



EUROPEAN  
**HUMANIST**  
FEDERATION

**EHF GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019, Reykjavik, room N-132

**AGENDA**

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**08:30 – REGISTRATION**

**09:00 – 12:30 - MORNING SESSION**

Verification of mandates and proxies

Welcome address by EHF President

Welcome address by HI President

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved with the following additional item: discussion on the second Reykjavik declaration on family and human rights under item 4.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the General Assembly of 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018**

The minutes were approved.

**3. 2018-2019 Annual Report**

Hervé Parmentier briefly presented several the key developments of the year. He highlighted the strengthening of EHF advocacy capacities, EHF's increasing involvement in various civil society networks and the strengthening of EHF media and communication capacities.

**Strengthening of EHF advocacy capacities**

Julie Pernet reported about three specific advocacy cases in which the EHF was particularly successful this year: opposing the institutionalization of the religious influence into EP politics (Mc Guinness's report on the implementation of the article 17 Dialogue); mobilizing against the participatory status of ADF (an US-based anti-choice NGO) at the Council of Europe ; amending the "Figel report" on the EU's action regarding FoRB worldwide so as to include the situation of non-believers' worldwide and the work of humanist organisations.

### Strengthening EHF's involvement into civil society networks:

Marc Soignet reported about the EHF work with Civil Society Europe, in the perspective of the Fundamental rights colloquium or the organization of the European civil Academy. He also mentioned other cross-NGO collaboration, such as the joint action #yEURmanifesto.

### Strengthening of EHF media and communication capacities:

Marc Soignet also reported about the successful efforts to increase EHF's presence in media and on social media, with 3 opinion pieces published in Euractiv this year, a rising number of media requests for interviews and a continuous development of EHF twitter account.

### Humanists Professionals:

Freddy Boeykens presented the past and coming work of the Commission on European Humanist Professionals. He reported about the working visit in Scotland and the CEHP meetings. He mentioned the refining of their mailing and quarterly newsletters. He presented the key priorities for the years to come, amongst other things: an International Congress to be held every 24 months ; a face-to-face meeting of the Commission every 6 months ; Working visits to be held every 24 months. Freddy Boeykens also presented the coming International Congress in Bruges (4 - 6 October 2019).

Hervé Parmentier and Marc Soignet then presented the main priorities of action for the next months : mapping of the new European Parliament, presentation of the EHF to newly elected MEPs with a conference on the 20<sup>th</sup> June (on non-believers requesting asylum in Europe), development of a toolkit to support the work of EHF Member organisations.

Giulio Ercolessi added to the discussion by encouraging MOs to share information about their activities and hot issues in their countries with the Brussels team. He also suggested to all MOs to coordinate with the concerned MO partner before taking position on an issue regarding a specific country.

The annual report was unanimously adopted.

### 11:00 – 11:30 - Coffee break

#### **4. Joint Reykjavik declaration (EHF-HI)**

Giulio Ercolessi presented the first Reykjavik declaration that was adopted by EHF, HI and YHI Boards. The following points were suggested :

- Adding a reference to the positive consequences of nuclear energy;
- Adding an explicit reference to the humanist position on sexual and reproductive rights, in a context where Christian right organizations increasingly use the issue of "demographic deficit" in order to oppose access to contraception and safe and legal abortion;

- Adding a clear criticism against individuals' behavior regarding climate change and environment.

After a short discussion, the declaration was adopted as such, without the proposed amendments.

Giulio Ercolessi then presented the second draft Reykjavik declaration on the Family and Human rights. He explained that the text had been developed as a humanist answer to the anti-human rights World Congress of Families that was held in Verona in March 2019. He further added that the text had been discussed during the EHF Board meeting on 30 May and had resulted in a shorter version to be presented at the GA. The declaration could be presented as a piece of news for now, by mentioning the context to the press, and could be part of a more comprehensive stance in the following months.

Several parts of the declaration were re-drafted at the request of member organisations. The amended declaration (see annex) was adopted by the General Assembly.

#### **5. Amendments to the Bylaws**

All the proposed amendments were adopted.

#### **6. Presentation and approval of the accounts for 2018, Report of auditors**

Jean de Brueker presented the 2018 accounts and reported about the positive balance. He then explained that there had been no expense for "specific projects" (point 9) this year and that EHF President had not requested the reimbursement of his accommodation/travel costs for 2018 yet (point 7).

#### **7. Approval of the 2019 Budget**

The 2019 budget was approved.

#### **8. Appointment of Auditor for 2019**

The auditor Mr Marc Bursens was appointed by the GA.

#### **9. Admission of new members**

The EHF was pleased to welcome two new member organizations in its network, one from Portugal - Associação República e Laicidade - and one from Italy - Inmedia[s]res. The two organizations presented their work with a short video and both were unanimously adopted as new members by the GA.

A representative of the Manchester Humanist organization took the floor and explained that he had submitted an application for membership years ago but had received no answer. It was agreed that the organization would send again its application to the EHF staff and that a follow up would be made as soon as possible.

#### **10. Board elections**

Following the resignation of Frank Stappaerts, the Board agreed to open elections for one seat at the GA. There was only one candidate, Freddy Mortier, from DeMens.nu. He presented his application through a video and the vote was carried publicly, with the agreement of GA members. Freddy Mortier was unanimously elected as new Board member by the GA.

#### **11. Next General Assemblies**

Giulio Ercolessi presented the application of UAAR to host the 2020 EHF GA in Rome, Italy. It was agreed that the staff would circulate a doodle amongst MOs in order to find the best suitable date.

#### **12. Any other business**

#### **12:30 – 14:00 – Lunch**

#### **14:00 – 17:00 – Afternoon session (workshops)**

##### **1/ The Future of Europe after the European elections.**

This workshop aims at raising awareness on the outcomes of European elections to our member organisations and brainstorm about possible lobbying actions to be undertaken by our network towards European and national institutions.

##### **2/ Increased collaboration in the domain of education**

From the mapping exercise, we noticed that many of our MOs work in education related issues. We hope that this working group would strengthen the collaboration between our MOs interested in the topic, by sharing best practises about concrete cases, approaches, campaigning etc.

##### **3/ Artificial Intelligence and ethics**

AI is high up on EU and national agendas and it raises a number of ethical questions which have incidence on some of our most fundamental values, e.g. free will, autonomy, free inquiry, human dignity and non-discrimination. In this workshop, we will brainstorm on what more we can do than our activity up to now.

#### **16:00- 16:30 : Coffee break**

#### **16:30 – 17:00 – Closing plenary session**

Hervé Parmentier reported about the discussion on the future of Europe. He presented the main suggested action for EHF MOs in the coming weeks: identifying potential allies in the new European Parliament and send some background information to the EHF staff. He also underlined the need to mobilise for the hearing of European Commissioners candidates.

Julie Pernet reported about the workshop on Artificial intelligence. After a presentation of the main challenges by Véronique de Keyser, the discussion went on the concrete input of humanist originations. Generally speaking, there was a request from several participants to clarify the EHF expectations regarding MO's role on AI: lobbying towards national and European decision makers ? Raising citizens' awareness on the main challenges triggered by AI and helping them to develop tools ?