

Newsletter April 2000

This letter is to inform you about the decisions taken by the Executive Committee of the IEHA during its meeting in Buenos Aires from March 25th to 28th 2000.

Firstly, the committee discussed the preparations for the XIIIth Economic History World Congress, organized in Buenos Aires on 22-26 July 2002. The first brochure has been distributed among the member associations and full information about the congress and the approved session proposals has been made available on the internet: <http://www.eh.net/XIIICongress>. In Buenos Aires, the committee inspected the site where the congress will be held. We found out that it is an excellent location near the city center with all the necessary facilities for a congress of this size.

The Executive Committee decided to distribute a second call for session proposals, which you will find attached to this letter. The deadline for this second call is April 30th, 2001. I would like to remind you of the fact that all sessions are in principle open to all participants. Thus, participants have the right to ask the organizer of a particular session to present a paper about their research during this session. It goes without saying, however, that the organizer has the final responsibility for the program of his or her session.

Secondly, the executive committee discussed a new set of statutes which has been prepared by the Reform Commission (installed by the General Assembly in 1998 in Madrid). After making a number of modifications - partly the result of legal advice received by the secretary general - this new set of statutes has been accepted by the executive committee. The proposed changes of the statutes will be on the agenda of the meeting of the next General Assembly in Buenos Aires in 2002.

As you might be aware, a two-third majority of the delegates present at the General Assembly is needed in order to change the statutes of the IEHA. To be able to prepare the discussion in Buenos Aires in 2002, we would like to have your opinion on the new statutes. Moreover, the executive committee will propose to the General Assembly to have one vote about the integral set of statutes, and not several votes about every single article. The reason is that the different parts of the proposed new statutes are closely

interrelated. But again we would like to know your opinion about this procedure. The vote on the new statutes at the General Assembly in 2002 will conclude the reform process which began in 1998. The executive committee will organize a separate meeting at the world congress in 2002 at which the Reform Commission reports back to the membership of the IEHA (and to all who are interested in the proposed changes) and at which the executive committee explains its position concerning the reforms.

Thirdly, the executive committee has discussed the 2006 congress. The call for host cities for this congress, issued last year, has resulted in three bids - Helsinki, Sydney and Strasbourg - which will be further explored in the meeting of the executive committee in 2001. You will learn from the proposed changes in the statutes, that the position of the 2006 organizer will be different from the present situation. Under the new statutes the vice-president will organize the world congress. He or she will then, at the meeting of the General Assembly that is organized at the end of his or her congress, 'normally' be elected the new president (see article 8 of the new statutes). Thus the selection of a vice president for the next committee (2002-2006) is related to the choice of a venue of the 2006 congress.

This brings me to the fourth issue of this letter: the nomination of new officers and sitting members of the executive committee. In the new statutes the nomination procedure for new officers and sitting has been made more transparent and democratic. As a result of these changes the executive committee is now in the position to ask the member organizations to nominate persons for the following positions:

a PRESIDENT for the term 2002-2006 (this will be a rather 'unique' presidency, because it is now possible to select a president who, as a result of the switch to another system in which the vice president organizes the world congress, will not organize a world congress; this may be taken into account when proposing candidates for this vacancy);

a TREASURER for (in principle) the two terms 2002-2010;

a SITTING MEMBER for (in principle) the two terms 2002-2010 (at least seven new sitting members can be appointed in 2002; each member organization is according to the new rules allowed to nominate one person; perhaps it may be taken into consideration that in 2006 the secretary general will end his second term, and that a new secretary general may be selected from the sitting members of the executive committee).

We would like to invite you to nominate three persons - not necessarily persons from your own country or organization - eligible for the three positions mentioned. Candidates for the presidency and the treasury may come from outside or within the present executive committee. These nominations should be sent to the secretary-general by November 30th 2000. Please include all relevant information of the persons that you wish to nominate. This should include the position they hold in their respective countries, a list of published books and articles, and information about governing positions held within their university or other institutions. We would like to add that, according to the new statutes, the executive committee has to reflect "the diversity of scholars of all countries interested in economic history in its broadest sense". This we interpret also to relate to a more balanced composition of the committee in terms of age groups and sex.

In accordance with the proposed new statutes (concerning this matter not in conflict with the old ones) the executive committee will prepare a slate of endorsed nominees for the available positions from the persons that were nominated by the member organizations. For further details about the nominating procedure, I refer to the proposed new statutes. As far as the secretary-general is concerned, the executive committee will propose to the General Assembly that the current secretary general (appointed in 1998) serves another four-year term.

Finally the executive committee paid some attention to the state of affairs concerning the world congress that was organized in 1998 in Madrid. It was acknowledged that the volumes of the congress have now been distributed to all persons who had paid for them. No news of the legal proceedings between Gabriel Tortella (or his foundation) and Proconsur was received. The executive committee reluctantly concludes that it cannot take any further steps. Moreover, the committee finds it regrettable that it is unable to obtain additional information about the accounts of the Madrid organization.

Jan Luiten van Zanden, Secretary General