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THE XTH EAS MEETING IN MÜNICH

I. Pustylnik ^a

^a Tartu Observatory, Tõravere, 61602, Estonia.

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THE XTH EAS MEETING IN MÜNICH

I. PUSTYLNİK

Tartu Observatory, Tõravere, 61602, Estonia

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The Xth annual Meeting of the European Astronomical Society (EAS) entitled: “Five Days of Creation, Astronomy with Large Telescopes from Ground and Space” was held in München, Germany jointly with 75th Astronomische Gesellschaft annual Conference during 10–15th September 2001. Around 500 astronomers from 34 European countries gathered in the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität of München. Both Scientific and Local Organizing Committees as well as the Astronomische Gesellschaft have done a great amount of preparatory work, timely informed the potential attendees about all the important aspects relevant to EAS Meeting (an official acronym JENAM-2001 will be used hereafter for the sake of brevity)—Scientific Program, accommodation, publication of Abstracts, visa support etc, last but not least, have done serious efforts to raise additional funds to support 54 participants of JENAM-2001 from East European countries. JENAM-2001 was sponsored by the German Research Council, the state of Bavaria, the Max-Planck Society as well as by ESO.

Traditionally JENAM-2001 Meeting consisted of both plenary sessions and parallel mini-symposia M1–M10 plus Joint Discussions JD1–JD5 dedicated to the subsequent topical problems of modern astronomy:

- MS1: X-ray Astronomy from the Local Bubble to AGN
- MS2: Massive Stars, the ISM and Chemical Evolution
- MS3: Particle (Neutrino/Cosmic Ray) and Gamma Astronomy
- MS4: Formation of Extrasolar Planets—Theory, Observation, Lab Experiment
- MS5: Evolution of Galaxies—Observation and Dynamics
- MS6: European Large Scale Facilities in Astronomy
- MS7: Magnetic Activities in Stellar Evolution
- MS8: Accretion, Turbulence and MHD—Stability and Instability in Astrophysical Flows
- MS9: Hot Subdwarfs and White Dwarfs and Low-Mass Stellar Evolution
- MS10: Large Telescopes for Solar Physics
- JD1 Astronomy with Robotic Telescopes: Present and Future Projects
- JD2 Virtual Observatory
- JD3 European Astronomy with Small Telescopes
- JD4 World Space Observatory (Ultraviolet) WSO/UV: The missing link in Astronomers toolkit
- JD5 Gravitational Physics

Finally a two day Special Colloquium on the History of Astronomy “European Astronomy in the 20th Century” was held. Because of an extremely overburdened agenda of JENAM-2001 the role of education in astronomy and its public outreach were not specifically included into the Scientific Program. However, they were prominently represented in the Program of the 75th Mitgliederversammlung der Deutsche Astronomische Gesellschaft with a public lecture by M. Grewing “A Breakthrough in a Dark Universe: Astronomy in a Quest for the Beginnings”, as well as by several lectures dedicated to gamma astronomy, X-ray astronomy with Chandra and XMM-Newton, Millisecond pulsars, Spaceborne astronomy with Hubble and NGST. An interesting novelty of JENAM-2001 was introduction (in addition to invited lectures presented as usually by the most prominent European astrophysicists and beyond), the so-called “highlights”—half an hour talks submitted by young and highly qualified European astronomers also contributing to the plenary sessions. The first such talk presented by the awardee of the Ludwig-Biermann prize Dr Stefanie Komossa (Garching) during the opening day of JENAM-2001 summarized the evidence from X-ray observations for black holes at the centres of nearby non-active galaxies.

Several important topics regulating activities of EAS between its annual meetings have been raised and discussed during the Council Meeting of EAS and its Business Meeting. Four members of EAS Council, including the President J.-P. Zahn (France) and one of the Vice-Presidents F. Sanchez have left their posts and the new members of EAS Council have been elected. The new President of EAS is a well-known Dutch radioastronomer Dr. H. Butcher and the newly elected Vice-President is C. Choisi (Italy). The total number of EAS members is currently approaching 1300. About 20% of the EAS members still do not have in their disposal a stable e-mail service which creates certain problems for EAS administration. For instance, expenditure on distribution of the EAS *Newsletters* in 2000 amounted to 5650 CHF which is almost comparable to its production costs (7000 CHF), grants for development funds (5000 CHF) and considerably exceeds the total sum for grants allocated to young astronomers, aimed to facilitate their participation in JENAM-2000 in Moscow (3000 CHF) held in the same year. Therefore in a near future the EAS *Newsletters* probably will be circulated via affiliated societies to curtail the costs of postage. It has been decided to retain for the time-being the annual Membership Fees for astronomers from East European countries on the same level—5 USD.

The editor of *Newsletters* Dr. M. Kontizas (Greece) urged the representatives of the affiliated national societies to initiate new ideas for the benefit of EAS in the whole and to advertise more actively their ongoing work through the *Newsletters*. In the same spirit Dr. M. Dennefeld (France) who was responsible for the EAS Home Page (Dr. R. Spurzem (Germany) takes over these obligations after JENAM-2001 from M. Dennefeld), called upon the national representatives at JENAM-2001 Meeting to play a more active role in shaping the Home Page of EAS and creating an effective feed-back between the members of EAS and its governing bodies. In future EAS Home Page should have direct links to its national affiliated societies. EAS plans in future to publish Proceedings of EAS Meetings and the respective negotiations both with Cambridge University Press, Kluwer and Springer Publishers are underway.

A new aspect of the prospective future activities involving participation from EAS (mentioned for the first time during the EAS Council Meeting) is the *OPTICON* (Optical Infrared Coordination Network). *OPTICON* is a project funded by the European Commission as a part of its Fifth Framework Programme. The *OPTICON* consortium consists of 14 partners including EAS, ESO and the most outstanding European astronomical research institutes, observatories and universities from UK, Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Scandinavian countries. *OPTICON* established several Working Groups, including Working Groups “Extremely Large Telescopes”, “The Astrophysical Virtual Observatory”.

The *OPTICON* partners agreed to coordinate their efforts towards the realization of an “Virtual Astrophysical Observatory” (for more details, see the Abstracts of JENAM-2001 and in <http://www.astro-opticon.org>). The treasurer of EAS B. Nördström is the official representative of EAS in the *OPTICON*.

The national representatives of Armenia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Ukraine have participated in the Business Meeting of EAS. The participants unanimously extended the expressions of condolency to the families who suffered from the terrorist attack on New York Trade Center and Pentagon on 11th September and the telegram undersigned by the President of EAS has been sent to the American Astronomical Society.

It has been formally announced that the next EAS General Meeting will take place in the autumn of 2002 in Porto, Portugal. Belgium is the most likely candidate for JENAM-2003.