



Promoting Excellence in Planning Education and Research

Materials for the CoRep meeting

Lodz, March 28, 2008

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Agenda

14:00 Introduction

1. Welcome (President)
2. Apologies – confirming the agenda of the meeting
3. Minutes of the last meeting (Naples, July 2007)
4. President's report

14:15 Planning Education

5. Excellence in teaching prize (Francesco lo Piccolo)
6. AOB on planning education

14:30 Planning Research

7. News from the thematic groups (Roelof Verhage)
8. Best published paper prize (P. Naess)
9. AOB on planning research

15:00 Planning policy / Link with other organisations

10. After the Leuven HoS meeting : AESOP/ECTP study on planners mobility in Europe (Anna Geppert)
11. Collaborations with other organisations : Isocarp (Peter Ache)
12. AOB on planning policy

15:15 Young academics

13. Young Academics Report (Beatrix Haselsberger)

15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00 Organisation and communication

14. Secretary General's report (Anna Geppert)
 - a. New members
 - b. ExCo Vacancies
 - c. CoRep elections 2008
 - d. Towards a professional secretariat
15. AESOP Journal(s) (Peter Ache)
16. New website (Nikos Karadimitriou and Giancarlo Cotella)
17. Communication Team's report (Nikos Karadimitriou)

17:00 Treasurer's report

18. Treasurer's report (Andreas Voigt)
 - a. Financial balance of the Naples congress
 - b. First responses to the membership fee increase
 - c. Membership fee : simulation of the proposal of waiving the fees according to the EU convergence criteria and discussion

17:30 Coming meetings :

CoRep meetings :

- 2008 Summer meeting : Chicago, USA, Monday, July 7th, AM
- 2009 Spring meeting : Lille, France
- 2009 Summer meeting : Liverpool, UK

Annual Congresses :

- 5-10 July 2008: Chicago, USA, Joint ACSP-AESOP Congress
- July 2009 Liverpool, UK : presentation by David Shaw

17:45 Any other business (AOB)

Presidents Report

1. Overview

Last year, our 21st conference was held in Naples, with about 600 participants coming from forty countries inside and outside Europe. More than 400 presentations were given in fourteen tracks subsumed under the main theme of the risk society. Obviously, AESOP has grown strong over its twenty years of existence.

In 2007, we had 108 full and 40 associate member schools - i.e. schools in which planning education follows our requirements and have therefore become a member of the association. What is more, these are schools which share our ideas and the quality criteria, which we promote for a planning education in Europe.

This is a huge international structure - up until now working entirely on a voluntary basis, which limited our capacities. What is very positive therefore was the decision made by the Council of Representatives in Naples to raise the membership fee from 2008 and to provide a full secretarial support to the Secretary General, strengthening a core function in our organizational structures.

This confirmed support is of particular importance for AESOP: In 2008 we will see a major overhaul of our web-pages with improved communication functions for our members. Our negotiations with two academic journals will open new additional communication channels for AESOP and its members, improving our representation inside and outside Europe. We are reaching out towards other associations to jointly promote the planning profession and provide for our members positive working conditions.

The year 2008 will provide many excellent opportunities for our work to continue. A new Heads of Schools meeting in March in Łódź continued the discussions about standards, qualities and professional recognition. In June, the AESOP PhD workshop on 'Doing Planning Research' will be hosted by our colleagues from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. The forthcoming joint ACSP/AESOP conference 'Bridging the divide – Celebrating the city', 6-11 July in Chicago will provide an excellent opportunity for scholarly debate.

This is not least also the success of all of those actively shaping and using AESOP as an organization. I would therefore like to thank our members for their continuing support and participation which makes AESOP such a strong organisation.

2. Objectives 2010

In the following sections I will report on some of the major issues of our work since CoRep in Naples 2007. According to the ExCo view, AESOP's agenda at current can be captured in one overarching objective: **AESOP is the only representation body which brings together the Planning Schools of Europe. Given this unique position AESOP will strengthen its profile as a professional body** (1). **AESOP will mobilize its resources taking a leading role and entering its expertise into ongoing debates and initiatives regarding planning education and planning qualification of future professionals** (2). **AESOP will promote its agenda with politicians and all other key stakeholders (or actors) in place development and management across Europe** (3). From this objective a number of sub-aims, items, and main instruments follow:

- (1) Thankfully the CoRep decided last year to raise the membership fee from 2008. This gave us the huge opportunity to establish a permanent support for the work of the Secretary General and the President. AESOP has acted on this already with employing a part-time support for the SG.

We also put out a tender for the improvement of our WWW presence and related issues like digital dissemination. The intention here is to turn our as yet one-way communication web-system into a two way system, which can actively be used by our members. The new web-pages should be operational by the end of the year with a first test version to be presented e.g. in Chicago.

This overhaul of the web-pages will be linked at the same time to an improvement of our data bases and a closer coordination of information exchange between treasurer and SG.

Other items:

- permanent office to support SG and President, ✓
- communication function & channels, data bases & routines; ✓
- communications, improving WWW presence, digital dissemination ✓
- scholarly activities like working groups, PhD workshops
- conferences, attract sponsoring ✓

(2) AESOP clearly has a task to guarantee educational quality. This has both, an internal perspective relating to accreditation (in teaching but also research), and the external perspective of a potential common platform for the definition of professional standards. AESOP has set up a Bologna 2 survey though the responses to that seem to be lagging. But regular up-dates of the process of the Bologna reforms will become a standard for AESOP. The process of defining core (minimum) requirements for planners is again a discussion of the Łódź Heads of School meeting. Regarding the common platform, AESOP has started a survey together with ECTP about professional issues. Last, we have been watching closely developments at partner countries and responded e.g. to the suggested abolition of diplomas in the field of urban planning in France.

Other items:

- survey & critical observation on Bologna progress and impact, ✓
- survey on various aspects of assessments and quality control,
- formation of working groups for preparation and discussion of professional policy, ✓
- accreditation of schools, programmes,
- formation & consultation of PhD programmes,
- building lists of experts

(3) AESOP needs to develop a strategy or a policy which helps strengthening the profile of planning and communicating the value of planning. We should attempt a better 'spatial literacy' of all actors and stakeholders to achieve a higher spatial quality. This point has still many open items. We came to an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with ISOCARP for closer cooperation. Together with ECTP we are running the already mentioned survey on professional issues.

Other items:

- draft 'spatial literacy' strategy
- identify stakeholders and actors
- better liaison with new members and potential new members ✓
- liaison with other associations and organizations ✓

As you can see, we step by step work on our agenda until 2010. Later this year, we will start working on the required review of our activities and the impact for further organizational reforms.

In terms of other agenda items, I can report to you that we gave out five grants for PhD-students to participate in the ACSP/AESOP Conference in Chicago this year. This conference seems to fall in the range of about one thousand participants, quite large in our terms.

The 2009 conference will be held in Liverpool. 2010 is open but we have a good candidate volunteering to organize the conference. 2011 will be the year for the next World Planning Conference, the host for this to be announced soon.

Announcement of Excellence in Teaching Prize 2008

The 2008 prize for excellence in teaching asks for planning courses that have clearly and consciously integrated elements linking the spatial dimensions of planning with matters of social equity and diversity in a way which seeks to promote social inclusion and cohesion amongst diverse groups.

The 2008 prize is looking for courses which explicitly raise these ethical issues alongside – or as part of – developing students' technical skills in designing socio-spatial interventions, with the aim of healing social divisions and conflict. All aspects of diversity can be considered. We now ask for planning courses where these socio-spatial elements are integrated, with particular emphasis on the ethical dimension of the planning discipline which we would like to be taught within planning courses.

→ **Informations, application** : www.aesop-planning.com go to the page AESOP Prizes.

Prize committees

Francesco Lo Piccolo (chair)

Department "Città e Territorio", Università degli studi di Palermo, Italy

Judith Allen

School of Architecture and the Built Environment, University of Westminster, UK

Roar Amdam

Institute of Municipal Studies, Volda University College, Norway

Giancarlo Cotella (Young Academics' member)

Department "Interateneo Territorio", Politecnico di Torino, Italy

Kristina Nilsson

Department of Landscape Planning, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden

Lia Vasconcelos

Department of "Ciencias e Engenharia do Ambiente", Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal

Thematic groups

Roelof Verhage

1. News from thematic groups

During the Naples conference or after, four groups have expressed their intention of becoming an AESOP thematic group. These are:

- Planning and energy (coordinator: Nanka Karstkarel, Groningen)
- Franco British Planning Study Group (coordinator: Philip Booth, Sheffield)
- Strategic planning (coordinator: Francesca Sertorio, Cardiff)
- Resilience and risk mitigation strategies (coordinators: Angela Colluci, Milan; Marcella Samakovlija, Milan)

The Franco British planning study group and the group on Strategic planning have since organised events and are active. The group on resilience and risk mitigation strategies starts its activities with a round table at the ACSP-AESOP congress in Chicago. There is no news from the group on planning and energy, who organised a session at the Naples congress but did not get the attendance it had hoped for, due in part to organisational problems at the congress venue.

All groups have been asked to write an official proposal, using the entry guidelines for new groups at the AESOP website. So far, none of the groups has written such a proposal. As a result, no new web pages have been created for the new groups.

2. Thematic groups budget 2008

Two thematic groups have made a claim on the 2008 thematic groups budget. The group on planning, law and property rights made a claim of 500 per person to support PhD students or young academics from distant countries to participate in the second conference organised by the group in Warsaw. The groups on complexity and planning made a claim of 1200 Euros for a language check by a native speaker of the book which is produced by the group. Both claims correspond to the objectives of AESOP, and the amounts demanded are reasonable. Taking into account the total amount of the 2008 thematic groups budget (2500 Euros), both groups have been granted 1000 Euros.

