

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON THE COREP, ITS RESPONSIBILITIES, ACTIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Dear Members of AESOP's Council of Representatives (CoRep),

This report presents the results of the questionnaire conducted between February and April 2013 among the members of the Council of Representatives.

Recently, the CoRep meetings have become subject of discussion. While the relevance of the CoRep as AESOP's decision-making body is obvious, the involvement of the CoRep in the various activities has been questioned. In particular, members' involvement during the CoRep meetings proved to be a matter of concern. Due to the increasing number of activities, the interaction between the Executive Committee and the Council of Representatives has developed into a one sided way of interacting, the ExCo sharing with the CoRep all AESOP's activities. Ample time remains for the CoRep to vote for executive members, new member schools or locations for AESOP events. Obviously, no room is left during the meetings to interact on various other and perhaps more strategic issues.

The questionnaire conducted has as its purpose to shine a light upon the issues described above. CoRep members were invited to critically reflect upon the CoRep meetings, and to share ideas, possibilities and visions to enhance interactions. With the feedback received and outlined in this report, I hope we can substantially enhance the CoRep meetings, becoming a source of inspiration.

Gert de Roo

President of AESOP

Out of 35, 31 CoRep members gave substantial feedback. Two out of the four not replying informed me about being too busy at that time and about being new to the CoRep and therefore not informed enough to reply. Many thanks to all participating in this project.

Question 1

The CoRep is AESOP's decision-making body. Should the decisions to be decided upon, such as voting for members of executive bodies, accepting new member schools, conference locations and more...

- a. ... remain the essential part of the CoRep meeting?
- b. ... be well prepared in advance to reduce the time spent on voting, and free up time to explore other, more strategic issues?
- c. ... be dealt with electronically, via email or website, to allow the meeting to invest in discussing new initiatives?
- d. Other:

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, all did answer question 1. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 31.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

The decisions made by the CoRep ..

- A. **(22,6%)** should remain the essential part of the CoRep meeting (7)
- B. **(77,4%))** should be well prepared in advance to reduce the time spent on voting (24)
- C. **(13,0%)** should be dealt with electronically (13)

Comments

A; comments regarding the statement that decision making should remain the essential part of the CoRep meetings

- "I think we cannot vote too many things in advance. A debate, even on a supposed minor subject such as accepting new members can be essential. It allows people to express ideas, postures and the result of a vote could be very different on the internet and in the room. Just an example: should we accept new members using the term 'planning' in one of their diplomas, but who are in fact far away from our culture (management, business, etc.)? I think we cannot rely upon a report made by our colleagues."
- "It is helpful when issues can be discussed and alternative viewpoints clarified. However, current austerity issues may mean that fewer representatives can attend. In terms of decision-making, the arrangements need to retain transparency and thoughtfulness."



B; comments regarding the statement that decision making should be well-prepared in advance in order to reduce time spent on voting

- “Except for the election of executive boards.”
- “It might even be necessary to have two sessions; it is not necessary that they are mixed elective activities with the discussion of general strategies from AESOP”
- “Ideally, with time permitting, materials critical to decision-taking do need to be circulated ahead of meetings to enable informed discussion and so that everyone is ‘up to speed’. What constitutes ‘more strategic issues’ is difficult to answer in the sense that issues will likely vary – but there are few times when such an international group of people can be assembled to deliberate issues of strategic direction and provide feed-forward. It would be useful to know how other Co-Reps obtain input from members.

General comment

- “I don’t think this should be a strategic issue to dedicate too much time to”.

Question 2

The CoRep consists of 35 members, however average attendance is consistently low. For the functioning of the CoRep it is important to identify why this is. Please share your experience with us:

- As a CoRep member I tend to participate at all meetings*
- There is a lack of finances to support me participating in the CoRep meetings*
- Information about the moment of the meeting arrives late, resulting in a conflict with other appointments*
- The moment of the year (spring) the CoRep meeting takes place conflicts with my agenda during this period*
- Other:*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 2 did not answer question 1. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 29.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

Regarding the experience of attending CoRep meetings

- (34,48%)** As a CoRep member I tend to participate at all meetings (10)
- (62,07%)** There is a lack of finances to support me participating in CoRep meetings (18)
- (20,69%)** Information about the moment of the meeting arrives late, resulting in a conflict with other appointments (6)



- D. **(17,24%)** The moment of the year (spring) the CoRep meeting takes place conflicts with my agenda during this period (5)

