



European Astronomical Society

24th General Assembly
Athens, 7 July 2016

Minutes

Attendance: The list of names is available on request from EAS.

The President, Thierry Courvoisier, opens the session at 9:15.
Marc Türler takes the minutes on behalf of the Secretary, Serena Viti.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda is adopted without changes.

2. Adoption of the Minutes from the 23rd General Assembly, Tenerife, June 2015

The minutes from the 23rd General Assembly are adopted unanimously.

3. President's Report

The President, Thierry Courvoisier, gives his yearly report, which is attached, in full, to these minutes. He notes that there was a lot of effort to prepare this meeting and is glad that everything runs so well. The preparations for EWASS 2017 are now well underway and two bids for EWASS 2018 are under evaluation by Council. He is very happy that EWASS has become an important meeting in Europe. Concerning establishing a presence of the European astronomical community in Brussels, things are not progressing as fast as expected due to the change of career of the identified candidate. He also mentions Council's decision that the EAS Publication Series was not worth to be continued in the future. He then welcomes the incoming Councillors Sofia Feltzing, Lex Kaper and Georges Meylan, and also Maarten Baes replacing Vassilis Charmandaris as Newsletter editor. He thanks the outgoing Councillors Eline Tolstoy and Mike Bode for their time and support to the EAS activities during their mandate. Instead of having a transition towards the presidency of Francesco Palla, his sudden death has forced Council to delay the change of presidency by one year. The President announces that Roger Davies will be the next president starting in June 2017 and serving until then as President Elect.

There are no questions or comments.

4. Council membership

This item is skipped as it was already mentioned as part of the President's Report.

5. Report on the 2015 accounts

The Treasurer, Johan Knapen, presents the report on the 2015 accounts (attached to these minutes). He notes that most of the benefit from EWASS 2015 is mainly thanks to sponsorship from the hosting university and other sponsorship. The EAS membership is roughly constant over the years.

Birgitta Nordström suggests having the accounts on-line before the meeting so that members can access them with their login.

6. Report by the Auditors

The Auditor's report (attached to these minutes) is read by Johan Knapen.

7. Approval of the 2015 accounts

The accounts are unanimously approved, following the recommendation by the auditors.

The President then thanks the Auditors, Georges Meynet and Thierry Montmerle, for their report and the Treasurer, Johan Knapen, and Martine Logossou for the considerable work involved. The two auditors are re-elected unanimously for the next year.

8. Presentation of the 2016 Budget

The Treasurer goes on with the presentation of the 2016 Budget as approved by Council and shown here for information (see attached slides).

9. Views on the budget evolution for 2017

The Treasurer then informs about the foreseen evolution of the budget for 2017 (see attached slides). He finishes his talk with some numbers on EWASS, which is now the main activity of EAS and has an overall budget approaching 500 kEUR. The EAS is entirely responsible for the risk associated with this big amount, while trying to keep the EWASS fees low.

The presentation is followed by some questions. The President explains to Jan Palous the aim of the Brussels representation as being to have our voice heard for promoting fundamental research, defending astronomical projects in general and establishing contacts with the EU parliament. Johannes Andersen wonders if EAS has enough members to represent European astronomy. The current number of about 1000 people has the potential to improve by one order of magnitude according to the President, who encourages everybody to work to improve this representation. José Miguel Espinosa asks for clarification about the 3 lines with 25 kEUR related to EWASS 2017. The Treasurer explains that they are the budgeted income from EWASS 2017 that will go into a special EWASS provision fund. Areg Mickaelian enquires about travel grants. The Treasurer explains that EAS only has Springer travel grants (3 kEUR) at the moment and that EAS is subsidizing students via reduced fees at EWASS meetings.

10. Membership classes and next steps

Councillor Coralie Neiner presents the list of current organizational members in each of the three categories: “Patrons”, “Sponsors” and “Affiliates”, as is also displayed on the EAS website. She notes the difficulty to get new organisational members for the EAS and encourages people to think about possible organisations to be contacted.

11. Report on EAS Prizes

Georges Meylan reminds about the five prizes awarded this year and the names of the awardees. He also reminds that the MERAC prizes are of two kinds with doctoral thesis being awarded this year and best early career researchers next year. He encourages everybody to nominate suitable candidates for the MERAC Prizes (deadline end of September) and for the Tycho Brahe Prize (deadline end of October).

