



Draft report

EFRJ Annual General Meeting

Online (Blackboard Collaborate) - 24 June 2020, 18:00-20:00hr

The main mission of the EFRJ is to "connect people" and we tried to do it, even if the Covid-19 emergency situation obliged us to do so virtually.

The Annual General Meeting of the EFRJ took place as an online meeting on 24 June 6-8pm (CET). All members were invited to register and to take part in the online event. The AGM was recorded to allow non-members to view the video of the event that was shared on the [event's page](#) shortly after the meeting. The event included Board Elections that took place online between 17 - 24 June 2020.

79 registered persons participated to the AGM 2020. 66 participants had full voting rights.

Opening of the Annual General Meeting and introduction by EFRJ chair Tim Chapman and executive director Edit Törzs.

Emanuela Biffi introduced the Blackboard collaborate and explained the technicalities on how to use the platform and make the participants familiar with it, how to use the poll to approve or disapprove documents, and how to vote. She also explained that the voting for the board elections was open till 19h and that during the five minutes break we would go to the Jitsi platform to make a group photo. Finally, participants could find all the information on the chat box (link to the documents to be voted, instructions on how to participate on the online AGM, etc.).

1. Formal issues and Activities of the Forum

1.1. Approval of minutes of previous Annual General Meeting (Annex 1.1) and Exceptional General Meeting (Annex 1.2).

Tim Chapman referred to the previous AGM 2019 that took place in Bilbao (June 2019) and EGM that took place in Leuven (December 2019) and asked if everybody had received both minutes as [Annex 1.1](#) and [Annex 1.2](#). He also gave the opportunity to participants to make



questions or comments on these two documents. Nobody raised the hand and the poll started with a result of 44 yes and 22 abstentions. Both annexes were approved.

1.2. Approval of new membership applications and other membership matters – Annex 2.1 and Annex 2.2

Edit Törzs presented the Annex 2.1 with the list of new members and showed it on the screen. Since the last AGM, 75 new members applied for an EFRJ membership:

- 9 new organisations (all full members, from Colombia, Croatia, 2 from Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, UK and Ukraine),
- 66 new individual members (53 full members, 13 associate members)

Participants voted and the Annex 2.1 was approved by 44 yes and 22 abstentions.

Tim Chapman asked to all members to check on their annual membership payments and explained that the organization needs their contribution.

Edit Törzs presented the Annex 2.2 "Membership terminations due to change of membership type". Some individual memberships have been replaced by organizational memberships and also the other way around. Finally there are 52 members who didn't pay their membership fee in the last three years and the EFRJ suggested to the AGM to terminate their membership because of non-payment. As there were no questions regarding this Annex, the poll was settled and the Annex 2.2 was approved by 46 yes and 19 abstentions.

1.3. Report of the activities of the Board and the Secretariat. Presentation of the Annual report 2019 for approval – Annex 3

Tim Chapman presented a short overview of the report by introducing the main achievements of the year. In particular he pointed out how the organisation is accomplishing with the long-term goals identified several years ago. Indeed, four years ago, during the AGM in Leiden, a new strategy for the EFRJ was approved. The new strategy included a much more pro-active approach to promoting restorative justice especially outside the EFRJ, to activating our members and to generating income. The new strategy focused on the following three points: raising public awareness on restorative justice, having an influence on policy and developing as well as disseminating values and standards of restorative justice practices.

Public awareness: This last year we worked on a new visual design, logo and slogan "Connecting people to restore just relations" as well as on a new website. This new visual

design and the website were launched at the beginning of 2020 and since last year we have a new communication strategy and are much more pro-active on social media.

Policy: In terms of policy we are consolidating and developing relationships with significant policy makers in Europe with the aim to work closer with them. We are strengthening our relation and advocacy activities towards the European institutions. We are consolidating our collaboration with the Council of Europe and we are regularly consulted by the United Nations on RJ initiatives. We are beginning to be seen as a real stakeholder in the international policy field.

The quality of restorative justice practices. A core aim of the EFRJ is to develop the quality of restorative justice in Europe. Based on the work done in the previous years and thanks to the support of the Standards and Values Committee, we worked on a Practice Guide on Values and Standards for RJ that will be launched in 2020. Based on the Practice Guide, we are also developing a self-assessment tool for practitioners. We also established a training committee and worked on a new training strategy aiming at developing our training offer in Europe. In order to offer qualified and competent trainers we launched a successful call for a pool of trainers and we have now a good pool of expertise. The development of our training offer should also help the EFRJ to generate own income and be more economically independent.

