



**EMA**

Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association

## **EMA Steering Committee**

### **Annual Report 2008-2009**

This document contains an overview of the activities of the Steering Committee of the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association, undertaken in the period June 2008 to June 2009, and a preliminary draft of future actions and strategies to be discussed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> EMA General Assembly, June 5-6, 2009, in Vilnius. For comments or clarifications, please contact the Steering Committee at [sc@em-a.eu](mailto:sc@em-a.eu) or the President at [president@em-a.eu](mailto:president@em-a.eu).

## Introduction

Another EMA year has passed; the second, and last, for me as President of EMA. This report is one of the last official documents written and edited by me in this role. The previous year has been one of consolidating progress made, and strengthening projects that have been set up. Successes this year are the progress made by Chapters and the Chapters Forum, under the guidance of Ricardo Chavez, elected as EMA VP last October. As a direct request from GA 2008 to make the elections of Erasmus Mundus Master Course representatives more democratic and consistent, the e-Voting system has been set up. The first thematic conference of EMA has been organized, Higher Education and Climate Change, at CEU in Budapest, again a great accomplishment. Also in November, the new Erasmus Mundus proposal has been accepted by the European Parliament; EMA has been active in this process both advising the European Commission as well as the European Parliament. Our input shows through in the new Erasmus Mundus Programme. In this Annual Report, written for the third General Assembly of the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association (EMA), the President of the EMA will detail the activities and strategic approach of the Steering Committee and the EMA as a whole. Summaries of the team reports of the EMA teams are also part of this report; more detailed reports of the EMA teams can be found in the respective team reports.

The Steering Committee of the EMA 2008-2009 consists of:

|                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Hanneke A. Luth          | President                   |
| Ricardo Chavez           | Vice President              |
| Chunyu Liang             | Conference Team Coordinator |
| Jean Carlos Pelicano     | Policy Team Coordinator     |
| Jennifer Lenhart         | Promotion Team Coordinator  |
| Manuel Fernandez         | Jobs Team Coordinator       |
| Rikke Skovgaard Andersen | Magazine Team Coordinator   |
| Ross Hu Zhongliang       | Newsletter Team Coordinator |
| Taghi Paksima            | IT Team Coordinator         |

As President of the EMA, I would like to thank all members of the Steering Committee and the EMA active members for all their input, hard work, energy and enthusiasm. A special word of thanks goes out to Natalia Spartakova, EMA member and ICUnet employee taking care of EMA affairs. We couldn't have done it without you! As my term of presidency has ended, I will leave this position at the GA where we as EMA members will elect a new President. The candidates are extremely qualified and full of spirit. They will do a great job. Sad as I am to be leaving the Steering Committee, I am excited for the new team to commence and undertake their responsibilities with renewed energy and ideas. It will be a challenging year also for the Steering Committee structure, as this is the first year where a large number of Steering Committee members will leave their positions. The "old" SC will do everything in her power to make sure the handover runs smoothly, and I am confident the EMA is able to take on this test. I wish the Steering Committee 2009-2010 all the best.

*Hanneke A. Luth, President of the EMA*



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## 1. Team reports

Here you can find summaries of the team reports in alphabetical order, and further information on EMA activities carried out throughout the year. It does not portray to be a full overview of everything that has been undertaken in the EMA framework, but should provide a solid overview of the most important EMA activities from June 2008 to June 2009.

### 1.a Conferences Team

The overarching goal of the team is to assist EMA members in constructing a strong community with ever-lasting inter-personal relationships, through the organization of EMA supported conferences and events. To achieve the above goal, the team has established and put into full operation of the following conference and events organization schemes in a systemized manner throughout the period from June 2008 to June 2009:

