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From Your Regional Director



DKG – WE ARE FAMILY

Travelling always brings new input and new insights to you and very often you meet new and interesting people. That is why I like to travel. I personally never go abroad, I just go to other places.

This spring 2015 I had the honor and pleasure to visit six State Conventions in Europe. A lot of travelling, yes but a great joy as this was not going abroad it was like going home as I knew I would meet members that I had met before and that I would make new friends.

And it was like coming home! I want to thank you all for the warm welcome, the kind reception, the gifts, the way you cared and took your time to give me a home stay and a sightseeing of your area. I felt like royalty! And this has been told to the Administrative Board.

I also told the Administrative how impressed I was by the professionalism with which the business parts of the Conventions were handled and how carefully the speakers had been chosen. So many different key topics were presented showing how much educators in Europe, retired or not, care about the future of children and students. Many projects were presented telling how you are being involved in the welfare of other people young or old.

It was also great to experience how DKG-members care for and recognize each other. It might have been by our symbol a rose or with kind words. Many of the Purposes of our Society were certainly fulfilled.

At all the Conventions our symbols – the bowl with roses, the brass candle sticks and the red candles bring dignity and underline what a membership in DKG can mean.

Coming to a DKG meeting is like coming home and the wonderful thing is that we have many homes in Europe and many other places. We are truly blessed that we can go home to so many places – that we are family!

I do hope you will feel the same about going to the 9th Europe Region Conference (ERC) in Borås in August this year.

We will celebrate the Europe Region and we will sing songs written by European members. The songs as well as information about the conference will be on <http://erc2015.weebly.com> shortly. Welcome home! Welcome to your family!

Marianne Skardéus Europe Regional Director 2014-2016

Iceland

The Icelandic State convention 2015

The Icelandic State convention was held in Reykjavik, our Capital city, 9th–10th May and the theme was: **To be connected – the source to School improvement and Innovative learning.** All presentations discussed these subjects in one way or another.

Eta and Kappa Chapters along with our Educational Committee prepared the convention frame and the convention program. State President Guðbjörg Sveinsdóttir welcomed the participants and then the program began.



Tamyra Burnett-Telles giving her presentation.

The first presentation was given by *Tamyra Burnett-Telles* who came to the conference with a funding from [The International Speakers fund](#). Tamyra is a music teacher from Florida and has been teaching on most school levels. Now she works as an assistant principal in an International School in Sweden. With a very lively performance she told us how you can connect music and literacy. And, believe it or not, Tamyra who is newly married, brought her husband with her to Iceland and this trip was also their honeymoon ☺

The next speaker was *Rannveig Björk Þorkelsdóttir* who is an Icelandic drama teacher and a doctoral student. Her doctoral thesis is about pedagogy and drama. Drama as an art form is not being taught in Icelandic schools, with a few exceptions. Very few schools use drama as a teaching method but according to the Icelandic national Curriculum Guidelines drama education should be interdisciplinary and used in teaching accordingly. Rannveig Björk told us how we can integrate drama to other subjects in schools.

The last speaker before lunch was *Frímann Kerúlf* who is an artist and a physicist. He told us about a course he teaches at The Reykjavik School of Visual Arts where science and maths are taught from the perspective and needs of visual arts and design.

After a wonderful lunch, *Kristín Jónsdóttir*, lecturer, and *Anna Kristín Sigurðardóttir*, Senior Lecturer at the University of Iceland told us about a research project they took part in. The name of the project was *Teaching and learning in Icelandic compulsory school*, and the principal objectives was to provide an overview of school practices at the beginning of the 21st century.



Anna Kristín Sigurðardóttir, Ingibjörg Jóhannsdóttir and Kristín Jónsdóttir

The last presentation of the day was given by *Rakel G. Magnúsdóttir*.

She is an ITC consultant and a teacher. She told us about some projects where technology has

opened gateways between different learning subjects and provided opportunities for creative working methods. After a good coffee break, Tamyra and Rakel gave one hour workshops about their teaching methods.

