

Report of the 36th ERA Members' Meeting held on 24 September 2005 in Elpsteet, the Netherlands

Present: 91 participants in total;
Delegates with voting rights – see the attendance list (attachment to the Report)

Beginning: 08.45 Hrs.
End: 12.30 Hrs.

TOP 1)

Welcome:

The President J. Havelka opened the 36th ERA Members' Meeting in Elspeet and welcomed all the delegates present in the hall. He thanked the hosts, Stichting Wandelplatform-LAW, for the organisation of the previous day's working meetings.

J. Havelka stated, under the terms of the Articles, that there were 44 organisations out of 51 member organisations with voting rights represented in the hall.

The numbering of individual topics corresponds to the agenda which was unanimously adopted (see the agenda attachment to the Report).

TOP 2)

Approval of the Report of the Members' Meeting of 9 October 2004 in Brilon, Germany:

The Report had been translated into three languages as stipulated by the Constitution and sent to all member organisations in November 2004. The report was adopted unanimously by 44 votes with no abstentions.

TOP 3)

The President's Annual Report:

The President J. Havelka pointed out that the delegates had received the President's report in writing in advance and for this reason he would not read it again but merely comment on some parts of the report. The report dealing with the previous 4-year administration period of the President was divided into six basic items.

He appealed for new methods of promoting the E-paths in Europe, which he found was not adequate at the present time. If we miss out on projects undertaken by other institutions supported by the EU, which may have connections to our paths, we lose financial support needed for waymarking and path maintenance. The ramblers' clubs associated with the ERA can guarantee with these projects that the paths are not only waymarked but also maintained in the future.

At the present time, there are 51 member clubs under the ERA umbrella. Some clubs have left because of small membership numbers or because of high membership fees. As a result of reminders from the ERA secretariat, it can be said that generally since 2001, the collection of fees has improved significantly.

The financial situation of ERA will eventually be stabilised as a result of the establishment of the ERA Foundation. The creation of a capital of €200,000 would be the prerequisite of a sound operation of the Foundation. J. Havelka asked the organisations through their contributions to help achieve this amount. In recent years, the ERA had managed to reduce its expenses and succeeded in gaining the support of partners and sponsors. This resulted in savings in the ERA budget and enabled the costs of the ERA secretariat to be covered for a further 2 - 3 years. The ERA needed to apply to the EU for funding of major projects; project budgeting should be prepared in such a way that specific amounts are allocated to the ERA.

ERA events, such as European Walking Days serve to promote the ERA and E-paths not only in individual countries but also in the EU. Therefore we should assemble the picture from the whole of Europe first and only then present this to the public, so giving it a higher profile. The results should be available to the public as soon as possible; this will be ensured by the newly created web site.

Since April 2002, the ERA secretariat has been settled in Prague. Due to cooperation with the KČT, the costs of its operation have been lower. The General Secretary J. Špreňarová is also in a good contact with U. Dicks of Kassel (the former seat of the ERA secretariat and present seat of VDGWV), who sends mail to Prague.

J. Havelka opened the topic “The President’s activities” with sad news concerning the death of the former 3rd Vice-President V. Alinovi from FIE. One minute’s silence in memory of the deceased followed.

The ERA range of activities has enlarged considerably in the last 10 years and this is making higher demands on the Presidium’s members. We need to identify priorities in these activities, assign tasks to the commissions, discuss them and, lastly, implement them within the ERA. The President also referred to the fact that the name of ERA - in English “rambling” and in French “pédestre” – limits, by its meaning, the sphere of action of the ERA in different activities and herewith, called on the native speakers to try to change the name of the ERA as it existed in both languages.

J. Havelka briefly summarised the importance of the new ERA website. He asked that each member organisation appoint one person to be responsible for E-paths and events in his/her country or region. This information would then be passed to the website. All old, out-of-date and/or invalid information must be removed from the website. He thanked P. Robins for his performance of the function of a webmaster up to this time and then thanked L. Nielsen for her initiative in reconstructing the ERA website and taking over the work of webmaster.