- 1) **Thematic Conference Scheme** (CAT organizes one to two themed conference each year, each targeting a specific topic that is of common interest to a large number of EMA members) – the first **Erasmus Mundus Conference on Climate Change and Higher Education** was successfully implemented in February 2009. Currently, the CAT is in the process of preparing for the next thematic conference of EMA (under the topic of “communication”). The conference also laid the foundation for the first EM professional network – *the Erasmus Mundus Climate Change Forum*. In addition to CAT taking the lead in organizing such a conference, EMA members can also self-initiate and organize thematic conference and request funding from the EMA under this scheme: the first EMA material science workshop (financially supported by CAT under the EMA) organized on 3-5 September 2008 was a good example;
- 2) **Small-scale Events Funding Scheme** has been set up for all EMA members to apply for funding and organize small-sized networking events; up to the time when finalizing this report, a total of 12 small-scale events proposals have been processed, out of which 9 have been granted financial support during this fiscal year.
- 3) **Regional Networking Events Scheme** (mainly open for EMA members from the same region to apply for funding and organize networking and promotion events with a clear geographic focus). During this past year, the team has coordinated the organization of the following EMA regional networking events: Jakarta (November 2008), New Delhi (November 2008), Moscow (November 2008), Sao Paulo (March 2009).

Details of the implemented conferences and events will be presented during the GA in Vilnius.

In May 2009, following an intensive review on the operations of the above conferences and events schemes, the team has decided to consolidate the above-mentioned existing schemes into two events organizing schemes under one systemized EMA Conference and Events Scheme:

- 1) **Thematic Conference Scheme:** EMA will initiate and organize one thematic conference during a given fiscal year, the topic of which should be of common interest of the EMA community; in addition to that, the association will make resources available for EMA members to self-organize a thematic conference with financial support from EMA.

- 2) **EMA Networking Events Funding Scheme:** under this scheme, any group of EMA members (e.g. a number of EMA members from a regional chapter, or from an Erasmus Mundus course, etc.) can apply for funding to organize any type of conferences or events. The team aims to expand the success of the small-scale events funding scheme and to be able to support 15 to 20 EMA networking events in the next fiscal year. It is expected that all future EMA networking events (except thematic events) will be supported via this scheme.

### **1.b Internal Communications Team**

Following the successful launch in year 2006 and progressive growing in 2007, the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association (EMA) has continued to be further developed in terms of its number of members, publicity and influence in European higher education. In the General Assembly 2008, former EMA Newsletter service team has changed to Internal Communication team. The new Internal Communication has still taken gathering, providing, reviewing and editing information as well as cooperating with other service teams as its responsibilities. And the team has also taken new steps to further enhance the dialog between different service teams and different master courses among Erasmus Mundus community.

The Internal Communication team launched a new initiative this year: The Field Reporter. This initiative encourages any member of EMA to report events of interest to the rest of the EMA community. Following the initiatives that created during GA 2008, the new features of ‘One issue one program’ and ‘One contact one program’ have been very successfully implemented. In the new coming GA, we expect to explore new possibilities to carry out the team missions.

### **1.c IT team**

Please see the IT report online.

### **1.d Jobs Team**

The Jobs Team aims to bring closer the job market and the student and alumni who are headed for a professional career in private companies. It builds on the knowledge and personal experience of its team members to advice fresh graduates and guide them on their job hunt. Networking is an essential component of its activity, as was shown by the “Call for CVs” initiative by which fresh graduates introduced in their respective companies the CVs of other students, thus increasing the chances for the latter to land the position. Another major initiative of the Jobs Team, currently underway, is to upgrade the EMA website into a more powerful platform on which companies can post positions themselves and where students can interact without third-party intervention thanks to an improved alumni directory. EM students and graduates are among the best ones in the whole academic spectrum. The Job Team’s vision and ambition is to have their students and alumni recognized at the excellence level. Our yearly report will be available soon, for the general assembly in June in Vilnius.

## 1.e Magazine Team

Here, the main conclusions of the Magazine report are portrayed. Please refer to the Magazine Team Annual Report for an extensive overview. The team's core task is the publication of the EMA member magazine, *Emanate*. This year the team has published the second edition of the publication. Among other successful achievements are:

- The team has successfully recruited new, active members at the GA 2008.
- By choosing a theme related to the first EMA thematic conference (Changing Climates) the EMA Magazine Team supported coherence in the activities of the EMA.
- Compared to last edition there is an increase in the amount of submitted articles.
- There is still significant interest in the EMA photo competition and the exhibition at the GA.
- The production costs stayed within the planned budget.

