

The Association of European Migration Institutions Chairman's report 2012 - 2013.

In reflecting on the events of the past year I would like to begin by recalling our Annual Meeting last year which took place in beautiful and historical Krakow, Poland. We again thank Adam Walaszek, Agnieszka Stasiewicz and Jan Lenczmarowicz at the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Jagellonian University for their warm welcome and generous hospitality. Both conference venues - The Institute and Dom Polonii were conveniently located at The Rynek Glowny, the heart and soul of Krakow, the focal point of everything that happens in the Stare Miasto (Old Town). From the early 13th Century, this is where Krakow merchants came to sell their goods. It might also be of interest to know that the Jagellonian university is the oldest university in Poland. Established in 1364 it is also the second oldest university in Central Europe and one of the oldest in the world.

As ever, we rely on the Annual Meeting as our most important tool for renewing old friendships and making new ones, but also to take farewell with people we have known for years. In that respect I will particularly thank Ms. Dina Tolsby, curator of the Norwegian-American Collection at the National Library of Norway and a long time member of AEMI, for attending most of the Annual Meetings. Dina Tolfsby has now retired, and her position has been taken over by Ms. ...

As usual, there has been frequent communication between members of the Board, mainly by email, in preparation for the Annual Meeting, and in this regard I would like to pay tribute in particular to Mathias Nilsson, our host in Karlstad, Sweden. I will congratulate him on his new position as director of the Swedish-American Center, which just recently changed its name to Svenska Migrationscenteret (Swedish Migration Center). I will also use this opportunity to thank the former director for many years, Eric Gustavsson, whom I have known since the late 1980s, for his conscientious job as auditor of AEMI, and for patiently waiting to host the Annual Meeting.

Your Board, for the second year of this current three-year cycle, has been Maddalena Tirabassi (Italy) as vice-chair, Sarah Clement (France) as general secretary, Eva Meyer (Åland/ Finland) as Treasurer, Hans Storhaug (Norway) as editor of the Association's *Journal*, Adam Walaszek (Poland) as representative of last year's host institution, Mathias Nilsson (Sweden) as representative of the host institution of 2013, and myself as chairman. The Board held one face-to face meeting this year 18 - 20 June in Paris, France, thanks to the hospitality of the Secretary Sarah Clement. Unfortunately, both Adam Walaszek nor Eva Meyer were prevented from coming, but it turned out to be a good meeting, although Paris welcomed us with heavy rain and thunderstorms. The Paris meeting coincided with the General Assembly meeting of Generique, and we were invited to join them at the dinner buffet closing their meeting. Obviously, the main reason for our meeting was to discuss the framework of the upcoming Annual Conference and who to invite as keynote speaker. Mathias suggested a representative

from the Global Forum of Migration and Development since the government of Sweden has assumed the chair-in office for 2013 - 2014, represented by Ambassador Eva Åkerman Börje. Hans mentioned the High Commissioner of National Minorities Meeting, Knut Vollebæk, who had been keynote speaker at the opening of the digital learning program of migration history (YAM) developed as part of Stavanger 2008 European Capital of Culture program. Sarah mentioned Klaus Dik Nielsen from the Soros foundation, or Patricia Renoult from the French Ministry of Interior who works for the European Fund for Integration. The Board agreed to address these people, but realised that the chance for having a positive response was relatively small due to the late request.

The Board also suggested to make space for a five minute presentation of each AEMI member at the General Assembly, and to make the following proposals for the General Assembly at the Karlstad meeting: 1) revitalise the European week of migration heritage by encouraging all members to select three places of memories/ histories of migrants as a common AEMI project, 2) modifications of the new website to make it more user friendly (thanks to our Secretary Sarah Clement, and her colleague Claire Tomasella at Generique for all their hard work) 3) introduce editorial guidelines for the Journal for future publications and make an iBook publication as replacement or complementation, 4) intensify the work on the book project *Making Europe Bottom Up: European migratory history (1800-2010)*. I will come back to this later on. Mathias Nilsson also reported that there will be no conference fee, and that all meals (lunches and dinners) will be provided for by the Swedish Migration Center thanks to generous support by the City of Karlstad and the Region of Värmland.

As mentioned in last year's report, I was invited by Virginie Beaufrere, Head of Cultural Department of La Cité de la Mer, Cherbourg, France to speak at the *Titanic and Emigration Meeting* 8-10 November 2012. The conference was a follow-up on the opening of the new permanent exhibition dedicated to the Titanic and the theme of migration that had taken place 10 April that year exactly 100 years after the Titanic's legendary stopover in Cherbourg. Aizlinn Merz, associate director of the German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven and Ms. Nicla Buonasorte and Dr. Pierangelo Campodini representing Museo Naval del Mare, Genoa, Italy and Marie-Charlotte Le Bailly, representing Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp, Belgium were among the speakers known to AEMI members. Unfortunately, our friend and associate member Diana Pardu, Chief of the Museum Services Division, Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York, USA could not come due to heavy destructions on the museum buildings caused by the storm Sandy. The majority of participants represented «The Titanic Cities Network», - and affiliation of maritime and city museums in Belfast, Southampton, Liverpool, Halifax NS, Cobh and New York.

This family attraction was truly an outstanding experience, and so was the meeting with Bernard Cauvin, President of La Cité de la Mer and his staff: Ms. Sylvie Brieau, Mr. Pierre Contentin, Ms.