12. EWASS 2017, Prague, Czech Republic

Jan Palous presents some slides and the conference poster of EWASS 2017 to take place in Prague on 26-30 June 2017. He presents Prague as a city of rich astronomical history with, in particular, the tomb of Tycho Brahe in the Tyn church, the stay of Johannes Kepler from 1600 to 1612 and the presence of Christian Doppler, professor of mathematics at the Prague Technical University. The venue will be the centrally located Charles University with many meeting rooms and a central hall for coffee breaks and exhibitions. He ends by reminding the deadline of the call for proposals on 9 September 2016.

13. Status of EWASS 2018

The item was not addressed here (see the President’s Report).

14. Any Other Business

None.

The President closes the General Assembly at 10:10 and thanks the EAS members for attending.

EAS President's Report 2016

Thierry J.-L. Courvoisier

Athens, 7 July 2016

Council, Staff and our supporting company Kuoni spent a considerable amount of time and effort on the EWASS front. First came the preparation of the meeting we are having in Athens. This exercise was delicate at the beginning for a number of reasons, all having to do with the political and economical situation of Greece in the Summer of 2015. This, contrary to my expectations, created tensions between the in Greece and out of Greece partners. The lack of confidence of the economical establishment outside Greece went as far as imposing that EAS carries alone the risks of the prepayments to organise the event. When one knows that the budget of an EWASS meeting is 3-4 times the EAS annual budget this led to difficult decisions. Having had a very successful EWASS15, the EAS was in a position to take this risk and decided to go ahead. With time going the tensions eased one after the other, leading to a very constructive collaboration. All is well, the decision was right, many thanks to all involved.

The preparation of EWASS17 also took some effort. Work is now well underway. The membership of the SOC and EHC are established. The call for symposia and special session has been issued.

Finally regarding the EWASS development, we did think of the longer term, organised the selection of the 2018 EWASS and established the procedures for the selection of future EWASS meetings. Pending some last discussions, we will announce date and place of EWASS 2018 in late September or beginning of October.

All the efforts invested during the last years in the development of the EWASS meetings led to EWASS meetings becoming now the important gathering of the European astronomical community. With these meetings, the European astronomical community has a powerful tool to contribute to building its future.

We also did progress on the establishment of a presence of the European astronomical community in Brussels. The strategy team leading this activity met in order to have a first cut at the activities that the person representing the EAS should develop. This was done in collaboration with a candidate, who, however, decided afterwards to give a new term to her career. We are therefore in the process of finding another candidate and are hopeful that we will be able to concretely start this activity in the coming few months.

Council had a discussion on the steps to let the EAS publication series evolve. Corinne Charbonnel had taken over from Jean-Paul Zahn some time ago. This was an opportunity to look at the direction this effort ought to take. After some

thinking, council decided to interrupt the series. It was found that the only meaningful publication would be school proceedings, but then even those are moderately useful in terms of publications, major review journals being a preferred path for such proceedings. Related to this question is that of the whole communication of the EAS, a question that is on the table with the arrival of Marteen Baes as new newsletter editor.

A new set of elections took place this spring. We have the pleasure of welcoming Sofia Feltzing, Lex Kaper and Georges Meylan as new councillors, and Maarten Baes replaces Vassilis Charmandaris as Newsletter editor. Welcoming new members also means saying good bye to others. Eline Tolstoy and Mike Bode leave us. I'm very thankful for their time, effort and support of the EAS activities during their mandate in Council. I'm also very thankful for the work and energy that Vassilis invested in the Newsletter, an important vehicle of communication within our society.

As you well have seen the present election procedure functions by default. It is only if members do not agree with the slate proposed by council and produce an independent proposal that members are called to express their opinion. Council thinks that this could now be improved upon to give members a more active part in selecting council. Council will therefore propose next year an amendment to the constitution or by-laws to implement this.

This leads me to a deep worry. The EAS membership is only a poor representation of the European astronomical community. Our colleagues often think that their membership is not important and that the few who spend time and effort for the benefit of all can manage without additional support. This is not so. The society considerably increased its level of activity at the service of European astronomers, EWASS is an example of this evolution. The strength of the voice of the astronomers on the political scene, the presence of our community in discussions regarding the future facilities and the evolution of our way of working now depend on the presence of astronomers within the society. Efforts must be made by all members to encourage their colleagues to join so that the membership gives a faithful representation of the whole community.