## 1.f Policy Team

The EMA Policy team has focused its activities during 2008-2009 into the following work streams:

EMA Statute:

- Release the new version of the Statute as voted by the GA-08 in Perugia (Italy). This new version has also been posted within the EMA website
- Prepare new amendments of the Statute to be proposed and voted by the GA-09 in Vilnius (Lithuania)

General policies: the team advises the SC as well as other structures of the association on policy matters in order to carry out their activities according to the Statute and the mission of the association.

During 2008-2009 the following activities should be highlighted:

- Create a better frame for organic creation and development of EMA Chapters as well as better integration of Chapters into the Statute and the EMA Structure
- Support on EMA elections (President, Vice-President and EMMC representatives to EMA)
- General advice to the SC on internal discussions as well as other EMA teams

Survey & quality issues: developing means to survey the opinion of the association members on quality matters regarding Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMC) and EMA activities. Moreover the results of the survey on quality of EMMC were published within the second edition of the EMA Magazine

Regular online meetings have been carried out by the policy team and a face-to-face meeting was carried out in Faro (Portugal) in order analyze the as is situation, way-forward and follow-up of the following topics:

- EMA Survey and quality issues
- EMA Chapters
- EMA Statute
- The EMA Vice-President was invited to this meeting in order to participate to the Chapter discussions

Finally the policy team has been represented on the following events:



- IFISO 2009 (Split, Croatia – Nov 2008)
- Launching of EM-2 (Brussels, Belgium – Feb 2009)
- Liaison Group meeting (Brussels, Belgium – Mar 2009)
- Erasmus Mundus Quality Assessment

During 2008-2009 the activities of the policy team have been lead by:

- Jean Carlos Pelicano – Policy coordinator (policy@em-a.eu)
- Tammy de Wright – Statute
- Peter Bentley – Survey & quality issues
- Mateo Botero – EMA Chapter policies

### **1.g Promotions Team**

The Promotions Team aims to promote EM as a programme of excellence in higher education. It aims to identify an emerging ‘brand’ as to what EMA is and should be known for: an enthusiastic network of motivated, globally-adaptable and interdisciplinary students and alumni: members who have a diverse range of academic, national and cultural backgrounds, but a common unifying experience linked by 3 elements inherent to every member of EMA – quality, opportunity, and mobility. From the June 2008 General Assembly (GA) in Perugia, Italy the Promotions Team has expanded and redefined its goals. It has a commitment of active members representing a variety of Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMC) and national backgrounds. Undoubtedly, we are learning along the way on how to best organize and where our targets should be. Since June 2008, we have focused on the following areas:

- Promotion and interaction with other student organisations (IFISO; the informal forum of international student organisations). This has a two-fold benefit for EMA:
  - 1) We can promote EM to dedicated and motivated undergraduate students; and
  - 2) learn from such organisations concerning operations. IFISO contact is primarily conducted at the Steering Committee (SC) level, to attend various events and electronic communication. However, in addition to SC involvement, Promotions Team members and other service teams have participated in specific meetings.
- Promotion Team members active in initiating and supporting various regional chapters – Promotions Team Members are active in established chapters as well as initiatives to start new chapters (i.e. the Latin American, North American, Indian and African chapter and pro-chapters).
- Participation in Erasmus Mundus II Launch Conference – EMII was launched in February 2009 pledging five additional years of funding to Erasmus Mundus masters and PhDs. As part of the launch conference, European and global partners attended, course coordinators and other stakeholders attended. The EMA Promotions Team Coordinator participated and conducted a presentation in the specific Erasmus Mundus Promotions workshop, as well as an additional presentation during the official ‘launch’ – together with other members of the EMA SC.
- Participation in European Higher Education Fairs (EHEF) – by Promotions Team Coordinator in Jakarta, Indonesia, together with Southeast Asian EMA members. Affiliated members to



the Promotions Team also participated in the EHEFs in Moscow and Sao Paolo, and other official promotional events. Prior to these fairs, various communications were shared concerning coordination, presentations, as well as provision of materials and funding support.