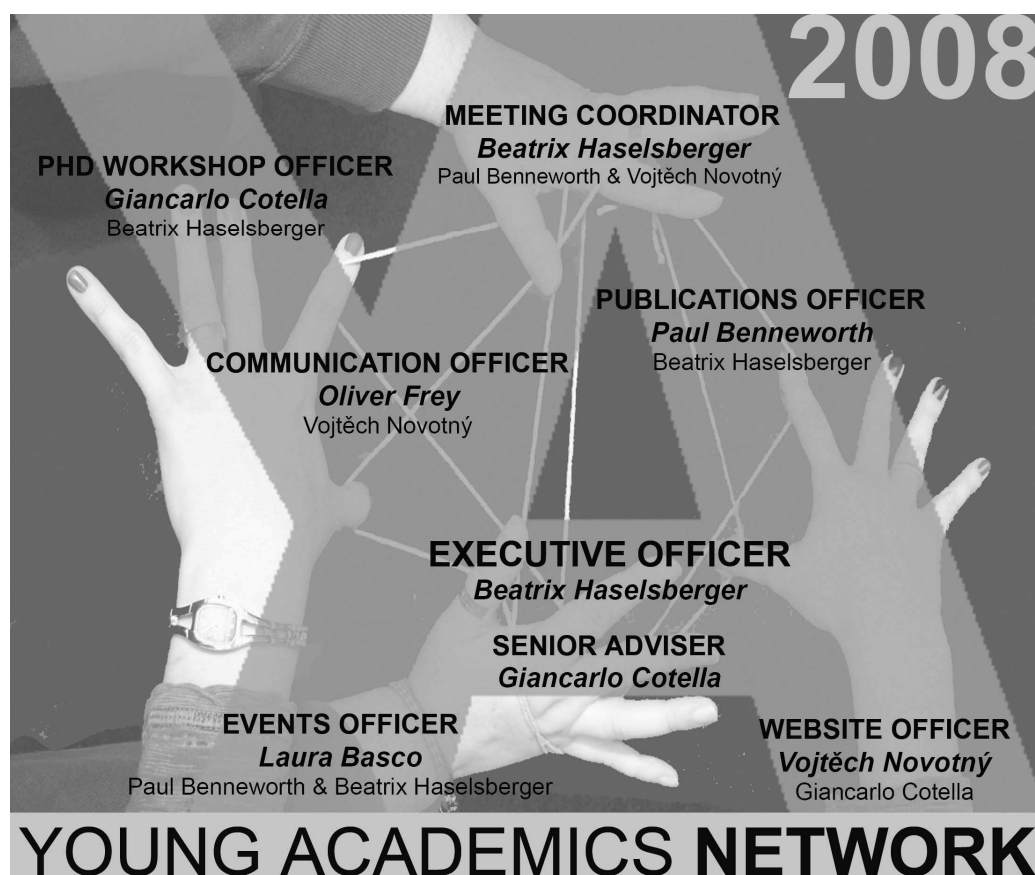
AESOP Young Academics Network

Beatrix Haselsberger

A creative and open-minded network of young researchers, academics and students from all over the world, developing and disseminating their ideas and research results, supported by AESOP.

1. Our network structure.

The AESOP Young Academics Coordination Team comprises 5 Members and one Senior Adviser. There are five portfolios within the CT, and each CT Member is responsible for one portfolio, together with one or two "Friends" (who act as non-executive assistants).



2. Who we are

Beatrix Haselsberger (haselsberger@email.archlab.tuwien.ac.at), project assistant at the Vienna University of Technology (Austria) and guest researcher at the University of Udine (Italy), is interested in the influence of territorial identities in planning issues, in particular in a trans-national context. She likes bringing people together and creating platforms for communication and networking.

Laura Basco (laubasco@unina.it), lecturer at the Università di Napoli "Federico II" (Italy), researches on participation processes in an urban environment, with a particular focus on "do it yourself" methodologies. She likes exchanging experiences with all kind of people, involved in planning research.

Paul Benneworth (paul.benneworth@ncl.ac.uk), research fellow at Newcastle University (UK), is keen to foster the relationship between planning theory and practice. He edits the Regional Studies Association magazine "Regions" and is interested in assisting young scholars to get their voices heard.

Giancarlo Cotella (quancarlos@libero.it), PhD student and project assistant at Dipartimento Interateneo Territorio (DITER), Politecnico e Università di Torino (Italy), interested in European Spatial Planning issues, multi-level governance and planning in Central and Eastern Europe. He considers all kind of networking valuable experiences to open up one's minds and to continuously challenge one's world view.

Oliver Frey (*oliver.frey@tuwien.ac.at*), assistant professor at the Vienna University of Technology (Austria) and former guest lecturer at the Humboldt University in Berlin (Germany), researches on the interrelationship of sociology and planning in an urban context. He appreciates the challenges of working in creative networks and wants to build up a network of networks within YA.

Vojtěch Novotný (*novotnyvoj@fzp.czu.cz*), PhD student at the University of Life Sciences Prague (Czech Republic), is interested in the interrelationship between physical planning and environment in its broader sense. He has recently been participating in the British Council's "Low Carbon Europe" activity. For him each kind of communication offers a challenging environment for overcoming borders between people.

3. What we want / What we stand for

Our main goal is to foster creative interaction among young planning scholars and to support them in their early stage of career in getting their voices heard within the scientific community.

4. How we put our principles into practice (our activities)

1) YA MEETING

This specific small-scale conference (limited to around 30 participants), established in 2007, has become one of the focal points of the YA network, due to its overwhelming success. The past conferences have attracted high-quality papers from young planning academics, and have provided a dedicated forum for peer mentoring and support activities. The YA Meetings (free of charge to participants) are able to operate only through strong support from the host university, and each year a co-organiser from the host university is co-opted onto the YA CT.

2007: Bratislava (Slovakia); Slovak University of Technology, Central European Research and Training Centre in Spatial Planning (co-organised with Prof. Maros Finka); February 7-10, 2007; Topic: *"Central and Eastern European Engagement"*.

2008: St. Petersburg (Russia); North-West Academy of Public Administration (co-organised with Natalia Razumeyko and Rector Alexander S. Gorshov); February 6–8, 2008; Topic: *"Looking Beyond One's Nose. Planning, Policies and Institutions for Integration"*.

2009: Vienna (Austria); Vienna University of Technology (co-organised with Petra Hirschler and Prof. Gerhard Schimak); February 2009; Topic: *"Planning as Rear View Mirror or Crystal Ball? Diversities of Planning Cultures, Traditions, Identities"*.

We already have two applications from possible future host universities (Prague and Ankara), and are developing a 'White Book' to assist potential hosts with the application process.

2) YA SPECIAL SESSION

This Special Session within the annual AESOP conference is dedicated to the needs of young planning scholars. It is structured in a "how to ..." format, where established academics and researchers present their personal experiences and provide advice for young planning scholars.

2007: Naples: AESOP Conference; Topic: *"How to Publish a PhD Thesis"*; Guest speakers: Prof. Patsy Healey (Newcastle University), Ginny Smith (Editor: Taylor & Francis), Dymphna Evans (Editor: Ashgate), Chris Pringle (Elsevier Publisher), Bruce Stiftel (former Editor: *Journal of Planning Education and Research*) and Jean Hillier (Newcastle University and Editor: *Planning Theory*);

2008: Chicago: ACSP/AESOP Conference; Topic: *"How to Get the Most Out of a Conference. Principles for a Paper Presentation in a Conference"*. This Special Session is dedicated to assist young planning scholars from all over the world to get the most out of a conference and to bring to light the importance of their participation in conferences. It will focus on the principles of a paper presentation, but will also draw attention to the preparation for serving as a discussant in a paper session or during a round table.

3) YA DRINKS

This informal event, organised in a convivial atmosphere, promotes social interactions between young planning scholars. The idea is to provide an occasion at a wider event such as a conference for young people to meet, offering them some drinks, informing them about the YA network and get them communicating.

2007: Bratislava (YA Meeting); Naples (AESOP Conference);

2008: St. Petersburg (YA Meeting); Norway (Ph.D. Workshop); Chicago (ACSP/AESOP Conference);

2009: Vienna (YA Meeting); Liverpool (AESOP Conference);

4) PUBLICATIONS

Our most recent achievement is the Special Issue of the quarterly "Regions" Magazine from the Regional Studies Association. The Special Issue "New Thinking in Regional Planning" is printed in June 2008 (right in time to bring along to the ACSP/AESOP Conference in Chicago) and contains seven articles from the YA Meeting in St. Petersburg, one article about the YA Meeting in St. Petersburg, one article about the YA network, five opinion-articles from all up to now chairmen of the YA network (Roelof Verhage, Nikos Karadimitriou, Richard Nunes, Giancarlo Cotella, Beatrix Haselsberger) as well as an opinion-article about AESOP (written by Anna Geppert).

5) FURTHER ACTIVITIES

The YA network organises a range of activities which support the overall network mission of helping young planning scholars to better communicate excellent scientific research and participate more effectively in existing planning networks, particularly those associated with AESOP.

- YA offer a bursary award to help young scholars presenting papers meet the travel and registration costs associated with attendance at the annual AESOP conference. Thanks to resources provided by the AESOP ExCo, YA have been able to support five young academics to present papers at the Chicago 2008 Conference.
- YA also help to support a number of AESOP activities that provide services directly to young planners. YA are involved in the AESOP Ph.D. Workshop Organisational Committee and provide an input to the AESOP Teaching Excellence Prize.
- YA are currently seeking other networks in the field of spatial planning to develop links to support the overall mission of helping our members to become more senior planning academics. We are developing linkages with the student network of AESOP's sister organisation, ACSP, and are discussing key issues with them such as conference organisation.

To better link Young Academics to AESOP we are developing an associate status, "Friend of YA", to acknowledge the contributions made by more senior academics to our various activities; this status will also be made available in the future to network members who find full academic employment in AESOP member institutions.

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Further information is available via the AESOP YA website <http://www.aesop-youngacademics.net>

Beatrix Haselsberger, Vienna University of Technology

10th March 2008

Secretary General's Report

Overall, taking over the function of Secretary General has been strongly facilitated thanks to the good state of affairs and information provided by my predecessor Gert de Roo. Although he isn't present today, I would really like to mention this. As incoming Secretary General, I have found AESOP very much alive and in good shape !

However, the move towards professionalisation of AESOP started by Gert has to be continued. In this respect, during the first months of my mandate I have assessed our next needs and implemented first changes. Albeit selective, this first SG report will be longer than usual, as several items need to be discussed by the Council.

1. AESOP membership and AESOP people :

➤ Membership in progress :

Since July 2007 :

New full members

- Full members admitted by decision of ExCo, November 2007:
 - the Faculty of Architecture of TU Delft (Netherlands)
 - the University College of Cork (Ireland)
- Candidates to full membership assessed by ExCo, March 2008:
 - School of Surveying, Kingston University London, UK, which runs a Master in Planning and Sustainability
 - Department of Urban Studies at the University of Glasgow, UK, which has recently implemented a suite of postgraduate courses in Planning
 - International School of Architecture and Urban Policies, POLIS University, Albania.