Finally, Council decided to devolve financial means to the activities of its working groups. This should help to give professional support to make the best of the efforts of our working groups. On the front of the working groups, however, we did not progress as much as we wanted, due to the fact that we cancelled most of our discussions in January in Rolle following the death of Francesco Palla. This will now be re-activated. Let me stress in this frame that we definitely need to work on our professional work ethics. You probably are aware that a false claim of the detection of a gamma ray signal related to the detection of gravitational waves from a coalescing black hole system gave rise to a flood of theoretical explanations within days if not hours. This contributes to undermine the credibility of science in general: What is the value of the understanding we gain of real phenomena, if we can also "explain" any fluke in the data.

Let me finish by stating that we should have had a happy day today making the transition towards the presidency of Francesco Palla. He was looking forward to taking over this position and I was happy to leave the society in his able hands. This is not to be. Council decided to react to Francesco's death by delaying the change of presidency by one year, by asking Roger Davies to serve as the next president and by asking him to serve in the intervening year as president elect. Both Roger and I agreed with this procedure. I'll keep the helm for another year and will use the time to help Roger become familiar with the inner workings of our society. Let me also mention in this sad register that the society also lost past president Jean-Paul Zahn during the time since the last general assembly. Jean-Paul had always been a keen actor on the EAS scene. I profited often from lively, constructive and pleasant conversations with him.

Astronomers go, other come. It is rewarding in this sense to see so many younger colleagues attending this meeting.



Treasurer's Report

Johan H. Knapen
EAS Treasurer

Martine Logossou
EAS Financial and Administrative Officer

EWASS, Athens
July 2016



Overview

- ◆ 2015 Accounts, plus Auditor's Report
 - ◆ For formal approval

- ◆ 2016 Budget
 - ◆ Approved by Council, for information

- ◆ 2017 Budget
 - ◆ Approved by Council, for information



2015 Accounts - Income

INCOME

	2015	budget 2015	2014
Ordinary members & reduced fee	21'256.50	18'000.00	21'439.41
Institutional members	45'900.00	35'000.00	40'900.00
Sales	1'300.00	1'300.00	1'300.00
Travel grant donation from individual members	1'835.53	500.00	678.43
Travel grant donation from institutional members	3'000.00	3'000.00	3'000.00
Other donation (KT for TB Prize)	6'000.00	6'000.00	6'000.00
EWASS profit	62'838.08	6'000.00	19'115.90
Interests	2.02		39.59
Currency realignment	2'908.91		578.98
Exceptional income	0.00		6.90
Transfer from capital		3'500.00	
Total Income	EUR 145'041.04	73'300.00	93'059.21

Total 145k: Indiv. Members 20k; Inst. Members 46k; EWASS
2015 result 63k (mainly thanks to sponsorship income)
Plus Springer travel grant, Brahe Prize



2015 Accounts – Expenses & Result

- ◆ Total expenses 85k (but includes 25k provision for EWASS – ‘real’ expenses 60k or 12k below budget)
- ◆ Expenses 24k office costs, 15k various travel (incl. Council, prize winners), 9k travel grants and prizes, 4k communications incl. Newsletter, 25k provision for EWASS)
- ◆ Positive result of almost 60k, added to capital



2015 Accounts - Expenses

EXPENSES		2015	budget 2015	2014
Newsletters		4'481.88	3'500.00	6'802.12
EAS Com: leaflet, prizes & postage		775.20	7'000.00	2'274.92
Tycho Brahe Prize		6'000.00	6'000.00	6'000.00
Medal L.Woltjer Lecture		0.00		1'441.41
Grants (only for EWASS in 2015)		2'500.00	3'000.00	6'542.47
Travel meetings (Council + EAS office & Prizes winners+ WG)		15'282.16	22'000.00	18'013.75
Services / Rolle & others & unforeseen		5'857.73	7'000.00	3'926.70
Administration & services		18'000.00	18'000.00	18'000.00
EAS& EWASS web pages		6'000.00	6'000.00	6'000.00
Credit card commissions and bank charges		1'079.85	800.00	1'266.50
Currency realignment		251.11		167.91
Allocation to EWASS provision		25'000.00		0.00
Total Expenses	EUR	85'227.93	73'300.00	70'435.78
EAS result of the year (profit)	EUR	59'813.11		22'623.43