Comments

A; comments regarding trying to attend all meetings

- "I would only like to slightly suggest an earlier date of the meeting - It is of course issue for discussion but maybe end of January or February will be more convenient (It would be a mid-term meeting – ExCo in early autumn, Exco and CoRep in July)"
- "It was critical that the (last) meeting was 'attached' to the conference to keep costs down (essentially bundling the costs into a research grant)"

B; comments regarding lack of supporting finances for participating in meetings

- "Considering economic difficulties suffered by (..) universities, it is going to be almost impossible to get funds to attend two meetings abroad on annual bases."
- "We are clearly facing bad days (..) It deterred me to come to both events last year and I am still struggling to secure funding for upcoming meetings. And as far as I know, my institute is one of the wealthier in the country... If things do not improve in the following years, I will not go for a new term."
- "The lack of funding is a substantial barrier to us in attending CoRep meetings. Because of financial difficulties and according to the rules of our university we could get financial support (..) for trips abroad only once a year and in case of accepted conference abstract – the rest is paid personally".
- "There are currently many economic constraints of universities to finance the voyages of the teachers. Especially in the countries of South of Europe."
- "The university management tends to be reluctant to fund international meetings unless the staff is delivering a paper/speech/lecture. It may often be necessary to explain to the university boards the importance of the Association and the role of CoRep, Responsibility as a CoRep member, etc."

D; comments regarding dates of the meeting conflicting with personal agenda's

- "The meeting potentially clashes with teaching commitments (as it does this year, sadly)"

General comments

- "General conflicts and scheduling time (at any time, not specific) and finances are problems."
- "A general observation: both the annual conference and the Head of Schools meetings should be announced the year before (it's not just a question of agenda but also of getting time enough for financial support applications within our universities and research institutes)."

Question 3

Every two years members of the CoRep are being (re)elected. To be well prepared...

- ... a talk to the previous CoRep member of one's country is enough to take over*
- ... an introduction for new members ahead of their first CoRep meeting is desirable*



- c. ... a manual for CoRep members is a must, explaining clearly the role, tasks, duties and such
- d. Other:

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 3 did not answer question 3. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 28.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

After (re-)election, members of the CoRep should

- A. **(28,6%)** talk to the previous CoRep member before taking over (8)
- B. **(46,4%)** be introduced ahead of their first CoRep meeting (13)
- C. **(53,6%)** dispose of a manual for CoRep members, explaining clearly the role, tasks, duties and such (15)

Comments

A; comments regarding new members talking to previous CoRep members before taking over

- "There should be as much involvement as possible of schools' members in AESOP activities"

B; comments regarding introduction of new members prior to their first CoRep meeting

- "In my case, I did not receive any instruction or orientation when I became a CoRep member (..) I did not receive an official written confirmation. (..) Hopefully, in my first meeting that I attend, I will get conveniently posted in my new position."
- "It may be a good idea to have at least one CoRep meeting where the current (about to be ex-)member of the CoRep attends with the new/future member"
- "I think this would be helpful as expectations may differ from the practice of a previous representative."

C; comments regarding the disposal of a manual for CoRep members

- "A manual is no absolute must, but it would be nice"
- "A manual could be an asset explaining clearly the role, tasks, duties and such"
- "If it is a brief instruction, good idea"

Question 4

AESOP has become more dynamic, and often has to move fast in processes of decision-making. In response to this electronic elections have taken place now and then.



- a. *This could become routine*
- b. *Electronic elections are fine, however they need to be preceded by a period in which CoRep members are invited to share opinions regarding the decision to be taken*
- c. *This is acceptable for minor decisions, however major ones have to be taken at the official meetings (major ones are those considered by the CoRep as major)*
- d. *Electronic elections should be minimal, as all decisions to be taken by the CoRep should be open for face-to-face discussions*
- e. *Other:.*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, all answered question 1. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 31.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

In response of the need to move faster in the process of decision-making, now and then electronic elections have taken place.

- A. **(16,1%)** This could become routine (5)
- B. **(54,8%)** Electronic elections are fine, however they need to be preceded by a period in which CoRep members are invited to share opinions regarding the decision to be taken (17)
- C. **(41,9)** This is acceptable for minor decisions, however major ones have to be taken at the official meetings (major ones are those considered by the CoRep as major) (13)
- D. **(19,4%)** Electronic elections should be minimal, as all decisions to be taken by the CoRep should be open for face-to-face discussions (6)

Comments

A; comments regarding voting becoming routine

- "If 'B' is considered, the voting can be done electronically"

C; comments regarding voting and its use for minor decision, whereas major ones have to be taken at the official meetings.

- "It depends not so much on the weight - important issues can be voted on electronically – but on whether the issue is defined clear enough. If not, sharing thoughts and having a discussion seem appropriate."