Finally, he thanked the Presidium’s members and ERA clubs for their cooperation. He also stressed the importance of the role of voluntary workers in the ramblers’ clubs and in ERA.

TOP 4)

The Reports of chairmen of the Commissions:

M. Grandjean was very satisfied with the work of the Walking Commission. 40 delegates had discussed the programme for the next 2 years. The website and its modification were among the main topics of the discussion.

At a common meeting of both commissions (Friday 23 September 2005), their chairmen resumed the decisions arising from the topics discussed and presented them to the delegates of the other commission.

F. Schlinzig added, on behalf of the Footpaths Commission, that the work concerning E-paths is not yet at an end and will be on the agenda of other meetings. Ramblers themselves are the best source of information for us. Their interest in particular sections of footpaths will allow the markers to assess whether the marked path is important or should be relocated in a more attractive area. The EURORANDO 2006 event should also help the organisers and individual clubs to identify the deficiencies in waymarking and the background to individual paths.

TOP 5)

Finances 2004:

The Treasurer L. Nielsen said that the members of the Members' Meeting had received the results of the financial activities for the year 2004 (financial details and a report) together with other documents by post before the conference. She thanked the organisations for timely and due payment of membership fees and, in particular, to those who contributed higher amounts than the nominal fee of €260.

TOP 6)

Auditor's annual report:

H. Reinelt acted as substitute for the auditor H. Grasmück based on a warrant of attorney. The auditor found that the financial records for the period 1 January 2004 - 31 December 2004 corresponded to the figures shown in the book of accounts and stated that the ERA capital had decreased to €28,845.94 and that the deficit in capital shown agreed with the amount of € -31,562.10.

TOP 7)

Approval of the Presidium's activities:

The auditor H. Grasmück and his deputy H. Reinelt proposed that the Presidium was given approval for the accounting period 1 January 2004 – 31 December 2004.

The Meeting gave this approval to the Presidium by 43 votes. There was 1 abstention.

TOP 8)

Members the Election Committee:

The Election Committee consists of a Chairman and 2 Members. The Presidium proposed the persons below, which the Members' Meeting approved unanimously:

- H. Reinelt (MSSGV) - Chairman
- E. Prato Bozzano (FIE) - Member
- P. Ayling (RA) - Member

TOP 9)

Presidium's elections:

Positions in the Presidium in the previous 4-year period were as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| President | J. Havelka (KČT) |
| 2 nd Vice-President | J. Hirschinger (FFRP) |
| Assessor | H. Yseboodt (Grote Routepaden) |
| Treasurer | L. Nielsen (Dansk Vandrelaug) |

J. Havelka passed the floor to the Chairman of the Election Committee H. Reinelt. After, the members of the Presidium seeking re-election had left the room; the election of one half of the Presidium took place in their absence (43 valid votes, i.e. without one voting delegate).

The election of the President:

H. Reinelt, on behalf of the Presidium, proposed the current President, Jan Havelka for this position. No rival candidate was proposed. In the voting, Jan Havelka received 42 valid votes, 1 delegate abstained.

The election of the 2nd Vice-President:

H. Reinelt, on behalf of the Presidium, proposed the 2nd Vice-President Jean Hirschinger for this position. No rival candidate was proposed. In the voting, Jean Hirschinger was elected unanimously.

The election of the Assessor:

H. Reinelt, on behalf of the Presidium, proposed Hubert Yseboodt for this position. No rival candidate was proposed. Hubert Yseboodt was elected unanimously.

The election of the Treasurer:

H. Reinelt, on behalf of the Presidium, proposed Lis Nielsen for this position. No rival candidate was proposed. Lis Nielsen was elected unanimously.

H. Reinelt closed the election of the Presidium and declared it as valid, thanked the Members' Meeting for the brisk pace of the election, congratulated the newly elected Presidium and passed the floor back to the President, Jan Havelka.

