



EAPS Advisory Board, Monday, 21 January 2019 (10:00-12:00) at the European School of Management and Technology, Schloßplatz 1, 10178 Berlin, Germany

Report (draft)

1. Opening.

The meeting was opened by Jane Falkingham, President of EAPS, who explained that all Affiliated Institutions of EAPS were invited to join this meeting of the EAPS Advisory Board. This meeting was organized jointly with Population Europe, as we are all the same family. This Advisory Board can raise any topic it wishes to discuss and advise the Council on the scientific program of EAPS. The EAPS Council is especially interested to hear the Board's views on how EAPS can best serve its members, which new activities could be considered, how to promote our discipline (notably in the policy arena) and how to increase the visibility of population studies

Nico van Nimwegen, Executive Director of EAPS, explained that in the past the Advisory Board used to meet during the European Population Conferences. But since the programs of the EPCs are very full and there was hardly time for discussion, the Council decided to change this. The current Advisory Board meeting was organized with the kind collaboration of Population Europe. Because most if not all Affiliated Institutions of EAPS are also a partner in Population Europe it only seemed logical and efficient to collaborate and have this joint meeting with Population Europe. Members of the Board welcomed this initiative of the Council and asked if there were special conditions to join EAPS as an Affiliated Institution. Nico informed the Board that any institution in the population field can just write to the Council with a request to become affiliated. Once affiliated, these institutions are part of the EAPS network; they will receive and can share information on their activities, job openings etc. But most important is that they can help to build our discipline and the scientific program of EAPS, for instance by organizing and/or hosting and/or sponsoring an EAPS event, like a workshop or a working group meeting. There is no fixed affiliation fee anymore (see discussion below), but voluntary financial contributions are of course very welcome since they enable the Council to support scientific activities.

2. Training in demography

Jane mentioned that there is a new request on the table from the European Doctoral School for Demography (EDSD) for financial support when the school will be in Barcelona. The Council already approved financial support for the current school year in Odense to help cover the travel cost of lecturers. The floor was opened for a round of discussion on training and related topics.

Zsolt Speder raised several issues. **Research collaboration:** can EAPS promote European collaborative research at an institutional level? Can EAPS for instance help put forth a programme where institutions are collaborating on a certain topic? This could also include perhaps the pooling of resources from participating institutes. **Knowledge transfer:** several training activities exist in the field, such as the EDSD, the MPIDR school, and various summer schools. Can EAPS help to support focused, low-budget seminars/teaching events? EAPS could for instance look at the demand-supply side, help with financing, advertise. Zsolt also mentioned the need to help institutions how to handle media attention, interaction with policy and how best to exchange information, but here it was mentioned that this is the typical mandate of Population Europe.



Tommy Bengtsson picked up on the issue of training. He noted that EDSD has a great track record, is moving around Europe, and has helped create new generations of demographers, but is also confronted with several challenges. For instance in EDSD there is uneven regional participation, some countries cannot send students out for the whole year as there is then not enough time to write a thesis, so some countries have very few applications. In his view, the EDSD program is too long and we may need shorter (several months) and more focused, courses. In between EDSD and shorter (1-2 weeks) summer schools in his view there is a need for “intermediate” programs, and Lund is interested to host. But he adds that this is difficult to get funded. MPIDR has some courses like that. Jane mentioned that the financial models of universities are changing; summer schools are often expensive and seen as revenue raising activities. Would EAPS-affiliated courses be cheaper?

Regarding EDSD and some of the issues that were raised, including the financial support by EAPS, Nico mentioned that EAPS is again going to organize an evaluation of EDSD. This could be a good starting point to discuss the challenges and where EDSD should go. EDSD has to look for sustainable options. In a broader perspective, a discussion on the future of demographic training in Europe seems to be needed as well. Jane mentioned that the Council is considering to establish an education/training committee or working group in EAPS to address these issues.

Tomas Kucera noted that we need to think carefully about content and format of training courses and the way to finance them; perhaps there are options in the framework of the Erasmus program; Prague would certainly be interested. On a critical note he questioned if these summer schools are effective and efficient? Some people come mainly for visiting & relaxing. He would prefer to spread summer schools in 2-3 specialised courses over 2-3 yrs. Could be short-stays, focused lecturing of invited international lecturers.

Melinda Mills commented that in discussing the future of EDSD and demographic training in general, we need to look at the changing ecosystem of training and education and avoid unintended competition of different initiatives. An EAPS Committee or Working Groups could look more carefully at this, also enhancing potential collaboration. As an example of the latter she mentioned some there are associations who fund student and lecturing exchanges between partner institutions, e.g. for several months; this could be an option; collaborative funding could cover travel, accommodation.

Tomas Sobotka added that we need to find out what is most needed? Where is the largest potential, also from the students’ perspective. Melinda mentioned that in her view “it’s the data”: there is a whole new data landscape, data management, data availability, data visualisation and the like and this needs to be covered better.

Luule Sakkeus added that six people from their side participated in EDSD and were happy about that. Three month courses (like MPIDR) are very useful too, in addition to EDSD.

Albert Esteve observed that you need at least a year to create demographers, to teach them basic skills, establish links and relations. A programme like EDSD to train some 20 new demographers per year is still highly needed in his view. But we also need a Master programme, like a one year master. UAB might accept such a Demography Master, offering a degree, be flexible in charging fees, and with a minimum of overheads. He wonders if we can share such a Master between universities, e.g. one year in Barcelona and the next year somewhere else?



Tommy proposed that an EAPS committee/group also makes an inventory/survey of existing training programs to have a clear view of what is available. EAPS could facilitate this overview, and put links to programs on the website. Andreas Edel noted that it would also be helpful then to draft a short web text stating why studying demography is important when we publish the overview. A “one stop shop” for demographic training. Tomas added that we also need to reach out and try to find what students want/need regarding courses, summer schools and the like.