When this program was over, we took a nice walk down to the harbour to a restaurant where there was a reception with food and some musical entertainment.



Dr. Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir and Guðbjörg Sveinsdóttir, our Icelandic State President.

On Sunday we had our Annual Meeting where we voted for a new board for the next two years. At our Convention we honoured one member in our Icelandic DKG society, *Dr. Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir*. Dr. Sigrún Klara is one of our founders and very well known for her work and support of the Society, both here in Iceland as well as regionally and internationally. We are very proud of her and her contribution to the field of Education and DKG.

When the meeting was over we had a nice and relaxed lunch and enjoyed the company of each other.

Like all other DKG Conventions, this one was run expertly and smoothly and the program offered something for everybody. But first and foremost it gave the opportunity to meet old friends again and build new relations and friendships.

Eygló Björnsdóttir, Beta Chapter Iceland

Serving on the International World Fellowship Committee 2014-2016

The International world Fellowship Committee is one of eight committees listed under the heading of Society Mission and Purposes. At the beginning of each biennium the International President appoints five members, one from each region, to serve on this committee. I applied and was invited to serve on the committee as the representative of the European region during the 2014-2016 international biennium.

The main task of the committee members is to grant world Fellowships to women around the world who intend to study in the United States or Canada at masters or doctoral levels, in accordance with the Constitution and International Standing Rules. The World Fellowship Program began in 1946 as a project to aid women in war-torn countries. The program is funded by donations from various sources, including many DKG chapters and state organisations.

Committee work was light during the first months of the biennium, but on February 17th we had an online meeting to outline the task that needed to be completed before our face-to-face meeting in Texas on March 27 and 28, 2015. Each committee member was asked to read all 93 applications that had been submitted this year and evaluate them on a scale of 1-100. Reading and evaluating all the applications was time-consuming but informative work. In March we then compared our scores and selected 20 recipients who each received a \$4,000 grant. We also selected six recipients who each received a \$3,200 grant extension. We wished there had been enough funds to be able to give a grant to all the applicants.

We are proud to report that DKG is affecting and influencing education worldwide. The recipients who were chosen were from 56 different countries (including several European countries). They all

had an interesting story to tell about their present state of affairs and ambitions for the future. It can truly be said that many of these women put an incredible amount of effort into getting to the place in life they are now. At this time they are all seeking more education so that after they finish their studies they can have an impact of education in their home countries.

At our March meeting in Austin, we also discussed how we were going to introduce the World Fellowship Program at the regional conferences this summer. It is important to introduce this program within our society and beyond, because a better understanding of the program will hopefully increase contributions to fund it in the future. We also updated the World Fellowship Program brochure as well as the information that appears on DKG International Website and in the *DKG NEWS*, our international newsletter.

1. Use social media to build awareness about the World Fellowship Program.
2. Engage the members of the Society in promoting the World Fellowship Program.

When the meeting was over we went to a nearby restaurant and had a cosy evening together over a good meal. The next day, March 29th, we all went back to our homes. We all had to travel a long way to attend the meeting but I probably had the longest trip, having to travel for one and a half days both to and from the meeting. Yes, it is a long way from Akureyri, Iceland to Austin, Texas.



Despite a long and tiring journey, this was a pleasant grip and fun to get to know and establish new friendships with other committee members and get a glimpse of their lives. I truly can recommend other European members to apply to serve on and International committee. The benefits are more than the disadvantages.

Go to the [World Fellowship page on International website](#) for more information about the committee.

Look forward to seeing you all in Borås, Sweden!

Eygló Björnsdóttir, Beta chapter, Iceland

Great Britain

GB State President's Report May 2015

It has been a great honour, and a priceless experience, to be State President for a second biennium. I am delighted that Kathy Hodgson has agreed to be our New State President and that Evelyn Goodsell will become our Vice-President. Evelyn's support will be invaluable, I know from my experience, no-one can do this job alone.