A special mention went to the amazing commitment and participation of EFRJ membership. With the purpose to bring together the expertise of the EFRJ members to support the work of the EFRJ and to contribute actively to its mission, the EFRJ launched new Committees and Working Groups in 2019. In November, we organised a one-day meeting in Leuven bringing together all the members of its COMs and WGs, to allow the members of the different groups to get to know each other, to coordinate their work and to place their activities within the group in a broader scope.

Tim pointed out that all the achievements of the EFRJ in 2019 were possible thanks to the secretariat's teamwork. The team works very well together and has proved a big resilience also during this hard time we are living. Tim warmly thanked all team members for their work and commitment by stressing the contribution and achievements of each of them. Special thanks went to the director, Edit Törzs for her sensitive and supportive leadership.

The pandemic has brought a new sense of solidarity but also has exposed some cracks that have been always there in a more obvious way. Tim stressed the need and opportunities for RJ in addressing the challenges brought by the pandemic

Vice chair Annemieke Wolthuis presented the Board and its work and stressed that, in spite of the pandemic, the Board managed to work close with the team. The mission of the Board

is to deal with a vision and concrete plans for the coming years in cooperation with the team, to carry out the Board tasks and the financial responsibilities that come with that. All Board members are involved in the EFRJ's working groups and represent the EFRJ internationally. The Board meets twice a year (the last meeting was held online because of the Covid-19 restrictions) as well as the Executive Committee.

Annemieke presented the Board members and their engagements, specific responsibilities and contributions in 2019. She warmly thanked each of them for their enthusiasm and commitment to the work and mission of the organisation. Special thanks went to Roberto Moreno and Aarne Kinnunen. Both terminated their mandate as Board members. Annemieke Wolthuis invited the members to count on the Board and to approach them for any questions or comments.

Edit Törzs presented the Annual Report of 2019 (Annex 3). She showed some slides and went into some highlights of the past year:

- Strategic priorities for the EFRJ.
- Board members.
- Secretariat. New 2019 staff members: Bálint Juhász (Communication and Training), Júlia Barjau Dachs (Website) and Silvia Randazzo (RE-Justice project). We welcomed Sofie Doorman as an intern.
- Membership: the core of our organization. It is a great feedback that our membership is growing each year and we are honoured to have their expertise supporting our work with their participation in our Committees and Working Groups.
- Important events: International Symposium in Bilbao, EFRJ Summer School on Child-Friendly Restorative Justice in Gdansk, Training in French on Restorative Justice in Serious Crime Cases in Brussels, Summer Course with the CJPE on Polarisation and Criminal Justice in Barcelona, International Restorative Justice Week and the Seminar with the Radicalisation Awareness Network in Dublin.
- Special thanks went to all the trainers who contributed last year to all our events: Bie Vanseveren, Belinda Hopkins, Gian Luigi Lepri, Marieke Arnou and Antonio Buonatesta.
- Policy. Edit explained how the new EFRJ policy strategy is developing. Regarding the European Union we participated in the CoPEN meeting under the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU on alternatives to detention where we were invited to contribute; some of our recommendations were included in the Council conclusions. We also participated in a Victims Rights Expert Meeting organized by



the European Union and in the United Nations discussion in Bangkok on the UNODC new handbook edition on restorative justice. Two years ago we initiated the European Restorative Policy Network where we invited ministries of justice to participate and 23 countries are already represented. We organise with them a yearly meeting to discuss topics such as, in 2019, the evaluation of restorative justice services. Finally, the Restorative Justice Strategies for Change - an initiative coordinated by the EFRJ, Ian Marder and Gert Jan Slump - involves ten countries with the aim to implement the CoE Recommendations on RJ of 2018.

- And more: new website and visual identity, new communication strategy, new publications, briefs and videos, new projects (i-restore, LetsGoByTalking, Re-Justice), new training offers, new partners in our external cooperation and 62 events attended in 2019.
- The EFRJ invites the membership to approach the secretariat if they are looking for a project partnership.

The Annex 3: Annual Report of 2019 was submitted to the poll and was approved by 49 yes and 21 abstentions.