- Participation in the European National Structures (NS) Meeting – EMA is promoting itself as an active and competent organisation, and correspondingly has made partnerships at national level(s), to promote our common interests, promoting European Higher Education (EHE).
- Country Representatives –the Promotions Team supported material provision and answered questions concerning national and regional promotion to support this initiative (headed by the Jobs Team) to create an international network of support and promotion around the globe.
- Creation of EMA promotions material – this will be complete for the 2009 GA in Vilnius, and brochures are also available for EMA related events and promotion activities. Promotion materials include a Jobsrelated brochure, an EMA brochure, a small A4 for course coordinators, buttons and T-shirts and other materials to advertise and create awareness of EMA.
- Conducting presentations at universities, organized events and associations – This has been one of the most important ways that EMA and Erasmus Mundus have been promoted. In Latin American countries alone more than 30 presentations were conducted by the LA chapter, with support from members of the Promotions Team. Other presentations were conducted at universities and events in North America, Africa, Asia, etc. EMA provides a presentation template that can be catered to describe a particular presenter’s experience.
- Support to EMA members in terms of promotion ideas and materials – In addition to those who have attended the official EMA events (such as the General Assembly) and become part of the Promotions Team, many members of the wider EMA community are eager to get involved and promote EM. As such the Promotions Team provides materials, as well as communication and support concerning questions, concerns or other logistics.

It has been an active year, full of hard work and learning, especially for some members. Within the structure of the Promotions Team, three informal sub-teams (or targeted areas) were created with the following aims: internal EMA promotions (to recruit new members from EMMCs), external EMA promotions (to promote our organization) and promotion of EM (to attract competitive and eager students and to support the EC from a student/alumni perspective). Further details are described in this 2008/2009 Annual Report. On behalf of the promotions team, we welcome the Erasmus Mundus II Programme and are eager about the support to EMA.

## **2. Other EMA activities**

### **2.a Reaching out to members**

At the GA 2008 in Perugia, members were asked for their input on how to improve EMA. Besides many comments about setting up new regional chapters (see below), a point that was frequently made is that it is not clear for members how they can contribute to EMA. Therefore, the SC has written a document “How to become active in EMA”, which can be found on the EMA website (under “about EMA”). We hope this will spur member activity, and we are looking forward to many contributions. Also, active members should be more clearly represented at the EMA website, as a sign of recognition and a communication tool for other members to contact them. Member profiles have been set up in the EMA Community to this avail, and the IT team will continue working on this. For more information, see the Internal Communications team report, and the IT team report.

### **2.b Steering Committee meetings**

The Steering Committee has scheduled monthly online meetings. In these meetings, the Steering Committee discusses progress on all EMA activities and other issues such as problems with recognition of degrees, payment of scholarships etc. Furthermore, the SC met face-to-face with representatives from the service provider ICUnet two times: October 19-20 2008 in Rotterdam, and April 25-26 2009 in Toulouse.

In Rotterdam, Ricardo Chavez was elected as Vice President of the EMA. New plans were set out for the new EMA year. A very important achievement set out for this year was setting up the online e-Voting system, as GA 2008 requested a more consistent and democratic election system for EMMC representatives. The invitation from Vilnius to hold the second EMA General Assembly was gratefully accepted. The meeting in Toulouse was mainly focused preparing for the EMA General Assembly in Vilnius, Statute amendments and the elections for President, Vice President and EMMC representative.

### **2.c Liaison Group meeting**

On March 5-6 2009, a Liaison Group meeting was held in Brussels, at the venue of Tour Madou. It was hosted by the European Commission, DG Education and Culture, and chaired by the President of the EMA. The Liaison Group meeting served mainly to inform representatives of all EMA teams of the initiatives that are being undertaken in the framework of EMA, and what role their respective EMA team could fulfil in this framework. Also, the opinion of the active members of the EMA was solicited on several issues, such as the expansion of EMA membership to cover EM External Cooperation Window (see below). The second day of the LG meeting consisted of the first EMA Chapters Forum (see below).