My state conference report allowed me to thank everyone who provided support and guidance during my biennium. It also gave me the opportunity to report what the chapter presidents said makes them most proud of their members, as Gamma Chapter put it, 'the genuine spirit of friendship and support and the ongoing commitment of its members'.

It was good to see so many members at our State Conference. We were very privileged to enjoy such first class speakers. Not everything went to plan however, one speaker was not well and so we had to find a 'back-up', who turned out to be a wonderful author giving us a powerful insight into her life in Gaddafi's Libya.

Our Chapters have been supportive to others' education with Gamma helping *Pestalozzi* and Beta supporting university education student experience in working with a literacy group. Our conference collection was for *Schools for Africa*.

The survey on recruitment and retention of teachers, drawn up by members in Estonia and circulated here by Joan Carroll, has provided us (and the European Regional Conference) with food for thought. Joan was also responsible for organising our delicious conference food. I have to say it was a pleasure to watch her keeping the minutes and writing down all that the GB Achievement Award recipient had done – only for it to slowly dawn on her that she was the award recipient!

The sun is shining, summer is on its way. I am now looking forward to seeing many friends and colleagues at our European Regional Conference in Borås, Sweden, the 'City of Sculptures'.

Diana Bell

2015 Visit to Norway and the Norwegian State Conference

When I was a child in the 1940's I had special geography lessons from the wireless augmented by a glossy black and white photograph book. The lesson on Norway and the picture of fjords and houses with grass roofs captivated me. In 1966 a secondary head teacher from Os near Bergen visited the School Sports Centre in London where I now lived and, as a result of that visit, a special family friendship was established enabling me to visit the country for the first time in 1969.

By 2015 I had made many explorations in Norway and learned much of the customs and folklore but my friends were growing older and I wished to see them again. I decided to combine a trip to see them and the DKG Norway Conference. Despite one having Alzheimer's disease, my two teacher friends were both able to reminisce about the good times we had with our children, boating, fishing and skiing. I was treated like a queen with most of the children and grandchildren visiting while I was there. We took the ferry to Tysnes and drove back via the Samnanger fjord. I was sorry to leave them; they are both older than me...

On this, my tenth visit to Norway, the sun shone brightly for my train journey from Bergen to Oslo; no mist and wonderful views of the mountains still mostly covered with deep snow. I arrived just in time to walk to the opera house, meet my DKG friends and to see Bizet's *Carmen* performed as a



ballet. It was good to be seated next to Anna Handeland who I first met many years ago at a Regional in Amsterdam and the delightful young person next to me turned out to be Ingrid Christiansen's daughter. It was also good to be greeted by other members seated so near. Afterwards Bjorg Nackling hosted me in her home with our International President Lyn Schmid and Regional President, Marianne Skardeus.

Ingrid and her team superbly organized the conference with interesting speakers and lovely music. We enjoyed a tour around Baerum and laughed so much with a cultural history sketch by Anne Storrusten and her colleague. The business flowed smoothly, a little in English but mostly in Norwegian. I have tried several times to learn the language, with little success but I understood some and could follow texts for pronunciation. Friends were on hand to translate when required.



The events were interspersed with chats over a large selection of delicious Norwegian food in the conference hotel that was large, light and airy. I was sad to leave all my colleagues but felt that I had grown to know them so much more, about their lives and families. There are degrees of knowing.

After the conference Bjorg drove Lyn and me to the now snowless Olympic Ski jump. We climbed to the top and admired the views of the fjords and mountains and those brave enough to jump, descending by the overhead wire. Making a really good end to the superb conference, Lyn then treated us to a delightful meal in Oslo. I really hope I shall see everyone again in the future, in the summer in Bórås perhaps.

Unity Harvey, Alpha Chapter

N.B. Norway has posted a detailed report with photographs of the 2015 state conference on the DKG European website.

