

Minutes of the

**The 2020 Annual General Meeting of the  
European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies (IVZW)**

Saturday August 29th 2020, 9-10 am, video conference

**Present:** Alessandra Boller, Niall Carson, Elke D'hoker, James Gallacher, Anne Goarzin, Peter Gray, Raphaël Ingelbien, Anthony Johnson, Michael Lydon, Radvan Markus, Sylvie Mikowski, Rióna Ní Fhrighil, Katarzyna Ojrzyńska, Emma Phelan, Katharina Rennhak, Loredana Salis, Hedwig Schwall, Malachy Vallely, Pilar Villar-Argáiz, Erick Falc'her Poyroux, Elvis (Zoom alias)

The president welcomes all attending EFACIS members and briefly reports on recent developments (see the president's report in the attachment).

**1. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting are approved. The AGM reconfirms that the board was elected last year and is continuing this year.

**2. Approval of the accounts for the previous year**

The accounts are presented by the treasurer and approved by the AGM.

**3. Approval of the budget for the current year**

The budget for the current year is presented by the treasurer and approved by the AGM.

**4. Honourable acquittal of the board**

The board has been honourably acquitted by the AGM.

**5. AOB**

The executive is reminded that the EFACIS Statutes will have to be re-examined due to the new Belgian legislation concerning non-profit organizations.

15 September 2020

Katharina Rennhak (President)

Radvan Markus (Secretary)



## EFACIS President's Report (AGM 2020)

Welcome all! In advance of my report I'd like to sincerely thank you all for your support of EFACIS throughout the year and for being here for this Zoom session. I would have very much preferred to meet you all in Leuven, where we could have had lunches and dinners together and many a chat over a beer, wine or apple juice. But, alas, this cannot be!

I also want to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the EFACIS executive for having made this first year in office a very rewarding experience. Thank you Elke, Anne and Raphael for all the work you've put into our Federation and for your invaluable support throughout the year. As you all know, Hedwig always was and still is at the core of everything related to EFACIS and we very much appreciate your support. Thank you, Hedwig.

You've all been in touch with James Gallacher and know that he is the most versatile and friendly coordinator of EFACIS, liaising between the executive and the centers and sparkling with ideas. Thank you James! Last not least, I'd also like to thank Carlos Reyes Solis who has again done excellent work in developing our website.

The past year has seen very significant developments in EFACIS including an **advancement of our relationship with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**. As you probably remember we in the executive concentrated on drafting the EFACIS strategy document last autumn. James and I then had a very productive meeting in January with Geoffrey Keating, Director of the Irish Abroad Unit within the Global Irish Services Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Anne Norton (also Irish Abroad Unit). I am very happy to relate that we have recently confirmed funding from the DFAT of 80% of the coordinator's salary in the coming next year and that the sum we got this time really meets our expectations. What may look like the result of our meeting with Geoffrey Keating in this year's report of the president, is, indeed, much more the result of the work done by my predecessor Seán Crosson and of Hedwig Schwall's untiring interventions in this matter which have prepared the success of our last ESP-application in many meetings and conversations over many years.

**New centres** have joined our Federation: one in **Ankara**, one in **Zurich**, and one in **Würzburg**, and James Gallacher is currently very successful in his endeavours to extend our **network into the Balkans** where he is in conversation with colleagues in Bulgaria, in Croatia, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, and Romania. Indeed, James has organized a meeting which the two of us attended with Ambassadors and Representatives from the Embassies from most of these nations. They showed great interest in the work of our Federation and promised their support in setting up an Irish Studies network in this region which is as yet underrepresented in EFACIS.

2020 has also seen the continued expansion of our **Irish Itinerary programme** in autumn 2019 in its traditional form. And you all know that we have started a new podcast version due to the Covid19-related travel restrictions that are in place since March 2020. We've again received considerable funding for the Irish Itinerary from Culture Ireland. My thanks go, again to Hedwig Schwall who has made all this possible and to James Gallacher for very ably coordinating the artists, centers and scholars involved in the Irish Itinerary. Also, the new **Kaleidoscope, no.2** conducted by Hedwig is well under way.

With respect to **EFACIS publications**, further issues of our online peer-reviewed journal *Rise* (Review of Irish Studies in Europe) appeared last year including the latest: Vol 3 No 2 (2020): Home Rule Crisis. I am grateful to General Editor Shane Alcobia Murphy, the editorial board and all contributors for their work in bringing these issues and future issues to publication. A collection of selected papers from the EFACIS conference 2019 in Ljubljana is currently being prepared by the co-organizers of the conference, our colleagues in Vienna.

Michael Lydon and James Gallacher have co-edited the regular **EFACIS newsletter** with EFACIS secretary Anne Goarzin. And I would like to thank all three for compiling and developing the newsletter as a valuable resource for EFACIS members.

Last not least, I would like to report that since about mid-February or so, we've established a weekly executive meeting. This new routine has proven immensely fruitful and productive. It's usually on a Wednesday morning that Hedwig, James and I touch base; other members of the executive have joined the meeting whenever any of us felt this could be helpful; Raphael Ingelbien the EFACIS treasurer has also become a regular participant. This also

means that whenever EFACIS members approach us with an idea or a question, you can be sure that we will usually look at your request as a team within a week. Also, if ever there is something that you'd like to discuss with us, just write me an email, and I will be delighted to invite you to join us for one of the upcoming meetings.

Wuppertal, 24 August 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katharina Rein". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light blue rectangular background.