## **2.d EMA regional chapters**

In accordance with the EMA SC decision, one of the responsibilities of the EMA Vice-presidency is to liaise the SC with the EMA Regional Chapters and Alumni Associations of the different EM Master courses. The EMA Vice President was elected in October 2008. One of the key achievements regarding EMA chapters was the production of the chapters framework document in order to provide the creation and operation guidelines of the EMA Regional Chapters. Furthermore, the role of the Chapters within the EMA structure is also defined in this document which was produced in collaboration with Camilo Mateo Botero of the EMA Policy Team. The discussions took place during the Policy Team meeting in Faro, Portugal.

One of the milestones of the Regional Chapters development was the establishment of the Chapters Forum. The aim of this forum is to provide the chapters a platform to exchange their experiences and to canalize properly their proposals to the SC and European Commission. The Forum is chaired by the EMA Vice-president. Two face-to-face Forums were held. The first one running parallel to the Liaison Group Meeting 09 in Brussels, Belgium and the second one at the GA 09 in Vilnius Lithuania. Beside these face-to-face Forums one virtual one via Skype also took place during this year.

During this year, new chapters and teams pro-chapter were established. One week before the GA 09, the following chapters and teams pro-chapter are operating:

- Chapters: China, Latin America, India, and Africa
- Teams Pro-Chapter: North America, Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States, South East Asia, and Pacific Region

EMA Vice-presidency liaised during this year the interaction between the Chapters, European Commission and third-party institutions. This included assistance for organization of events to gather EMA members and promote the EM programme and EMA.

## **2.e Launching Erasmus Mundus II**

Based on the success of Erasmus Mundus I 2004-2008 with its 103 current Erasmus Mundus Master Courses, the European Parliament has decided to continue the programme, which resulted in adopting EMII with the goal to reach 150 EMMC by 2013. Besides aiming at continuous high quality in European higher education, mobility, excellence and inter-European as well as international cooperation, the new features of EMII include: joint doctoral programmes; scholarships for European students and the inclusion of higher education institutions from third countries and Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window scheme into the programme. The European Commission has stressed the importance of activities of EMA and has confirmed its support for the further development of our Association – in part because of the strong support and activities of its members!

As has been mentioned last year, EMA has been advising both the European Commission and the European Parliament in the process of developing and assessing the Erasmus Mundus II proposal. One of the most prominent results of this involvement is the following: a cap on tuition fees has been introduced into the new Erasmus Mundus II scheme. Tuition fees may not be higher than 4000 euro per semester, 8000 euro per academic year for third country students; and not higher than 2000 euro per semester, 4000 euro per year for European students. As the EMA has received many complaints from her members about outrageous tuition fees, we are extremely pleased with this result.



## **2.f Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window**

The new Erasmus Mundus Programme consists of both the “old” parts and some new parts. The old parts, mainly consisting of the Erasmus Mundus Master courses and promotional activities, are now expanded with Doctorate courses and the External Cooperation Window programme. The External Cooperation Window, now part of Erasmus Mundus, is different from the Erasmus Mundus Joint courses. Instead of handing out a quality label and scholarships to a specific master or doctorate programme, the External Cooperation Window aims to enhance development of educational institutions outside Europe through cooperation and exchange between universities. The ECW is also funded by a different Directorate General, namely EuropeAid. The question now of course arises if and how the students participating in the External Cooperation Window should be eligible for EMA membership. There are several considerations that the SC is concerned with, such as:

- Dilution of the quality label of Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes
- Number of ECW students (more than EMJP students and alumni)
- Type of ECW stay in Europe: ranging from 6 months to 3 years, on exchange as bachelor, master or doctorate student. Some of the ECW students get a degree in Europe, some do not.
- Financial considerations

The SC has decided that this issue should be further discussed in all its aspects before presenting it to a General Assembly. Extending the membership eligibility is an issue only the GA can decide on. SC will discuss this issue internally and with the European Commission DG Education and Culture to come up with a proposal. This issue should also be discussed at the Liaison Group meeting.