1.4. Presentation and approval of the annual accounts and budget

Rik Defrère presented the Balance sheets and assets 2018 and 2019 and liabilities 2018 and 2019: If we take a look at the income statement we see that the largest part is still coming from the EC Operating Grant. The membership fees and other income coming from some events, like the summer school, and also various projects, provide the rest of the income. In 2019 we received an important amount from the Basque Government for the organisation of the international symposium in Bilbao. Regarding the costs, we have the staff costs and the operational costs. The first has increased a bit if we compare it to the 2018 because our new staff members (Kris Vanspauwen, Bálint Juhász and Silvia Randazzo). As we also participated in more events in 2019, the operational costs have also increased.

The difference between the incomes and the costs showed that the EFRJ had a final result of **35.507,31 euros**, which is a very good result for 2019.

Regarding the budget for 2020; the impact of the corona virus has been huge in the NGO sector. Our conservative estimations for this year show negative results (-63.000 euros) yet the cautious financial policy of these last years has ensured to cover the gap. Indeed, the postponement of several events, particularly the Sassari conference, resulted in a significant loss of income. Also finding sponsors has become more difficult in these times. Finally we call



to all our members to check on their annual member fees and eventually renew them. All members having questions or comments can contact Rik Defrère (contact details on the website).

Rik added as a conclusion that the EFRJ has a stable financial situation even with the 2020 crisis, the organisation is in a continuous growth of initiatives and activities, reinforcing staff and has demonstrated a great flexibility.

The Annual accounts and budget were approved by 46 yes and 22 abstentions.

1.5 Report of the Committees and Working Groups – Annex 1.6

- Editorial Committee: presented by Heidi Jokinen

The committee has no chair and no editor-in-chief and this is intended because we wanted to discover new ways of work. There is a rotating system of guest editors for each new issue and it has really worked fine. Beside the three annual issues, we also launched two special issues on Environmental Crime and Restorative Justice and on Intercultural Conflicts related to Migration. Most of the publications appear first on the online blog "[The Restorative Blog](#)" and then on the edited version three times per year. With the 20th anniversary a Jubilee Magazine special issue will be published by the end of the year.

- Training Committee: presented by Paul Delaney

The first meeting was held in November 2019 when an ambitious work plan was agreed. The group met also online in March 2020 and the chairs were elected. The group is working on the production of the EFRJ training manuals, development of the pool of trainers and advise on the EFRJ training plan.

- Research Committee: presented by Brunilda Pali

It is a new committee that met in November 2019 for the first time. Members of the committee will rotate every two years bringing a new spirit and initiatives each time. This way, the committee will have some synergy with the EFRJ but the character of the group will depend every time on the members working on it. This committee started with launching a call to assess research needs and found that the EFRJ is lacking of research about the evaluation of restorative justice services and the group is now focusing in this area. The committee pay attention on non-English research and explore thinkers that are not yet well known in the restorative justice field. There will be a call for publications and EFRJ members are invited to disseminate the word. The same way there will be a call focused on RJ research and how to apply it on the field. Interested members are welcome to apply. Finally, there is a



new initiative to create a European data collection and evaluation system, and this idea is being also developed.

- Values and Standards Committee: presented by Claudia Christen-Schneider

The group met for the first time last November and focused on how to support the EFRJ in drafting the practice guide on values and standards based on the Values and Standards Manual published in 2018. The practice guide will be hopefully published this year.

- WG Restorative Cities: presented by Gian Luigi Lepri

A meeting was held recently and it has been decided to write a booklet on how to develop the idea of restorative city, to be consulted as a useful guideline by other cities. The group would like to involve new cities so the initiative can grow and be a better and larger group across Europe.

- WG Violent Extremism: presented by Joakim Hope Soltveit

This working group started with its first meeting in Leuven in November 2019. During this meeting it was decided to change the initial name "radicalisation" with "violent extremism" because the group thought that the word "radical" could also be used for positive changes. It was also decided to focus on hate crime, which is closely linked with violent extremism. Since then, the group have gathered and shared information through a report "RJ in cases of violent extremism" written in cooperation with the EU promoted RAN (Radicalisation Awareness Network) published in January 2020. A new report written by Emanuela Biffi and RAN will be published in July 2020. These reports could be used for a position paper on RJ and violent extremism to be published in 2021 and also as inspiration to offer a training programme on this topic.

Tim Chapman shared the information about the launch of three new working groups - Restorative Schools, Restorative Environmental Justice and Restorative Justice and Gender-Based Violence - and invited the members to apply if interested (deadline 7 September).

During the five minutes break a group picture has been taken, inviting the participants to join on the jitsi platform.

