

Policy 2019-2020

European Horizons Amsterdam Chapter



Board Amsterdam 2019-2020

President George Vournas

Secretary Louisa Vofrei

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Preface

Dear member of the Amsterdam chapter of European Horizons,

Last academic year was an important year for our chapter. We managed to expand and became one of the biggest chapters in Europe! The previous board, Derk, Miriam and Johanna managed to organize one of our most successful events about the European Parliament election in April. By gathering a group of enthusiastic students from different backgrounds and nationalities, we have accomplished to establish our chapter at the University of Amsterdam. As the new board, we hope to continue this legacy and keep up to improve our chapter continuously. Thereby, we would like to focus not only on the quantity, but rather on the quality of our output for the upcoming academic year 2019-2020.

The following policy paper will give you a brief overview of our policy, rules and plans for the academic year 2019-2020. We would like to focus on academic output, organization of events and growth of the Amsterdam chapter and hope that you are as motivated and excited as we are!

The Chapter

Expansion

While we believe that maintaining the chapter membership to around 30 is ideal, we want to expand our reach to students from studies that are currently underrepresented in our chapter, many of which are bound to be interested in European affairs, such as European Studies, Political Science, Law and Economics.

Moreover, we want to focus on having active members in order to be more productive in our tasks, since we are convinced that the quality of membership is more important than its quantity.

By achieving an engaged and diverse membership, we aim at:

- o **Division of the workload.** By adding active members to our research groups, we believe it will be easier to realize output.
- o **Larger group during the meetings.** By focusing on the quality of membership, while maintaining a relatively high number of members, we ensure that every meeting has sufficient attendance.
- o **More members, more input.** By adding additional minds from a wider range of study programmes, we increase the insights from different fields of study. This enhances the diversity of the views and discussions within the chapter.

We seek our new members in different fields of study. We contacted several study associations to ask for the promotion of our recruitment campaign. The following associations of the UvA have been approached:

- o SES (open to collaboration)
- o Machiavelli
- o Sefa
- o Mercurius
- o AUCSA

- o JFAS

Of course, we are open to other fields of study as well. The reason for reaching out to the aforementioned associations is their obvious potential interest in European affairs, as well as having English as their contact language (with the exception of JFAS, although the Faculty of Law offers many English-language Master programmes). We also actively promote our recruitment campaign through our Facebook page and Instagram profile, while asking our members to share it to their study groups.

We decided to not contact AIM due to the already significant outreach we have within PPLE, as quite a few of our members are PPLE students (including George and Louisa) and can comfortably share our content and spread the word within the programme without additional help from its study association. However, should the member balance change in the future, we believe that AIM is a good contact to reach students who are interested in the European Horizons and our work.

There was an information session on the **23rd of September** and the application deadline will be on the **30th of September**.

Official European Horizons Chapter

As one of the largest chapters in Europe, we will ensure that we fulfill all the new organizational requirements as set by the European Horizons in order to maintain the status of an Official Chapter, which is the highest classification among all the EuH chapters on a global scale.

We will stay in frequent contact with the central organization in order to ensure that our chapter is organized in accordance with the official guidelines set by European Horizons, as well as guarantee the highest level of cooperation with the central board and our fellow chapters.

For these purposes, we aim to communicate with other chapters for the purposes of cooperation in hosting events and producing research, while we will also attempt to



attend the annual international and European Conferences to become even more involved in the overall organization.

Effective Organizational Structure

We aim to achieve a clear and effective organizational structure, in order to facilitate our members in becoming more engaged in their work for the chapter. That means that we will structure our communication channels (Facebook page and group, Instagram profile, WhatsApp group) as well as possible, while uploading all of our work and fundamental documents on the Google Drive folder that can be accessed by all of our members. This is both in line with European Horizons' guidelines and bound to ensure an increase in our productivity and transparency levels.

The Meetings

Attendance

In general, we expect our members to attend the monthly meetings. We will announce a date for a meeting and let you know it one month before, so you can take this into account for your own planning. Of course, we can understand if some members cannot make it to a meeting. However, to have a clear overview of who will join the meeting, we would like members to inform us in case of absence.

Nonetheless, it is important to us that everybody attends at least half of the meetings in general. Attending one out of the two first meetings at the beginning of the semester is mandatory. The board will keep track of the attendance and inform members that have been absent too often.

Reference letters

As a reward for their engagement and motivation, we would like to offer reference letters for our members. Please do not hesitate to approach us if you are interested in a reference letter from us.

