



Minutes ESSDA AGM 2017

Sunday 30th July 2017, Pinkballroom venue, Berlin

Attending [needs to be completed based on attendance + voting lists]:

United Kingdom: Mary Logan, Jacky Logan, Vernon Kemp, Ralf Schiller, Chrisi Lyons, Trix Macleod and Peter Meager

Germany: Thorsten Reulen, Dörte Lange, Ingeborg and Marc Schleuter

France: Patrice Naudier and Romain Drouet

Israel/UK: Heather Gladding and Hadass Armon

Thomas Marter (**Austria**), Valentin Fürpass (**Switzerland**), Imre Zsoldos (? **Hungary**), Davy Brocatus (**Belgium**), Michal Vaníček (**Czech Republic**), and Diana Vinke (**the Netherlands**)

Nine out of the ten paid-up group members were represented: UKSSDC, DVET, TTC Rot-Gold Köln, Pink Ballroom Berlin, Equality Dance Switzerland, Charme Hungary Dance Club (?), CEDA (Czech Republic), Rainbow Evidanse, and TSC Wechselschritt Linz.

The quorum of 5% of the members was reached.

Chair: Davy Brocatus, Co-President

1 Opening

Attendees are warmly welcomed by our Co-Presidents to the Annual General Meeting 2017 held at the Pinkballroom venue in Berlin. The meeting starts with checking on membership and distributing the voting forms for the elections. After the voting forms have been filled out an independent person processes the votes to arrive at the election results (see topic 3 below).

2 Approval of the ESSDA AGM minutes 01/07/2016

The minutes of the 2016 AGM were mailed to all ESSDA members four weeks before the 2017 AGM. The chair asks whether there are any comments or questions related to the minutes. Since there are not any, the minutes are approved.

3 (Re-) Election of ESSDA board members

For Davy Brocatus, Hadass Armon, Sören Stauffer-Kruse, Michal Vaníček, and Marc Schleuter their two-year term has ended. Sören does not stand for re-election, the other four do. In addition, there are three new candidates: Heather Gladding, Kai André Lillebø and Patrice Naudier. From these seven candidates six can be elected as board members.

Forty-three voting forms were filled out, three of which online. Some members could fill out more than one voting form because they were an individual member as well as a representative of a group member. Members could vote for six candidates at the most but could also cast fewer votes. 23 members have voted for 6 candidates, 10 members for 5 candidates, 5 members for 4 candidates and 5 members for 3 candidates. In total, 223 votes were cast.

The outcomes of the elections are that the following candidates have been voted in: Marc Schleuter (40 votes), Patrice Naudier (37 votes), Kai André Lillebø (33 votes), Heather Gladding (32 votes), Michal Vaníček (31 votes) and Davy Brocatus (28 votes).

Hadass Armon is not voted in. She receives a big thank you for her hard work and the engagement she has put in for ESSDA in the past ten years.

Together with Chrisi Lyons, Trix Macleod and Diana Vinke the six elected board members are the new ESSDA board for 2017 – 2018.

4 Annual Report July 2016 – June 2017 by the Secretary

The Annual Report by the secretary was mailed to all ESSDA members four weeks before the AGM, together with the invitation and the agenda for the AGM. It can also be downloaded from the ESSDA website at <http://ESSDA.eu/ESSDA-organisation/agm-documents/>

The secretary gives a brief summary of the topics covered by the report: the activities for the celebration of ESSDA's 10th anniversary, the support provided to the EC 2017 team, the communication with GayGames Paris about ESSDA's position in this and the choice they have for ESSDA's support and involvement, the discussions the board has had about same-sex dance championships as part of larger multi-sports events or not (also see topic 6 below), the discussion about respectful wording of gender identity in the constitution, bylaws and competition rules (also see topic 7 below), and monitoring the participation in senior age competitions. There are not any questions related to the report.

One participant asks for a report about PR & Marketing and Outreach to be included in the annual report. A paragraph about each will be added to the AGM minutes and/or annual report 2016 – 2017.

5 Financial Report 2016 by the Treasurer

The financial report 2016 and January – July 2017 was sent by mail to all paid-up members about xx days prior to the AGM. At the meeting there are also hard copies for participants. The year 2016 is closed with a positive result of €4958,-, and half way 2017 with a positive result of €4656,-. It should be noted, though, that several expenses related to the EC 2017 and to the celebration of ESSDA's 10th anniversary still need to be paid for.

