

Report from the EMS Executive Committee Meeting, in Copenhagen, 10–11 March 2023

Richard Elwes

The EMS Executive Committee (EC) plus guests met on 10–11 March 2023, in beautiful (if snowy!) Copenhagen, the home town of the new EMS President Jan Philip Solovej, chairing for the first time. This important moment of transition was kindly hosted by the Danish Mathematical Society and the University of Copenhagen, and took place in the current residence of the University's Centre for the Mathematics of Quantum Theory, the research group led by Jan Philip. On Friday evening, the Danish Mathematical Society hosted a fine dinner for the assembled company near the magnificent Christiansborg Palace, the Danish Parliament building.

1 Officers' reports

After a warm welcome from our hosts, the meeting was opened by the President who paid compliments to his predecessor Volker Mehrmann and outgoing members of the EC, before discussing his activities during the first months of his leadership. He has enjoyed meeting and learning from many and varied people involved in the EMS, especially members of the Society's standing committees whose assorted activities are so central to the EMS's work, as well as representatives of the University of Helsinki which generously hosts the EMS's office, and representatives of affiliated organisations including EMS Press and zbMATH Open.

The new EMS Treasurer Samuli Siltanen then reported on the Society's finances, with the most recent budget approved in the 2022 Council Meeting in Bled (Slovenia). There were then discussions of possible improvements to EMS processes, in both financial terms and those of environmental sustainability. The committee agreed to change the EMS Magazine to being primarily online, rather than having printed copies automatically shipped to every member.

The EMS Secretary Jiří Rákosník, and Vice Presidents Jorge Buescu and Beatrice Pelloni reported on their activities (most of which feature elsewhere in this report).

2 Membership and website

The EC was pleased to approve the Department of Mathematics of the University of Trento as a new corporate member, and honoured to waive the membership fees of the Ukrainian Mathematical Society.

The committee approved 325 new individual members, with the President expressing the hope that the rate of growth in individual membership, which has been constant for a while, might be encouraged to increase through some appropriate publicity and additional membership benefits, such as discounts to attendance at major mathematical meetings.

The EMS website is running smoothly following the complete rebuild and relaunch in March 2021. Incremental improvements are ongoing, with some changes in the technical staffing at EMS Press, the previous primary web-developer having now left with the EMS's thanks for his excellent work. The EMS's membership database is currently in the process of being upgraded, a sizeable technical undertaking which both EMS Office and EMS Press staff are working hard on.

3 Scientific and society activities

Two major EMS-supported meetings are coming up in 2023. The inaugural Balkan Mathematical Conference (BMC)¹ will take place on 1 July, hosted by the 10th Congress of Romanian Mathematicians in Pitești, Romania. Steering Committee member (and EMS Ex-Vice President) Betül Tanbay reported on progress towards this important event, including fruitful collaboration with EMS associate member society MASSEE (the Mathematical Society of South Eastern Europe).

The 29th Nordic Congress of Mathematicians² will take place on 3–7 July 2023 in Aalborg, Denmark, and the EC heard about progress towards this meeting.

¹ <http://imar.ro/~bmc>

² <https://ncm29.math.aau.dk>

The EMS's marquee event is the European Congress of Mathematics (ECM) which happens every four years and is the second largest mathematical meeting in the world. The 9th edition is coming up in July 2024, in Sevilla, Spain.³ The EC heard from the Chair of the Organizing Committee Juan González-Meneses (in attendance remotely as a guest) and made decisions about appointments to the congress and prize committees. The EC then considered plans for the 10th ECM to be held in 2028. The location will be decided at the 2024 EMS Council meeting, with initial bids invited by June 2023. The best format for large mathematical meetings in the future, given the financial and environmental costs of flying, is an important matter to consider. The EC plans for a panel discussion of this topic at 9ECM.

Vice President Beatrice Pelloni reported on the inaugural meeting of the EMS Young Academy (EMYA),⁴ which she attended alongside all 30 members of this new body. The meeting was exciting and constructive and included practical progress towards determining EMYA's structure and bylaws. The EC agreed to offer non-student EMYA members a two-year free EMS membership (students are already entitled to free membership).