J. Havelka said that, after 15 year's work as KČT Chairman, he would not be a candidate in the following year. He was also standing as a candidate for the Presidency of ERA for the last time. He suggested that in the year 2007, at the next election of the other half of the Presidium, his successor should be known. He would have to have the support of his club and ought to be elected as a member of the Presidium for a minimum of 2 years so that he could be a candidate for the Presidency in the year 2009.

H. Yseboodt thanked all the candidates for the honour they had given him by re-electing him.

TOP 10)

a) The 2005 Budget +

b) The 2006 Budget:

The Treasurer L. Nielsen said that the members of the individual ERA organisations had received the draft budget for the year 2005 and the year 2006 in advance. The budgets were submitted in a shape adopted at the spring Presidium's Meeting in Budapest. Furthermore, L.

Nielsen said that she had available the financial results for the first half of the year 2005, which are in accordance with the budget for the year 2005 and the budget deficit to be covered from the ERA capital should not exceed €10,000. She thanked the organisations for higher membership fees. Further income that was not shown in the table would issue from the cooperation on the WalkOnWeb project. M. Grandjean is paid for his job from the budget of KU Leuven, a share of about €1,000 per year belongs to the ERA. Although the costs of the internet have increased, the change of the website will make the communication and availability of ERA documents easier and will save the expenses related to postage. For this reason the 2006 budget has been lowered for the item “Office expenses”. Conversely, a higher amount is expected from the membership fees and the first income from the ERA Foundation. The budget for the year 2007 will be prepared at the Members’ Meeting in Budapest.

B. Kramer from Wandelplatform-LAW thanked the Treasurer who had taken into account his comment at the Members’ Meeting in Krakow and extended the budget for two years ahead.

K. Schneider referred to the fact that in three years’ time, the ERA will not have any capital on its account which it could utilise but the interest revenue from the Foundation should make up for this. Higher amounts transferred to the Foundation account from individual member organisations are therefore much needed and welcome. However, he did not recommend that in two next years the budget should count on the revenue from the ERA Foundation. The interest accrued in this time should be returned to the ERA Foundation account.

TOP 11)

ERA Foundation:

The ERA Foundation was established on 27 September 2004 in Stuttgart. Pursuant to the Articles of the ERA Foundation, the stakeholders who contributed with an amount of a minimum of €3,000 at the time of the Foundation establishment became members of the Foundation Forum. For economic reasons, the Foundation Forum has not met since the Members’ Meeting in Brilon. The members of the Meeting in Brilon entrusted J. Havelka and K. Schneider with the management of the Foundation until the establishment of the Foundation Council. The members of the Foundation Forum met for the first time in Elspeet on 22 September 2005. The task for the members was to propose a minimum of 3 founders or founders’ substitutes to the Foundation Council with a minimum initial deposit of €6,000. These proposals were passed on to the Presidium. According to the Articles of the Foundation, the Presidium is obliged to elect three of the proposed founders to the Foundation Council and complete the five-member Council by two candidates from among the Presidium, the ERA or by persons which may not be connected with ERA. After this year’s election (to be for a period of 4 years), the candidates from the Presidium become, at the same time, the founders of the Foundation. The newly elected Council met on 23 September 2005 and elected its President and his deputy. All members perform this job voluntarily.

The ERA Foundation Council consists of:

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| President | Karl Schneider | - VDGWV and a private person |
| Vice-President | Jan Havelka | - ERA |
| Member | Jacques Lemaître | - FFRP |
| Member | Dr. Hans-Ulrich Rauchfuss | - Schwäbischer Albverein |
| Member | Henk Dikker Hupkes | - Stichting Wandelplatform-LAW |

K. Schneider reminded the meeting that the Foundation was established with the initial deposit of €90,000. At present, another €14,000 had accrued on the account. It was currently possible to deposit the capital safely at an interest rate of 2.3 – 2.6 %.