New associate members:

- Associate members admitted by decision of ExCo, November 2007:
 - Cemagreff de Grenoble (France)
- Candidates to associate membership assessed by ExCo, March 2008:
 - Urban Planning Department, King Saud University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

and 7 new individual members.

Unfortunately, we also have one revocation : Scuola di Specializzazione in Pianificazione Urbanistica, Università di Roma – Sapienza, whose activities have been suspended.

This brings our membership to 111 (114) full members, 43 (44) associate members (of which some are actually affiliate), 40 (41) individual members. Also, we have 2 schools and 12 individual members who have manifested their interest and we are waiting for them to send the required information. The attractiveness of AESOP is confirmed!

✓ **Coming elections for the Council of Representatives**

As every second year, spring 2008 is the period for elections to our Council of representatives. This is a matter of highest importance for AESOP. Our Council is at the same time:

- AESOP's decisional body
- ... but also a vital resource, both as main contact channel with our members and as a group of people with strong commitment to AESOP where support has often been sought – and found – for various activities

The mandate of the new Council starts after the Chicago conference for a 2008-2010 period. Tomorrow, I will provide the Council with detailed information about the election process and the way our secretariat may support them. I would like to use this opportunity to stress 2 points :

*** Proxies and substitutes :**

- **a proxy** is another member of the Council designated by a representative unable to attend a specific meeting (art. 20 of our Charter).
- Some countries designate substitutes at the end of their election process : **a substitute** is a person who will attend the CoRep meeting in replacement of a national representative who cannot attend – and/or will take over his function for the reminding part of his mandate if a Rep has to leave mid-term. It is not stated so in our Charter, however it seems to me a healthy habit to encourage. It may ensure a better representation of all countries and an implication of more nationals.
- AESOP appreciates the designation of substitutes (in the same number as the representatives)
 - either by appointing for this position the 3^d / 4th candidate from the election process
 - and/or by offering the possibility to colleagues to candidate directly for substitute position only in the election process (e.g. a stepping down representative who wishes to provide support to his successors, or a person who wishes to reach a stronger implication gradually...)

*** Election process : Each country is free to define and organise the elections process. It is the responsibility of the National Representatives to do so. Usually, the elections are run electronically.**

➤ AESOP recommends :

- That a call for candidates is issued, providing the candidates the opportunity introduce themselves formally to the national community by a statement of interest
- Voting rules :
 - each school holds one vote
 - list of 2 names nominated for Reps + 2 names nominated as Substitutes
- Sending regular reminders during the election process.
- That not only candidates, but also schools, are informed with the result of the elections.

➤ **Information to provide AESOP secretariat :**

- list of candidates (together with their full addresses and, when available, statements)
- number of expressed votes
- number of votes for each candidate

➤ **AESOP support : upon request, AESOP secretariat may provide the national representatives with:**

- the **list of schools and e-mail address of AESOP contact persons** from their country
- the **sheet with the election rules** and definition of the role of the national representatives.

*** In addition to ExCp members, President may nominate up to three additional members for the Council (art 16-a of our Charter). They have to belong to the staff of our member schools.**

The Council in our Charter

Article 16

- a) The Council shall be composed of the following members:
 - 1) the national representatives;
 - 2) the Officials; and
 - 3) up to three additional persons designated by the President
- b) **Where a country has one Full Member, it shall represent that country. Where a country has two Full Members, both shall represent that country. Where a country has more than two Full Members, all Full Members of that country shall organise an election of two representatives. The Secretary General shall be responsible for the general oversight of this process.**
- c) The President can designate persons only from the European planning schools represented within the Association.

Article 17

- a) Any member of the Council may resign by written notification to the Secretary General.
- b) The Council can expel any member by a two thirds majority vote.
- c) When a position becomes vacant, arrangements can be made to fill the post for the remainder of the mandatory period in accordance with Article 16.

Article 18

Each Council so formed shall last for two years.

Article 19

- a) The Council shall meet at least once annually on the call of the President.
- b) Special meeting of the Council shall be called by the President on the request of at least five of its members.
- c) The Secretary General shall inform Council members of the agenda, date, time and place of each meeting at least two weeks in advance.

Article 20

- a) The quorum of the Council shall be at least seven members, including at least three Officials of the Association and three others from amongst the national representatives.
- b) Members of the Council can designate another members proxy in their absence. No member can be proxy for more than two persons. In calculating the quorum, any proxy must be disregarded.
- c) The Council shall be chaired by the President.
- d) Resolutions shall be carried on a simple majority, except in those special cases stipulated in this constitution. Where voting is evenly split, the President shall have the casting vote.
- e) The Council's resolutions shall be recorded in a register signed by the President and any other Official, and be available from the Secretary General for inspection by Full Members.

➤ **Upcoming vacancies :**

A concern about the number of vacancies coming up in the next 2 years :

- 2008: Junior Vice-President, Communication Officer.
- 2009: Senior Vice-President, Treasurer.

May I urge all of us to start “chasing”?

5. Towards professionalization of AESOP

2.1. Organization matters:

➤ **AESOP has become an employer**

Our new assistant Sébastien Piantoni is at work since July. AESOP is now acting as his employer (formerly, the University of Groningen used to do this on behalf of AESOP). During 2008, the secretariat will manage the transition from a ½ time employee to the equivalent of a full time.

➤ **Schools directory update**

The update of our Schools directory has started since December 2008. So far, some 40 out of 152 member schools have updated their information (after 2 reminders; 3d reminder has been sent in March). **It is a matter of highest importance** for AESOP, as a wide part of the informations are no longer accurate.

This process will be going on continuously during 2008 until the data is completed. However, the first steps have shown that the form provided to schools needs a refreshment adding at least 2 elements:

- **Name and e-mail of the Heads of schools** (so far, only a « contact person »);
- **ECTS credits** granted per diploma.

Overall, the information requested is appropriate. However, **2 elements could be improved with the help of our communication team and some volunteers in the CoRep:**

- the **layout** (far from our visual identity and a bit oldy)
- provide the **definition** of terms (key words are not always clear to everybody)

As the update procedure shall be possible online with the future website, this upgrading should be done in collaboration with the future « webwizzard ».

@department@
@name university@

Information supplied in 2008

AESOP member: **Head of School**
(name, e-mail):
AESOP contact :
(name, e-mail):

Address:
Phone:
E-mail:
Homepage:

Fax:

Undergraduate education

Teaching Language:	Teaching Period:
Number of years:	Degrees granted:
ECTS:	

Graduate 1 education

Teaching Language:	Teaching Period:
Number of years:	Degrees granted:
ECTS:	

Graduate 2 education

Teaching Language:	Teaching Period:
Number of years:	Degrees granted:
ECTS:	

Doctoral education

Teaching Language:	Teaching Period:
Number of years:	Degrees granted:
ECTS:	

Curriculum

Academic Staff in Planning Faculty **Number of academic staff:**

Key persons: Please provide for each:
name, function, e-mail

**Research Centres
in Planning Faculty**

Students organisation:

Publications:

2.2 AESOP publications:

➤ AESOP Yearbook 2007

The yearbook has become a tradition of AESOP. It was until 2006 edited by Alan Reeve (Oxford Brooks) in collaboration with Gert de Roo. He has never let AESOP down, and we owe him many thanks ! From 2007, the secretariat of the SG will take over the edition of our yearbook. This appears both coherent with the role of the secretariat and cost-saving (printing costs in UK are high):

- 2006 yearbook costed 5274 €.
- 2007 yearbook is evaluated 2212 € (without sending)

The 2007 Yearbook will keep the overall format of the former ones with a few evolutions:

- the contents will be slightly revised to allow a presentation of our new activities, as some of them need to be announced and/or reported.
- the size of our Yearbook will be kept, so that our members can put the new ones on their shelf next to the former ones. The layout, globally stable, will be adjusted in order to follow AESOP visual guidelines which have been defined, meanwhile, by our Communication Team.

As usual, the 2007 Yearbook will be ready for the Chicago conference. In addition to the printed version which all our members receive, we suggest to make a .pdf version available for online download on our website (free of charge).

➤ Proceedings of AESOP Heads of Schools meetings

Financed by the savings on the yearbook, it appears possible to start a new series : the Proceedings of AESOP heads of Schools meetings. Production costs are evaluated 1300€.

This new series will show the works done by AESOP on Planning education matters (which Patsy Healy was encouraging in her TPR point of view, worrying whether the education aspect had not become too modest). The n°1 distributed today is registered ISSN, printed in 400 units, and will be sent to the schools together with the yearbook to keep shipping costs stable.

➤ AESOP flyer

A new support for our communication:

- to encourage our members to participate to all of our activities and to use our services
- will be updated yearly (autumn) and/or if major changes occur
- will be distributed at AESOp events, available online and inserted in the *Proceedings*, partner Journals, etc.
- black and white template distributed at the Łódź meetings.

2.3. Communication and advertisement

➤ Mailing lists:

One of the issues for the Secretary General when taking over AESOP was its communication means : the mass-mail function was so far run by the University of Groningen. In autumn 2007, we established a webhosted platform to run the e-mail lists inherited from Gert de Roo. AESOP advertisement is more and more used by our member schools. The messages are also appreciated by our members as a source of information.

The address lists provided by Gert de Roo have been imported and extended. In autumn 2007, the number of valid addresses appeared to be much lower than what we claim on our website (ca. 1200

instead of 1800), partly due to addresses double referenced in 2 previous lists, partly due to the natural evolution (addresses no longer valid were rejected - the new tool provides this information).

To enhance the impact of our communication, updating and enlarging our e-mail database will remain a constant work. Two elements will be from now on included in our routines :

- ➔ New members will be asked for full staff list with all emails together with the information they provide for admission
- ➔ Young Academics will be invited to share their list of members.

In addition, may I ask CoRep members to provide the staff e-mail lists of their school?

In March 2008, we have 2 target lists :

- « Schools » : AESOP contact persons ;
- « Relations » : 2130 individuals.

As for the layout, we have implemented AESOP visual guidelines with 2 variants:

- blue strapline for AESOP messages
- orange strapline for ads

➤ **Advertisement guidelines :**

Our advertisement guidelines (available on line) will be refreshed because they appear complex (many different options - never requested so far). Also, our guidelines do not say that this service is free of charge for our members.