D: comments regarding the stake of electronic elections should be minimal

- "I favour face-to-face, but expediting this is difficult"
-



Question 5

The CoRep meetings are held twice a year, one in July, one in April-May. What do you think of this unbalanced distribution of meetings?

- a. *It is not a problem*
- b. *It is not a problem, however the meetings could differ in character to avoid overlap and to get focused, for example one on strategic issues while the other could be for example on information sharing and decision-making*
- c. *Better to have the meeting every half year, which means the March-May meeting should be in December, January or February, independent from the Heads of Schools meeting*
- d. *Better to have the meeting every half year, which means the March-May meeting should be in December, January or February, jointly with the Heads of Schools meeting*
- e. *Better to have the meeting every half year, and to differentiate both meetings substantially, avoiding overlap and to allow meetings to focus on particular agendas*
- f. *Other:*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 1 did not answer question 5. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 31.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

What do you think of this unbalanced distribution of meetings?

- A. **(13,3%)** It is not a problem (4)
- B. **(30,0%)** It is not a problem, however the meetings could differ in character to avoid overlap and to get focused, for example one on strategic issues while the other could be for example on information sharing and decision-making (9)
- C. **(6,7%)** Better to have the meeting every half year, which means the March-May meeting should be in December, January or February, independent from the Heads of Schools meeting (2)
- D. **(33,3%)** Better to have the meeting every half year, which means the March-May meeting should be in December, January or February, jointly with the Heads of Schools meeting (10)
- E. **(26,27%)** Better to have the meeting every half year, and to differentiate both meetings substantially, avoiding overlap and to allow meetings to focus on particular agendas (8)

Comments

A; comments regarding the unbalanced distribution being not a problem

- “Looks to me like this is a practical solution with low costs, OK!”

B; comments regarding the unbalanced distribution not being a problem; however, meetings should differ in character and avoid overlap



- Agreed. The nature of the meetings needs to be clear – my impression of the CoRep meeting and the information provided at the Annual General Meeting were very similar.

C; comments regarding having the meeting every half year, which means the March-May meeting should be in December, January or February, independent from the Heads of Schools meeting

- “It seems to me that a gap between the meetings might be helpful. Ideally meetings should not fall in the same semester. I am not clear about the link/overlap between Head of Schools meeting and CoReps.”

D: comments regarding having the meeting every half year, which means the March-May meeting should be in December, January or February, jointly with the Heads of Schools meeting

- “The CoRep should be in combination with the Head of Schools meeting!”
- “The synergies of having the CoRep jointly with the Head of Schools of meeting is very high and should not be compromised (attendance to CoRep may even fall further if not followed by HoS)”
- “I would like to recommend to keep it twice a year. I like especially the ‘little’ meeting compared to the ‘big annual event’. The atmosphere is better and we are more focused on our duties, not on attending conferences and preparing ourselves to present a paper”.

E: comments regarding having the meeting every half and to differentiate both meetings substantially

- “It seems there is scope for scrutiny/decision taking and a more creative/bottom up input.”

General comments

- “It is probably good to avoid having the meeting too close to the annual conference; also having two meetings together (CoRep-HoS) is important – I suspect there could be even less participation if separate”
- “CoRep and Head of Schools meetings should NOT be separated. March-May is OK as long as the specific dates are announced more in advance.”
- “September to February is a very busy teaching period for me (and perhaps others) so this may affect attendance”
- “It is probably better to have an even distribution of the two meetings within a period of 6 months, yet the important issue is to have a clearly differentiated focus on the two”
- “I recommend other dates: January, and late August”

Question 6

The CoRep meetings are held as a joint activity with another initiative, in the spring with the Heads of School meeting and in July ahead of AESOP's Annual Congress.



- a. *This is smart planning and should remain*
- b. *This is crucial to allow people to justify to participate*
- c. *It is difficult to attend meetings that last multiple days and this should be reconsidered*
- d. *Other:*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, all answered question 6. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 31.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

CoRep meetings are held as a joint activity with another initiative, in the spring with the Heads of School meeting and in July ahead of AESOP's Annual Congress.

- A. **(54,8%)** This is smart planning and should remain (17)
- B. **(67,7%)** This is crucial to allow people to justify to participate (21)
- C. **(3,2%)** It is difficult to attend meetings that last multiple days and this should be reconsidered (1)

Comments

C; It is difficult to attend meetings that last multiple days and this should be reconsidered

- "No, I think it makes sense to combine things. It makes no sense to travel around Europe for a 1 day meeting and it isn't by the way sustainable"

General comments

- "I'd prefer not July, January and late August are better"
- "Where possible (if not desirable) proximity to an airport is a consideration is for those not based in mainland Europe. "
- "I cannot go to two meetings a year without an opportunity to present also a communication (paper, poster)"
- "Better to have a once-a-year meeting, jointly with the Head of Schools meeting."

