



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY 20.06.2020

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The current Executive Committee of the EUI Alumni Association was elected on 7 July 2019, it is composed of Elie Michel (President), Hanna Schebesta (Vice-President), Diego Garzia (Treasurer), Alessandra Chirico (Secretary) and Filippo Vergara Caffarelli (member).

The following Annual Report accounts for the activities of the EUI AA since the election of the new Executive Committee. It is presented at the General Assembly of the EUI AA taking place on 20 June 2020 (online) for members' approval.

1. Transition and normalization of relations with the EUI

Since the EUI AA is an independent association under Italian Law, new members of the Executive Committee had to organize the legal transition of the association with Florence's administrative authorities (where the association is located) and with the bank and service providers of the EUI AA (webmaster, accountant). Despite the bureaucratic load, this transition was completed in October 2019.

Because of the decision to fully separate the EUI AA from the EUI and of the contentious relation between the former EUI AA Executive Committee with the current EUI Administration, it proved necessary to normalize and improve the contacts between the parties. In that view, the current Executive Committee made it a priority to organize a meeting with the EUI President Renaud Dehousse, representatives of the EUI Academic and Communication Services. The meeting took place on 24 September 2019, and productively relaunched the relation between the association and the institute. Since then, the executive committee has been in regular contacts with key personnel at the EUI in order to coordinate activities, and plan new events. In general, the objective is to institutionalize the cooperation with the EUI as much as possible.



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2. Academic and Social events

The Executive Committee of the EUI AA strived to plan its events in closer association with the EUI flagship events.

The General Assembly was moved to mid-June rather than the end of July in order to occur around the days of the Conferring Ceremony, the June Ball, and the Max Weber Conference. Practically, it will make it easier for a greater number of members to attend the General Assembly, as they may already be in Florence for one of the other events. Symbolically, it is important for the EUI AA to be visible at that period of the EUI, which constitutes the peak of academic and social events. The EUI administration welcomed the idea of having the alumni more involved during this period, and particularly at the Conferring Ceremony. The EUI services were very flexible and accommodating in the practical organization of the GA in such busy time of the year. However, because of the Coronavirus crisis, the General 2020 takes place in mid-June but in visioconference. The 2021 General Assembly is expected to occur the day following the June Ball, on the campus of the EUI.

The EUI AA had organized a panel for the State of the Union Conference (7-8 May 2020). The SoU organizing committee has agreed on the principle of a yearly EUI AA panel at this event. The composition of the panel was decided after an open call among alumni. The selected panel was titled “*The EUI Alumni’s perspective: the future of Europe between populism and technocracy*”, and composed of Prof. Marina Aksenova (IE University of Madrid), Prof. Lorenzo De Sio (LUISS University of Rome), Dr. Johannes Karremans (University of Salzburg), and Dr. Monika Sus (Hertie School). Because of the Coronavirus crisis, the panel was postponed the State of the Union Conference 2021.

Since most scheduled event have been postponed because of the Coronavirus crisis, the EUI AA Executive Committee has decided unanimously decided to redirect the money committed to organize the panel of the State of the Union conference and the physical General Assembly to charity donation. The EUI AA has donated 2,000 euros to a special call of the Florentine section of



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the Red Cross (Croce Rossa Firenze) to finance a special ambulance for transporting patients in biocontainment.

3. Revive EUI AA local chapters

The EUI AA has constantly expressed its intention to support local chapters, which are really at the heart of the common efforts to make the Alumni Association less hierarchical, more member driven, and closer to local realities. As of Autumn 2019, different activities have been going on at local level. Many alumni explicitly welcomed the intention to revitalize local chapters. The issue of financial contribution to local chapters from the AA is still open (to be debated in the 2020 General Assembly).

In October 2019, the Brussels Chapter gathered for an informal networking get-together. About 20 participants joined from Brussels and further. On the same line, several gatherings and get-togethers took place in Washington DC in January 2020, in London, and in Paris. Others were announced in the Netherlands.

Additionally, the EUI AA co-financed an initiative in Brussels in November 2019: [“History of the European Parliament: Research Projects, Sources and Historical Memory 1979-2019”](#), a conference organized by the ‘Association of Friends of the Historical Archives of the European Union’, in partnership with the Historical Archives of the EU and the House of European History. The EUI Alumni Association has co-sponsored the event, as part of a friendly collaboration with Friends of the HAEU. About 25 alumni attended this event.