Current guidelines:

Association of European Schools of Planning Preliminary guidelines for advertisements

December 2004

On the 5th of November 2004 the Executive Committee of Aesop (Exco) has agreed to allow advertisement to become part of Aesop's means of communications with, to and between members and groups of members, if certain conditions are met. The conditions reflect upon the sort of advertisement that is appreciated by Aesop, the options for advertisement Aesop has to offer, the rates for the various sorts of advertisements and the time-span for advertisement. Important as well are conditions preventing possible nuisance caused by advertisement.

The conditions are as follows:

Type of advertisement appreciated by Aesop

Advertisement is considered to be an announcement made by a third party, with the prime benefit to this party.

Advertisement to be presented through the various means Aesop has available should likely to be of interest to Aesop and to what it stands for, to Aesop's members and / or – in general – to the field of physical planning.

As such advertisement should be content related, addressing issues that correspond to planning (books and such) and / or activities that are planning related (conferences and alike).

As such advertisement appreciated by Aesop can be considered as a source of useful information to the planning profession, which is announced by a third party.

The message the advertisement is delivering should be clear in its presentation, be straightforward in its meaning and be aesthetically acceptable (which basically means not in contrast with Aesop's formats and lay outs).

It will be both the responsibility of Aesop and advertiser to leave no space for doubts that the message presented is advertisement (if felt appropriate 'advertisement' as an announcement might be added).

Aesop's possibilities for advertisement

Web

Ads as banner on front page: 200 Euro per month

Ads as banner on main sub page: 100 Euro per month

Ads as banner on pages that are issue or target group related: amount negotiable

Email

Ads on the bottom of Aesop's email boasts: 150 Euro per 5 email boasts

Ads as the main and solely message through Aesop's email boasts: 300 Euro per message non-repetitive

Aesop's email boast contains appr. 1000 addresses

Ads on the bottom of Aesop's email member list: 150 Euro per 5 emails

Ads as the main and solely message through Aesop's email member list: 300 Euro per message non-repetitive

Aesop's member list contains 170 planning schools and associated schools throughout Europe

Post mail (addresses of member schools only)

Advertisement through post mail, via Aesop: 500 Euro handling fee + mailing costs

Advertisement through post mail, via labels or digital file: 300 Euro per cohort per mail

(labels + digital files to be used once only and solely for what is agreed upon)

Yearbook (sent annually to all member schools and handed out to all annual conference participants)

Inside front cover:

Full page: 300 Euro

Half page: 150 Euro

Inside of back cover:

Full page: 200 Euro

Half page: 100 Euro

In first one-third part:

Full page: 200 Euro

Half page: 100 Euro

In last two-third part:

Full page: 100 Euro

Half page: 50 Euro

Banner inside front cover: 200 Euro

Banner inside back cover: 100 Euro

Banner, one page in first one-third part: 100 Euro

Banner, one page in last two-third part: 50 Euro

Conferences

Aesop's standing committee for conferences conditions apply

Other

Negotiable

Prices presented do not include VAT and bank transfer charges.

All advertisement should be made available in the appropriate format.

Procedure

Request for and interest in advertisement through the means of Aesop should be made known to Aesop's Secretary General

Prof dr Gert de Roo

Department of **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**

Faculty of Spatial Sciences

University of Groningen

PO Box 800

9700 AV Groningen

The Netherlands

Tel. +31-50-3633895

Fax. +31-50-3633901

Email. g.de.roo@rug.nl

Payment of rent or use of Aesop's means for advertisements should be made to Aesop's Treasurer

Christoph Blaser (Dipl. Architect ETH)

ETH Zurich - Hoenggerberg

CH – 8093 Zurich

Switzerland

Tel. +411-633-2977

Fax. +411-633-1090

Email. blaser@nsl.ethz.ch

Proposed new guidelines (as submitted to ExCo on March 27th):

Advertisement Guidelines :

by decision of the Executive Committee of Aesop (Exco), 27th of March 2008

Type of advertisement appreciated by Aesop

Advertisement is defined as an announcement made by a third party with the prime benefit to this party. Advertisement to be presented through the various means Aesop has available should be relevant to the field of Planning and of interest to Aesop and to Aesop's members.

The message the advertisement is delivering should be:

- clear in its presentation,
- straightforward in its meaning
- aesthetically acceptable (not in contrast with Aesop's formats and layouts).

It will be both the responsibility of Aesop and of the advertiser to leave no space for doubts that the message presented is advertisement (if felt appropriate 'advertisement' as an announcement might be added).

Language conditions : AESOP accepts advertisements with attached documents in national languages but a 5-10 lines English presentation has to be provided.

Web + mail information package

The information advertised by AESOP is simultaneously :

- added on the relevant page of our website : Books - Congresses – Editors call for papers – Education programs – Jobs. Our website receives 150 visits per day.
- sent by individual e-mail to each AESOP relation (2200 Planning Academics from Europe and all over the world).

Price table :

Announcement	AESOP members	Other parties
Book	free	300 €
Book selection (publishers)	free	750 €
Congress	free	300 €
Editors call for papers	free	300 €
Education program	free	300 €
Job	free	300 €
Job reduced (temporary positions, fellowships)	free	100 €

Prices presented do not include VAT and bank transfer charges.

Other advertisement possibilities (post mail, inserts in our publications) : information upon request.

Procedure

Request for and interest in advertisement through the means of Aesop should be made known to Aesop's Secretary General

Anna Geppert
Université de Reims
Institut d'Aménagement du Territoire et d'Environnement de l'Université de Reims
57 bis, rue Pierre Taittinger
51096 Reims cedex
France

Email: aesop.secretariat@free.fr

To speed up the procedure payment should be made to the Treasurer, it is advisable to email him 'proof of payment'. The moment this arrives and is considered acceptable he will inform the Secretary General, who will make the appropriate actions.

Payment Instructions

Members : To advertise free of charge, please indicate your AESOP-MEMBERSHIP-CODE NUMBER.

Other:

Payments can be made in EURO on the EURO bank-account or the equivalent amount in any other currency on the regular bank account. Payments should be made FREE OF BANK CHARGES for AESOP.

- Checks should be mailed exclusively to the AESOP TREASURER and be made out on the order of the AESOP Treasurer.
- CREDITCARD payments can be made by VISA only. In this case, send back one copy of the invoice and please provide the following information:
 - VISA Card-Number _ , _
 - Expiration date _ , _ / _ , _
 - Last 3 digits of your card verification number (CVV2 no.) _ , _ , _
(you will find the entire CVV2 number in the signature field on the back of your VISA card).
 - Name of cardholder as it appears on the card (pl. print)
- Bank transfer to:
UBS (Union Bank of Switzerland) AG
Branch Roemerhof, Roemerhofplatz 5, CH – 8032 Zurich, Switzerland
BIC: UBSWCHZH80A
in the name of AESOP Treasurer Mr Andreas Voigt
 - EURO bank-account 251-831.084.7 EK IBAN: CH94 0025 1251 8310 847 EK
 - Regular bank-account 251-831.084.01 P IBAN: CH21 0025 1251 8310 8401 P

Correspondence

AESOP Treasurer
Andreas Voigt
Vienna University of Technology
Department of Spatial Development, Infrastructure & Environmental Planning
A-1040 Wien, Karlsplatz 13 [280-4]
Tel. +43 1 58801 26821 Telefax: +43 1 58801 26899
E-mail: voigt@ifoer.tuwien.ac.at

AESOP Web Site Tender

Website Specifications

Introduction

The Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) intends to introduce a new web site to the public during 2008 with a view to operating certain key features by June 2008. AESOP currently operates a web site (www.aesop-planning.com) which provides basic functionality (news, downloads, general information) to the public, mainly through static pages which are maintained using web design tools, such as Microsoft Frontpage, Macromedia Dreamweaver, etc.

The process of elaboration of the new AESOP web site is to run in parallel with the process of revision of the Aesop Young Academic Website (currently at: www.aesop-youngacademics.net), in order to both ensure greater coherence between the two and to take maximum advantage from possible synergies.

General Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an abstract of the specifications, both in functional and in technical terms, that will serve as a basis for the AESOP web site.

1) GOAL

AESOP is planning to build a new web site, which extends the current functionality and adds new, utilising the current state of web design and web development technologies (database usage, "Web 2.0" trends), in order to further enhance its connection to current members as well as the public. The new web site main goals can be further divided in the following areas.

1.1. Web Design

A new elegant, stylish and clean web design, which provides clear navigation methods to the functionality to be built should be pursued. The web design should be based on common standards such as XHTML and CSS specifications (www.w3.org). Apart from the "static" graphic design, usage of current "Web 2.0" trends, through the usage of AJAX technologies is desired in order to provide a better web site experience to the visitor / member.

1.2. Content Management

The new web site must eliminate the need to use web design tools, in order to maintain its content. Therefore a full Content Management Solution (CMS) is required, which will provide the means to easily add and update content through an administration section using only a web browser.

1.3. Member Management

AESOP is network of university schools. Each university school is a potential member of AESOP. Associations and Individuals are also potential AESOP members under certain conditions. Academic staff and researchers in University schools that are AESOP members are also potential users of AESOP's website. Finally, a limited number of AESOP services (i.e newsletter) should be available to the wider public under certain conditions. The new web site should provide the means to manage these AESOP members and website users in order to provide them with extended content and services usually not available to the common visitor of the web site. Furthermore the web site should provide the means to organize the members, the users and the content – services provided to them, according to different access levels.

1.4. Promotion and Income Generation

AESOP aims at promoting its own web site through search engine results (i.e. Google, Yahoo), as well as promoting other parties through advertising in order to generate income through the web site. Therefore the new web site must be optimized for search engine robots using keywords or other Search Engine Optimization (SEO) technologies. Furthermore the new web site must provide the means, to easily add advertising banners or interstitials in the website and per web page

1.5. Information Integration

AESOP currently operates small databases which serve as a repository of members' contacts and payment obligations, as well as a repository of papers submitted by members in conferences or other events. The possibility to integrate these databases into the new web site or provide alternative functionality through the web site should be explored and a feasible solution should be presented in the context of the new web site.

1.6. Open Source Technologies

Upon project completion AESOP should be able to fully manage and extend the new web site, either using in house human resources or by acquiring any external third party technology provider. Therefore the new web site must be built utilising open source technologies which do not require any licensing or other kind of fees.

1.7. Re Usage of Existing Code

One of AESOP's groups, the Young Academics are currently rebuilding their web site (yaneew.aesop-youngacademics.net), using open source technologies. The source code available on this project could be reused on AESOP's web site wherever appropriate in order to achieve shorter project time lines and if possible synergies between the two web sites.

