

EUPJ Search and Nominations Committee

Report for the special meeting of the EUPJ European Assembly to be held on 20th April 2023

The EUPJ European Assembly, at its annual meeting held on 8th September 2022, considered and approved the resolution proposed by the Executive Board (ExBoard) that a search and nominations process be put in place from the date of the 2022 Annual European Assembly (AEA) until 20 April 2023. During that time a pro-active and effective search process would be implemented to find a new Chair and/or co-Chairs for EUPJ as well as nominees to take over the offices of President and Vice-Chair Governance, and also to review the structure and make-up of the Management Committee (MC).

At that meeting it was agreed that Rabbi Thomas Salamon would chair the Search and Nominations Committee (SNC) with assistance from the then EUPJ Co-Chair, Robert Weiner.

Firstly, may I thank Rabbi Salamon for commencing the work of the SNC and contacting a large number of individuals whose names were given to him. I also want to thank Robert Weiner, who began the work with Rabbi Salamon as the EUPJ Co-Chair but who resigned his position in December for personal reasons. Since then John Cohen (Vice-Chair Governance) and I have taken on the task of progressing the work of the SNC and have endeavoured to catch up on the time lost. I am therefore very grateful that Miriam Kramer agreed to be nominated for the position of Chair of the EUPJ, having been co-opted to the MC as co-chair together with Sonja Guentner, which co-option was ratified at the ExBoard meeting on 16th March 2023.

Since December 2022, John and I have phoned, corresponded and met by Zoom and WhatsApp a number of excellent candidates whose names have been forwarded to us by Rabbi Salamon and others. We had also circulated a number of requests to EUPJ members as well as members of the ExBoard urging them to continue to suggest potential nominees for these positions. In view of the time pressures and constraints, we sent the proposed list of nominees to the SNC and held a Zoom meeting in early March.

I am delighted that the SNC, the MC and the ExBoard have all agreed to propose the names of the nominees in the list attached as Appendix 1 (the EUPJ Slate) for the positions on both the MC and the ExBoard indicated on the EUPJ Slate to the Special European Assembly (SEA) to be held on 20th April 2023. A short profile of all the nominees is also attached as Appendix 2. The SNC believes that those nominated reflect a strong, committed and excellent cross-section of our European communities and will complement the current members of the MC and ExBoard and be excellent successors for those whose terms come to an end at the SEA. I therefore urge EUPJ members to approve these nominations.

There are, however, two issues to which I wish to draw to your attention:-

- 1) At the next Annual meeting of the EUPJ, to be held in August/September 2023, we will have three major vacancies - being Chair, Vice Chair- Finance and President - unless we find suitable candidates by then. To date we have not received any nominations for these positions.
- 2) At that Annual Assembly we will not have a single representative from the UK on the MC of the EUPJ despite the fact that the EUPJ is a UK registered charity and that the UK has the largest Synagogal Movements in Europe.

With that in mind, Miriam Kramer, on taking on the position of sole chair at the SEA, has kindly agreed to write a letter re-introducing herself and urging further nominations to the MC. This letter will be sent to all members of the ExBoard and Miriam will request that this letter be

forwarded by board members to all the chairs and Rabbis of their member communities with, hopefully, their endorsement and encouragement.

This is especially important because at the 2023 AEA further vacancies will arise and, in particular, vacancies for the Chair, VC-Finance, up to a further two Vice Chairs, up to a further five co-options as well as up to five further Vice Presidents. So there is plenty of scope for further nominations which hopefully will arise with help of our members. Finally, I would like to advise that I have agreed to remain as President of the EUPJ until the 2023 AEA and to help supervise the work of the SNC so that nominees for these positions can be identified.

I would like to emphasise that we, the leadership of the EUPJ, believe in the relevance of the EUPJ in promoting and nurturing Progressive Judaism across Europe and our aim is to ensure that ours is the voice of a vibrant, diverse and meaningful European Judaism and that we are seen as such. With this in mind, the SNC has advised the MC to aim for greater gender, age and geographic diversity when seeking further nominations. In addition, the EUPJ should focus and concentrate on informing its members and communities of the importance, relevance and direction of the EUPJ to all its members, regardless of their size and position. The EUPJ should and will work with its members to achieve its aims and goals in consultation and with the help of its members.

I wish to thank all those who have sent nominations to the SNC, all those who have agreed to be nominated, the members of the SNC and Rabbi Salamon in particular and my colleagues on the MC.