J. Havelka prompted those present to continue their support for the Foundation. The deposit can come directly from the ERA member organisation or from collections from among

walkers within the organisation at walking events. The EURORANDO 2006 event will also support the ERA Foundation capital with its revenues.

TOP 12)

The adoption of the Marcoussis Declaration on walks leader training in Europe:

J. Havelka reminded that FFRP held the 1st European conference on : „Training courses for group leadership and safety“ in French Marcoussis on 25 – 29 May 2005 under the auspices of the ERA. He invited J.-C. Burel, the FFRP President, to take the floor. He added that some 50 participants of 11 European countries took part in the Conference. Representatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of France also accepted the invitation. For three years already, a successful cooperation had been developing in the area of the walks leader training among FFRP, Spanish and Portuguese clubs. Based on this experience, FFRP organised a conference where delegates from all European clubs could share information. From the questionnaire survey made on the topic it was discovered that in different clubs both professionals and volunteers take care of the training and security measures in courses ranging from 36 - 970 hours/year. Discussions and information at the conference resulted in a formulation of the Marcoussis Declaration which the delegates of the Members' Meeting had received before the meeting. J.-C. Burel proposed the creation a Training Commission within the ERA, which would consist of 4 - 5 competent persons. He recommended preparing another conference on a similar topic but with a demand for more specific topics for professional discussion.

J. Havelka thanked J.-C.Burel not only for his summary of the Marcoussis conference but also for his personal participation in the ERA meeting. He believed that the development of the situation will provide an opportunity for the organisation of a second conference focused in this field and recommended that more specific concrete topics are discussed.

At this moment, a 15-minute-break in the Meeting was taken.

TOP 13)

Evaluation of the Event “Family Rambling Day” held on 10 – 11 September 2005:

M. Grandjean said that all delegates had received a table with the results of the “Family Rambling Day” events. It was evident from the document that 27 events in 9 countries were held within Europe. Nevertheless, he considered this result as rather weak, though it is obvious that many more events were organised than were reported. He appealed to those present that they supply the information to the secretariat in Prague in the shortest time possible. The information collected would not serve only to increase members' awareness but was also created an important document for dealing with politicians and the European Commission.

A representative of Stichting Wandelplatform-LAW pointed out that in organising of such an it is impossible to force individual local organisations to take part in the panEuropean event if they have their own event scheduled at the same time.

TOP 14)

The preparation of the EURORANDO 2006 event:

In preparation of the event, two brochures have been issued:

Walks along E-Paths:

- created on the basis of data from ERA member organisations, though many ERA members did not send any data by 09/05
- contact persons are shown under each walking proposal who will answer the questions and ensure the registration of those interested
- circulation of 25,000 copies
- costs covered by ERA
- the ERA income from advertisements almost compensated for the costs

Closing destination week:

- circulation of 30,000 copies
- costs covered by KČT
- the brochure came into being thanks to the co-operators from KČT

The President Havelka had ensured the distribution of the brochures during his travels abroad. They have also been or will be sent to other places by post. The postage can be provided partly from the grant which KČT applied for in the South Bohemian Region. Presentation of the event will be on the ERA website from October 2005.

Mr. Havelka stated that there were some 5,000 beds booked in the South Bohemian Region for the final week of 2 - 10 September 2006. Within the cultural programme, a similar concert is under preparation as in Strasbourg; however, it will take place on Friday (8 Sept. 2006) in two locations simultaneously. The ERA Secretariat will dispatch invitations to individual ERA clubs shortly, informing them about the possibility of presenting national cultural programmes at both locations. The national ensembles invited will be responsible for their travel costs only; their stay (accommodation + board) will be taken care of by KČT.

Further, Mr. Havelka added that a conference on "Walking and Youth" will be held on Thursday (7 Sept. 2006) within the final week of the EURORANDO 2006 event. The ERA Secretariat will distribute invitations to individual ERA clubs during autumn 2005.

