



Annual Report 2012 – 2013 by the Secretary

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1. Expanding individual ESSDA membership options

The board has discussed several times how to encourage individuals to become a member of ESSDA well as of their own national association, and by doing so to give their commitment and financial support to both, to get involved with both. This topic was also brought up at the previous General meeting in Budapest. A solution we have reached agreement on is to create an additional way of becoming an individual ESSDA member through membership of a national association that is a member organisation of ESSDA. This requires a small additional fee from national associations for each of its paid up members. This kind of individual ESSDA membership will give individuals the right to vote at ESSDA general meetings.

This implies that there will be three options for individual ESSDA membership:

- a. in countries without a national association: a 'direct' individual ESSDA membership (€10,-);
- b. in countries with a national association: a 'direct' individual ESSDA membership (€10,-) or

- c. in countries with a national association: an individual ESSDA membership through membership of the national association. In this third case individuals do not have to pay for their ESSDA membership separately: their national association will be asked to pay a small fee per paying member, in addition to the current fee for extraordinary ESSDA membership of the national association involved: £2 per member for the UK and €3,- per member for other European countries.

This additional individual membership means that article 13.1 of the Constitution and article B.15.1 of the Bylaws need to be adjusted accordingly. It does not, however, affect the rules about voting: every individual member has one vote, groups/associations up to 99 members have one vote through one delegate and groups/associations of 100 or more members have two votes through two delegates. This proposal will be a topic for the agenda of the AGM 2013 in Antwerp.

If the proposed adjustment of the organisational year (see topic 2) is supported at the AGM in Antwerp, the next organisational year will start on 1 January 2014. This will give national associations about five months after this AGM to arrange the additional fee for individual ESSDA membership within their own association.

2. Changing the organisational year

The board has discussed the option of shifting the start and end date of the organisational year. The current start (1st of August) and end of the organisation year (31st of July) are inconvenient with respect to the time around which the AGM usually takes places: depending on the specific date of the AGM there is hardly any time or no time at all to implement changes or decisions taken at the AGM in the following organisational year. The proposal to change the dates to January 1st and December 31st was approved of unanimously by the board. This requires an adjustment of article 7.1 of the Constitution.

This proposed change implies that the first renewal of the annual membership fee will be per January 1st 2014.

3. Additional age category for dance competitions / Competition Rules

Another topic that was brought up at the GM in Budapest was the senior dance competition. Many 35+ couples compete in the 35+ as well as the 18+ competitions so in both these competitions the couples are the same to a large extent. That is why it was proposed to add another age category, for example 40+ or 45+. Davy and Hadass had discussed this proposal prior to the 2012 AGM and brought up another proposal: first experiment with this additional age category at one or two of the larger competitions in Europe to see if there is enough body for this extra age category and if it affects participation in the 35+ and 18+ competitions. This proposal got full agreement.

The Board has discussed this topic twice and agreed on a 45+ category. This means that dance couples with the required age need to decide in which Senior Category they will dance: either in Senior 1 or Senior 2. Competing in both Senior Categories is not possible but competing in one of the Senior Categories can be combined with competing in the Adults Category. In order to enable

competition organisers to experiment with this new age category rules 2.6.c. and 3.4.b. of the Competition Rules need to be adjusted accordingly. A draft version of this adjustment has been drawn up.

In addition, Rules 1 to 7 of the Competition Rules have been reviewed and textually improved, where necessary. This has resulted in a draft revised version of Rules 1 to 7. This revised version will be published on the ESSDA website as soon as possible.

4. ESSDA approved dance competitions

The idea of introducing a label for ESSDA-approved dance competitions was introduced at last year's AGM. In the years before, several competition organisers had approached the Board expressing their interest in having their competitions certified as 'ESSDA Rules compliant'. The Board welcomed this dialogue and acknowledged the importance of uniformity and consistency across competitions in Europe.

Since the AGM this topic has been discussed several times. An ESSDA label would not only promote uniformity and consistency but would also be a guarantee for the level and quality of our same-sex competitions. For organisers it would be a quality label which might attract more (top) dance couples. The difficult part to decide on has been to find a way to ensure that the competition rules are applied in ESSDA-labelled competitions. In the end we came up with two measures:

- have an ESSDA board member attend the competition to check but also support the organiser in applying the competition rules. The organiser would have to pay for travel and accommodation for this ESSDA board member;
- Impose a fine afterwards if the organiser knowingly did not apply all the competition rules.

