Introduction

The following 24 companies are members of our group:
- Veritas Verlag (Austria), Prosveta Publishers (Bulgaria), Profil–Klett Publishing House (Croatia), Systime A/S (Denmark), Fraus Publishing House (Czech Republic), Koolibri Publishers (Estonia), Otava Publishing Company (Finland), Cornelsen Verlag (Germany), Patakis Publishers (Greece), CJ Fallon (Ireland), CET (Israel), Zvaigzne ABC Publishers (Latvia), Įvies Publishers (Lithuania), Learnetic SA (Poland), WSiP SA (Poland), Gyldendal Undervisning (Norway), Leya (Portugal), Art Klett (Romania), Kreativni Centar (Serbia), Rokus-Klett Publishing House (Slovenia), Editorial Vicens Vives (Spain), Natur & Kultur (Sweden), Lehrmittelverlag Zürich (Switzerland), and Ranok (Ukraine).

Even though there has been some interest from publishers from other countries, the only three “serious applicants” were from member countries:
- Clio from Denmark (discussion not continued after change of CEO)
- Mladinska knjiga Publishing House from Slovenia (discussion at AGM)
- TAMO Group from Lithuania (rejected by management board because of legal action concerning infringement of copyright)

EEPG General Assembly 2017

The EEPG Annual Meeting 2016 was held on October, 9th at Novotel City Messe, Frankfurt. The minutes are available on the website.

The EEPG Management Board

For the year 2018, the management board consists of the following members:
Chairperson: Frank Thalhofer (Cornelsen Verlag)
Members: Kina Andreeva (Prosveta)
          Carmo Correia (Leya)
          Søren Peter Sørensen (Systime)
Director: Helga Holtkamp

Since two members will be retiring at the end of 2018, elections will take place at the AGM on October 9th.

The Financial situation of EEPG

As the discussion and presentation of the financial report will show, 2017 was the first year since 2013 that did not close with a loss. Even though the net result was only €1000, this is proof that the new measurements have had an effect and that the EEPG is financially on sound feet again.

With the increase of the annual membership fee from €4075 to €4400 in 2018, it will be possible to pay for additional costs at network meetings (e.g. keynote speakers, venues) and create contingency reserves.
Main Activities 2018

1. **Management Board Meetings:** There was one full meeting in Berlin on 12th January 2018 and two Skype meetings. The main purpose of the management meetings was:
   a. to revise and finalize the 2018 budget
   b. to suggest and implement improvements to the EEPG website
   c. to discuss possible ways of using the EEPG website as a marketing and information tool (see also website)
   d. suggest and contact future members as associates of the EEPG (not very successful in 2018)
   e. to plan and prepare networks
   f. to suggest and invite new members for the management board since Carmo and Søren Peter will retire at the end of 2018.

2. **Website:** The website was revised and finally went live at the end of September. Since the budget for this was minimal, the main purpose was to
   a. improve the findability of information and useful documents for the EEPG members
   b. make navigation easier for non-members who are looking for information about the EEPG and interesting topics or events
   c. aggregate useful “news” (this will have to be built up)
   d. make the website more attractive and aligned with the BELMA website
   e. make the website scalable for all devices

3. **Lobbying:** The EEPG tries to assists its members where possible as far as OER, government involvement, questions of copyright etc. are concerned. In 2018
   a. The EEPG represented by Helga, took part in the forum conference “NewEdu” in Kharkiv in March. Helga gave a talk to Ukrainian publishers and interested stakeholders on “Modern world trends in publishing of Educational Literature”. The talk was rather broad and touched on several topics (see June newsletter).
   b. Several members of the EEPG have requested and received letters and best practice examples dealing with the “single textbook market.” As always, the EEPG tries to help and come up with arguments against it.