2. Board member elections

The EFRJ membership had to elect two new Board members during the Annual General Meeting. The elections took place as the terms of two board members have come to an end (Aarne Kinnunen from Finland, working at Department of Criminal Policy, Helsinki, appointed in Belfast 2014 for his second mandate and Roberto Moreno from Spain, who worked as the



Head of Adults Justice Service at the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice of the Basque Government and now works for the Basque Ombudsman Office, he was also appointed in Belfast 2014).

2.1 Introduction of the Selection Committee and the procedures, appointment of an Election Committee.

Peter Keeley (Ireland), as chair, presented the selection committee and its members: Monique Anderson (Belgium), Marta Ferrer (Spain), Robert Friskovec (Slovenia). The main tasks of the committee are to support and motivate possible candidates across the membership of the EFRJ, to communicate with the candidates to seek and approve nominations, to prepare the elections and to control the election procedures. Peter clarified how the selection committee proceeded in the selection of the Board candidates and the criteria used for it. He underlined the important role and functions of the Board within the EFRJ. He also reminded that the new Board members will be elected for 4 years.

2.2 Introduction of the candidates – videos

At the end of the selection procedure, 6 candidates have been approved: Petra Masopust Šachová (Czech Republic), Dobrinka Chankova (Bulgaria), Henrik Elonheimo (Finland), Jorge Elías Ollero Peran (Spain), Anna Matczak (Poland) and Maia Chochua (Georgia).

The candidates were only briefly presented since they already presented themselves through individual video messages that were shared in the EFRJ website before the AGM. In order to give to the EFRJ members the possibility to have all relevant information on the candidates, they had also access to the written presentations of the candidates, and their Proposers' and Seconders' statements.

2.3 Voting

Full members of the EFRJ were invited to help shaping the future of the organization by voting on the board candidates. Unlike the previous years, the voting did not happen in person, as the AGM took place [online](#) through the "Election runner" platform. This enabled every full member to participate in the voting (even if they were unable to attend the AGM). They could only vote once; after they had voted the online system did not allow them to change the vote or add a new one.

The voting took place between 17 - 24 June 2020. Previously, full members received the instructions for the [online voting](#) via email. Every EFRJ full member could vote for two

candidates and according to the adapted rules, the vote of organisational members counted three times.

A volunteer from the membership, Olga Kiseleva joined team member Bálint Juhász to witness the election process. The voting platform has been closed at 19h during the AGM.

2.4 Announcement on the new board members

Edit Törzs exposed the results of the elections: 36% of the eligible voters (348) voted and 64% did not vote (the participation was similar to the last AGM).

The most voted candidates were Maia Chochua and Petra Masopust Šachová. Edit Törzs congratulated the two new Board members and thanked the rest of the candidates for their participation.

Maia Chochua took the floor to express her enthusiasm to have the possibility to contribute to the EFRJ Board with her expertise. She explained how she believes in restorative justice and the positive outcomes of RJ practices in her country (Georgia). She thanked everyone who contributed to her election.

Petra Masopust Šachová also thanked her voters for the trust. She is a lawyer from the Czech Republic and is contributing to the Restorative Justice Strategies for Change Project. She works for the Czech Republic probation and mediation service and has always felt a lot of support from the EFRJ in her work.

Tim Chapman thanked Peter Keeley and the election committee for their work.

3. Proposals

No proposals were submitted from the audience.

4. Next General Meeting

The next AGM will take place on 23 June in Sassari 2021 (the night before the EFRJ international conference begins). It will be an important AGM because we will have to discuss and vote on changes of the EFRJ constitution that need to be introduced due to a reform of the Belgium law. The restorative justice award is postponed for Sassari 2021.

Tim Chapman shared very thoughtful words to warmly thank Roberto Moreno and Aarne Kinnunen for their work within the Board. They did a great service for six and 12 years respectively, putting their expertise, enthusiasm and commitment to the service of the EFRJ.

5. Communications



This year, the 8th December, we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the EFRJ with an Arts festival in Leuven. Part of the festival will be online and part will be live.

Tim Chapman made a reminder to those interested in sharing their restorative justice testimonials to approach Bálint Juhász. He also announced the International RJ World e-Conference 2020, that would start the 22th August and where the EFRJ would present around 25 workshops and keynotes. Finally, he invited the members to participate in the series of webinars "Looking forward" that the EFRJ was organising.

Edit invited the members to join again on jitsi for the social moment and for a farewell to Roberto and Aarne.

Closure of the Annual General Meeting