The EC agreed to change the name of the open call for large-scale, inclusive and cross-institutional activities from "EMS Large Events" to "EMS Strategic Activities." The call and application form are available on the EMS website.⁵

4 Standing committees and projects

The EC considered the general set-up of the EMS's standing committees, making several proposals to increase communication between the committees, as well as improve coordination, for example in the setting of budgets, and in the release and format of open calls. The committee then considered reports from the committees in turn.

The Committee on Applications and Interdisciplinary Relations (CAIR) brought a proposal for inaugurating a new joint EMS/ECMI Lánzos Prize for Mathematical Software, which the EC was delighted to approve. Reports were then considered from the committees on Education, ERCOM (European Research Centres on Mathematics), Ethics, Publication and Electronic Dissemination, Raising Public Awareness of Mathematics, and Women in Mathematics. The members of these committees all have the Society's gratitude for their work.

Karine Chemla, Chair of the European Solidarity Committee in attendance as a guest, delivered a report on her committee's activities, noting that the number of applications they receive has dropped in recent years. The EC considered steps to improve the

visibility and relevance of the calls. It then approved some funding applications, including for a summer school at CIMPA (Centre International de Mathématiques Pures et Appliquées) on "Graph structure and complex network analysis."

The committee then considered its relationship with the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), of which the EMS is a member, and made plans for how to continue engaging with this body.

5 Publishing and publicity

EMS Publicity Officer Richard Elwes, in attendance remotely as a guest, reported on his activities, including the state of the Society's social media channels. In November 2022 the EMS created a page on the social media platform Mastodon.⁶ As of 1 March 2023, the EMS has over 12000 followers on Twitter,⁷ over 5000 on Facebook,⁸ around 300 on LinkedIn,⁹ and 400 on Mastodon. It also has over 500 subscribers on YouTube,¹⁰ a platform the EMS is yet to make the most of.

The quarterly EMS Digest is currently undergoing a redesign and relaunch, following the retirement of long-standing editor Mireille Chaleyat-Maurel. Discussions on the new format and a new editor are ongoing.

Managing Director of EMS Press¹¹ André Gaul (in attendance remotely as a guest) presented his update. With 21 Subscribe-to-Open (S2O) journals in 2023, EMS Press is currently the second largest S2O-publisher in the world (after Annual Reviews), indicating the success of this approach. He emphasised the great caution that is needed before further journals can be added to the portfolio, for financial and practical reasons.

The Editor-in-Chief of the EMS Magazine, Fernando da Costa (in attendance as a guest) reported that the magazine is performing well, with a good supply of articles, although the balance of content is not always perfect. He hopes for a productive relationship with EMYA (the EMS Young Academy, see above).

The Managing Editor of zbMATH Open,¹² Olaf Teschke (in attendance as a guest) delivered his report, remarking that it is succeeding in the goal of increasing its visibility, and that it successfully passed a mid-term evaluation by the EMS's co-editor FIZ Karlsruhe.

⁶ <https://mathstodon.xyz/@EuroMathSoc>

⁷ <https://www.twitter.com/euromathsoc>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/euromathsoc>

⁹ <https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-mathematical-society>

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/c/EuropeanMathematicalSociety>

¹¹ <https://ems.press>

¹² <https://zbmath.org>

³ <https://www.ecm2024sevilla.com>

⁴ <https://euromathsoc.org/EMYA>

⁵ <https://euromathsoc.org/strategic-activities>

6 Funding, political, and scientific organisations

The EC discussed its relationships with several scientific and prize-giving panels, making nominations where appropriate. The European Research Council (ERC, a major funding body) was again a major topic of discussion, and the EC agreed to set up a working group to further consider strategies to improve mathematical funding via this route.

7 Close

An online meeting of the presidents of EMS member societies was scheduled to take place in May 2023. Later in the year, the autumn Executive Committee meeting is likewise planned to be held online, at a date to be determined. In the meantime, a new schedule of monthly short online EC meetings will continue.

On behalf of the assembled company, Secretary Jiří Rákosník thanked the President (who also served as a local organiser for this meeting), the University of Copenhagen's Centre for the Mathematics of Quantum Theory, and the Danish Mathematical Society for hosting a very successful meeting and for the generous hospitality.

Richard Elwes is the EMS publicity officer and a senior lecturer at University of Leeds (UK). As well as teaching and researching mathematics, he is involved in mathematical outreach and is the author of five popular mathematics books.

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