A question is asked about the purpose of the on-site visit, given the expenses (nearly one third of the license fee that ESSDA receives from the host organisers of dance championships). This visit is not just for seeing the dance venue but also for talking to the organising team about the preparation and organisation of the competition, and any expected problems. This can solve any problems well in advance rather than being confronted with problems one day before the competition starts. Part of the license fee is meant to cover expenses related to such an on-site visit.

Another question / remark relates to generating more income from membership fees and involving people. Currently this generates about €600,- per year, of which ESSDA pays around 300,- for our EuroGames and GayGames membership (this gives ESSDA members a discount on the registration fee). It is suggested to have a membership registration desk at the competition venue: there was one in Berlin and it was also announced. Another suggestion is to enforce ESSDA membership in order to participate or in order to win a championship title. Arguments against this include: this would be too much like mainstream dance competitions, it would go against ESSDA's aim to support competitions and organisers, we might lose competitors if we make this compulsory, people like it when they have a choice rather than being compelled. The overall atmosphere is to sell ESSDA membership as a benefit but not make it compulsory. A concluding remark is that PR & Marketing in general is on the to-do list for the ESSDA board.

6 Discussion European / World Championships as part of larger multi-sports events

Davy introduces this topic and explains the role of FGG, GLISA and EGLSF in organising and hosting GayGames, OutGames and EuroGames. For the first two Games IFSSDA is the sanctioning body for same-sex dance championships, for the latter it is ESSDA. So far, these have been World / European championships but the official announcement of FGG that world championships for sports should not result in additional costs either for the host or for competitors, has started a discussion within the ESSDA board in order to determine our position.

The way in which these Games are scheduled is agreed on by the umbrella organisations. In the years when there are no Games in Europe ESSDA has independent European championships organised by the host city that has won the open bidding. The next EuroGames are already known: Rome in 2019 and Düsseldorf in 2020. For the next GayGames in 2022 the bidding has started and there is a shortlist with three candidates. For the OutGames it is not sure yet – due to what happened in Miami – but this will be decided on at a meeting this fall.

The discussion at the AGM is about whether same-sex dance championships should be part of these larger multisport event or organised independently (for world championships with the agreement of the IFSSDA partners), but also the other way around: do organisers want to have our championships as part of their events? If the world / European championships were organised independently this would result in GayGames, OutGames and EuroGames championships, so without a world / European title to be won. Questions, remarks and arguments include the following:

- What does either option mean for the registration fee? For GayGames – especially Paris 2018 - and for OutGames this is extremely high. The registration fee is determined by the umbrella organisations. Even though a title has some kind of glory the costs might put people off.
- What kind of Outreach is offered? Currently, people have to register and pay first, without knowing if and how much financial support they can get. In order to not let the costs determine if dancers can participate ESSDA and the national organisations should set up a joint outreach program.
- If the same-sex dance championships would not be part of the Games this would be disappointing. Would it be possible to organise championships in the host city of particular Games and at the same time the Games take place? How would this sit in with the umbrella organisation? Would this be in line with the agreement not to get in each other's way (see above)?;
- Same-sex dancing attracts spectators and we are a big draw for the media. This can generate income.
- Are there more cities like Blackpool and Berlin, so cities with an experienced local organisation team? How many bids were there for the EC 2017? Only one complete bid: Berlin. This has to be taken into account when a decision is taken on going independently or not: do we have an organisation to run championships independently? And how about Rome (EuroGames 2019), do they have same-sex dance clubs and/or dancers so an organising team can be set up? The first contact with EGLSF has been established so this is not known yet.
- Are we only bringing this discussion in because of the disaster in Miami? Previous Games were successful and attracted many participants, for example Sidney, to support and promote same-sex dancing, make it grow, but also to promote and support diversity. Back then people were willing to pay a considerable amount of money for the expenses involved. Paris might seem expensive but you do not just pay for the dance competition. This might not be the case anymore for the current competitive dancers. What if the GayGames are to

take place in Hong Kong or Mexico, do we want the same-sex dance world championships be part of it? By not taking part in such an event we /Europeans would not only negate other countries and communities but also ourselves, we would shut ourselves in. The higher costs for participating in a bigger event should be weighted against being part of other sports and of cultural events. The latter especially applies to new competitors.

Concluding remarks: the discussion has revolved around two aspects: solidarity (being part of) versus costs. Costs are not in our hands if championships are part of a bigger event such as the Games. The idea of choice, having options, seems favourable. The ESSDA board should take these decisions and do so per occasion, taking everything into account such as the diverse circumstances. Reasons for taking these decisions are flexible. ESSDA has done this very well so far.