Question 7

A major part of the CoRep meetings are being used to share information.

- a. *Yes, this is helpful as I have no idea what is going on*
- b. *Yes, this is important, and I would like to know even more*
- c. *Yes, however I would only like to know if an initiative is progressing or not*
- d. *Yes, however I would be interested in the way initiatives relate to a wider strategy*



- e. *No, the website and the newsletter inform us already about what is going on – however it is wise to address all these initiatives within the CoRep meeting as well, so we can ask questions in case we want to*
- f. *No, the website and the newsletter tell us already about what is going on – therefore the CoRep meeting is rather repetitive, which shouldn't be*
- g. *Other:*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 2 did not answer question 7. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 29.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

A major part of the CoRep meetings are being used to share information.

- A. **(10,3%)** Yes, this is helpful as I have no idea what is going on (3)
- B. **(34,5%)** Yes, this is important, and I would like to know even more (10)
- C. **(17,2%)** Yes, however I would only like to know if an initiative is progressing or not (5)
- D. **(48,3%)** Yes, however I would be interested in the way initiatives relate to a wider strategy (14)
- E. **(27,6%)** No, the website and the newsletter inform us already about what is going on – however it is wise to address all these initiatives within the CoRep meeting as well, so we can ask questions in case we want to (8)
- F. **(- %)** No, the website and the newsletter tell us already about what is going on – therefore the CoRep meeting is rather repetitive, which shouldn't be (0)

Comments

E; comments regarding the statement that the website and newsletter already tell what's going on – and therefore renders the CoRep meeting rather repetitive

- “No, but perhaps I am in this regard old-fashioned. All these new forms of communication are extremely useful but cannot compensate face-to-face communication”
- “It seems to me that it is helpful to create an environment for some bottom-up inputs – whilst the e-newsletter is excellent for highlighting issues and flagging issues to colleagues, it is relatively passive – so the opportunity for discussion draws attention to emerging tissues making the CoRep more proactive.”

General comments

- “The website and the newsletter mainly inform about ongoing activities – it would be good to know about what is planned to be done ahead of real action – last CoRep meetings were a bit difficult in this regard – CoReps were facing information that ‘we’ (AESOP) are doing a lot of things of which CoReps heard of for the first time – there were comments about it that the CoRep had no idea that it was so active”
- “These meetings must, at the outset, an introduction by the President, not only indicating the agenda of the day, but making a balance of the overall situation and



the progress of the initiatives underway. Also, may be interesting to include self-criticism”

Question 8

What should the CoRep meeting be about? The CoRep’s responsibilities are well explained by AESOP’s Charter, Article 15c. Most importantly the CoRep is defining the policies and programmes of the Association. The question is how to see this process of ‘defining’? Would this be...

- a. Decision-making only
- b. Decision-making and information sharing
- c. Decision-making, information sharing and initiating new ideas
- d. Decision-making, information sharing and consultation & advice
- e. Other:

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, all answered question 7. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 31.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

What should the CoRep meeting be about? Most importantly the CoRep is defining the policies and programmes of the Association. What is this process of defining?

- A. (-) Decision-making only (0)
- B. (3,2%) Decision-making and information sharing (1)
- C. (67,7%) Decision-making, information sharing and initiating new ideas (21)
- D. (64,5%) Decision-making, information sharing and consultation & advice (20)

Comments

C; comments regarding the CoRep involved in decision making, information sharing and new ideas

- I agree, but information sharing should constitute the minor part of the meeting
- It seems to me that this does open up a more influential avenue for gathering ideas and ‘adding definition’ which blends with some of the ideas of advice captured in D.

General comments

- “What I like in the spring meeting is that we have time to exchange during the CoRep but also during Head of Schools conferences about our different national experiences. (..) It helps to change our programs back home.



Question 9

Suggestions are appreciated about what particular issues the CoRep could or should be consulted or could be asked for advice:

- a. To propose topics to the agenda of CoRep meetings
- b. Checking applications for membership by CoRep members from the same country
- c. The desire to officially set up a relationship with a partner organization
- d. Expanding the website with in various ways
- e. Other:

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 3 did not answer question 9. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 28.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

About what particular issues could or should the CoRep be consulted or asked for advice?