Finland State Convention of 2015 in Joensuu

Around 20 members from all Finnish chapters gathered in Joensuu, in North-Karelia on Saturday the 11th and Sunday 12th of April to have the annual seminar and meeting. The theme of our convention was "Kasvua kaiken ikää – Whole Life Learning", so a very suitable venue was the Family House in Joensuu city centre in the craft centre in a old wooden building which has been renovated for new purposes.



<http://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/joensuunperheentalo/esittely-introduction/>

We had an introduction of the various activities that are going on in the Family House by Ms Anne-Maria Saaristo, project leader from Save the Children Fund. Later in the afternoon we had a talk by Dr Merja Korhonen, university lecturer in psychology, entitled "Life Story". Dr Korhonen told us about a large research project in which they had interviewed a number of 40-year olds about their life stories.



Mr Topi Linjama, who works as a project manager in the Family house, talked about the roles of fathers and men in Finnish families. His title was "I wish to have a change in the Finnish male culture". His aim is to bring men together to talk about their lives and families as well as create activities both for men and children.

We also had a great pleasure to have our European director Marianne Skardeus with us in Joensuu. Marianne told about the Borås regional conference, which looks very tempting with a lot of interesting programmes.

In the evening we went to a concert, "In This Age" by a well-known Finnish actress with her women's band at the local theatre and enjoyed it very much.



On Sunday morning we had our annual business meeting and meeting of chapter officers. Our new state president is Ms Kaija Teikari and secretary, Ritva Norhoma. Both are from Alpha Chapter (Helsinki). Our principle is to have representatives in the state board from every chapter which improves communication and hopefully enables better participation of our members.

We look forward to seeing our friends in Borås. Unfortunately some schools start around the time of the conference, but we try to participate as much as possible.

Anna-Kaisa Räsänen, State President and Eija Liisa Sokka-Meaney, State Secretary

iPads as a Tool to Excite a Desire to Learn: Project

I have received a grant from the DKGEF for a project, 'iPads as a Tool to Excite a Desire to Learn' for the academic year 2015-2016. The project takes place at the International School of Vantaa (ISV) located in Helsinki metropolitan area in Finland. There are more than 90 grade 1-2 students and four class teachers involved in the project.

The project has four goals:

- Co-operation with different parties internally and externally to ISV
- Bilingual education (Finnish and English)
- Increasing students' learning motivation
- Using modern technology equipment as a pedagogical tool with grade 1 and 2 students

This project was already launched in the spring 2013 when I received the first grant from the DKGEF. Since the fall 2013, the funding has enabled for the International School of Vantaa to buy 14 iPad minis, an iPad charger for multiple iPads, few AppleTVs, iTunes gift cards and headphones. Next academic year, the new funds will be used to buy more iPads minis in order to reach 1 student: 1 iPad ratio.

In the academic year 2014-2015, the grade 1-2 team teachers have participated in several tablet trainings and professional development courses for ICT. One of them was an animation workshop in March 2015,



which inspired me to introduce making animations for grade 2 students.

The first small animation project took place in small group lessons for Finnish language. All 48 grade 2 students of ISV made their own animations in pairs using an app called PuppetPals HD Director's Pass. In the animation making process, the students either drew the actors themselves or used ready-made puppets. They planned their animations by creating a mind map with the Popplet application. This small project took all in all 4-5 lessons. The goal was to get familiar with the use of the application and practice digital story telling using Finnish language. Even the students at the beginner level of Finnish language were able to act out their stories!

The second trial took place in art lessons. The students in my own class participated in this small project and they learned to make animations using Stop Motion Studio App. The students used Dublos or Playmobil characters in their animations. The goal was to get introduced into stop motion



animated movie making and to learn the basics of movie editing by using iMovie. This project took four art lessons to film and one lesson to edit the videos (adding background music and sound effects).

All in all, the students have had a great time with their animation making process! They were well motivated and very excited to see the ready-made movies. Especially some of my boys have asked the names of the apps so that they can continue making animations at home with their own tablets. The aim is also to show the outcomes of the iPad project for Grade 2 parents before the end of spring semester.