TOP 15)

Information on the WalkOnWeb project:

M. Grandjean said that on 23 September 2005 from 16.30 Hrs. Bert Paepen will inform all participants of the 36th conference in Elspeet in detail about the mission and course of the WalkOnWeb project. J. Havelka thanked M. Grandjean who represents ERA in the WalkOnWeb project for his efforts.

TOP 16)

a) Presentation of the ERA website:

L. Nielsen told all present that the new ERA website was presented at a common meeting of both Commissions on 23 September 2005 from 15.00 Hrs. For this purpose, the creator of the new website Marcus C. Hansen was invited. She added that the content of the written documents on the EURORANDO 2006 event will be shown on the website, from which everyone can download the information they need. The website will also enable advertisements to be placed which have been presented only in the Rambling&Transport magazine so far.

b) Presentation of the Rambling&Transport magazine:

Mr. Havelka observed that, in spite of the fact that the next issue of the Rambling&Transport magazine had not yet appeared, he counted on having the new issue by the end of 2005. Based on the advertisements, it is not a problem to cover the costs of the printing, however, distribution is so expensive that it exceeds by as much as fourfold the production cost. To achieve some savings, further information will be provided via the ERA website. Nevertheless, the magazine should not be allowed to lapse as it promotes the ERA so well amongst politicians.

TOP 17)

Proposals for the agenda of the Members' Meeting:

Mr. Havelka stated that so far no new proposals had appeared.

TOP 18)

Approval of new organizations:

The ERA Secretariat received two applications for ERA membership from Germany in 2005:
Odenwaldklub e.V. (represented in Elspeet by N. Hofmann)
Frankenwaldverein e.V. (represented in Elspeet by K. Schneider)
According to the Constitution, ERA member organisations in Germany had received these applications in order to express their opinions. The Secretariat received four positive responses to both applications.

J. Havelka invited the Chairman of Odenwaldklub N. Hofmann to make a brief presentation of his ramblers' club. N. Hofmann pointed out that Odenwaldklub is very active in the protection of countryside and cultural monuments; it boasts a broad base of ramblers' guides and 18,000 members. The club also contributed with two walking proposals along E-paths in the EURORANDO 2006 brochure – Walks along E-Paths.

Odenwaldklub e.V. was admitted with a unanimous vote.

J. Havelka then asked K. Schneider, who represented Frankenwaldverein in Elspeet, to present the club on behalf of the Chairman R. Strobel who had apologised for his absence. K. Schneider made it clear that the new clubs would not be for strengthening the position of Germany through their accession to ERA but that they would offer ERA support as they both have a stable financial background. Frankenwaldverein has a total of 12,000 members, out of which 1,000 members are aged less than 27 years.

The Frankenwaldverein e.V. was admitted with a unanimous vote.

J. Havelka welcomed the new members into the ERA.

He announced that Österreichischer Touristenklub had also applied to become a new member. However, due to the absence of the ÖTK representative at the ERA conference, the application for membership will be postponed until the next Members' Meeting in the year 2006.

TOP 19)

Exclusion of member organisations:

J. Havelka stated that the secretariat does know any reason for excluding any ERA member. At its own request, Verein Niederrhein e.V. (D) ended its membership on 31 December 2004. At the end of 2005 also MEJEM, represented by H. Hoffmann (F), ended its membership in the ERA because its young members had grown up and the club has lost its importance. H. Hoffmann would like to become an individual member of the ERA.

J. Havelka stated that, the ERA now has 50 member organisations and 2 associated members. In August 2005, he was invited to Sofia by the Bulgarian club BTS where he had the opportunity to meet representatives of Serbia and Macedonia. They expressed interest in becoming members of the ERA in the future and enlarging the cooperation and activities of the ERA in the Balkan Peninsula.