2) TECHNOLOGICAL PLATFORM – WEB SITE HOSTING

2.1. Open Source Technology

The project should be based on the following technological platform, which is both open source and widely adopted.

- ➔ *Scripting Language:* PHP (www.php.net) - latest stable version (5.2.x)
- ➔ *Database Server:* MySQL (www.mysql.com) – latest stable version (5.0.x)
- ➔ *Web Server:* Apache (www.apache.org) – version 1.3.x, 2.0.x, or 2.2.x

The vendor may provide any open source content management system (i.e. Joomla, Drupal, Typo 3 etc) as long as the desired functionality can be built on top of it. Furthermore in order to facilitate code reuse from the AESOP Young Academics web site, the vendor should examine the possibility to use the “symfony Web PHP Framework” (www.symfony-project.com), or provide any other custom based solution.

2.2. Web Site Hosting

AESOP aims at hosting both its own web site and the Young Academics web site on a common or on a dedicated web server.

The vendor should provide a hosting solution based on the below requirements:

- *Server Operating System:* Linux, FreeBSD, or any other open source operating system
- *Minimum number of Domains that can be hosted:* 1
- *Maximum number of domains that can be hosted:* 2

- *Minimum Amount of Hard Disk Space Available:* 1gb
- *Minimum Number of Email Accounts:* 100

The vendor will be responsible for installing and maintaining the website for a period of at least 2 years after delivery. "Maintaining" refers to services provided by the site and not to the content.

Furthermore the vendor should provide information on the following areas:

- *Shared or dedicated solution:* The vendor must provide details on whether the web server is a hosting solution dedicated or shared between the two sites (YA and AESOP). In any case, hardware details of the dedicated or shared hosting solution (cpu, amount of ram) must be provided.
- *Control Panel availability:* The vendor should provide a control panel (cpanel, plesk, ...) that will allow for easy creation of email accounts, web site backups, access to web site statistics etc.
- *Maximum bandwidth per month.* The vendor must provide the exact amount of bandwidth per month that can be utilised by the web sites.
- *Backup scheme:* The vendor must provide details of the automatic backup solution available for the web sites.

3) VENDOR INFORMATION – EXPERIENCE

The vendor must provide proven work experience in web site design and web application development, based on the above technological platform, as well as a portfolio of relevant projects (url addresses) successfully completed by him/her. Apart from that the vendor should be willing to cooperate with the Aesop webteam in the draft of the website. The vendor should employ an experienced graphics designer to carry out the task of the web site user interface design. A portfolio of relevant projects (URL addresses) that the graphics designer has worked on should be provided, unless these are already included in the vendors portfolio requested previously in this paragraph.

4) WEB SITE FUNCTIONALITY

4.1. Passive Information

The web site must provide links to passive information such as "What is AESOP, History, AESOP Structure, Contact information and contact form, Links to other web sites", etc. This information must be presented as direct links to the visitor and should contain formatted text, images or other media.

The provided content management solution must provide the means to easily add and update content through an administration section, to assigned administrators, using an on-line editor tool (such as tinymce, fckeditor or other) without or with elemental html knowledge on the administrator part.

Furthermore the provided solution must provide means to easily add or delete any passive information link, allowing therefore the creation of a basic navigation infrastructure on the web site through the administration section of the content management solution. Assigned administrators should be able to create new passive information links at any time and at any level. For example an administrator must easily be able to add a "What is AESOP" -> "The Future" -> "2008 Objectives" link navigation system and the relevant content to each of these links.

4.2. News, Announcements, Job Postings etc.

Apart from passive – static information the new web site must provide visitors and members with a news type functionality meaning that content can be added on the web site based on chronological terms. News, announcements and job postings or any other news related functionality that will be decided, must be added on the web site through the content management solution administration section, or directly by the web site members, according to an access level scheme that is described on the next paragraphs. News items information should include the published date, a title, a small abstract to be displayed on news related list pages, the full news text which must contain formatted text, images, links, files, etc., and finally an optional archive date which will remove the news item from the current news page list, if the administrator decides to do so. News related pages must provide a

browsable list of news items displayed in reverse chronological order. The list must display a certain amount of news items per page and links to next – previous pages of news items should be displayed as navigation options. Clicking a news item should provide the visitor or member the ability to read the entire news text. A certain amount of news items must be displayed on the first page as well. Finally RSS feeds of the news lists must be provided automatically.

The content management solution must provide administrators the ability to create web pages at any navigation level, containing news related information with the above described functionality.

4.2.1. News Submitted by Members

Members will be able to post their own news items (announcement, job postings, etc), according to their access level. An automatic email notification should be sent to assigned administrators whenever a news item is published by a member. The administrator(s) must have the ability to delete the news item if they decide to do so. AESOP may decide that news published by members will be directly available on the web site, only after an administrator's intervention, therefore the vendor should provide the above notification ability to the administrator and the ability to activate or deactivate a news item from appearing on the web site. Either way the member that uploaded the news item, must be also informed by email about the approval of the news item on the web site.

4.3. Monthly or Weekly Bulletin

An automatic or semi automatic way of emailing members with the latest published news must be available as an option on the content management solution. An automatic solution should provide an administrator with the ability to select the bulletin recipients allowing for a scheduled weekly or monthly task to email the recipients with a latest news list and with direct links on web site news items. A semi automatic solution should provide the administrator the ability to select the bulletin recipients and the time period of news items to be included in the bulletin. The administrator should then be presented with a pre-composed bulletin that he can email to recipients through the administration section.

4.4. Mass Mailing

The content management solution must provide administrators, according to their access level, access to a mass mail function. The mass mail function must provide the ability to select a recipients list created by the choices of the members when they register, type the email subject and text which should contain images, links, attachments, etc. if needed, allowing the administrator to send the email through the web site. The administrator should also be allowed to add extra recipients to whom the email should be sent. Mass mails should be stored in a database for later retrieval by administrators with appropriate access levels.

4.5. Newsletter

AESOP currently is considering a pdf newsletter. AESOP aims at providing the newsletter through its web site to the public and to its members. At the same time it is seeking to produce it via a relevant web site function. The newsletter will be based on a simple layout template. The newsletter function, should allow administrators the ability to compose the newsletter or the yearbook using an online html editor, similar to the one used for publishing content on the web site. Content inserted into the editor should be converted to pdf-format, using the respective template, allowing for quick creation of the newsletter for the web site. The vendor should also provide a newsletter archive/storage function accessible and searchable from the members. The website should allow allocated administrators to mass mail the newsletter to website users depending on selections done by the users themselves during registration.

4.6. User Registration- Aesop Members' Registration - Profiles – Users List

The web site must provide an AESOP member registration function and a user registration function. Primarily, members of AESOP are University schools. They provide a physical person usually from their academic staff as a contact of their membership. The web site must accept applications for registration from member university schools (at different categories: Full, Associate, Corresponding). Each contact person must be able to select a username and a password which will provide the ability later on to log in to the web site, in order to access AESOP member only related information. Contact

persons must also provide a list of details at registration time which will be decided by AESOP. The registration function should inform assigned AESOP administrators by email about a registration application. The AESOP administrator should then be able to browse the list of members in order to activate the members registration on the web site. Upon registration activation the applicant should receive a welcome email and be able to log in to the web site with the chosen user name and password.

Apart from university schools, other individuals (physical persons) or Associations/Institutions must be able to follow a similar registration process in order to become AESOP members and have access to the services offered on the web site. This applies to individuals detached from an existing University school-member in which case they will be paying membership fees (Individual members) or Honorary members (non fee-paying). If these individuals belong to an Institution that is already a member they are non-fee paying and their registration should be processed in a different way. These individuals' registration process should involve email notification to the University school contact person and to the assigned AESOP administrator. The contact person at the member university/ school will be responsible for accepting their website registration in the first instance, with notification of acceptance sent to the appropriate AESOP administrator. The website should allow the contact person to accept the registration and to the AESOP administrator to override that decision or delete any website user if necessary. The vendor should take into consideration the need to provide the contact person with a regular update both via email and on their administration page of the users registering from his/her member institution and the actions taken (acceptance/rejection) A similar list concerning all user registrations to the website split by category should be available to the AESOP administrator. For that purpose the vendor should take into consideration the need to classify website users according to AESOP membership status, the member university school they are affiliated to/work for and their fee status where applicable.

Each website user must have the ability to change his/her personal profile after successful login on the website. A website user must have the ability to change his/her username and password, contact details, or any other information decided by AESOP to be included at registration application. Website users should also be able to reset their passwords in case they have forgotten them, by providing a combination of their user name and email, or email only.

A list of members should be browsable on the web site. The users should be listed according to their category (institutions, individuals etc), country and the university school they are working for/are affiliated to if applicable. A link to each user's webpage profile in the AESOP website should be available. Furthermore it is desired that the users list can be displayed on a map, with highlight points to the countries and cities where users originate from, classified by category of membership. Clicking on a highlight point may present a list of users in that country and/or city. The vendor should examine the possibility to offer a Google Maps based solution or any other mapping solution that can establish such a functionality on the web site.

AESOP currently has about 170 members and holds a part of the above information in two existing databases, using Filemaker (www.filemaker.com) and MS Access. AESOP's intention is to recreate this database in the website by using as much information as possible from the existing databases (the recreation may include the integration of current databases). Re-registration for existing members has to be avoided. The vendor should provide an appropriate solution that will make this migration a) possible and b) trouble free both for AESOP and for its members. Information on the existing databases can be provided to the vendor upon request.

4.6.1. Other users Registration

Apart from regular users, other visitors from the wider public might register on the web site by opting in to a couple of functions like the mass mail function or to receive AESOP's newsletter etc. These users will be required to provide limited personal information but they will not own a user name and password so they will not be able to login to the web site. They will need to provide their name, surname, institution, occupation and email address to register for the services previously mentioned. This registration information should be stored and available to the website administrators. This registration procedure should be available in a specific area on the web site and the vendor should pay particular attention to provide all the necessary security measures that will prevent bogus registrations.

4.7. Networking

Users' profiling information entered during registration from the users themselves (research interests, keywords etc) or when uploading news items, papers etc. (i.e tagging) must form a basis of networking between users, in the sense that a user should be able to access a list of other users with similar research interests which then the user may contact by his/her own means. Apart from performing profiling of users the function should also present users with a list of profile matches either on user request (i.e. search members function) or while browsing specific areas of the web site. The members contact details should be available for direct contact depending on the member's preferences for disclosure.