- A. **(89,3%)** To propose topics to the agenda of CoRep meetings (25)
- B. **(32,1%)** To check applications for membership by CoRep members from the same country (9)
- C. **(35,7%)** The desire to officially set up a relationship with a partner organization (10)
- D. **(10,7%)** Expanding the website in various ways (3)

Comments

A; comments regarding topic suggestions for the CoRep meeting agenda

- “Perhaps there could be topics/workshops for the discussion (similar to how the Head of Schools meetings are organized?) For instance planning research may be a good addition to the on-going emphasis on planning education”
- “Suggestion: Aesop should examine the diversity of academic cultures shaping our perception of what establishes a high academic quality of planning research. The current debate on Flyvbjerg’s article on PlaNet (do planners reflect upon their failures as well?) or the increasing number of conference abstracts by PhD candidates (often with supervisor as co-author) or the doubt cast upon self-citation (plagiarism, laziness, or dissemination of ideas to different audiences?) are examples of the changing appreciation of the quality of planning research. I’m sure everybody has an opinion on this, but I doubt that we all have the *same* opinion. AESOP should actively examine the core qualities of academic research in our field”
- “Yes, the CoRep should suggest topics for meetings. E.G., the dramatic changes in higher education and how to make planning education resilient to those changes; dominance of STEM over social sciences, etc.”

B; comments regarding the checking of applications for membership by CoRep members from the same country



- "I would not recommend point B for risk of conflicts. The CoRep could propose session titles for the national congress"
- "Potentially, but what information/advic

E; comments regarding other issues the CoRep could/should be concerned with;

- "An assessment of AESOP activities after they are held (congresses, meetings, workshops, publications; currently it is only the form of presenting information about what happened where).
- "A forum for a discussion on rooms for improvement, ideas for future activities or future approach in existing activities"
- "The problem of the language can be important if news is broadcasted in the newsletter or WEB. Is it perhaps possible to add a small summary in a Latin language: French, Spanish, Italian?"

Question 10

Aside from being AESOP's decision-making body, the CoRep is also a gathering of National Representatives, representing the planning schools in a particular country. This element has never been explored fully. Is this linkage important enough to explore further?

- No, this is not the core business of the CoRep*
- No, there are other means to get an overview of national affairs*
- The CoRep could report on the development of planning schools within the various countries*
- The CoRep can be a platform to sharing developments at the national level, considered of importance for AESOP and its members*
- Other:*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 3 did not answer question 9. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 28.

Answers (multiple answers possible)

Is this linkage important enough to explore further?

- (13,8%)** No, this is not the core business of the CoRep (4)
- (3,4%)** No, there are other means to get an overview of national affairs (1)
- (24,1%)** The CoRep could report on the development of planning schools within the various countries (7)
- (58,6%)** The CoRep can be a platform to sharing developments at the national level, considered of importance for AESOP and its members (17)

Comments



D; comments regarding the CoRep being a platform to sharing developments at the national level, considered of importance for AESOP and its members

- “Overlap with the Head of Schools meetings should be avoided”
- “I think listening to international experiences (not the ones from your own country) is of interest”

General comments

- “The CoRep can be a platform to sharing developments at the national level, ONLY if considered of importance for AESOP and its members.”
- “This is not the question of CoRep routine, but on AESOP activities. Should AESOP do mapping of national specific/development?”
- “There is one very important difference between the conception of teaching between Anglo-Saxon countries and those of Latin origin, in what refers to the planning. The Bologna Plan has failed to unify criteria”
- “I would assume this is the business of the Head of Schools meeting”
- “Personally – and from a UK perspective – AESOP might be a useful platform to develop an objective overview of the planning schools as these are very different across the devolved UK but also within the schools (eg – and simplistically - large/small; global players/local regional). This may be a UK matter (only) but it strikes me that it is important to differentiate between the planning schools and the RTPI (especially as schools have planning courses which are jointly accredited by other professional bodies). Obtaining information from (competing) schools, however, may be problematic.”

Question 11

It could be desirable to invite CoRep members to interact or get in touch with individual member schools within their country:

- In case a member school is persistent in ignoring to contribute its membership fee (for the Treasurer it is quite often difficult to allocate and connect with the responsible person within a school)*
- In urging a member school presenting itself better on the various digital pages AESOP has*
- Identifying active individuals willing to support AESOP in one of its official activities and committees*
- Stimulating member schools to become actively involved in one of AESOP’s activities (such as hosting a European Urban Summer School, a Young Academics event, a lecture within AESOP-IFHP Lecture Series, organizing a Heads of Schools meeting)*
- Other:*

Analysis

Of the 31 Representatives that returned the survey, 6 did not answer question 11. Total N of respondents to this question is thus 25.