4. **Networks:** There were two well attended network meetings with excellent speakers.
   a. The first network meeting of 2018 took place in Alfragide near Lisbon on April 19th and 20th and was attended by 24 colleagues. There were two keynote speakers, Dr Benedikt Model from the THM in Germany on taxonomies and Jozef Misik from Edia in the Netherlands on AI. There were lively discussions and best practice examples from the participants concerning both topics. All presentations are available on the new website.
b. The meeting in Helsinki on 14th and 15th of June focussed on the “Changing Role of the Publisher” with two sub topics: from product portfolio to service portfolio (business models) and “Best Practices: R&D Cooperation with Schools”. The keynote by Najat Ouakrim-Soivio gave some interesting insights into both the Finnish education system and the different methods of assessment and evaluation. The meeting was attended by 22 colleagues.

5. Conference in Ljubljana (6th and 7th of September)
   The conference that was open to non-members and heavily promoted by information letters, personal emails and twitter, was unfortunately only attended by one non-member from Slovenia. This was quite surprising since prior to the event quite a few non members had expressed interest. Questioned after the event, some people gave feedback regarding the difficult date. But then every date seems to be difficult since there are so many conferences and events around. It might be necessary to re-think this format, especially regarding the date. However, the 36 participants were generally very satisfied with the outcome of the conference. Katie Roden, who gave one of the keynotes also lead an interactive workshop on day two. Her presentation “What makes content marketing different” was tailored to the educational market (even though bringing lots of examples from different areas).and an excellent follow up to last years talk by Stephen Walsh. The presentation is online, but difficult to make use of without Katie talking through it. Her contact details are available and she can be hired as a consultant. The other two keynotes focussing on headmaster – publisher relationships are also online on the new website.

6. BELMA: Both the more transparent price structure and the categorization have resulted in an increase in entries – this year there were 49 entries (2 dropped out at the last minute) which is another 6.5% rise compared to 2017. The much more even spread of entries across all categories shows that the decision to re-draw the boundaries between cat 1 and 2 was a good move. It is interesting to note that the BELMA has become more recognized outside the EEPG. This year, 19 of the entries (39%) were from non-EEPG members. The BELMA jury consists of 8 members now since Preben Spåth and Jana Huttova retired last year and were replaced by Julieta Savova, Professor, PhD, University Veliko Tarnovo, former Council of Europe and UNESCO expert on teacher education, textbooks evaluation expert (Bulgaria/USA).
7. **Other activities:**
   a. Once again the EEPG tried to assist the Humbold University with an application for Horizon 2020, but once again the result was negative.
   b. The EEPG was invited to present the publishers’ view at the “European Workshop on Integrating SDG 4.7 in Textbooks of Core Subjects” - *Textbooks for Sustainable Development – An Embedding Approach* at the Georg-Eckert – Institute in Braunschweig in July. This workshop was organized by UNESCO and MGIEP. There will be a follow-up meeting on “education for sustainable development” in November in Germany. Some copies of the publication are available free of charge from Helga.
   c. London Book fair: The event - Educational Publishing in the Baltics: from Soviet state-sponsored textbooks to digital learning, and teaching materials in 30 years featured two members of the EEPG (Sviesa with Jurgita Nacevičienė and Zvaigzne ABC with Sintija Buhanosvska) and was moderated by Helga.
   d. Collaboration with IPA and EPF: The EEPG participated in formulating and giving input to various IPA and EPF communications relating to freedom to publish and copyright issues. The EEPG also provides the EPF with information about member countries that are not represented in IPA and disseminates the papers of the EPF. It also makes country reports from the EPF available to EEPG members.

**Important issues for 2019** (largely unchanged from 2018)

1. To continue to secure the financial base of the EEPG (see discussion on budget)
2. To be able to actively assist members where and when needed at very short notice
3. To be able to compile and analyse data about the educational systems in Europe
4. To keep the quality in topic, content and speakers for network meetings and conferences
5. To find new members from countries that have not yet a representative in the EEPG.
6. To keep making BELMA more attractive for non-members and develop BELMA into a more effective marketing tool for participants
7. To try and become more effective in influencing educational politics in the individual countries as well as on a European basis.

Helga Holtkamp, Berlin, September 2018