4.8. Search Function

A visitor or a user should be able to search the web site contents (news, members list, etc.) by entering key phrases on a search form and / or selecting advanced search criteria such as date of publication, or area (news, members,...) to search into.

4.9. Other Non-passive information

Apart from passive – static information mentioned above, AESOP needs the ability to add content to specific web pages. These web pages will be maintained by assigned administrators according to their access level which is mentioned in the paragraphs to follow. Direct links on these web pages must be included in the main web site navigation.

4.9.1. Conferences

Each year AESOP holds conference events, a website is built for each conference by the organisers of that conference. AESOP wishes to build a conference webpage in its own website as well, to complement and not to replace the main external conference website. Assigned administrators or users should be able to add and update information according to the conference date. Each conference web page will include formatted text, images, etc. as well as direct links to additional conference information. Assigned administrators or users should be able to create on demand and add content to these direct links. For example administrators should be able to add a 'Paris 2008 Conference' link and add content to it, and in addition create links or upload files with additional conference information (i.e. driving directions, conference photos and other related files) which will be presented at the conference page.

In addition, conference papers are gathered and stored in an AESOP database. A link should be provided to that database and the administrator should be able to add links to databases containing AESOP conference papers.

4.9.2. PHD Workshops

PHD Workshops are events maintained by the AESOP Young Academics web site. Relevant information with a similar concept as in conferences should be made available on AESOP's web site.

4.9.3. Awards

AESOP organises several award competitions, the winners are picked from review committees prior to conferences and announced during the conferences. In a similar way as in conferences, there should be a page per award. A solution in order to add and maintain award related information must be provided by the vendor.

Especially for the Awards, members or other third parties should be able to apply for an award and provide all the necessary award application elements (documents, photos etc) in order to participate in the award competition. Other users should be able to use the page not only as contestant but also under various roles (conference track chair, journal editor, jury, winner or runner up etc.). A list of applicants for a specific award should be available as additional information on the awards web page, together with the current and previous winners and associated documentation, which should be archived and accessible to users depending on their level of access.

4.10. Advertisement

AESOP is seeking to generate income through advertisement on its web site or in emails sent to recipients. Advertisement should take place through banners placed at specific web page locations (i.e. header, left or right side of the web site, etc.), or through interstitials and rich media flash advertisements on the website per web page. Administrators should be able to upload the advertisement banner, choose the time period to display the advertisement, as well as the web page and the location to place it. Vendors may provide a custom advertising solution or an existing open source solution such as Openads (www.openads.org), to be integrated on the web site.

4.11. Archiving

While the web site displays current information per year about news, conferences and any other time related information (awards, phd workshops, etc...), a separate archive web page should be available for visitors and members to browse information uploaded per past year. The archiving page will provide links per past year for each current web page (i.e. News -> 2006, 2005, 2004, ...), allowing for the same functionality that was described above, only that content displayed on these pages is archived content and not current one.

4.12. Payments – Financials Management Function

All AESOP's members (Institutional, Associate, Individual etc) are required to pay annual fees in order to enjoy a full membership¹.

AESOP also pays expenses to individual members participating in the managerial structure of AESOP, remuneration to contractors as well as prizes to award winners. AESOP's treasurer has to keep track of these amounts and has to be able to extract information for his/her budgetary calculations and monitoring.

4.12.1. Members' Fees

A user should be allowed full access on the web site services only if the annual membership fees (personal or those of the member institution of affiliation) have been paid. Therefore a function in order to keep track of members' fees must be made available on the web site administration section. An automatic or on request invoice about members fees should be generated and stored with the option available to be emailed to members. The website should have the appropriate infrastructure (database tables) to allow member fees status and resulting incomes to be monitored.

Assigned administrators should be able to update the member's profile with regard to fees and payment status and should be able to change the status of the member's account if no payment has taken place within certain deadlines.

Members can pay fees via credit card, cheque and bank deposit. An online payment function should be also integrated in order to accommodate for those payments. When a member makes a payment, its payment status in the database should also be updated. Invoices emailed via the website should be stored in a database for later retrieval by administrators with appropriate access levels. When an invoice is generated or fees are paid a report should be generated, should appear and be stored on the website in the Treasurer's admin pages and a notification should be emailed to the Treasurer, containing the invoice or the payment information

4.12.2. Expense Receipt Submission

An individual member participating in AESOP's day to day management should be able to submit expense claims and associated documentation electronically over the web. The claims and associated documentation should be stored and archived according to date of submission and be searchable by appointed administrators according to various attributes (date, reason for claim). A report should be generated upon request and in regular intervals about the claims submitted and their status (paid, unpaid). The Treasurer should be able to enter basic information about the status of the claim

¹ A special category of members (Honorary members) is not required to pay any fee. They still receive pro-forma invoices

(paid/pending payment). When a claim is submitted a report should be generated, should appear and be stored on the website in the Treasurer's admin pages and a notification/acknowledgment should be emailed to the Treasurer and the submitting user, containing the claim information and a unique claim identifier code.

4.13. Synergies with the AESOP Young Academics web site

AESOP's web site and the Young Academics web site should strive to be hosted on the same web server taking into account that the Young Academics web site source code and database can be accessed by the vendor. PHD Workshop related information, as well as news published on the Young Academics web site could be accessed through AESOP's web site as well, without the need to rebuild from scratch the entire functionality. Especially the Young Academics' latest news should be integrated in AESOP's web site through the RSS feed the first one provides. PHD Workshop related information code could be replicated in AESOP's web site maintaining the information posted on the Young Academics web site database, eliminating the need to post twice the same information, assuming of course that the vendor decides to use the functionality offered by the Young Academics web site and the specific technological platform that it uses.

The vendor should also explore the possibility to co-host the two websites in order to provide AESOP with cost and time efficiencies. In the case that the websites are co-hosted, Aesop website users should be able to check and search the YA member database. In any case RSS feeds should be provided between the two websites.

4.14 Central Repositories of Communication and File Storage (*Minutes- Proposals-Reports-Other Files*)

Within the context of the web site, specific users will have the need to exchange information by uploading files on the website. A central repository of file storage and a system to easily locate and download specific files should be made available on specific users, according to their access level and role (ExCo, CoRep, StaCo, Awards, Special Events, Thematic Groups). For this purpose specific users must be able to upload files on the web site along with a title and/or description. A list of these files preferably categorized per predefined file categories should be also available for users in order to locate and download files they wish. These files should not be stored in a publicly accessed folder of the web server, and should not be available for download, unless a user is logged in the web site and has the appropriate access level to download the file. The general principle behind this functionality is to contain different pages with different items ordered by date, containing title, description, attached files, similar to the News Functionality described in paragraph 4.2.

4.16. Other Desired Functionalities

4.16.1 Thematic Groups Blogs

Apart from files specific users must communicate ideas, notes, etc, in specific areas or themes. The web site should provide the technical infrastructure that will give these users the ability to use blog type functionality in the future either by posting on the web site or by sending their posts to a specific email address. When the blog materialises, other users should then be able to read and reply to posts, by email or by using the web site. Furthermore a bidirectional email notification system of new posts and answers on the blog should be available. The blog type functionality on the web site will be based on an open source solution (i.e. Wordpress), as long as it integrates well with the rest of the web site functionality and it preserves the permission system mentioned in the following paragraphs thus the website must take these future plans into account.

5) INTEGRATION WITH AESOP'S EXISTING DATABASES

AESOP currently operates several databases across its network, maintained by specific members. These databases serve as a repository of members' information and should be linked to the new web site.

5.1. Address And Invoice Database

AESOP maintains two databases which hold members' address information. The databases used are Filemaker (Treasurer) and MS Access (Secretary General) and it is available over the internet. When

an Institutional, Associate, Corresponding or Individual/Honorary member changes their information above (except usernames and passwords), a report should be generated, should appear and be stored on the website in the Treasurer's and Secretary General's admin pages and a notification should be emailed to the Treasurer and SG, containing the member's updated information.

6) ACCESS LEVELS, PERMISSION SYSTEM, ROLES

Web site members' will be assigned specific roles on the web site. Each role will be assigned one or more access levels, allowing for access to different web site functionality as this was described in the above paragraphs. The web site should provide assigned administrators with the ability to assign a role or roles to each member, and optionally add a title best describing the member's role (i.e. ExCo Role – Description: President). When creating a new webpage of a specific type the administrator should also be able to select which roles can have access to the created page. All registered members by default will assigned the "Member's Role" as this is described below.

6.1. Super User Role (Secretary General - SG, President and Treasurer)

This user will have access to all web site functionality. The super user role is allowed access to the administration section and no permission restrictions should apply for this user.

6.2. ExCo (Executive Committee) Role

User with the following ExCo Roles are allowed to access the following functions:

6.2.1 ExCo member

- ✓ Post news related items (announcements, jobs, books, etc.) to the website
- Post specific information available only to other ExCo or CoRep (Council of Representatives) member
- Access and post to the ExCo and CoRep Repository of Communication and File Storage
- Access future Thematic Group Blog

6.2.2 ExCo Secretary General's Assistant role

- Create the pdf newsletter
- Mass Mail members and visitors
- Access and post to the Central Repository of Communication and File Storage
- Post news related items (announcements, jobs, books, etc.)
- Manage passive information pages (TG, Conference page, PhD workshop etc)
- Access/edit future Thematic Group Blog

6.2.3. Treasurer Role

- Full access to members fee status functionality
- Full access to claims functionality
- View the member registration data

6.3. CoRep Role

- Access and post to the CoRep Repository of Communication and File Storage
- ✓ Post news related items (announcements, jobs, books, etc.)
- ✓ Access future Thematic Group Blog

6.4. HoD Role

- Access and post to the HoD Repository of Communication and File Storage
- ✓ Post news related items (announcements, jobs, books, etc.)

6.5. Committee Representative Role (to be defined by Committee, award etc)

- Update the awards and related information web pages
- Accept applications from members for award events
- ✓ Post news related items (announcements, jobs, books, etc.)

6.6. User Role

- ✓ Post news related items (announcements, jobs, books, etc.)
- ✓ Apply for an award event
- ✓ Access future Thematic Group Blog

6.7 Thematic Group moderator role

- Access and moderate/edit future Thematic Group Blog

7) SECURITY

Protection from harvesting robots, unwanted emails etc should be built in every aspect of information input and output. An activity log should be kept about administrator actions (To be expanded by the vendor in detail about forms, secure server for Treasurer).