The secretary sent an email about this to all organisers of European same-sex dance competitions to be held in 2013. Since only two organisers responded to this email a reminder was sent, together with some more information. This time five out of the fourteen organisers responded, one of whom confirmed that they would like to get an ESSDA-label on the terms mentioned. The other four declined, the main argument being that the terms would not be feasible for them financially. But two of them also felt some distrust on the side of the ESSDA board (in wanting to have a control mechanism).

We regret this situation, especially because organisers had expressed their interest in having such an ESSDA label earlier on. We would like to consider new ways of implementing the ESSDA label, one of which might be to explain better what the goal and added value are.

5. Annual European Championships / Open bid

The Board has discussed the idea of having European Championships every year, so also in the two years when there are no EuroGames (the 4-year schedule is EuroGames – EuroGames – Outgames – Gay Games). In these years the European Championships could be organised by the bigger same-sex dance competitions and circulate around Europe. The board has unanimously agreed with this proposal. These European Championships required some adjustments in the Partnership & License

Agreement (which is used for the EuroGames) so it applies to European Championships in general. The Board also agreed to organise the European Championships by means of an open bid.

The open bid for 2013 was announced at the ESSDA website and Facebook page. In addition it was communicated by email to all ESSDA members. Initially three organisers showed their interest for hosting the European Championships but the time to actually organise such a competition in 2013 appeared to be too short. This and the fact that there would already be a big dance competition in 2013 (the Outgames in Antwerp) made the Board decide not to have European Championships in 2013 and to open the bid for 2014. For this open bid there was one candidate. The application met with the criteria so it was accepted.

6. IFSSDA

Finalising the IFSSDA constitution has proved to be a slow and difficult process. The goal was to have a final version by the end of 2012 but this deadline had to be postponed twice. The last deadline for finalisation was set on the end of June 2013 so the constitution could be made available early July. If everything proceeds according to plan the IFSSDA constitution is finalised prior to the dance competition at the Outgames 2013 and IFSSDA is legally established. This will be published on the IFSSDA website. Then the next steps can be taken, such as drawing up the Bylaws and Competition Rules, and building a new IFSSDA website.

7. World Championships 2013 in Antwerp

Much time and energy has been devoted to having World Championships at the Outgames in Antwerp. Davy has been the liaising partner between ESSDA and Metropolis Dance Sports Club, the association that has done the execution of the contract and the organisation of the competition. He has been in touch with them on a regular basis. At first the goal was to organise the dance competition under the auspices of ESSDA. In the course of time, however, it seemed to become feasible to finalise the IFSSDA constitution in time and to have IFSSDA legally established. This has made it possible to have World Championships of Same-Sex Dancing at the Outgames in Antwerp, sanctioned by IFSSDA for the first time. IFSSDA has not been able to have their own competition rules in place. Instead, the ESSDA Competition Rules are applied at the Outgames 2013.

At the Outgames Hadass and Davy are competition officials, Frank takes pictures for an 'impression of the day' which people can buy (**will he??**), and Diana is liaising partner between the registration desk and competition officials.

8. The Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee has not received any requests.

9. Newsletter and new ESSDA website

In the second half of the previous organisational year much time has been devoted to building a completely new ESSDA website. This new website has been launched in the autumn of 2013.

The proposal to publish an ESSDA Newsletter twice a year seemed a good way of communicating news about same-sex dancing beyond topics discussed by the ESSDA board. But it turned out not to be feasible for this organisational year. The goal for next year is to publish two newsletters.

10. The Board and elections

The Board is presently constituted by:

Hadass Armon (UK)	Female Co-President
Davy Brocatus (Belgium)	Male Co-President and Treasurer
Diana Vinke (Netherlands)	General Secretary
Frank Morche (Germany)	Membership Officer
Salvador Lloret-Fariña (UK)	General Board Member

Frank Röpke (Germany) and Kees Notenboom (Netherlands) were elected at the previous AGM. Both got the position of General Board Member. In addition, Kees agreed to become chair of the Outreach Committee. But both handed in their resignation in the course of the organisational year for the same reason: they could not make the time for ESSDA due to their work and/or private life. Frank resigned from the board in December 2012 and Kees in February 2013.

The following Board members' term comes to an end:

Hadass Armon (stands for re-election),
Davy Brocatus (stand for re-election) and
Salvador Lloret-Fariña

This means that the board currently has three vacancies. The board has received an application from two candidates, which gives room for another candidate.

4 August 2013

Diana Vinke

Secretary to ESSDA Board