So, the SNC, as approved by the MC and the ExBoard, is requesting the EUPJ membership to approve the resolutions set out in Item 4 of the Notice of Meeting calling the SEA and to which this Report is attached. These resolutions (a) extend the period of operation of the SNC to the date of the 2023 AEA; and (b) approve the appointment of the persons in the EUPJ Slate for the positions on the EUPJ MC and/or ExBoard set out next to their names

GORDON SMITH
President
22nd March 2023

Appendix 1

Proposed EUPJ Management Committee and Executive Board Nominations- April 2023

Position	Name	Country	Special Responsibility
Management Committee and Executive Board			
President	Gordon Smith	UK	Only until 2023 AGM
President	?		From 2023 AGM
Chair	Miriam Kramer	UK	Only until 2023 AGM
Chair	?		From 2023 AGM
Vice Chair- Finance	Paul Winter	UK	Only until 2023 AGM
Vice Chair- Finance	?		From 2023 AGM
Vice Chair- Governance	Jonathan Eaton	Netherlands	Governance
Vice Chair	Dominika Zakrzewska-Oledzka	Poland	Communications
Vice Chair	Ben Fantini	Italy	Israel
Vice Chair	Rabbi Alexander Grodensky	Luxemburg	Interfaith
Chair ERA	Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild	Italy	
Convenor EBD	Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick	UK	
Executive Board			
Vice President	Fendrych Frantisek	Czech Republic	Czech Republic and Central Europe
Vice President	Sven Parsser	Netherlands	Stichting and European Commission
Vice President	Andres B. Munoz Mosquera	Belgium	Iberia
Honorary			
Life President	Leslie Bergman	UK	
Life President	Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein	UK	
Life President	Rabbi Menno ten Brink	Netherlands	

Appendix 2

Management Committee and Executive Board - Profiles of Nominees

Andres B Mosquera

I am 57 and working for NATO as a civil servant, where I am the top lawyer at NATO's Supreme Headquarters in Mons, Belgium. I am a member of the Reform Jewish Community of Madrid and while Expat in Belgium member of the IJC. I just came from Israel after teaching international law last academic quarter at Reichman University, Herzilya.

I am very interested in contributing to the EUPJ project for Progressive Judaism in Europe in general and in southern Europe particularly. I think I can be of great help to EUPJ due to my Jewish leadership and Jewish traditions studies (Beutel Jewish leadership course of 2017 and courses on Jewish literature in the US and Argentina - I am also the author of several disclosure articles (in Devarim and Nueva Sion) in Spanish and Portuguese, which is my contribution on explaining Reform Judaism to the Spanish and Portuguese speaking shuls in Europe and America. I speak Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Italian, and my wife is Greek. I also speak basic conversational Hebrew.

Rabbi Sergio Berman has been a professor of mine in Argentina. My son Avi studied at Tel Aviv University and my father is buried in the Lavi Forest at the Golani Junction.

Dominica Zakrzewska- Oledska

I have been an active member of the Progressive Jewish movement for more than a decade, in recent years serving as Executive Director of Beit Polska - "The Union of Progressive Jewish Communities in Poland". Over that period, I have had several opportunities in which to explore the operational specifics of Progressive Jewish communities in Europe, Israel and the United States. Everything I have learned during this time reinforced my belief in the value of the Progressive Jewish movement, both for developing and sustaining the values of Judaism itself as well as for shaping a positive image of Jewry in wider society.

I believe that my long-standing experience of working as a manager, psychologist, and educator in international and intercultural settings can be an asset in supporting the work of the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ), which plays a crucial role in facilitating the development and sustaining progressive Jewish life across the European continent.

The last two years, in which I undertook postgraduate studies in the management of Jewish nonprofit organizations at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, offered me a unique opportunity for working on the development of my networking, outreach and public diplomacy skills. I also gained a more nuanced understanding of the structures and cultures in which American Jewish nonprofit organizations work, which I could productively contribute toward facilitation of local and global collaborative schemes and projects with various stakeholders. I look forward to working with you in the future and thank you for this opportunity.

Rabbi Alexander Grodensky

Rabbi of the Liberal Jewish Community of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and (non resident) Rabbi of the Liberal Jewish Community of Slovenia.

Member of the General Rabbinic Conference of Germany (ARK), member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR).

Languages spoken - Russian (native), German, English, Hebrew, Luxembourgish (passive).

Rabbi Grodensky wishes to support the work of the EUPJ in the area of organisational coordination of interfaith work.

František Fendrych

For 23 years, from 1997 to 2020, I was the vice-chairman of the Reform Jewish Community in Děčín.

In 2000, we founded in Prague, with the spiritual support of rabbi Thomas Salamon, the Jewish Liberal Union, ZLU, which in 2002 became a member of the World and European Unions for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ, EUPJ) and was also admitted to the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic (FJC) but only as an associated member until now. I was the founder and long-time chairman of the ZLU. We are grateful for the support of the EUPJ, and we are hopeful that in cooperation with the new progressive community of Ec Chaim, led by our joint rabbi David Maxa, we will achieve recognition as a full Jewish community in the Czech Republic.