David W. Massey

Viewpoint

AESOP at twenty: introduction

The founding of the Association of European Planning Schools (AESOP) in 1987 was part of a critical decade in the institutionalisation and the internationalisation of the planning academy (Stiftel and Watson, 2005). The moves towards change can be seen as combinations of three main threads: first, the growing strength of the social science intake of staff in planning schools over against those trained and practised in the more traditional design professions; secondly, a desire for the recognition of the separate academic identity of 'planning' and hence of the 'planning school' over against the approach of offering a specialist planning option in a related discipline; and, thirdly, a reaching out to engage with other national and academic planning cultures beyond interests of the long-established personal membership and more professionally identified associations.

Things were, of course, more complex than a mere conjunction of the three elements: there were – and still are – contests; there was a certain Anglophone/Anglo-Saxon lead and elements of national and regional emulation and rejection; there was also an underplayed academy vs professional/practitioner element in the discourse. Some national and international contexts were more conducive and welcoming to change than others; some existing institutional strengths could be built on, while other fragmented and more polarised interests remained detached and uninvolved. Elsewhere, existing alternative structures and distinctive traditions continued and even strengthened. It is important also to recognise that the social science perspective is one among a number of alternative approaches and has its own tendencies towards hegemony, that a research-driven planning academy needs to recognise and nourish policy and practice (without being co-opted by either), and that national and local cultural identities are essential and valid in planning scholarship and practice, not hills and valleys to be made plane in pursuit of a reductionist internationalism.

Town Planning Review recognised the beginnings of change in 1984, in an 'Editorial Note' remarking on how over 250 academics from planning schools throughout the US had assembled in San Francisco the previous October at the third, more independently organised annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) and what a positive occasion it had been. The transformation of the Association's *Bulletin* into the more ambitious *Journal of Planning Education and Research* was also noticed. In a more modern version of 'transatlantic crossings', the Note went on to float the idea of a British initiative along similar lines strongly linked to the need

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to improve the research capacity, strength and role of the planning schools. That was too narrow a national vision to be taken up (although the more recent annual UK 'Planning Research Conference' suggests that it had some currency), and it needed further transatlantic crossings to subsequent ACSP conferences to widen the scope to the European scale for action to take place.

This 'Viewpoint' provides an opportunity to look back to and reflect on the consequences of that widening of scale in the formation of AESOP in 1987 and its development over the next twenty years and then to take stock of the Association in 2007 and look ahead to some future interests and issues. The first of these two specially commissioned 'Viewpoints', 'European integration and the planning academy: reflections on the AESOP project', is contributed by Patsy Healey, and the second, 'AESOP – an ambitious "TWEN"', is provided by Peter Ache.

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STIFTEL, B. and WATSON, V. (2005), 'Building global integration in planning scholarship', in B. Stiftel and V. Watson (eds), *Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning 1*, London and New York, Routledge, 1–14. Stiftel and Watson not only cover the 1980s, discussing parallel moves to establish scholarly institutions for planning in Canada, Brazil and France, but also the subsequent emergence of wider regional associations (adding to the international alphabet soup for planning academics) and the first World Planning School Congress in Shanghai in 2001 and the first meeting of the Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN) in Volos in 2002.

European integration and the planning academy: reflections on the AESOP project

Patsy Healey

In the mid-1980s, the planning academy in Europe consisted of a range of planning schools with different intellectual traditions, as well as specialist options in courses of architecture, engineering and economics (Rodriguez-Bachiller, 1988). The academics teaching within them were influenced primarily by their national cultures in education and research, as well as by a variety of intellectual traditions. For many, planning was a practice craft rather than a scholarly endeavour. Some published in the academic literature, primarily in economics and geography, but many acted as consultants to government and private bodies. International networks existed, but mainly within separate language communities. Student movement between countries during their educational programme was unusual.

It was in this context that AESOP was born. Of course, the wider project of European integration was a major influence and opportunity, but for many of those who gathered for a snowy weekend in Schloss Cappenberg in January 1987 (Fig. 1), invited by Klaus Kunzmann of Dortmund University, the motivation to create an Association of European Schools of Planning was to widen horizons for staff and students, to promote a more international outlook, and, in particular, to advocate a social scientific underpinning for understanding and developing the theory and practice of planning activity. For me, certainly, coming from one of the larger EU countries, I felt that the academic planning community in my country was too small, and its intellectual traditions as yet too weak, to sustain a vigorous community of critical inquiry. Both Klaus and I had experienced the energy of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Congresses of the 1980s, and appreciated the way in which the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* had been developed. But we also felt that a European association should have distinctly European qualities.

This European quality was very evident at the founding Congress held in Amsterdam in the autumn of 1987. Many of those who became research collaborators in the 1990s met there for the first time. We astonished each other with our different practices. Forthright Scandinavians encountered the elegant rhetorics of Italians. Pragmatic, managerial Britons struggled to accommodate the desire for conceptual clarity among French and German participants. And we all found diffi-

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Figure 1 AESOP's founders, Schloss Cappenberg, Germany, January 1987.
Photo courtesy Sébastien Piantoni, AESOP website administrator.

culty in communicating, not just because planning academics in most parts of Europe at that time had not been trained with English as a second language, but because our intellectual traditions, the positions of our planning education programmes and the vocabularies we used to talk about planning were so diverse, as Dick Williams highlighted later in his book on European spatial planning (1996). Yet what was also evident was a strong commitment to coming together into an Association.

In the first few years, creating a community of planning academics across Europe involved intense debate about all kinds of matters as we got to know each other and developed the practices of the Association. Some, particularly those already well networked in the fields of urban and regional development studies, argued that AESOP's focus should primarily be on education issues and the promotion of exchange of students and lecturing staff. Others, of whom I was one, believed that an Association without a strong focus on enhancing the quality of research and scholarship would not carry the intellectual weight to involve significant numbers of academics across Europe. Then there were debates about membership. The principle was that membership was open to schools of planning. But what *is* a school of planning? The classes of 'membership' now recognised by AESOP developed out of this debate. In the early days, every application was scrutinised to ensure that programmes in architecture, engineering and economics which merely had planning options were not allowed to become full members. There were also difficult debates about where

'Europe' ended and how far into the Middle East it stretched, as well as how AESOP should approach the 'language' question. This last was and is a particularly difficult issue for the planning field, which combines an openness to international ideas with a commitment to interactive relations with planning practices, where one of the key qualities of local specificities lies in local languages. Some people argued that AESOP, too, should operate in a multi-lingual way. UK people abstained when voting on this last issue, which resulted in English being adopted as AESOP's language. We perhaps should have insisted on 'Euro-English' as the language, as some UK participants still fail to realise that their peculiar way of speaking English is not readily understandable to non-first-language English speakers! Meanwhile, a younger generation of planning academics in Europe are much more skilled in communication in international English.

In time, these early debates faded into the background, as the AESOP project developed its institutional infrastructures. Of these, by far the most important are the Annual Congresses. It is in the Congress arena that we have developed the academic art of scholarly presentation of research material, and progressively built up transnational exchange of ideas and inspirations across a range of subject areas with a relevance to the planning field. In the early days, we had a hard time listening to each other, not just because of differences in capacity in English, but because of the different intellectual traditions and different performative practices noted above. The contrast with recent AESOP Congresses is striking. Now a new generation of academics engages with the Congress presentation format with an ease and a seriousness which make for very stimulating experiences. Those meeting in Amsterdam in 1987 would have been astonished at the range and quality of the material presented and the smooth, professional organisation of the 2007 Congress in Naples. They would also have been proud that the Congress now attracts participants not just from across Europe, but from North America and Asia as well.

If the Congress is where AESOP has its most influential presence in European planning academia, there are also many other arenas of encounter which have been important in 'integrating' the planning academy in Europe. One has been the Association's basic governance mechanisms – the Council of Representatives (COREP) and the Executive Committee (EXCO). These have been not only sites for debate and the development of initiatives but important opportunities for regular meetings where education and research collaborations of various kinds have developed. Among the special initiatives has been the PhD Workshop, running now for nearly fifteen years, in which many current planning academics have participated. Then there have been the special commissions – on planning research and on planning education, the journal, *European Planning Studies*, and the AESOP Newsletter (now superseded by the website, www.aesop-planning.com) and the institution of prizes for best paper in a planning journal published in Europe, for teaching innovation and for best Congress paper.

Meanwhile, membership of AESOP has spread eastwards, although some difficulties in engaging participation in some western European countries, notably Spain, are still encountered.

What is striking about these different AESOP activities is not just their existence. Most organisations have similar programmes. What has been more important is their role in the creation and spreading of networks among planning academics in Europe which could be mobilised to take advantage of Europe-wide initiatives and, particularly, EU opportunities. AESOP arrived just in time to take advantage of the EU's ERASMUS/SOCRATES programme, which promoted the interchange of staff and students. Large numbers of planning students, from undergraduates to doctoral students, have been able to spend a semester in a planning school outside their own countries. And the networking opportunities of AESOP have been invaluable in developing the links needed to put together the trans-national research networks demanded by EU projects funded under the structural funds and by the succession of EU Research Framework Initiatives. One outcome has been the appearance of much more comparative research in the planning literature, and an increasing understanding of the differences which different practice cultures and institutional contexts make to how planning is practised. These experiences have in turn helped to make planning academics valued resources for national, regional and local governments seeking to learn more about practices in other countries and how, or how far, these might be transferred into specific local contexts.

Looking back twenty years, the project we embarked on seems to have grown into something larger and much more vigorous than we could have imagined at the time. This is not just because of the energy and commitment of a few people – in particular Louis Albrechts, Goran Cars, Klaus Kunzmann, David Massey, Alain Motte and the late R. H. (Dick) Williams – who helped to build AESOP and develop the relations between AESOP and national planning education arenas, although this was very important. What was also important was the moment of opportunity, when, in each of our national communities, we were waking up to the significance and opportunity of the project of European integration for our subject matter – urban and regional development, environmental improvement, urban design, and place-making in all its forms, and for educational development and academic endeavour. The formation of AESOP helped to create or reinvigorate national associations of planning academics in several countries.¹ Overall, AESOP has played a major role in generating the intellectual energy which has made European contributions to our

¹ In France, the organisation of planning academics, APERAU, created in 1983–84, was very keen to develop links with the emerging AESOP. In the UK, AESOP came to replace what had been the Education for Planning Association (which generously donated the residue of its funds to AESOP), but helped to stimulate a new arena for UK planning academics, the Planning Research Conference, sponsored by the professional institute, the Royal Town Planning Institute.

field so stimulating in recent years. It has helped many to become skilled ‘travellers’, not just between different practice contexts, but among different disciplines and traditions of addressing particular subject matters.