TOP 20)

Changes in the organisation of ERA annual conferences:

J. Havelka talked about the need to sort out the possibility of interpreting at annual conferences, including meetings of the commissions, a matter which had arisen from previously held discussions, and the amount of the conference fee. Interpreting at the commissions would require that the organiser secured sponsorship or increased the conference fee for participants. However, the fee had been rising since 2002 and in 2005 it had recorded the highest amount ever during the entire period of organising conferences. One option to consider was that all meetings should be concentrated in one day, which would allow for making full use of the interpreters and equipment and so economize on the costs of interpreting. The dates of the ERA conferences should also not be identical with the dates of the European Walking Days.

M. Grandjean presented the point of view of the Walking Commission. The members are of the opinion that the arrangement of the conference programme should not change. The free unorganised time is used by the delegates for informal discussions in groups. At the same time, the members of the commission do not consider the simultaneous interpreting as a must during their meetings. On the other hand, they stand for maintaining the conference fee at under the limit of €400 per participant.

The Secretariat will prepare basic guidelines for conference preparation for new organisers, by the spring Presidium's meeting. The Presidium will inform organisers annually about its specific requirements concerning the conference programme.

TOP 21)

Information on the preparation of the Members' Meeting in Budapest in the year 2006:

Lajos Thuróczy from Magyar Természetbarát Szövetség presented the venue of the 37th ERA annual conference to be held on 28 September – 1 October 2006 in Budapest. The delegates present received the papers including registration forms.

J. Havelka added that the last spring Presidium's meeting took place in Budapest and its members had the chance to see the premises where the conference will be held in 2006. The

Presidium agreed upon that the Agro Hotel is a suitable venue for the conference organisation.

TOP 22)

The venue and term of Members' Meetings in 2007 and 2008:

J. Havelka invited the delegates to correct the item of the agenda instead of "The venue and dates of the Members' Meetings 2006 and 2007" to "The venue and dates of the Members' Meetings 2007 and 2008".

The representative of Eesti Matkaliit from Estonia T. Mere confirmed that the club would host the 38th ERA conference. It will be held on **13 – 16 September 2007** in the Laulasmaa Conference Centre near Tallin. The delegates will be provided with detailed instructions at the Members' Meeting in Budapest in 2006. T. Mere made those present acquainted with the future conference venue by means of the DVD projection.

2008: Czech Tourist Club (KČT), Czechia

J. Havelka clarified that in 2008, KČT will celebrate its 120th anniversary of its foundation. In terms of this important event, the club invites the present delegates to the 39th annual conference to Czechia.

Those applying for the organisation of further annual conferences are:

2009: Canary Islands, Spain

2010: FIE, Italy

The Presidium, in its previous meetings, recommended that the venue of the spring Presidium's meeting is identical with the venue of the ERA conference a year later. The next Presidium's meeting will take place in Laulasmaa, Estonia, in May 2006.

TOP 23)

Any other business:

Henk Dikker Hupkes informed the present delegates about organisational matters concerning the rest of the programme of the conference in Elspeet.

Jean Simon informed the present delegates about four excursions organised by FCV in South Bohemia. The participants of the excursions visited the sights and walked along the paths that would become the part of the EURORANDO 2006 event. J. Simon found that the the best and most efficient promotion of events is the satisfacton of his clients. He promised that FCV would set out in 10 buses for the final week of EURORANDO 2006 and urged the delegates present to participate in the event in South Bohemia.

J. Hirschinger introduced a publication "Projet de Traçage des pistes de Randonnée dans l'Atlas Marocain", created by Fédération royale marocaine de ski & montagne in Morrocco.

The President J. Havelka closed the conference. He thanked all delegates for their attendance and active cooperation. He believed and hoped they would implement in their individual organisations what had been decided here at Elspeet. He also thanked the organisers for their excellent preparation of the annual conference and other events related to the programme. He

wished the delegates a pleasant remainder of their stay, a happy evening's programme, a safe return home and looked forward to the reunion in Budapest in a year's time.

Attachments to the Report:

- Agenda of the Members' Meeting
- Attendance list
- The ERA address list

J. Havelka / J. Špreňarová
November 2005