## **2.g Budget**

Another part of the decision by the European Parliament on the extension of the Erasmus Mundus programme concerns budget for the EMA. As the EMA is regarded as an extremely valuable network for Erasmus Mundus students and alumni, promoting European Higher Education as well as supporting current students and setting up new initiatives for students and alumni, the EP and EC want to continue their support. The EMA has of course expressed her sincere gratitude, and is eager to live up to expectations set.

A certain amount is by EP decision set for the EMA. A detailed budget is still to be decided on. Together with the Service Provider ICUnet, the Steering Committee will draft a request for the next fiscal year, July 2009-June 2010 rights after the GA in Vilnius to enable the new Steering Committee members to have a say in the budget discussions. This proposal needs to be discussed with the European Commission, out of which results are expected in the beginning of September.

## **2.h Quality assessment of Erasmus Mundus programmes**

Since July 2007 the EMA has taken part in an exercise on quality assessment, funded through the Erasmus Mundus scheme. The EMA has a seat in the project’s steering group and help oversee the progress of the project. The purpose of the project is to assess the ‘best practices’ of a handful of Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses which have, voluntarily, signed up for self-assessment and a series of on-site visits by higher education experts, the European Commission and representatives of students and alumni. The overarching aim is to define factors of excellence for Erasmus Mundus Masters



Courses and to create an online tool which will enable these excellent practices to be shared among universities across Europe. The service provider is the consultancy ECOTEC.

The project's first phase was successfully completed in fall 2008. A handbook of best practices and a self-assessment tool, aimed at both academic staff and students are available online via <http://www.emqa.eu/>. The idea is to support course coordinators and academic staff in their quality work. The handbook and online tool highlights four dimension of excellence for Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses, namely:

- Facilities, Logistics and Finance
- Quality of Teaching and Learning
- The Joined-Up Practice and Integration
- Quality of Leadership and Institutions

Currently the quality assessment project is entering its second phase and six new courses have been selected for assessment. Again EMA representatives will be part of the visiting expert teams and the EMA will continue to have a seat in the projects steering group. Please contact Peter Bentley ([bentleypeterj@hotmail.com](mailto:bentleypeterj@hotmail.com)) for more information on EMQA. He currently represents the EMA in the project steering group.

## **2.i EMII Selection Board**

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the EMA, the President has received an invitation to participate in the Selection Board for Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes 2009-20103. The EMA is very happy for this recognition of her status as representing students and alumni of Erasmus Mundus courses, and applauds the efforts to incorporate student opinions in the selection of Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes. As this invitation was sent to the President, Hanneke Luth has provisionally been appointed to participate in the first of these meetings. A rotating chair for the EMA representative is envisaged. As the first of these meetings takes place shortly after the GA in Vilnius, and therefore someone else will have assumed to position of EMA President at that time, the new President of the EMA has the right to represent the EMA at this meeting. The then elected President of the EMA will discuss with Hanneke shortly after the GA who should participate in the EM Selection Board meeting.

## **2.j Other international student organisations**

The EMA participates in the Informal Forum of International Student Organizations (IFISO), a non-political and non-profit forum for various student-run organizations. Currently it consists of 30 student organizations, covering more than two million students all together. Annual IFISO meetings are normally held twice a year, hosted by local committees of member organizations. During these meetings, the most important topics of interest are discussed and often new events being planned. This autumn, the IFISO meeting was held in Split/Croatia between 22-26 November 2008, and was organized by the local group of the Food Industry Students European Council (FISEC). The EMA was represented by Peter Bentley (Policy team) and Richard Klein (Conferences team). For more information on contact with other student organisations, see the Promotions team report.

## **2.k Online Voting for EMMC representatives, Vice President and President primaries**

The online eVoting system is set up this year in response to a request by the General Assembly 2008 to improve the EMMC election procedures. At that time, all EMMCs were able to find their own representative in whatever way they wanted, and quite a few representatives were chosen by course coordinators without any proper election. The Steering Committee was asked to make the election procedures more consistent in different courses and more democratic.

