OBESSU Extraordinary General Assembly 2020

30 May 2020; online via ZOOM

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**Opening of the extraordinary GA at 11:00 CEST**

Board Member Edvardas officially opens the extraordinary GA and welcomes the delegates. Edvardas explains that the GA is being recorded for legal purposes and asks everyone to ensure that they are muted at all times unless speaking. Edvardas also explains that French interpretation is available.

Edvardas tests the polling function. The delegates are asked to speak slowly and clearly because of the interpretation. Edvardas presents the agenda.

First Roll Call: AKS, ASuBiH, CANAE, BSK (not present), CEF, CNE, CSU, DGS (not present), DOS, EEO, ESCU, FSS, ISSU, KYC, LH (not present) LMS, MAKOSZ, NSoA, OSKU, RSM, SAKKI, SIF, SLL, SUS, SVB, TOS, UDS, UEM, UNEL, UNL, UNSS (not present) USO

The following organisations do not have the right to vote: ASuBiH (AFC not paid), KYC (affiliate), NSOA (AFC not paid), OSKU (candidate), SVB (affiliate), TOS (candidate), UDS (AFC not paid), UEM (candidate), UNL (AFC not paid), USO (AFC not paid)

**Election of the Chairperson**

The Board proposes Judit Lantai - former Project and Partnerships Manager of OBESSU (2018-2019) to be the Chairperson of the GA. The board and the secretary general explained that only official delegates from organizations who paid the AFC paid. There should be 18 votes.

NSOA asks if they paid and Giuseppina answers that no.

The GA approves the Chairperson by vote through polling on zoom. (16 yes 2 abstain).

Judit has been elected as a chairperson of the GA. Edvardas gives the floor to Judit. Judit welcomes the delegates.

**Election of the minute-takers**

The chairperson explains that the Board proposes Daša Kribaničová, Membership and Capacity Building Officer as a minute taker. The chair reminds the delegates that only the official delegates from organisations that paid their AFC can vote.

The GA approves the minute-takers by acclamation through polling on zoom. (17-1 abstain)

**Election of the Ballot Committee**

The Chairperson explains the role and function of the Ballot Committee. Judit asks for 3 volunteers for the ballot committee, they can propose themselves by writing their name in the chat.
The GA elects the ballot committee by acclamation through polling on zoom. (18yes)

**Adoption of the internal regulations**
The chair presents the internal regulations and the rules the GA will be using online.

- **The right to speak**: every delegate has the right to speak. In this case, as we have an interpreter, we don’t consider them as a guest but as the direct voice of delegates.

- **The right to vote**: Member organisations have the right to vote. Members failing to pay AFC need to receive the right to vote by the GA.

- **Speaking time and discussion**: the Chair will open the floor for discussion and decide on speaking order and time.

  - Delegates can ask for the floor by writing "ORG wants to speak" in the chat.
  - Delegates can also ask questions in the chat. These will be read out loud by the chair. If you ask a question in the chat, kindly clarify who the question is directed to.
  - Participants can reply to a statement directly if a previous speaker presents faulty information. Please write V in the chat.
  - If you have a procedural question or proposal, kindly write «P» in the chat.

  - The chair can propose to close the speaking list if enough arguments have been made. Delegates can also propose to close the speaking list.

  - Voting by acclamation is made with a simple poll

  - Voting by secret ballot (e.g. for AFC and Budget) will be made through Election Runner.

**The majority is calculated out of the votes for and against**. Abstained votes are not counted in quorum of majority, except in case a two-thirds majority is required. **For a majority to be valid, at least half of the present member organisations must place a vote either for or against.**

The Chairperson proposes a vote on the internal regulations of the General Assembly. The GA approves them via poll on zoom (18 votes yes).
Voting right for Member Organisations failing to pay the Annual Financial Contribution

2018

The Chairperson explains that according to the Statutes, only Member Organisations which have paid the Annual Financial Contribution (AFC) have the right to vote. Judit explains that all organisations will get one minute to explain why they did not pay and what is their plan and then there will be a common QA session. After that, a vote will be taken and the organisations who did not pay will be moved to break out room. The voting will take place through the election runner.

Giuseppina says that the organisation that failed to pay the AFC 2020 are:

ASuBiH, they did not declare the turnover and OBESSU could not calculate the contribution

NSoA because calculation was made and delay in payment was agreed upon.

UNL since there was no declaration in 2020. There was no issue for a long time but now conversation is starting again.

UDS’ declaration was received this morning and it will be calculated and paid.

USO’s declaration was received and invoice was sent but it was said that the payment will be delayed.

Judit gives the floor to organisations who failed to pay to explain.

ASuBiH says that in their budget they planned to pay AFC in the 2nd Quarter of 2020, so they failed with paying in February, and in the second quarter due to COVID-19, they weren’t able to pay it, in the period of March to May. Now they can pay for it but they only need an invoice. They are very sorry about this.

NSoA says that everyone has been furloughed and the only employee could not manage NSOA intents to pay and it was just a mistake because of NSOA being overworked. NSOA wants to pay and will.