Answers (multiple answers possible)

It could be desirable to invite CoRep members to interact or get in touch with individual member schools within their country

- E. **(32,0%)** In case a member school is persistent in ignoring to contribute its membership fee (8)
- F. **(24,0%)** In urging a member school presenting itself better on the various digital pages AESOP has (6)
- G. **(44,0%)** Identifying active individuals willing to support AESOP in one of its official activities and committees (11)
- H. **(60,0%)** Stimulating member schools to become actively involved in one of AESOP's activities (15)

Comments

A; comments regarding member school's persistence in ignoring to contribute its membership fee

- "Treasurer can ask advice from CoRep members about who to approach"

E; other comments

- "No, this should be done by the AESOP secretariat"
- "To support the mediation of the information about AESOP activities (which is spread via web and other channels) and activate member schools to participate on them and in opposite to mediate the information and interests of member schools to the official structures of AESOP"
- "Stimulating member schools to become actively involved in one of AESOP's activities (such as hosting a European Summer School, a Young Academics event, a lecture within AESOP-IFHP Lecture Series, organizing Head of Schools meeting) and stimulate information and promotion of agreements between the members to participate in projects (including research) internationally."
- "Some of these issues are easier to assist with than others – but ideally I would anticipate being able to help with contacts without being the bailiff"

Question 12

Would it be acceptable to invite CoRep members to identify non-member schools in their country which are potentially interesting becoming part of the AESOP network and to analyse why these schools are not (yet) part of the AESOP network?

Answers

- Yes: **(88,5%)** (22)
- No: **(7,4%)** (2)
- Maybe **(3,7%)** (1)
- Don't Know **(-)** (0)
- No answer: **(7,4%)** (2)



Comments

Yes

- Informally yes, time permitting (to an extent)
- Yes, it will be acceptable
- My answer is yes. Indeed, it is hard to believe that there are academics in Europe working in the planning field that are not aware of AESOP. The relevant question seems to be why some countries in Europe, such as France and Spain, for instance, have such a small representation in AESOP as compared to the size and importance of the respective planning education systems? Is it a question of language? Or there are other reasons. If that's the case they should be investigated.
- Yes, it is acceptable and welcomed
- Yes, it would be a good idea
- Yes, if this further action fits to an AESOP strategy or main goal: e..g. to grow anyway, to have most of all schools as members..
- Yes, although 'analysing' has to be done by the not-yet-member-schools
- We have currently only one planning school in Bulgaria, yet there are indications for considering a second programme. The contact with a newly established programme would be surely helpful in spreading the information about AESOP network and its potential in supporting the development of high quality planning education.
- Yes, they may be asked to explore this and submit a short report
- Yes, of course. I know the Department of Building and Environmental Sciences in the University of Reunion Island, which is interested by being an AESOP member. Actually they are in the process of becoming an APERAU member, under the leading action of Divya Leducq, Associate Professor, divya.leducq@univ-reunion.fr. She defends her thesis in planning and urbanism focusing on developing territories.

Maybe

- It will depend on how far this would be expected to go (i.e. I would think it should be possible for CoRes to phone up the HoS in that university to explain AESOP and it's membership benefits and ask why they are not member, but this would be different to a deep analysis which I think would not be appropriate.

No

- No, but it may be possible to encourage CoReps to disseminate the information about activity of AESOP, its webpage, newsletter
- No, CoRep members could only disseminate information about AESOP to non-member Schools in their country

No answer

- It is necessary to be self-critical. The reality is that, the AESOP, does not have enough diffusion of their activities to constitute an incentive for the various schools

of planning, especially in schools of the South of Europe. The concept of planning who handles the AESOP is understood as too abstract. For these schools is more interesting the planning design or political and public activity in relation to the management of the territory (*“la planification and l’aménagement du territoire”* (fr.)). This "gap" is very, very difficult to overcome, because we start of very different cultural traditions

Question 13

Future involvement of the CoRep is desired regarding the ‘Sense of History’ project to set up a database which will be accessible to all and which includes top class examples of planning practices (visions, strategies, ideas, actions, programmes and practitioners) having had a serious effect on the development and progress of our discipline. To reach out to the various countries an obvious move would be to invite the CoRep members to set up a national team to support the ‘Sense of History’ project. The question is, is the CoRep (are you personally...) willing to support this AESOP initiative?