Iida Hyvönen, Alpha Chapter

Germany

Our annual **State Meeting** took place **in Fulda** on the **15th and 16th May** this year.



Inside the baroque cathedral

As usual, Friday was the sightseeing day so we had a guided tour through historic Fulda, known for its baroque quarter with its baroque cathedral, the Royal Palace, the city's palace and the Orangery.



Inside Romanesque St. Michael's Church



Street view (all photos by Dr. A. Krause)



G. v. Engelhardt, M. Huber, D. Ullmann, A. Turturici (from left to right)

Saturday morning we had the executive board meeting and the general assembly with the election of our new executive board. Here it is:

We are very happy that Dagmar Ullmann from Delta Chapter had been nominated and was elected our new state president. She knows the society very well, has been to many international conventions, Europe regional conferences and was and still is our member in the European Forum and, last but not least, has been the editor of our newsletter for many years. So I am convinced that she has the energy and the ideas to do a great job.

Gisela von Engelhardt will be our secretary again as she has been for some years now, as well as Anna Turturici who will serve as state treasurer for the next biennium. Thank you very much for being willing

to do that again.

Saturday afternoon was dedicated to the exchange of ideas for chapter activities regarding migration and integration as this topic has become quite important in Germany due to the arrival of many refugees in the last two years.

First Gudrun Nylander reported on the situation in Sweden. She has been working in this field for many years, mainly teaching Swedish as a foreign language. Having only 9 million inhabitants, Sweden accepts about 100,000 refugees every year. The main aim is to enable them as fast as possible to find work and thus a sort of “career plan” is developed for each of them by finding out about their former education and training, their language and professional skills. They have to come regularly to the language course otherwise their social welfare is cut.

Then Barbara Frank from Gamma chapter presented her project in our town of Achern. She organizes German language courses and courses in all other subjects needed to get a sort of GCSE for mainly Turkish women. They have been living in Germany for some years without having the chance of learning German or getting any further education. In addition to the lessons they go on excursions to getting to know our country and culture better. Barbara managed to get money from a local foundation for the project, but organizing it all is a lot of work! Her work is highly esteemed by the local authorities and of course, by all of us.

Gudrun Bertsche from Gamma chapter as well, teaches German to illiterate immigrants, mainly from Arabic countries. As there was not much teaching material available in the beginning, she produced it herself and showed it round. Great work! We were very much impressed.

After that, Anna Turturici, teacher at a so-called “Werkrealschule” in Freiburg which offers preparing classes for migrant children of many different backgrounds talked about her work. As Freiburg is a university city, children of Chinese professors as well as the ones of Roma are sitting in the same classes, so the main problem the teachers have to deal with is internal differentiation. Anna talked about these difficulties and showed us a large variety of teaching materials.

Thi Finkemeyer from Delta Chapter was our next speaker. She reported on the project of the “living library”. It works like a normal library: Visitors come and borrow a book from there. The difference:

the "books" of the living library are real people that can be "borrowed" from the visitors for a talk. They represent social groups that are frequently confronted with prejudices and stereotypes.

Finally, I presented the Tandem project I have been organizing in our area for about two years now. Its aim is to place children of migrant families in German families for one afternoon a week. At present, there are about 18 children who visit German families once a week, so almost 40 families have got in contact up to now. And we are thinking about organizing Tandem for adults as we feel that there is need for them as well.

After the meeting we strolled through the picturesque town to a restaurant called "Wiesenmühle" a former mill near the river and had a great time together.

Monika Huber, outgoing State President, Germany

Thank you everyone for the excellent articles, reports and photographs sent for this edition of EuForia, which show the wide range of topics and interests being discussed and studied by members in Europe. I hope many of you will be able to go to the conference in Borås to continue these discussions and share this knowledge, as well as make new friends and renew old friendships. Have a wonderful Summer.

Joan Carroll, Editor.