Format

We want to maintain last year's organizational structure of a monthly meeting with a clear outline and meaningful content. Moreover, we want to add a social dimension to the Chapter by organizing activities outside the formal meetings, in order to grow closer together as a group. To accomplish this, we will appoint a social committee that will come up with fun ideas. These informal meetings will hence depend on the activity that is organized, but the monthly meetings will generally have the following structure:

- o **Opening**
- o **Announcements of the Board**: informing the members about developments in the central organization, actions undertaken by the board, announcing

upcoming deadlines or events and asking members for input on certain aspects.

- o **Announcements of the Research groups:** Informing the rest of the chapter about the steps undertaken within the research groups, presenting (part of) the research or information about planned events.
- o **Content related discussion:** This year we want to ask one member each meeting to prepare a short presentation (approximately 10 minutes) with some critical questions. This in order to stimulate discussion and new ideas, without the presentation needing to be formal. We believe that the input of a different member in each meeting can lead to a rich variety of topics and interesting discussions.
- o **Wrap-Up & Closing:** The board will briefly wrap up the meeting.

We aim to hold two-hour meetings that are filled with interesting content.

Acknowledging that the academic schedules change every two months, we will continue to decide the exact day and time by a Facebook poll. Although we, like the previous boards, would like to have a standard day and time, we believe this is the best approach to ensure high attendance.

Research and Events

Research groups

We would like to keep the structure of our chapter as consisting of different groups. In order to create diverse and interesting teams, we will establish new research groups that are not only focused on creating written output, but also on organizing events and lectures.

We would like to heighten the efficiency of the research groups by implementing and enforcing the following guidelines:

- o **Monthly update about progress.** To increase the output of the chapter, we want the research groups to engage in transparent planning and update us in the monthly meetings about their progress.
- o **Setting deadlines.** The research groups are currently not obliged to meet certain deadlines. We would like every research group to provide us with a time schedule to better plan the output of our chapter. This is especially of great importance due to our new focus on the organization of events, which requires work and attention outside of the scope of conducting research.
- o **Study related research.** The subjects of the research groups often have overlap with the courses its members' fields of study. The research done for European Horizons can also be helpful for the members' research papers and essays. In the coming year, we will try to connect European Horizons' research with the studies of the members.

Academic output and events

We plan to become more active regarding the output of our chapter, especially in terms of the organization of events at the UvA. Thereby, the groups can work on the following types of output:

- o Academic papers



- Blogposts
- Events

According to the new European Horizons guidelines, every chapter is obliged to organize two events per semester. We view this as a great opportunity to promote our chapter and attract new members by becoming more active at the UvA.

As aforementioned, we would like to enhance our chapter's productivity. For this reason, the output is essential. We believe that the goal of output for every semester is the perfect combination between achievement and ambition. To grow as a chapter, we have to expand our outreach so that we can look for research partners, funding and spaces to hold events or conferences.

Cooperation

Central Organization

We are part of a very big organization as the Amsterdam chapter. We believe that we as a board and as a chapter can learn a lot from the central organization. The new board of the central organization has reached out to us to ensure a short and easy line of communication. We tend to use their guidelines as much as possible, focusing especially on the following points:

- o **Funding.** We, as a chapter, have no funding at the moment. We want to start gathering funds for our chapter. Funds help to organize better and bigger events, make field trips possible and can partly cover the costs for attending conferences. Since we are lacking the expertise for gathering these funds, we will be looking for guidance from the central organization and, with their help, lay the foundation for funding for the coming years.
- o **Conferences.** European Horizons is not just about doing research within your chapter. It is also about meeting other like-minded students. European Horizons organizes several conferences a year and we intend to be present at as many as possible (all if possible). This is a great opportunity, not just for the board, but for every interested member. We will make sure that our members are up to date on upcoming events or conferences. The board will organize the accommodation and transportation for the conferences.

Other Chapters

We are looking forward to collaborating with other European Horizons' chapters, both for research and for event organization purposes, and we are optimistic that these expectations will be met due to the guidance and the ambitions of the central organization's new board.



Study Associations

We aim to cooperate with other study associations, both within the University of Amsterdam and outside of it, in order to host more successful events with higher attendance numbers, while meeting people with similar interests to ours.

Postface

We hope that this policy document has given a clear overview of what we plan to achieve as a chapter and board in the academic year 2019-2020. We hope that our plans are both feasible and challenging so that we can grow not only in terms of size, but also by increasing the quality of our chapter's output. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or remarks - we are always open for your feedback and thoughts.

Sincerely,

The Amsterdam board 2019-2020

President: George Vournas

Secretary: Louisa Vofrei

Treasurer: Marlinde Schellekens