The Brussels Chapter has been liaising with Max Weber Fellows to organize events and debates in Brussels on topics of truly European interest, with the contribution from academics and practitioners among the AA’s Alumni. Two events were announced: one on Brexit Phase II (which



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was cancelled and reported because of the Coronavirus crisis) and another one planned for Autumn 2020.

Due to the advent of the Corona virus crisis, local chapter activities were suspended and will be resumed when circumstances permit.

4. Work on the institutional foundations of the EUI AA

As part of the efforts to strengthen the institutional bases of the EUI AA, the Executive Committee has identified the need to modify the statutes of the association. Because of a series of weaknesses and contentious points the Executive committee set the following objectives:

- 1) introduce in the Statutes a mechanism to improve guarantee functions including, but not limited to, compliance with the Statutes and financial integrity;
- 2) review and, if necessary, update the objectives of the AA, stated in art. 4 of the Statutes;
- 3) review and, if necessary, update the tasks/roles of the members of the Executive Committee;
- 4) review and, if necessary, update the electoral process of the AA, with the goal of ensuring that rules, deadlines and procedures concerning the elections are clear and safe;
- 5) introduce in art. 12 of the Statutes the faculty for the Executive Committee to issue a set of rules regulating the internal functioning of the AA;
- 6) review and, if necessary, clarify the rules on the Meetings of the General Assembly, in particular art. 11(7).
- 7) correct any factual mistakes and typos present in the Statutes.

For that purpose, the Executive Committee has established a "Subcommittee on the Statutes and the governance of the EUI AA". Filippo Vergara Caffarelli, member of the AA Executive Committee



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and chair of the Subcommittee, Alessandra Chirico, Secretary of the AA, and Johanna Engström, and Marco Rizzi, alumni. The Subcommittee will propose an amended version of the statutes to the Executive Committee. The adoption of modifications of the Statutes will be decided by the members by vote prior to the General Assembly 2021.

5. Improve the AA communication

The new AA communication strategy wants to live up to principles of transparency and inclusiveness by using a mix of communication channels. All of the important documents and events of the association are communicated to members via email (to the address they provide in their profile on the EUI AA website). Daily exchanges between EUI AA members, and the wider public, take place on social media.

For internal communication, the EUI AA relies on its Facebook group. It is open to EUI alumni, this includes active and inactive members. It is meant to be an internal communication platform, both for sharing information and for exchange of views between members. The Executive Committee has posted regular updates about the activities of the association and – in order to enhance transparency – posted summaries of board meetings. Members share information about local chapter or other events relevant to the association.

During the transition period with the previous EUI AA Executive, it must be noted that the outgoing president of the Association, F. Bindi, severely obstructed the well-functioning of the association by isolating social media accounts. Because of her refusal to transfer the administrator's right of the EUI AA Facebook group (800+ members) to the current Executive Committee, a new group had to be created. The new group has reached equal levels of membership as the prior group, currently counting 769 verified alumni. This lack of cooperation not only resulted in a great loss of time and additional confusion for members, but it also damaged the image of the EUI AA. To this



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day, F. Bindi still owns the right to the EUI Alumni Facebook Page, and refuses to transfer them, despite repeated requests. This problem remains unresolved.

For external communication, the EUI AA relies mostly on its Twitter account. The EUI AA Twitter is reaching an increasing audience: followers have increased from 230 (July 2019) to 600 (June 2020). Alumni wishing to have conference calls or vacancies distributed can use the @EUIAlumni handle or can request distribution by private message. The EUI Twitter account now also explicitly targets current EUI researchers, in order to enhance inter-generational inclusiveness. The account is supported by Alex von Witzleben (History Alumnus), to whom we are indebted for his daily support.

6. Improve the EUI AA website

The EUI AA website has been thoroughly updated – as to make the Alumni personal online profiles the supporting infrastructure of the association. The website has been largely simplified and made more functional modernized – and particularly the section to manage your membership to the association. Members can now fully manage their membership, and renew it directly online through a secured payment system, which automatically updates the members' database. The automated registration process was programmed by the webmaster Fabio Di Lupo. Others costs had been planned by the previous Executive Committee (2017-2019), committing about 7,000 euros for a video platform or an e-commerce section. The current Executive Committee decided to cancel these commitments and the associated costs. The costs associated to the restructuring of the website were limited to 800 euros.