The above facts are also a motivation for me to actively work in the Executive Board of the EUPJ, where I could use my decades of experience in Jewish life in the Czech Republic to present to the members of the Management Committee of the EUPJ the reality and the conditions of Jewish life, the structure, activities and relations of Jewish organizations in the Czech Republic.

I believe that my many years of active, practical experience could be useful in helping the EUPJ to engage more competently and effectively in the development and equal rights of Progressive Judaism and democratic and pluralistic Jewish life in the Czech Republic and other Eastern European countries.

Jonathan Eaton

I would like to apply for the EUPJ MC position as the Vice Chair of Governance. As a background, I am a member of Birmingham Progressive Synagogue and the Liberaal Joodse Gemeente (LJG) Amsterdam.

I am the father of 2 children (aged 10 and 13) my wife is the pastoral care worker for the LJG Amsterdam & I am a volunteer for the EUPJ Neighbours project as the LJG Project manager.

My motivation is simply that I want to ensure that my children have the foundations of a confident Progressive Jewish Europe. I feel that Key to this is an organisational umbrella that provides voice by binding these communities together.

My background is one of where I was deeply involved in the Jewish community in Birmingham (the synagogue and Jewish Youth Trust as a youth leader) and later Liberal and Reform communities in North London between 1990 and 1999. I attended Shnat Netzer with RSY and ULPSNYC (LJY) from 1993/4 and served on the maskirut of ULPSNYC for several years. I have also been a youth worker in Netzer Holland.

I am a senior manager in one of the Big 4 global accountancy companies with a side specialism within program & organizational governance.

Fabio Benjamin Fantini

I was born on 30.11.1957 in Johannesburg, South Africa
In 1985-2012, I lived in the Far East and South America. I was the General Manager at Alitalia.
In 2013 I was one of the founders of Beth Hillel synagogue in Rome, Italy.
Since 2014, I served 2 terms as Vice President of Beth Hillel.
Since 2020 I have been involved in International Relations and Fund Raising for Beth Hillel.
Since 2017 I have served as a member on the Executive Board of FIEP and the EUPJ.
Since 2020 I have served as a member on the Executive Board of the WUPJ.
Since March 2020 I have served as a Representative on Arzenu Italy.

Sven Parsser

Sven was born on 15th of November 1948 in Amsterdam
He started his career in Banking and IT (ING and ABN-AMRO) and worked for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. He was appointed CIO of the Dutch Centralized Savings Bank. After leaving the Banking industry he joined as a director of Turmac International and became a regional CFO member of the Executive Committee.

During his stay in Germany, he became Honorary Attaché for the State of Israel.
After his return to the Netherlands, joined as CFO/CIO of Brunel International NV; later becoming President of the Board (CEO).

Typical for Sven's approach in his engagements is the dedication to the human and creative factor in management; thus supporting them in the development and growth of the company and developing new ways of doing business. He focuses on balancing stakeholders' interest and personal interest of key players; supported by his experience in management and finance.

Sven's Involvement with the Jewish World includes:-

- Honorary representation of the Israeli Embassy (Germany)
- Board Member Deutsch -Israelische Gesellschaft (Germany)
- Executive Board Member of the Amsterdam Orthodox Community
- Executive Board member and secretary of the LJJ in Amsterdam
- Chairman of the Supervisory Board of BleW, the Dutch Jewish Security Organization
- Member of the advisory Board of CIDI (Center of Documentation and Information Israel)
- Board member of the Chamber of Commerce Netherland-Israel
- Member of the Executive Board of the EUPJ

Miriam Kramer

I was born in London and bred in New York; we were members of a Conservative synagogue.
In my mid-20s I moved back to London and, by marrying Stephen, joined Wimbledon Synagogue in 1978. We have two adult children. Over the next couple of decades I progressed up the ladder: co-organising the children's services, chairing the Education Committee, serving as Senior Warden and ultimately chairing the congregation.

After a stint on the RSGB (as it then was) board I became involved with Leo Baeck College. Initially I formed and chaired a committee to organise events to mark the College's 50th anniversary in 2006 and then chaired the College for four years.

After a brief respite I was approached to chair EUPJ and I did this for six years. At the end of last year I was approached to return as co-chair. I have agreed – with the stipulation that no more than six months following the meeting on April 20th, when a new chair has been found, my involvement will cease.

In my professional life I trained as an art historian and spent most of my career as a freelance journalists writing about art and antiques