

ECCE BRIEF ACTIVITY REPORT (October 2008-April 2009)

Our 48th ECCE General Assembly Meeting in Cyprus elected the **New Executive Board (2008-2010)**. The new modified ECCE Articles of Association (from 2006) were implemented for the first time, and, according to them, ECCE President (2008-2010) and ECCE Vice President/President Elect (2010-2012) are elected directly by the General Assembly (General Assembly elects ExBo Members first, followed by the election of President and Vice President/President Elect). A broad announcement has followed by Press Releases by our ECCE Secretariat (*Please find attached both Press Releases – both documents are also included in the 49th Materials Package I for the 49th ECCE General Meeting*).

On **November 8, 2008, ECCE ExBo Teleconference** on the nomination of the New ExBo Rapporteurs for each ECCE Standing Committee (SC) was held. Executive Board (ExBo) also discussed the subject of contacting, attracting and incorporating New ECCE Member Organizations from other European countries in order to strengthen and enlarge our activities and our CE influence on the EU and other international institutions. We also opened the subject of new ECCE General Meeting's Organizational Scheme. The further progress of our ECCE Book "Civil Engineering Heritage in Europe" was also reviewed.

Our Honorary Treasurer/ Vice President Helena Soimakallio represented ECCE at the **138th Annual Civil Engineering of American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)** that was held in Pittsburgh, USA, on November 6-8, 2008.

The cooperation with ECEC was mutually promoted and a Common Working Group (WG) on Small Business Act (SBA) was established to cooperate with EU and support the framework of SMEs in the engineering field. Our colleague Gábor Szöllösy participated on behalf of ECCE and he holds the Chairmanship of the Working Group.

The Chamber of Engineers in the Investment Design of Bulgaria (Sofia Department) organized on November 27, 2008, International Discussion Forum "Competition of Engineers in Europe" with great international participation. ECCE President gave introductory presentation on "Competitiveness of the provided design services at National and European level in the conditions of globalization and world financial crisis". (*Please find attached the presentation that is also included in the 49th Materials Package I for the 49th ECCE General Meeting*).

Our colleague Gülay Özdemir represented ECCE **at the General Assembly and ExCo Meeting of the World Council of Civil Engineers (WCCE) that took place in Brasilia on November 30, 2008.**

Proclamation of ECCE President **as Honorary Member of Association of Civil Engineers of Cyprus took place at its General Assembly on December 6, 2008.**

ECCE ExBo Meeting held in Brussels (December 12, 2008) was combined with a pre-scheduled meeting with Mrs Pamela Brumter (Head of the Unit D4-Regulated Professions of DG Internal Market and Services of the European Commission).

The ECCE ExBo Meeting was held in EU-Liaison Office of BAK, BIngK, BAIK and ECEC in Brussels. Joachim Jobi, Head of the Liaison Office, informed us on the Liaison Office activities, especially with EU Institutions, and on the common representation and operation of their Office in Brussels. **ECCE President has launched discussions with Joachim Jobi and with our colleagues in ECEC for hosting/sharing also the ECCE focal/contact point in Brussels at the same premises.** ECCE President mentioned that apart from the general information and contact we need special actions to inform our Members Associations about the financial EU frameworks and tools and, of course, to exploit these opportunities. The whole subject is under consideration by our Executive Board, evaluating expected benefits to our ECCE and the operational cost per year.

Our Vice President/President Elect Gorazd Humar informed analytically ExBo Members on the progress of our **ECCE Book**. A broad discussion was held about all aspects of a successful project implementation: volume, extension and quality of the content material, matters related to copyright and protection of the intellectual property rights, contractual matters with the publishing company and dissemination/distribution of the book, "business/commercial" plan concerning the Expressions of Interest/Order Forms, attracting sponsorships, possible future agreements with worldwide engineering publishing companies, and so on. (*Please, find attached the indicative cover of the book that is also included in the 49th Materials Package I for the 49th ECCE General Meeting*).

European Council of Civil Engineers represents civil engineering organizations from 22 European countries.

ExBo Members decided that information and relative feedback to our Members Associations must strengthen and be continuous and broad throughout the whole year.

Other ECCE matters (Contact & Incorporation of New Member Associations, Activation of our ECCE Standing Committees, Financial Matters, Cooperation and Common Activities between ECCE and ECEC, ECCE promotional material) were also discussed in the above ExBo Meeting.

"The Development of a Construction Information Platform" was established in Brussels (December 9, 2008) by the EU Commission DG Enterprise. ECCE will participate in this important EU initiative. *Please contact ECCE Secretariat or our colleague Georges Pilot (participation via ECCREDI) for further information.*

ECCE investigates all the opportunities to inform our Member Organizations about the important **EU FP7 - 7th Framework Programme on Research, Technological Development and Demonstration**. Under this framework ECCE participated in the proposal application of the program SSIMPLER "Safe and Simple Earthquake and Wind Design Rules for Unreinforced Masonry Structures" of a network consisting by Technical Universities and European Organizations (EU Joint Research Centre, European Calcium Silicate Producers Association, European Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Association, German Society for Earthquake Engineering and Structural Dynamics, Austrian Association for Earthquake Engineering and Structural Dynamics, ETH Zurich, University of Pavia et al, leaded by the RWTH-University of Aachen.