Answers

- Yes: **(55,6%)** (15)
- No: **(11,1%)** (3)
- Maybe **(14,8%)** (4)
- Don't Know **(11,1%)** (3)
- No answer: **(7,4%)** (2)

Comments

Yes

- Yes, in principle – but not sure about the time commitment
- Yes, it is a good idea – but I will not be able to participate in it personally
- Yes, I am. However there are some dangers in this kind of open initiative (as I'm sure the promoters of the idea are very much aware of). We have to be particularly careful selecting the cases, because as we all know for experience, often times the best practices of today (or of here) may well be the best jokes of tomorrow (or of there). The Sense of History requires the consideration of adequate time and space frameworks to allow effective knowledge consolidation that, in any case, can hardly be decontextualized.
- Yes, I would be most interested in this!
- Yes, it would be a good idea. The problem is to get a person with enough spare time to put to work this initiative in a given country
- I am not sure, if I understood the intention of this project (national best practices??) But as far as I can, I will help.



- I would be personally interested to support to the initiative and to initiate the setting of a national team to contribute to the project with relevant information concerning Bulgaria and the SEE region
- Yes, I'm sure it's a very good idea
- Yes, it is a very interesting idea. We are willing to support such an initiative in collaboration with the second AESOP Member School from Greece. For this reason we think it will be useful that Aesop should contribute to the methodology, e.g. by identifying common criteria of classifying top class examples of planning practices.
- I think this project is important and are willing to commit. In addition to the sharing of national experiences a database open to allow you to better compare the differences between the various schools of planning. I also think that this project will lead to an enrichment of the debate within the Aesop, and within COREP.
- Yes – I wonder about the emphasis / message of 'Sense of History' in the sense that whilst I feel that this is worthwhile we are, as a community, criticised for being backward looking rather than seizing the day and tackling current issues and looking to the future

Maybe

- This activity is over the capacity of majority of the CoRep members. If there is a need to do this project, it is necessary to apply for a European project and to cover the expenditures of the team members and to address experts' pool members. The role of the CoRep can be the nomination of appropriate team members – national representatives similarly/in addition to the experts' pool.
- Being honest, I'll face some agenda's conflicts..
- Good idea, but tricky and not easy to implement. More thinking needed.
- The question seems very interesting. But would have to choose very carefully the member of this "national team". There is no question of the greater or lesser prestige of the person, but that is should be sensitive to the different views and the own "history" of each countries.
- Good idea, but (at this moment) no time to contribute

No

- No. This is not the core business of AESOP. AESOP should be thinking/working/acting on matters of planning/pedagogy/learning/knowing. Documenting cases on these matters would be interesting; AESOP can stimulate other organizations (e.g. ISOCARP) to collect, document and store exemplary planning practices.
- Too much databases around
- Personally, at this time, no due to a heavy workload and set of commitments.

Don't know

- I don't know enough about this initiative (yet) to feel I can/should comment
- I don't know the 'Sense of History' project. In general, I am not in favour to set up databases if the target group and the usage is not clearly defined. But again, I don't know the discussions in this regard