UDS says that they are self funding with social initiatives and Italy is one of the states with the largest lockdown and UDS is based on social contact, initiative that make people and so UDS had difficulties with finances.

UNL says that it was a very difficult year financially speaking given the pandemic, UNL have had many financial issues, there were legal proceedings and they cannot even lay a hand on their account and they had to ask partner organisations to lend money to the organisation so they could not pay.

USO says that right now they do not have financial resources to pay the AFC, they have around 100 euros in their bank account and they are hoping to get some governmental funding in September and they do not think they could pay before that.
The chair opens to floor for questions.

**CANAE** wants to ask the secretariat whether from the organisations that have failed to pay if any of them have been failing in a recurring way.

Giuseppina says that usually ASUBIH does not have outstanding debt, NSOA always informs and they have different accounting time, UDS has been paying outstanding debt that they have so there is no more, UNL is a bit more complicated, there have been many years of not receiving declarations, and part of their debt has been written off, USO has been paying.

Judit reads statement from **ASuBiH** which was sent via email due to internet connection problems: 'In our budget we planned to pay AFC in the 2nd Quarter, so we failed with paying in February, and in second quarter due to COVID-19, we weren’t able to pay it, in the period of March to May. Now we can pay for it but we only need an invoice. I'm very sorry about this.'

**EEO** asks a question if all organisations who did not pay have intentions of payment when they have the financial possibility to do so.

**NSoA** delegate says she spoke to someone from the office and they will sort it out next Monday, so their full intention is to pay.

**UNL** says they want to pay but they cannot guarantee it will be done quickly because they cannot use UNL money now because of legal proceedings.

**ASuBiH** will pay next week.

**USO** says they won’t be able to pay until September and of course they want to pay when it is possible.

**UDS** says that they intend to pay, they simply have financial issues.

Judit says we have input from all organisations and now she gives the floor to the board.

Edvardas says that OBESSU understands that because of the current situation the financial situation might be different, the financial situation will be reflected in the declaration and it is calculated based on the income so the fee lowers.

Judit asks for the members who have not paid to be moved to a break out room so the discussion can continue.

Judit opens the floor for discussion.
**EEO** says that because of the whole pandemic everyone has been struggling and many can relate on some level to what the organisations explained. EEO thinks that should be taken into consideration. As NSOA was saying, it is not because everyone has financial problems, but things are upside down so giving a bit of an extra change this year would be nice because everyone might need it at some point.

**CANAE** says that right now everyone is going through tough situations and every country is affected in a different way, for example CANAE also had lots of problems and grants were cut and they are still fighting to maintain the organisation. Maybe not everyone receives the same funding for example not everyone gets money from the government, which means that payments might be affected. We need to take into account that we some organization did not even submit their declaration which is their obligation and we should remember that

**SVB** says that they see that it is problematic that it also puts OBESSU in financial jeopardy as always but we should bear in mind that even if the countries are not affected by the pandemic the organisations might be (eg short staffed, lower capability of dealing with the situations) so from SVBs point of view the GA should grant everyone the right to vote.

**UNEL** asks the board and secretariat that if they have the legal proceedings, OBESSU knows about the financial situation, did they not tell OBESSU or how are they supposed to pay if they cannot touch their money? Was that the situation when the call for the AFC came out, can OBESSU take that into account?

Giuseppina answers that OBESSU is happy to negotiate and OBESSU is not like a heartless bank trying to get all the organisational money. With UNL this is the first time this happens.

Giuseppe from the board confirms what Giuseppina said, OBESSU is in touch with UNL and this is new. Contacts were a bit slower and not continuous in the last year and the contact now is positive.

The chair closes the speaking lists and asks for the vote on the election runner. The organisations are welcome back to the room. A video of how voting works is shown.

**CANAE** says that the GA did not vote on the right of affiliate organisations to speak and asks why it was so. Giuseppina says the organisations were not registered in advance and therefore it was not foreseen on the agenda, OBESSU apologises.

Judit asks if CANAE would like to have a vote on it now and CANAE answers they would ask for a simple poll. Judit explains there was a poll at the start and asks if CANAE accepts that. Judit also reads a message from Lukas from SVB who apologises for registering only this morning.

Judit calls for the vote on the election runner. There will be a 5 minute break to cast votes.
EEO says they thought the GA will finish by 12 and asks if Kaja could be the official delegate because Jacqueline will have to leave.

Judit explains that it is taking longer, EEO did not misunderstand the timing. Judit will check if that is possible. If EEO sends a new nomination letter it will not be a problem.

Judit says that the voting went well and the vote is closed. Giuseppina is in a breakout room sharing the vote with the ballot committee.

Judit reads the results of the vote. All organisations who did not pay the AFC were granted the right to vote in this GA.

Presentation and adoption of the Statement of Financial position for the current year

First Roll Call: AKS, ASuBiH, CANAE, CEF, CNE, CSU, DOS, EEO, ESCU, FSS, ISSU, LMS, MAKOSZ, NSoA, RSM, SAKKI, SIF, SLL, SUS, UDS, UNEL, UNL, USO

The chair asks Giuseppina to present the Statement of Financial Position.