During the **ECCE ExBo Teleconference Meeting held on January 17, 2009**, ExBo Members approved the new ECCE procedure for the travel expenses reimbursement (ExBo Members and SC Chairmen/Responsible Assigned Persons) circulated on 27.01.2009. *Please find more information by our ECCE Secretariat.*

It was also decided to propose the **Proclamation of our colleague Yrjö Matikainen** (previously Chairman of ECCE Task Force for Research and Technology and ECCE President) **as ECCE Honorary President** for his significant contribution to our organization. This reflects, of course, his personal contribution and also the contribution of his National Association (Finnish Association of Civil Engineers-RIL) to our organization. This proclamation will be held by the ECCE General Assembly at our 49th ECCE General Meeting in Ljubljana.

The discussion for the progress of our **ECCE Book** is continued as one of the basic matters during all ECCE ExBo Meetings, especially on the intellectual property matters, contractual matters, "business plan" and the final implementation of our project. Institution of Civil Engineers, with its great experience in the engineering publishing field (Thomas Telford Ltd) was very kind to assist ECCE and consult all the above matters. Our book is elaborated, formulated, edited and will be printed/published in Slovenia under the guidance and coordination by our Vice President/President Elect Gorazd Humar.

ECCE ExBo was informed by the President on the continuing activities concerning attracting and incorporating new Members Associations in our ECCE and this is for the great benefit of Civil Engineers in Europe and in the national level of course.

On January 24, 2009, the 1st Meeting of ECCE/ECEC Common Working Group on SBA was held in Vienna, under the Chairmanship of our colleague Gábor Szöllösy. ECEC Secretariat provided broad background information on this subject. After the WG Group intensive work and extensive correspondence an **initial background report/preliminary opinion** was produced and also a proposal for a **study defining and analyzing the present situation, the needs and the perspectives of SMEs in the engineering sector** were formulated commonly by ECEC and ECCE. The basic points of the EU support framework to SMEs include:

- The provision of a new statute for a **European Private Company**
- Special **financial tools and products offered to SMEs by the European Investment Bank and in national level**
- Best practices for public procurement that **facilitate SMEs access to public procurement contracts**
- A **New General Block Exemption Regulation** for higher level of state aid to smaller companies
- Providing initiatives, chances and programs for **women and also for the young entrepreneurs**
- The proposal of **VAT reduced rates**
- Business support centers for the **external activity of SMEs cross-border and in the emerging markets**

ECCE, in cooperation with ECEC, follows up the evolutions for SBA in the EU and we will continuously inform our Member Associations. The whole subject is still open for further propositions and actions and we welcome contributions from all our Members.

We would like to thank our colleague Mirko Oresković (ECEC President), Mr Josef Robl (ECEC General Secretary) and Cornelia Hammerschlag (ECEC Secretariat) for our perfect and effective collaboration.

The subject of the supporting framework our SMEs in the Civil Engineering Sector is one of the top priorities!

Please, update continuously your information on the subject by the EU Commission Directorate General Enterprise valuable Portal http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sme/index_en.htm

The 2nd Meeting of ECCE/ECEC Common Working Group on SBA has been scheduled for the 9th of May 2009 in Vienna.

Please, find attached the initial common background report/preliminary opinion on the subject and the proposal for the study on the situation and perspectives for SMEs in the engineering sector that is also included in the 49th Materials Package I for the 49th ECCE General Meeting).

The already existing Draft Agreement with ECEC and BAIK for the Brussels Office was kindly provided by Joachim Jobi to the ECCE President to consider ECCE perspective on sharing the same office in Brussels.

During the ECCE ExBo Teleconference Meetings on February 14, 2009, and March 7, 2009, our ECCE Book was discussed as the main subject. All aspects of the project realization were investigated and further defined (Fixing/Approval of the indicative price per book for the First Edition of 2.000 copies, Distribution of Expressions of Interest/Order Forms, Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright Matters, Contractual Matters with Publishing Company, VAT Issues, and Implementation of the ECCE Book Business Plan).

On February 25, 2009, ECCE and ECEC Presidents met with the responsible persons in DG Enterprise - Sylvia Vlaeminck (Head of the Unit ENTR E.3) and Isabelle Augustin. A broad discussion was held about the EU Support Framework for the European SMEs and Presidents offered close cooperation in order to be informed and participate on time in all legislative, institutional, operational and financial EU Initiatives in this field. Presidents highlighted their support needed for the SMEs in the Engineering field by presenting our common/preliminary report on SBA and the proposal for a study as referred above. Discussion also included standardizations matters.