- I'd like to hear more, please

Question 14

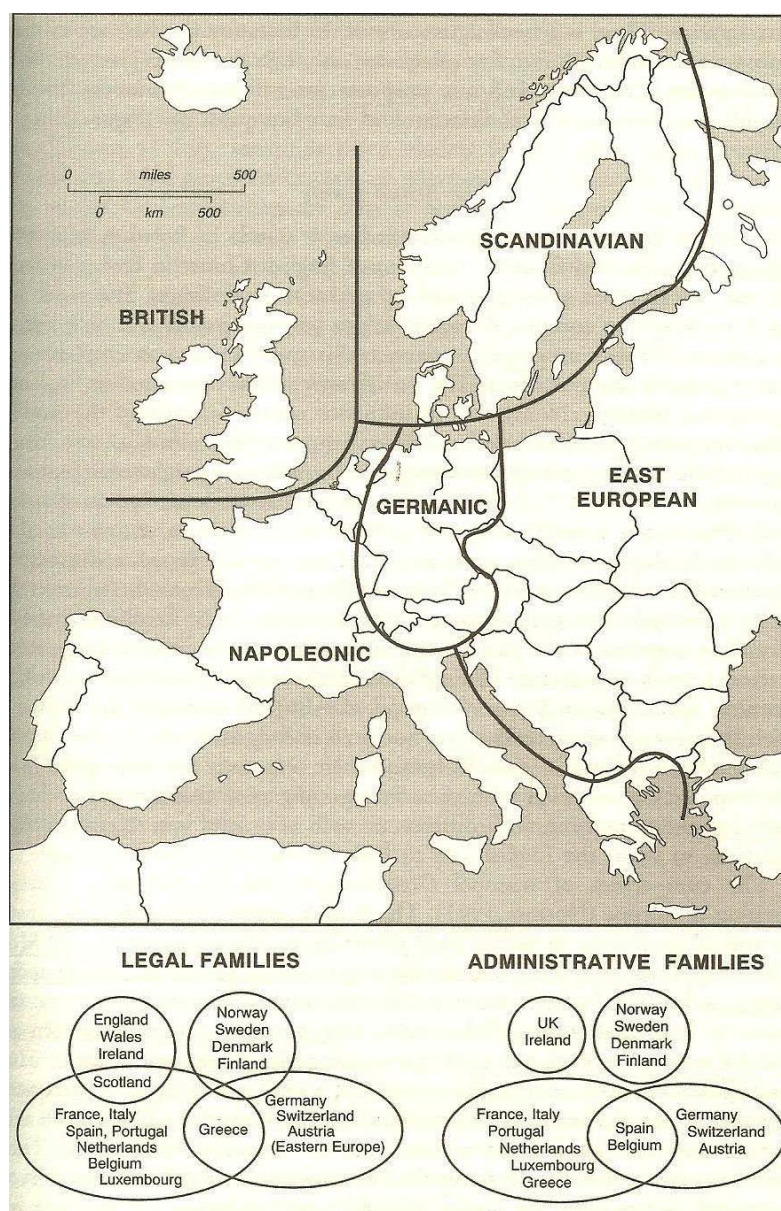
Is there any other issue regarding the functioning of the CoRep and its interaction with the ExCo that requires attention?

- From my understanding the CoRep members are also the representatives of AESOP in their country and the ExCo should consider how to 'use' them in the most efficient way for the benefit of AESOP.
- I've a more general concern about AESOP; I'll use this space to share with you. When AESOP was established, back in the 1980s, planning education and planning research were carried out in Europe under the same ceilings – university faculties or (most commonly) planning departments, and education was the determining factor of the success and visibility of these departments. Nowadays, the situation is slightly different. The planning departments are still there, often times with associated research centres (as it is our case), however, in other contexts, new organizations are emerging, dedicated exclusively to planning research. I am talking about Planning Research Centres or Institutes (Nordregio, OTB, etc). How is AESOP dealing with this new reality? Broadening the scope of membership, linking education and research?
- CoRep should be understood as a pool of active people who can be “used” for specific tasks which are not covered by ExCo members in addition to their position as “only” CoRep members.
- As in many democratic organisations CoRep feels 'hosted' or 'invited' by ExCo. This is in my opinion a reversal of the bottom-up logic
- Another important matter is the relationships between theory and practice. In my opinion this should be a priority for AESOP and thus for CoRep and thus for ExCo.
- In-depth discussions on strategic issues of the planning profession and planning education seem to be very important in line with AESOP mission and priorities.
- CoRep members as representants of AESOP in their own countries, and articulating with other academic and professional bodies – should more thought be put into this idea?
- The main challenge with the mode of operation of CoRep is that unless someone from the CoRep takes on some responsibility to do with AESOP, they remain too anonymous, too passive and do not interact with anybody – often just coming and going, or just hanging out with fellow country members. The combined HoS & CoRep definitely changed this by creating a platform for people to talk and work together (particularly in the parallel workshops) and hence interact and get to know each other. But not all CoRep come to HoS, and such an atmosphere is not present during the July CoRep meetings. Therefore, taking on responsibilities and presenting/discussing them (as in question no. 13 above) or to have some sort of a forum at some point during the CoRep for past events' assessment and/or ideas for future activities, or perhaps to set up sub-committees made up of CoRep members from time to time to carry out some task, and also having a rotation of CoRep



members involved in the existing committees for best congress paper/journal paper/teaching prizes, can make people become more involved in AESOP and hence motivate them to “actively” participate in its meetings and activities.

- The cost of participating in the AESOP activities is becoming prohibitive. It is important that a provision be made for reducing fees for countries with severe economic problems.
- I truly appreciate this outreach. I’ve found previous CoRep meetings very frustrating, perhaps what already would be enormously helpful is to give CoRep delegates more time for open discussion of whatever comes up. The dynamics of CoRep meetings are difficult to predict. If somebody attends, however, they should have a little floor-time for whatever they want to talk about with ExCo/CoRep members.
- Do you know this? They should take it into account for everything:



Newman, P. and Thornley, A. (1996) - “Urban Planning in Europe” (International Competition, National System and Planning Projects) Routledge. London