These days, I have less contact with the inner workings of AESOP or with the networking that goes into sustaining student exchange and transnational research projects. But some of us ‘founding fathers and mothers’ of the AESOP ‘movement’ have been wondering lately whether perhaps AESOP has become too much focused on the research dimension of the planning academy and too little on the development of teaching programmes. We also wonder if the focus of attention on developing research and scholarship in the planning academy may be pulling against a commitment to an interchange between research and practice, especially when practice cultures and exchange of ideas necessarily take place in local languages. There is a danger in the current emphasis across much of European academia on ‘research output’ as evaluated by peers, rather than on contributions to developing practices in different places. Committed academics have of course always done both, but it is not easy to meet both demands as funding pressures build up on universities across the continent. Yet surely, the contribution of the planning field intellectually and in research lies in its tradition of grounding its scholarship in engagement, in all kinds of ways, with practices and of recognising that knowledge development is not some kind of linear translation from abstract theories to ‘applied’ practices, but a continual interaction between the purposes and experimentation of the practical world and the practices of academic reflection, inquiry, critique and the generation of potentially useful ideas, concepts and vocabularies.

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AESOP – an ambitious ‘TWEN’

Peter Ache

On its twentieth anniversary, the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) has become so to say a ‘grown-up’ institution, with the ambition of contributing to the development of both the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA). Our twenty-first conference was held in Naples this year, with about 600 participants coming from 40 countries inside and outside Europe. More than 400 presentations were given in 14 tracks dealing with a diverse range of topics from ‘planning education’ to ‘planning theory’ and subsumed under the main conference theme of ‘the risk society’.

Obviously, AESOP has grown strong over its twenty years of existence – and, taking into account the fact that nine presidents of our sister organisations were also present in Naples to discuss and work with us, it now has a global audience. At the time of writing, AESOP has 108 full institutional members and 40 associate members – that is, schools that share our ideas about planning education and meet our standards for a proper planning education in Europe. This is a huge international structure which until now has operated on an entirely voluntary basis.

Recently it has become clear that we have reached the limits of this organisational model. The Council of Representatives has therefore made the very positive decision to raise the membership fee in order to provide a full secretarial support to the Secretary General, the holder of the office which keeps AESOP together. This step is also very positive with respect to the more immediate challenges which the planning community has to address, related to educational questions, to research and to the position of planning in the professional field.

In education terms, AESOP has provided a first report on the progress of the Bologna process. We now have an exploratory (though not comprehensive) picture of the current situation in our member schools, showing us that many schools have already prepared for the two-cycle model. Clearly, more research is needed and we have also asked our members to continuously update this information. In the course of this, we have recently established a new feature in our routines, i.e. the Heads of Schools meeting. The first meeting was held in Bratislava (Slovakia) in 2006, followed by one in Leuven (Belgium) in 2007.¹ The 2008 meeting will be held in Łódź (Poland). The Heads of Schools meeting will hopefully become a regular exchange and discus-

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¹ Reports on both meetings can be found on the AESOP website, www.aesop-planning.com.

sion platform for all those colleagues at the various schools who are responsible for education and curriculum development. As was seen this year, the discussion may also be related to matters such as accreditation and general quality assurance. The aspect of accreditation, the scrutiny of programmes (at both levels in the two-cycle system), is a function with which AESOP should be much more closely and proactively involved in the future. The development of proper European Masters² and PhD programmes under the umbrella of AESOP is clearly desirable.

Education has been and continues to be one of our main concerns and I should therefore mention a recommendation, formulated by past and current presidents of AESOP in April 2007, to reaffirm this mission:

AESOP sees the ‘art and science’ of planning as a complex expertise. To develop this, a strong relation with planning practice is indispensable for planning education. As an academic field, planning clearly has an applied science character, providing a particular stimulus due to its multi-disciplinary approach bringing together different intellectual traditions and concepts. In planning education we therefore need to make sure that students can learn in practice situations at an early stage. As a scientific endeavour, we need to work towards innovative new solutions in cooperation with day-to-day planning practice.³

Since the WPC conference in Shanghai in 2001 AESOP and other planning associations have formed the global education planning association network (GPEAN). Here we come together to discuss matters of common concern and to plan further world conferences,⁴ but also to publish at regular intervals the ‘Dialogues in Urban and Regional Planning’ (Stiftel, Watson and Ascelrad, 2006), giving an overview of actual research themes and topics.

The research aspect is vital for AESOP. The planning academy, despite the centenary to be celebrated in Liverpool in 2009,⁵ is still rather young and experiences constant changes in terms of a modern understanding of planning as the complex task of creating good quality spaces and sustainable territories – or, to express it in accordance with the ‘risk society’ topic of the Naples conference, avoiding risks

2 In 2007, some AESOP members prepared joint applications for the ‘Erasmus Mundus’ programme; for example, the University of Reims (France), the Technical University of Bratislava (Slovakia) and the Royal Institute for Technology in Stockholm (Sweden) have applied for a joint programme on European Planning in the context of globalisation (EuroPlan).

3 The reference to ‘art and science’ relates to the well-known notion used by RTPI.

4 The first World Planning Schools Conference was held in Shanghai in 2001, the second in Mexico City in 2006; the next one is scheduled for 2011/12, with the venue being still open.

5 The point of reference here is the appointment in 1909 of Stanley Adshead as the first Lever Professor of Civic Design and also founder of *Town Planning Review* in the University of Liverpool’s Department of Civic Design, marking the start of a formal planning education before it was introduced in other parts of Europe and the USA.

and mitigating hazards. Research is important as it helps us to reflect on practice, to develop theories (or concepts), and to systematise our knowledge as an academic discipline to make it available for practice.

Our community has a rich record of research and development of research themes. This richness becomes visible in the many thematic groups initiated by individuals or groups of colleagues, using AESOP as an umbrella to regularly discuss and work on actual topics, feeding this into the conference tracks or round-tables. This research is also indispensable with respect to new requirements coming from the institutional environment, as universities increasingly use statistics relating to contract research or scientific publications to assess our quality as academics or the success of departments. All who are involved in this know that at times such an approach generates strange results or is straightforwardly inappropriate for the discipline. AESOP developed an initiative to establish more appropriate criteria to assess our research quality as against the currently dominant practices. A first report⁶ and suggestions have been put together, providing information about actual practice in countries where AESOP is present. This report came with a list of more than forty journals, which AESOP uses in part to select the winners of the prize for best published paper, but which might also be used as a manual for universities which are looking for appropriate material to assess the research quality of planning schools or departments. This is definitely something AESOP will promote in the near future.

We also have our own associated journals and quite a number of our individual members founded journals or sit on journal editorial boards. *European Planning Studies* started as a means to communicate our planning debates and agendas, addressing a global audience. Currently AESOP is reviewing the situation and considering whether to establish an additional instrument for communication which would bear an AESOP quality mark and would reach the full range of our members. One important aspect of this is the language option(s) available. New models have been discussed, such as the possibility of formally embracing a journal as the official AESOP journal, with subscription linked to membership fees and operating as a direct means of communication with our members. However, this discussion is still ongoing and needs careful thought.

The planning profession has recently entered a discussion regarding professional standards, initiated by the European Council of Town Planners and the International Society of City and Regional Planners, representing professional practice interests. AESOP is taking an active role here as well. We have established a relationship with the European Commission (EC) in order to investigate whether a regulation should be expected at the level of the European Union. Thankfully, no immediate regulation is intended by the EC and it is up to professional and educational bodies to

6 For an outline, see the presentation by A. Balducci, available from http://www.aesop-planning.com/Bratislava_ppt/Alessandro_IIOD_March06.pdf.

come up with proposals in case of, for example, barriers preventing market access for planners in Europe. This issue was discussed extensively at the Heads of Schools meeting in Leuven (April 2007). AESOP and the professional associations have agreed to cooperate closely in any future activity, for example towards the creation of a common platform. As the field of planning changes rapidly, we have to respond to these changes and make sure that the educational institutions have a say in this context. As the EU is enlarged (and possibly reinforced with a new treaty), professional mobility and recognition of planners is crucial for our future. The schools organised in AESOP are, to put it simply, the producers of future generations of professionals. Our research at its best identifies current changes and future challenges. Who else is better positioned to reflect on qualification requirements?

Whereas the early years of AESOP were clearly much more concerned with establishing a communal spirit and enabling networking, very well described by Patsy Healey above, we now are in a situation where we have to face up to the importance of AESOP as an institution in very practical terms: AESOP is the only representative body which brings together the planning schools of Europe. Given this unique position AESOP has to strengthen its profile as a professional body. AESOP has to mobilise its resources, taking a leading role and lending its expertise to ongoing debates and initiatives regarding planning education and planning qualifications of future professionals. AESOP has to promote its agenda with politicians and all other key stakeholders (or actors) in place development and management across Europe. From this threefold objective it follows that our voluntary structure brings us to the limits of our capacity. To safeguard past work and sustain it in the future, AESOP intends – as noted above – to establish a permanent office to support the work of the Secretary General and the President. As described above, at our last meeting in Naples (July 2007) the Council of Representatives gave its support to this ambitious agenda and agreed to raise the membership fee structure in order to provide the urgently needed resources. A further review of the membership fee is planned for 2010 and with that, the next steps towards a more professional structure will also be reviewed. The Executive Committee will provide and present a report on options regarding office operations and representation. This is a very important discussion ahead of us; one result could be that AESOP will decide to have a permanent address, establishing a headquarters somewhere in Europe and being clearly and permanently visible as an association with a proper business address.

In its first twenty years AESOP has grown to become truly representative of European planning, and has developed a conscious vision of planning. AESOP's commitment to the issues of planning education is facing new challenges which bring new items to our agenda. In the field of research, AESOP has grown from a spontaneous facilitator to a proactive stakeholder. In the context of globalisation, AESOP supports the worldwide debate on planning with its sister institutions and in GPEAN.

Our ambition as a TWEN[ty something] for the next twenty years is definitely to mature and sustain our level of activities, services and functions as the only body representing planning schools in Europe.

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