2015 Balance - Assets

ASSETS	2015	2014
Cash	1'908.21	1'750.39
Current accounts	144'325.16	110'405.54
Savings account	10'750.18	26'354.68
Withholding tax	26.35	23.11
Account receivable	64'399.82	1'324.19
Paid beforehand	0.00	0.00
Total assets	EUR <u><u>221'409.72</u></u>	<u><u>139'857.91</u></u>



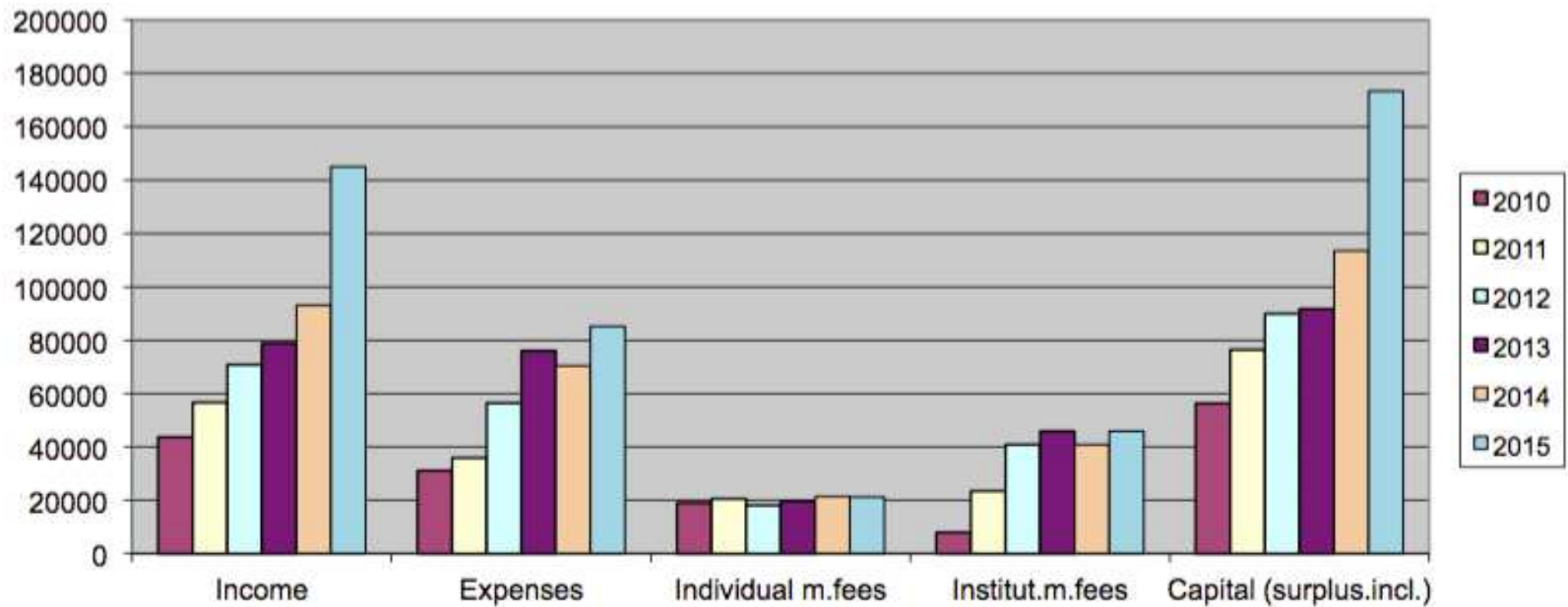
2015 Balance - Liabilities

LIABILITIES

Prepaid membership	3'628.00	7'201.02
Accounts payable	4'481.88	3'875.16
Lifetime members	9'412.90	9'707.90
Travel Grant fund	5'564.09	5'564.09
Provision EWASS	25'000.00	0.00
Capital	90'886.31	88'028.77
Surplus of previous year	22'623.43	2'857.54
Surplus of the year	59'813.11	22'623.43
Total liabilities	EUR <u><u>221'409.72</u></u>	<u><u>139'857.91</u></u>