Giuseppina presents the balance sheet and actual cost overview and spendings. There are different figures in it - balance sheet doesn't include all costs

Giuseppina says that the contribution that comes from within the network is around 34 thousand, compared to the other income, and there is less contribution which is not only worrying for OBESSU but also for member organisations.

OBESSU finished the year with a surplus for reserves of 6000 which is very little.

Chair opens the floor for questions

CANAE asks if for this year Maribel was lost or is it still there.

SVB wants to know how stable the core funds that OBESSU has, have been over the years.

CANAE realised that the Maribel fund is in the budget and so the question has been answered.

Giuseppina answers that the financing has been fluctuating very little, the very core budget is from DG EAC, Maribel Social, Council of Europe and membership fees. Over the last years it has been stable, Maribel can change into positive, it depends on what we pay, structural grant from CoE is slightly higher for the next year and the membership fees are decreasing. OBESSU is not overly worried but new rules for
operating grants are not out yet so OBESSU hopes it will be stable but we don’t know what it will be. Core financing is little compared to project/event financing.

**CANAE** asked what is happening with OSF.

Giuseppina answers that OSF is cutting on several grants, and OBESSU has been a grantee for several years, OBESSU does not see an issue. Seeds have not been renewed but OBESSU put a request for edition of Stronger starting from June but we have not heard back yet, but we were told informally that it has been granted, this will be shown in budget 2021.

**SVB** asks for a clarification on how Maribel could make things in the budget more positive.

Giuseppina answers that it will not impact massively, Maribel covers one employee so if OBESSU raises a salary a little bit, then Maribel contribution will increase.

**Presentation of budget 2020**

Giuseppina presents the budget and says that the office costs will stay the same, subcontracting stays the same and travel and subsistence will be less (EYF workplan for example.) There is a gigger remuneration line which means salaries because there are a lot of new people in the office (Rute, volunteer starting in June, Juanma for ECMA).

Some things will change because OBESSU could not carry out all activities and we do not know what will happen and we will keep you posted. Giuseppina goes to the break out room with CEF to present the same in French.

The chair opens the floor for questions.

**SVB** asks what does it mean to adopt a financial position. It already happened, what does the vote mean?

Giuseppina answers that since the GA is the main decision making body, it has to approve it. For example, if OBESSU wanted to spend 500000 euros on staff, it could be rejected, if it wasn’t true. Or for example if the balance sheet was with profit and OBESSU decided to divide the money amongst the board, the members could say no. It is more of a transparency mechanism.

**SVB** asks if MC could say something because SVB doesn’t have enough knowledge to evaluate it.

Sara from the MC answers that the MC could not look at the books physically this year yet because in person meeting was not possible and they trust that everything is going well and they put a blessing on this budget.
The chair asks for the vote via Election Runner. Both votes are sent via election runner at the same time. The financial statement and the budget 2020 have been approved by the GA.

Q&A on the upcoming General Assembly in person
Edvardas explains that the next GA will take place online on ZOOM and explains which calls will be launched. He explains the timeline of what will be sent when. Bicca adds information on registration, the deadline is 22nd of June. Adrian says OBESSU is planning to have discussions before the meeting since time during an online GA might be limited. The reports will be sent in advance and there will be preliminary talks and webinars (not compulsory).

Everyone will receive the registration later today and questions can be sent to ga@obessu.org

Any other business
Urgent motions and resolutions
The board explains that they prepared an urgent resolution about the situation in Hungary and it will not be voted upon right now. There is a big democratic shift in Hungary and the government is planning to send police officers to 500 schools, especially in poorer areas in countries, also in schools with a lot of Roma learners. This can have negative effects on learners and the learning environment. The board wants to raise awareness, reach institutions since this is against international laws. The board will send the document on Monday and hopes for reactions/support ASAP. OBESSU will ask the members to co-sign the resolution.

CNE says that they are very aware that there is a lot of discrimination against roma community in romania and hangary. CNE can try to help raise awareness in Romania and work together with MAKOSZ.

Certifying attendance
OBESSU needs to keep track of attendance, and everyone will be requested to sign a document proving attendance at this GA because it is a legal requirement and we have to provide it to support our funding.

1 in 5 campaign
The board explains that there will be a webinar with external guests. There is a petition that can be signed individually or as an organisation. There is more information about the campaign on the website as well. More will be shared after the GA.

Toolkit on online participation
Dasa tells the delegates that OBESSU is working on a toolkit on online participation together with an external consultant and a survey will be sent out which will feed into the process. Dasa asks the members to fill in the survey when it comes since without it the toolkit will not happen.
Closing of the General Assembly

The chair thanks all the delegates for their participation and she thanks the delegates that we tried it and next GA will go even better. Judit thinks it was a big success that OBESSU could do this online.

Edvardas wants to thank the chair for amazing job during a first online statutory meeting

Judit says it was a big teamwork.

Giuseppina says we will send a feedback form to find out what to do better for the next online GA.

The extraordinary GA ends at 13:00 CEST.