Jane concluded the discussion by summarizing that it definitely looks that we need to revisit education and training in EAPS and to create a committee or group on training to study the various options. EAPS could see how to facilitate this group, and the possible survey of what is going on. Ideally EAPS would do this in collaboration with one of the Affiliated Institutions; and of course the EAPS website is available to host information on the various programs, but someone has to provide that information since EAPS does not have the staff to do so. Jane mentioned that there will also be a committee for the evaluation of EDSD, and although these groups have different mandates, ideally these two groups should interact.

3. Other Activities

Jane Falkingham introduced this topic by stating that EAPS is based on members, both individual and institutional, and their initiatives. Currently EAPS has 2 working groups (on Mortality and on Migrant fertility). There is an Open call for Activities on the website in an effort to try to involve more members. The Council would also like to hear the Boards views on affiliation fees.

Norbert Schneider suggested to also think about creating sections in EAPS, in addition to working groups, (as was done in the German Association) to more actively involve the members.

Tommy stated the need to have more working groups, for instance on international migration, and on population ageing. Graziella Caselli also supported the idea to have more working groups; could this be in collaboration with IUSSP, other institutions and associations in Europe? A workshop on migration is definitely needed and could be repeated each two years or so. Graziella strongly supports summer schools; we could for instance have a summer school on migration just before or after the EPC 2020 conference, and could ask the Padova colleagues to organize this.

Zsolt remarked that the GGP User Conference is a good example of institutional collaboration in medium size conferences; perhaps EAPS could be involved here.

Jane summarized by inviting all institutions to send suggestions for (collaborative) activities. EAPS is open to facilitate these initiatives where possible.

Regarding a possible affiliation fee, it was remarked that this is not unusual, but that fees need to be adjusted to the economic strength of the institutions. It was also noted that sometimes institutions pay the individual fees of their staff, so we don't want them paying twice. Tomas Sobotka reminded the Board that the Council would highly welcome if Affiliated Institutions would sponsor EAPS activities rather than collecting general fees every year. The Board agreed that this approach could work well and looks promising.



4. Publications

Tomas Sobotka stated that the Council is looking at the possibility to launch a new publication series with working title “Population Perspectives” with short, easy to read, focused articles and aimed at a wider audience, also in policy circles. We have discussed this with Population Europe and concluded that currently this is not feasible because of financial reasons. In the Board it was noted that although this new series may be interesting and in high demand, the issue of Open Access is crucial. Many countries are moving to the so-called “Plan S”: Open access by 2020, and increasingly research councils do not allow non-open access publications. EAPS urgently needs to think about open access for ALL its publications. This new series could work only if it is OA. Vlada Stankuniene mentioned the need for a policy newsletter which shares information useful for policy makers; countries try to manage and share information on policy decisions; short texts with summaries are useful. Andreas remarked that Population Europe could help with this, but we should avoid to do things double as Population Europe already has several types of these publications.

5. International collaboration

Nico raised the issue of collaboration with IUSSP and regional population associations. There is a move towards organizing joint sessions at each other’s conferences. EAPS for instance co-organized a regional associations invited session in Cape Town at the IUSSP conference in 2017; EAPS also organized an invited session at the Asian Population Association (APA) conference in Shanghai in 2018, and EAPS participated in an invited session at the conference of the Latin American Population Association (ALAP) in Puebla, Mexico in 2018. APA also organized an invited session at EPC 2018 in Brussels. The EAPS Council looks favourably at these collaborations, which are welcomed by all regional associations and by the IUSSP. Another joint session with regional associations will take place at the upcoming International Population Conference of the IUSSP in Hyderabad, India in 2021, but before that we will have our own EPC 2020 in Padova where we can think of joint sessions.

Collaboration with other population associations at the level of Working Groups may be more difficult, and Zsolt mentioned that we first need to establish these groups and have them work before reaching out to others. Graziella remarked that Italian colleagues would be willing to organize a workshop on international migration with EAPS.

6. Policy Dialogue

The interaction with policy makers was mentioned as a priority by several members. It was noted that this is the primary domain and expertise of Population Europe and we should avoid duplication. Close collaboration of EAPS and its Working groups with Population Europe is needed with EAPS focusing on the science and training parts, and Population Europe on the communication, policies and dissemination parts.



On the topic of how to promote our discipline in the policy arena, Jane invited Andreas to give his views as **Population Europe** is the key player in this field and was especially created with this mandate of being an interface between population experts and policy makers. Andreas noted that Population Europe has a long track record of organizing short, focused, targeted policy oriented expert meetings (Events) in Brussels and elsewhere. These Events are effective, quite cheap, working well, and aim at clear outcomes (policy briefs). Meetings can be also organized to communicate project results, outcomes of Working Groups etc. Keeping the dialogue open with the policy community is a challenge; the general feeling in the policy community is that ‘we already know all about the demographic challenges’. We need to keep informing about the specifics and variations in demographic trends, such as “population diversity”. The need for accessible messages remains the same and we will always need to think about how to translate our knowledge into something useful addressing public and policy concerns, debates.

7. Closing

Jane closed the meeting, thanking all for their inputs and the lively discussion. It definitely seems that this way of meeting of the Advisory Board is a good one, and reading the Board’s positive reaction it was decided to do so. As a follow up, Jane stated that the EAPS Council will create an EAPS committee on Demographic Training, will form an ESDS Evaluation Committee (both committees would ideally interact), and will send out a new call for proposals for working groups, for instance on international migration and population ageing. Jane thanked Andreas Edel and his team for their collaboration and hospitality for this joint meeting of Affiliated Institutions/Population Europe partners.

The Hague, April 2019