EAS 2010 - 2015 Economical development





Some notes on capital

- ◆ Society such as ours ought to have 3 times annual budget as capital
- ◆ Currently we have around 2
- ◆ So should increase capital further

- ◆ EAS Capital: 173k (end of 2015)
- ◆ EAS Budget 2016: 90k (proposed 120k for 2017)

- ◆ Aim to increase EWASS provision to order 100k



AUDITORS' REPORT
European Astronomical Society
Year 2015

We, Thierry Montmerle (IAP, Paris), and Georges Meynet (UNIGE), present at ISDC Versoix, have reviewed on June 7, 2016 the 2015 accounts of the European Astronomical Society (EAS). We found the accounts in very good order and recommend that the accounts be accepted by the General Assembly of the EAS, as presented.

We acknowledge that membership fees from all countries have been carefully registered according to the member status, country, annual fee, and fiscal year of payment, allowing a full visibility on the income from all members.

We note that the number of both organizational member and individual member affiliations are stable. We encourage the Council, the EAS affiliated societies, and the individual active members to continue the effort to promote institutional and individual memberships: only a regular increase of members will allow the Society to have the political and financial means to realize its ambitions.

We note in 2015 a significant increase of the income and of the capital mainly due to EWASS 2015 that attracted a large number of participants. This provides the EAS with some provisions in case of less economically successful future EWASS meetings.

We were pleased also to learn that, in 2017, the 2016 accounts will be cross-checked by a professional auditor, in addition to the two EAS-appointed astronomers.

In the name of the EAS, we are very grateful to Martine Logossou, Marie-Claude Dunand, and Marc Türler for their continuous strong commitment and high-quality work, including new initiatives, all for the benefits of the EAS.

Georges Meynet

Thierry Montmerle

Versoix, June 7, 2016



We, Thierry Montmerle (IAP, Paris), and Georges Meynet (UNIGE), present at ISDC Versoix, have reviewed on June 7, 2016 the 2015 accounts of the European Astronomical Society (EAS). We found the accounts in very good order and recommend that the accounts be accepted by the General Assembly of the EAS, as presented.

We acknowledge that membership fees from all countries have been carefully registered according to the member status, country, annual fee, and fiscal year of payment, allowing a full visibility on the income from all members.

We note that the number of both organizational member and individual member affiliations are stable. We encourage the Council, the EAS affiliated societies, and the individual active members to continue the effort to promote institutional and individual memberships: only a regular increase of members will allow the Society to have the political and financial means to realize its ambitions.

We note in 2015 a significant increase of the income and of the capital mainly due to EWASS 2015 that attracted a large number of participants. This provides the EAS with some provisions in case of less economically successful future EWASS meetings.

We were pleased also to learn that, in 2017, the 2016 accounts will be cross-checked by a professional auditor, in addition to the two EAS-appointed astronomers.

In the name of the EAS, we are very grateful to Martine Logossou, Marie-Claude Dunand, and Marc Türlér for their continuous strong commitment and high-quality work, including new initiatives, all for the benefits of the EAS.



Georges Meynet



Thierry Montmerle

Versoix, June 7, 2016



2016 Budget (as approved by Council)

- ◆ **Headline figures:**
 - ◆ Total 90k, balanced income/expenses
 - ◆ Members fees basically constant at 20k and 45k
 - ◆ EWASS 2016 result 6k (estimate)
 - ◆ Loss 7k (taken from capital)

- ◆ Office & IT costs (UniGe) 34k & 6k (up from 24k in 2015)
- ◆ Brussels representation 6k (new initiative)
- ◆ EAS meetings and working groups 20k

- ◆ 3k Springer Travel and 6k Brahe Prize



2017 Budget (for information)

◆ Headline figures:

- ◆ Total 144k, balanced income/expenses (see below!)
- ◆ Members fees basically constant at 22k and 45k
- ◆ EWASS 2017 result 25k (mainly from non-member fees)
- ◆ Loss 25k (from capital)
- ◆ EWASS provision 25k

- ◆ Office & IT costs (UniGe) now stable at total of 40k
- ◆ Brussels representation 18k + 3k travel
 - ◆ Income from aff. soc.'s at least 15k
- ◆ EAS meetings and working groups 20k
- ◆ New: EAS Reports 7k and Trustee services 3k

- ◆ 3k Springer Travel and 6k Brahe Prize