7 Proposed amendments DVET to Competition Rules + discussion gender identity in same-sex dance competitions

As part of the input for this AGM the proposed amendments were mailed to all members 4 weeks prior to the AGM. The proposed amendments are introduced and briefly explained by Thorsten and Dörte.

First proposed amendment: replace the term “EuroGames” by “European/International Championships”. The term “EuroGames” is too narrow because the competition rules also apply to European and World championships. It is agreed that the board checks the text of the competition rules on this and generalizes the wording to include all same-sex dance championships to which the competition rules apply.

Second proposed amendment: add a requirement for adjudicators judging European / World championships (rule 8.3.a.i). This requirement is meant to have adequate variation in the composition of the adjudicator panels by excluding the situation that an adjudicator judges two European / World championships in a row or that an adjudicator of a European / World championship has judged any national championships in the same calendar year. Reactions / comments: the current rules are fine but this kind of situation arose in Berlin; adding this requirement might make it very difficult for the person who is responsible for composing the panel. It is agreed not to take a decision yet. The ESSDA board will discuss this topic at their board meeting and propose a decision to the membership.

Third proposed amendment: incorporate formation-dancing terminology into Showdance Teams competition guidelines. Reactions/comments: “formation” is included in the verbal explanation that is given to adjudicators before they judge showdance teams. The suggestion is to add part of this explanation to the showdance guidelines. The ESSDA board will compose a working group for this and report the outcomes to the membership. A suggestion is made to create a discussion platform for this (and other topics) to involve members. It is agreed to take care of this.

Inclusion of transgender and intersex people in same-sex dance competitions: the request to the ESSDA board is to get in touch with other organisations about this to see what measures or actions enable participation of transgender and intersex dancers. Trix briefly explains that this is also what the ESSDA board has discussed, together with the current wording of gender identity in the constitution and competition rules. The proposal is to do more research first. The outcomes of this research will be used to come up with a proposal, which will be shared with the membership.

8 Promotion / advertising policy ESSDA Facebook page

In the past year the posts published on ESSDA’s Facebook page (and to some extent also on ESSDA’s website) seem to have changed, including announcements of (commercial) workshops and regular (social) dance classes. Some visitors have commented on this, especially on the number of advertising posts, and requested guidelines for publishing posts. Reactions / comments at the AGM:

who are the posts for, everyone, all dancers or competitive dancers? What should be the purpose of the posts, informing, sharing, advertising? It is agreed that, given ESSDA's objectives, the posts are for competitive dancers in general, not for local groups of dancers and not for (regular) social dance classes. Should a distinction be made between commercial and non-commercial advertising? It seems to be too difficult to draw a clear line between the two. Should there be guidelines for the frequency with which a particular event is advertised? A specific frequency does not emerge from the discussion. The ESSDA board will establish publishing guidelines, taking into account this discussion at the AGM, and will publish these guidelines on the Facebook page. The administrator can remove posts that are not in line with these guidelines.

9 Any other business

- What does Outreach consist of? Michal gives a brief explanation of his role as Outreach Officer and his actions so far. It is suggested to organise small-scale crowd funding: organisers of dance competitions might ask every participant to donate €5,- as outreach for dancers who need financial support.
- Heather puts forward Mariusz' idea of adding a 'professional level' Class, and to have an A-level Class for amateurs only. In the current situation, for example Adults Latin for men, it seems to be very difficult for amateur couples to get into the A Class, which might have a discouraging effect. This may be feasible for bigger competitions such as the EC 2017 in Berlin. Concern: not all dance teachers teach / dance at the highest level. Do we force them to compete in this 'professional' class?
- It is requested to keep members informed about the progress of particular actions, such as the addition to the Showdance Teams guidelines: what, when and how can we expect this?

The meeting is closed with mutual thanks between the board and the other participants, and with thanking Hadass again for her ESSDA work and involvement.

10 Actions for ESSDA board

- Process amendments / comments in Competition Rules and Showdance guidelines for teams
- Do research + draft a proposal for gender identity + inclusion of transgender and intersex dancers in same-sex dance competitions
- Determine position with respect to same-sex dance championships as part of multi-sports
- Make a plan for advertising / promoting / supporting outreach with the purpose of generating more income
- Evaluate and decide on continuation of Grand Slam
- Monitor participation senior age category
- Create a discussion platform
- Inform members of envisioned timeline for actions above

As agreed by the ESSDA Board on 17 September 2017
Diana Vinke, female co-president ESSDA Board