Answering to this request, the IT-team and the Service Provider have been working very hard on the eVoting tool. This tool is business standard, internationally accepted, has been tested numerous times including by EMA, and is completely safe. The SC is very satisfied with the results of the recently held elections. Most EMMCs are now able to send a representative to the EMA whom they elected themselves, instead of someone appointed by the universities, exactly as was requested by GA 2008. This tool has also been used in the elections for President and Vice President. The SC was extremely pleased to receive 10 nominations for the position of EMA President, and 20 for the position of EMA Vice President. The online election tool has been used to conduct primary elections, upon which the top three candidates have been invited to present their candidature to the General Assembly.

All EMA members who sent in a nomination for any of these positions have been invited to become active in EMA, in any of the ways mentioned on the website ([How to become active in EMA](#)). The SC welcomes these eager and enthusiastic members into the active community.

### 3. Plans for the future

This section portrays the major plans and challenges in and for the future of the EMA as viewed by the President of the EMA, on the basis of discussions with the Steering Committee and the Liaison Group mainly. All of these are of course subject to input to be received at the General Assembly in Vilnius. The Steering Committee has made a specific point that it is not desirable to make too many decisions on behalf of the next Steering Committee. When certain decisions for next term were made, such as accepting the invitation of the Madrid to hold EMA GA 2010, it is done since SC feels this would be very valuable to the EMA and a delay in deciding would not be beneficial.

#### 3.a Scheduled events for next term

##### *SC handover weekend*

Continuity is a major concern to the Steering Committee of the EMA. It will be of the utmost importance to devise a way to have an effective and high-quality handover of position when “old” SC members leave, and “new” people take their place. To that avail, we have deemed it most useful to plan a SC handover meeting in which the new SC members will be receive all information necessary to fulfil their tasks. Of course, this meeting will also be used for a continuation of setting actions for the SC and the EMA on the basis of the information received in the GA. Last year, trying to plan a handover meeting soon after the GA involving both “old” and “new” SC members in the planning process turned out to be very difficult; mid-June is too late to plan a weekend in July. Therefore, SC has decided to plan a weekend way in advance, July 4-5, and communicate these dates to prospective candidates for SC positions. At the GA, in the elections for team coordinators, these dates will again be communicated.

##### *Liaison Group meeting*

The Liaison Group meeting has proven critical for EMA team development and progress, and mostly for coordination of team initiatives. Venue and dates are still to be specified. The SC does appreciate her connection with the European Commission and Brussels; therefore, Brussels is a likely candidate. Dates and venue for a Liaison Group meeting are point of discussion for the handover meeting. . The SC does however expect that, as for the last LG meeting, not all active team members will be able to join the LG meeting, due to financial constraints. Representatives of teams will be chosen to attend the LG meeting and voice the input of the respective team.

##### *GA 2010: Madrid*

The Steering Committee has decided to accept the invitation by Madrid to host the EMA GA 2010. The support for this event in Madrid is very wide. Travel opportunities to the city are excellent. The EMA is very happy to be able to present the location for next years GA already now, so that preparations for the GA can start.



### **3.b Challenges and plans**

In the document of last year, several items were touched upon. These will be briefly dealt with, and some other challenges and plans will be highlighted. These challenges will be met by the new SC, under guidance of a new President. Therefore, this part of the report aims at highlighting some of the issues that should be dealt with, without prescribing an agenda for the new SC and President.

#### ***Organisational structure and focus***

The amount of workload, in SC and in teams, and overlapping initiatives between teams have been identified as challenges in the last year. During this year, SC has addressed this issue continuously by discussing which actions are to be undertaken, and under the responsibility of which team this action should lie. The focus in EMA, hindered by a lack of structure in the abundance of new initiatives, plans and contacts, has become more structured. For instance, the Jobs Team and the Chapters have been working very hard on a plan of support to the Country Representative. The workload of active EMA members, especially SC members, has been brought down by focusing on certain items to take on, rather than undertaking it all. This will be another point of discussion at the handover meeting.

The workload of the President has been brought down by the work of the Vice President, and by delegating tasks such as representation at events to other SC and EMA active members. Facilitating SC members in their tasks, keeping overview of EMA activities, signalling overlap, facilitating internal meetings, responding to member queries, contact with the European Commission and first point of contact with the EMA remain the most important tasks of the President. An overview of tasks of the President can be found in the Addendum.