Laure-Anne Fortiemarthe and Ms. Beatrice Legoupil. During our conversation we touched upon the question how the Cite de la Mer and our Association could cooperate in the most beneficial way, and in that connection the question of EU funding soon became an issue. As part of the program was also a visit to the city hall and the mayor of Cherbourg - Octeville, Bernard Cazeneuve. Mr. Cazeneuve (a friend of Mr. Cauvin) was also Deputy Minister for European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and he expressed a sincere interest in AEMI. He generously invited us (Mr. Cauvin, his staff and me) to a meeting in Paris to discuss matters of common interest. Due to this, I suggested that the Board should meet in Paris as soon as this meeting was settled. Unfortunately, before that happened, Mr. Cazeneuve was appointed the new Minister of Finance and replaced by Mr. Thierry Repentin. Consequently, there was no meeting with Mr. Cazeneuve, but the Board finally met anyway.

As the dreams of the Paris meeting were about to fade, they were recently brought to life again by an email from Virginie Beaufrere stating that the new French Minister of European Affairs (Mr. Repentin) have asked Ms. Lhayani (in charge of the relationships with European Parliament and the civilian society) and Ms. Wernert (in charge of the budget, the home market, the Europe 2020 strategy, the social Europe, the Justice and the Internal Affairs) to make arrangements for receiving me in Paris.

The key issues to be discussed at the meeting will be the same four as those I prepared for the meeting with Mr. Cazeneuve, and that were discussed at the Board meeting in Paris. Three of them are recurring themes at AEMI meetings: the book on European migratory history (*Making Europe Bottom Up: European migratory history 1815-2015*); the digital learning programme on migration history, (*You and Me*) and the *European Migration Heritage Route*.

The fourth idea is to make an exhibition on European migration that could tour the major cities of Europe connected to migration. This was discussed with Mr. Bernard Cauvin and his staff during the Cherbourg meeting, and also at the Board meeting in Paris. The travelling exhibiton named *From the Congress of Vienna to Fortress Europe. 200 years of European migration 1815 - 2015*.

It will take too long to give an detailed description of all the projects here, but a short version is given below.

Making Europe Bottom Up: European migratory history 1815-2015, was launched by vice-chair Maddalena Tirabassi and presented at the Annual Meeting in Krakow 2012. The aim of the project is to write a history of European migrations from the different countries' perspectives in order

- to see how different European countries manage contemporary migrations analysing the passage from country of emigration to country of immigration
- to examine the new mobility phenomenon, difficult to quantify in a post Schengen era
- to analyse Europe's internal migrations to show how Europeans people have intermingled over time through migrations

You and Me is a digital learning program on migration history that was launched by your chairman in 2008, and has been presented to AEMI members at several meetings. The many French teachers that attended the Titanic conference in Cherbourg expressed a great interest in the program, and the idea is still to make it available in the European schools - including France.

Primarily on the initiative of Antoinette Reuter, a *European Migration Heritage Route* was granted reconnaissance in 2007 by the Council of Europe under the auspices of the « European Institute for Cultural Routes » (EICR). This project was promoted by an informal association, in which some AEMI-members took an active part by helping to settle a “European Migration Heritage Week” (1st week in October). In 2009 the Council of Europe issued new requirements for the routes stipulating that each itinerary needs to be legally founded by statutes and independent accounting. This development, exposed to AEMI members at the Genoa annual meeting meant of course the end of the loose organisation described above. It also made clear that a “cultural route” cannot just be a working group within an association. The step had to be made to create a legally founded association with own statutes and budget. A second issue will be to re-launch the “European Migration Heritage Week” in October 2014 in order to offer a transnational awareness for migration heritage.

From the Congress of Vienna to Fortress Europe. 200 years of European migration 1815 - 2015

Through a combination of text, audio, still images, animation, video and interactivity the travelling multimedia exhibition *From the Congress of Vienna to Fortress Europe* aims to show why emigrations from Europe to America and other parts of the world in the hundred years after the Napoleonic Wars constituted the most important global scale human migrations, and why approximately 210 million people worldwide today live outside the country they were born. The exhibition also stimulate debate between young people from the various European cultures and other parts of the world, and in that respect contribute to better understanding, openness and tolerance between the native inhabitants and the immigrants of Europe.

I believe many of our members will be glad to support this idea and pour from their rich resources to make the exhibition a showcase for their own institutions. A full version of the document can be uploaded from our website www.aemi.eu.

As enlargement and funding of our Association are two of the Board's main targets, I hope that a meeting with the French Ministry of European Affairs will open the door(s) to many EU offices and give us the opportunity to make ourselves better known among EU delegates and hopefully trigger EU funding. Until then we have to rely on our internal networking, which this year has given us one more member - Emigration Museum in Gdynia, Poland and one potential the At Home in Europe, which is

part of the Soros Foundation/ Open Society Initiative for Europe, «conducting research and advocacy to ensure equal rights and social cohesion in a climate of political tension, global recession, and rapidly expanding diversity». In that respect, I will thank our Secretary for connecting us with Mr. Paul Lappalainen, and for inviting him to the 2013 conference as representative for the Soros Foundation. Paul Lappalainen is a Senior Advisor with the Swedish Equality Ombudsman. He is a US/Swedish lawyer who has been working on discrimination in Sweden and Europe for many years. He is closely involved in various city and national government networks on best practices in tackling discrimination and promoting equality. He has experience as a civil servant, NGO activist, local politician, and lawyer. He will also be the keynote speaker at the our conference.

In closing, I would like to draw your attention to another matter that needs discussing. First of all the fact that your Board is now entering the final year of its three-year term so elections are due to be held next year. That means that you need to think about who to elect next that have the talent and energy to take the organisation a step forward. You should also consider which theme to choose for next year's conference. The Board wishes to put a stronger focus on youth migration and also how social media transform networks and facilitate migration.

Once again I would like to thank again Adam Walaszek, Agnieszka Stasiewicz-Bieńkowska and their colleagues for hosting the Annual Meeting in Poland in 2012. And we also thank Mathias Nilsson and his colleagues for making their preparations to host us for the first time in Karlstad.