On February 26, 2009, Meeting of the Presidents of the European Engineering Organizations/Federations (ECCE, ECEC, EFCA, FEANI, SEFI), hosted by EFCA, was held in Brussels. Discussion during this Meeting included:

- Codes of Conduct for the Profession in the Engineering Field
- Upgrade of the engineering educational systems, Continuous Professional Development and Continuing Training for Engineers.
- Enhanced Visibility of Engineers (promoting our Engineering Profession Contribution to the Society, promoting our vital role for the public interest, health and safety and for the upgrading the quality of life of the citizens)

Please, find attached a general view/comment by the EFCA with a comparative consideration of the existing Codes of Conduct (ECCE, ECEC, EFCA, and FEANI that is also included in the 49th Materials Package I for the 49th ECCE General Meeting).

ECCE Executive Board decided (on March 7, 2009) to activate the provision of our Articles of Association for Associate Membership (2.1.1 "Associate Membership shall also open to European NGOs, Contracting and Consulting companies, other associations and organizations. Associate Members shall have no voting rights).

According to the article 2.5, "Membership fees are to be determined by Executive Board and then proposed by the Executive Board for approval to the General Assembly and are to be paid in Euro". We would, therefore, like to propose at our upcoming 49th ECCE General Assembly the annual Associate Membership Fee for 2009 to be defined in 850 Euros.

On March 13, 2009, ECCE Book Expressions of Interest/Order Forms were sent by our ECCE Secretariat to all Members. Until today, Order Forms for 1.263 copies returned to ECCE Secretariat from Members Associations, other companies and organizations and Individuals. As many ECCE Member Organizations have not yet sent their Order Forms, we are kindly asking you to send the Order Forms before Ljubljana Meeting in order to finalize the scheduled number of copies to be printed and to proceed regularly to the further realization of the

project. *Please, find attached the current list of already ensured Expressions of Interest/Order Forms that is also included in the 49th Materials Package I for the 49th ECCE General Meeting).*

On March 12, 2009, after our mutual previous contact, discussion and mutual relevant correspondence, Engineers Chamber of Montenegro - Civil Engineers Chamber submitted Membership Application for their membership in ECCE.

WE would like to WELCOME OUR NEW ECCE MEMBER ASSOCIATION AND OUR COLLEAGUES FROM MONTENEGRO AT OUR 49th GENERAL MEETING IN LJUBLJANA, WITH THE ACCEPTANCE OF OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2009!

We also expect observers and guests from other organizations to participate at our 49th ECCE General Meeting in Ljubljana.

With regard to the activities of our ECCE Standing Committees, we are being all informed by their materials that will be included in the Working Material Package for our 49th ECCE General Meeting in Ljubljana. From many activities we are highlighting:

- **SC Development and Business Environment.** Karlheinz Zachmann (Chairman) participated on behalf of ECCE in European Construction Forum (ECF) and all the relevant evolutions will be presented in Ljubljana. Aris Chatzidakis (Vice Chairman) works on the situation of the EU Engineering Standardisation - he participated in a relative seminar in Brussels and he will inform us on the seminar outcomes.
- **SC Education and Training.** Iacint Manoliu (Chairman) works effectively on EUCEET and ECCE, under his guidance, is involved in a new important EUGENE Thematic Network 2009-2011 (European and Global Engineering Education). Survey on the development of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) on the involvement of ECCE members in this activity was disseminated on February 24, 2009.
- **SC Environment and Sustainability.** Marc Bonazountas (Chairman) works on a ECCE Position Paper on the subject "Sustainability of the EU Islands". Relevant ECCE project will be investigated for preparation to be submitted in the EU for financing and implementing under the proper framework. Umut Turker (Vice Chairman), leading the Session Meeting in Cyprus, will prepare the relevant presentation for Ljubljana, continuing and extending the discussion held at our previous meeting.
- **SC Knowledge and Technology.** Asko Sarja (Chairman) works on a broad agenda, SC activities and information will be sent with the accompanied material before our forthcoming General Meeting in Ljubljana. Georges Pilot made an effective work representing us in ECCREDI and via this representation we attract valuable broad information for many interesting matters to our Civil Engineering profession, concerning innovation, research and technology, EU FP7 Financial Programs etc. Information on SC activities after Cyprus Meeting was sent on March 11, 2009.
- **SC Professional Recognition and Mobility.** Fernando Branco, our ECCE ExBo Member, has done important work by producing ECCE Professional Recognition Agreement and a relevant Charter. Many opinions and positions have been expressed and all of them must be faced within the valid EU legal framework (EC Directive 2005/36) - the dialogue for possible reviewing may start in the year 2010. Based on previous discussions and experience, Fernando will present in Ljubljana approach in the view of "Partial Recognition".

**We look forward to meet all of you in Ljubljana!
We need your active contribution!**

Athens, 16th of April 2009

**ECCE PRESIDENT
Vassilis P. Economopoulos**

**ECCE GEN. SECRETARY
Diana Zlatnanska**

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