Regarding the structure of EMA teams: SC discussed the issue relating to the merging of Internal Communication Team with the Magazine Team, since they have a similar aim (internal communication). SC decided not to merge the two teams, as internal communication is to be improved in the coming year (see below). For now, each team has several initiatives and responsibilities to be undertaken in their respective task area, and overlap in initiatives is less of a problem since all new initiatives are discussed or at least mentioned at SC level.

#### ***Legal status***

The Steering Committee unfortunately has not been able to look into attaining a legal status for the EMA. As the SC still considers a legal status very worthwhile for EMA, it would like to address this issue in the next EMA year.

#### ***EMMC alumni associations and EMA chapters***

For the next year, two main challenges with respect to EMA chapters and EMMC alumni associations will be faced: the transference of the coordination of the Country Representative to the Chapters and to strengthen the interaction between EMA SC and the different Alumni Associations of the different EM courses. Regarding the country representatives, it was decided that Chapters will coordinate in the future the Country Representatives network. Currently, this network is being

coordinated by the EMA Jobs Team. Therefore, one of the challenges for the future is to design the proper strategy to transfer the coordination from the Jobs Team to the chapters.

On the other hand, the other main challenge to overcome for the next year is to promote a closer approach between the SC and the Alumni Associations of the EM courses. It is necessary to be aware about how many EM courses currently have an Alumni Association and the activities that these associations are carrying out. Furthermore, it is also necessary to update them about the different supports that EMA can offer them and to ask them to contribute to promote the EM program and EMA. An approach similar to the one used for the Regional Chapters to strength the interaction between EMA SC and the Alumni Association could be used. This could consist in bringing together several Alumni Associations with common characteristics within a Forum in order to promote the exchange of ideas.

### ***Reaching out to EMA members***

Even though the SC has improved the information available to EMA members about EMA activities, possibilities to contribute to EMA and member profiles, the EMA community should be improved. Content of the website, communication with members, job ads on the website and IT instruments are to be improved and expanded. This is another point of discussion in the handover meeting.

### ***Future of EMA***

The Erasmus Mundus Programme will run till 2013 at least; after that, the future of Erasmus Mundus, and that of the EMA, is unclear. One of the main challenges of the future will be how to organise the funding of the EMA. In EMII, support for EMA has been requested from the European Parliament by the European Commission. After that, no financial support is guaranteed, however, neither negated. As this is a critical point to the development of the EMA. Even though taking decisions right now for situations occurring in 2013 is probably too early, it is wise to anticipate and already discuss which options are available, such as member contributions in the long run. It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to devise an EMA structure and set up that is maintainable in the future.

Member activity is another issue to be looked into. Even though many people join teams at the GA, it is difficult to remain enthusiastic and keep contributing. Main factors could be: online communication, lack of face to face contact, lack of recognition. Internal communication is the key here; it is time the EMA looks inward and improves her community efforts. This will be a nice challenge for the next EMA year!



## **Addendum: President's activities**

### **Overview of activities and responsibilities of the President, in cooperation with the other members of the Steering Committee and the Service Provider:**

- Facilitating SC meetings (planning, agenda, minutes)
- Facilitating SC handover weekend
- Facilitating Liaison Group meeting
- Facilitating General Assembly
- Coordinating of General Assembly, together with Service Provider
- Responding to external policy issues
- Being informed of other EMA activities, as for instance Quality Assessment EM
- Focusing on general EMA issues: mission statement, future of EMA, legal status
- Keeping an overview of Steering Committee proceedings and EMA activities
- Signaling overlapping EMA initiatives
- Coordinating a budget overview, together with Service Provider
- Responding to member queries
- Serving as contact person for the European Commission
- Serving as contact person for the European Parliament
- Serving as contact person for external contacts, such as other international student and/or alumni organizations and other interested parties
- Serving as main liaison with Service Provider
- Representing the EMA at several internal and external events: promotion, information, policy meetings
- In general, providing support to all EMA activities when requested and desirable, such as proofreading of drafts, giving advice, attending meetings, etc.
- Writing for the Magazine
- Writing for the Newsletter

