

ERME: The European Society for Research in Mathematics Education

A New Society in Mathematics Education Research

Barbara Jaworski

The idea of developing an European organisation for researcher in mathematics education was brought forward by Professor Hartwig Meissner at the NORMA-94 conference in Lahti, Finland in 1994. The first organised discussions about the society was held at a conference in Osnabrück, Germany in the autumn of 1995, and a network was established. A meeting was held at ICME 8 in Seville to discuss further progress.

During the weekend of 2-4 May 1997, representatives from 16 European countries met in Osnabrück, Germany, to establish a new society, ERME, to promote *communication*, *co-operation* and *collaboration* in mathematics education research in Europe. The foundation of this Society will take place over two years, from 1997 to 1999, during which its constitution will be developed. The Society will be fully operational for the new millennium.

The Society begins with a Constitutive Committee consisting of representatives from all participating European countries (see below). A Steering Committee has been elected from these representatives to lead the progress of foundation over the Society's first two years. Countries not yet represented are invited to send a representative to join the Constitutive Committee.

The Society will host its first scientific conference in August 1998. The style of this conference will reflect the mission statement see below. A Programme Committee has been elected to plan this conference.

Countries represented at the weekend were:

Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, UK, Ukraine.

Barbara Jaworski er professor ved Oxford Centre for Mathematics Education Research, Department of Educational Studies ved University of Oxford.

Steering Committee

Paulo Boero (Italy), Jean-Philippe Drouhard -*Co-ordinator*- (France), Konrad Krainer (Austria), Jarmila Novotna (Czech Rep.), Luis Rico (Spain), Leo Rogers (UK).

Conference Programme Committee

Nicholas Balachef (France), Elmar Cohors-Fresenborg -*Co-ordinator*- (Germany), Milan Hejny (Czech Rep.), Barbara Jaworski (UK), Joao Pedro da Ponte (Portugal)

An initial mission statement

The communicative/co-operative/collaborative nature of this Society will be reflected in the following activities:

- 1) The Society will organise: *Conferences* with a wide spectrum of themes to profit from the rich European diversities, *Special Meetings* such as *thematic workshops*, centring around specific topics, or *summer schools* where high-level participants work together with beginners.
- 2) The Society will foster and support *co-operative activities on common themes, topics, interests*, aimed at: *Broadening Understanding* – going beyond local contexts to enhance knowledge and understanding in scientific areas; *Finding out* – what research is going on in different places in Europe which might benefit from wider investigation. Identifying *Key Areas for Research* – areas of scientific interest or concern which should be a major focus for collaborative research on a wider scale. *Bringing Together Areas of Expertise* – drawing on expertise in related areas to broaden scientific knowledge.
- 3) The Society will enable *Communication of Information* to enhance the visibility and availability of European research on Mathematics Education (in Europe and all over the world). Media of communication would include: Proceedings, Journal, Newsletters, Books, Internet, Web site, Video-Conferences, Interactive CD-Roms, Virtual groups.
- 4) The Society will support graduate students, thus preparing researchers in Mathematics Education through conferences, summer schools, provision of information, student and teacher exchanges, post doctoral opportunities, inter-European collaboration on thesis presentation.

The first ERME conference

This is designed to foster a communicative spirit. It deliberately and distinctively moves away from research presentations by individuals towards collaborative group work. The main feature of this conference will be the thematic group whose members will work together in a common research area. Papers will go through a peer review process in which members of a group offer a helpful critique to the author. Group leaders will design the form of group sessions at the conference, based on the papers received. Proceedings from a group may be published after the conference in a formal or informal style. It is expected that this process will ensure a high quality of scientific work, with resulting high quality publications which will be available to all members of ERME.

The first conference will take place from 27th August (commencing at 1600h) until 31st August 1998 (ending at 1200h) in Osnabrück, Germany, to follow the International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) in Berlin. A first announcement and call for papers will follow in September, 1997.