

XIX EUROSAI Training Committee Meeting
(Madrid, Spain, 9 and 10 March 2011)

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN DISCUSSIONS AND AGREEMENTS

The XIX Meeting of the EUROSAI Training Committee (ETC) took place in Madrid (Spain) on 9 and 10 March 2011, hosted by the SAI of Spain. It was attended by ETC members (SAIs of the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation and Spain), and co-chaired by the SAIs of France and Spain. Representatives of the European Court of Auditors, IDI and the Chair of the INTOSAI Capacity Building Committee -the SAI of Morocco- attended the ETC Meeting as guests.

The main discussions and agreements taken, referred to the following issues:

1. The ETC approved the agenda for the Meeting, which covered issues concerning strategic matters, progress in the performance of the EUROSAI Training Strategy 2008-2011 –including financial matters-, analysis and distribution of pending tasks, and papers and documents to be produced in view of the VIII Congress. The minutes of the XVIII ETC Meeting, held in Paris on 10 and 11 May 2010, were also approved.
2. The Chair of the Task Force “EUROSAI Strategic Plan”, the SAI of Poland, provided an overview on the background and the elaboration and consultation process of the draft Plan with the Governing Board (GB) and the EUROSAI Members. The main characteristics of the Plan were presented, making mention to its mission, vision, values and strategic goals, as well as to the organisational structure proposed for developing it. Specific reference was made to the future of training in the new context offered by the EUROSAI Strategic Plan, where training would become a tool for performing the different strategic goals. This way, in the future it will be Goal Teams 1, 2 and 3 -within the scope of their technical competence- who will manage training, under the coordination of Goal Team 4 that will ensure consistency, balance and coherence on it.
3. Discussion was opened on the future role of the ETC, if any, in the context of the Strategic Plan. It was agreed that, in the view of the new structure foreseen by the Plan and the different nature that training is given on it –evolving from being a policy by itself to become a tool for performing the strategic goals-, ETC existence would not be any more needed. Nevertheless it was considered that detailed information on the activities developed, documents, materials, guides and tools produced by the ETC, as well as the experiences and lessons learned accumulated along their eleven years operating for developing training could be useful in the implementation of the EUROSAI Strategic Plan to be submitted to the VIII Congress. The ETC agreed to draft documents that would approach the knowledge and facilitate the maximum impact of its work and to make their materials available on the EUROSAI website in the benefit of EUROSAI.

4. The ETC reviewed the progress in the development of the implementation of the EUROSAT Training Strategy 2008-2011, making emphasis in the activities still to be accomplished. The Training Strategy has the mission of supporting and strengthening SAIs by enhancing professional and institutional development of EUROSAT members. It looks for effectively targeting the needs and demands of the diverse groups within EUROSAT, in a responsive, relevant, cohesive and focussed way. It searches for training well managed and operated in an effective and efficient way, contributing to the continuous improvement and development of public sector auditing within the European region.

With these principles in mind, several issues were discussed by the ETC in this context; namely, the following points can be remarked;

➤ *Strategic priority 1.- Training:*

- Providing training: Information was shared on the seminars and training events performed during 2010-2011, with special emphasis in their evaluation and the experiences and lessons learned. It was remarked that standard evaluation tools provide coherence to training assessment, making their results comparable, what helps to extract lessons to be taken into account in future events.

- Identifying EUROSAT training needs and priorities: The results of the questionnaire in this regard circulated by the ETC among EUROSAT members in 2011 were presented. The updated information showed that, jointly with traditional priorities on specific audit topics where training would be desirable (performance audit, IT in auditing, evaluation of internal control, financial audit, role of SAIs in the fight against corruption, ISSAIs...), also some others -more general- (related to SAIs management, impact of their work, new challenges for SAIs, contribution of SAIs to the good governance, among others) were raised. The questionnaire also identified preferred modalities of training, suggesting to collect information on contact points at the SAIs ready to support training in different areas. The ETC agreed on making the results of the questionnaire available on the EUROSAT website.

This information on needs and priorities is to be completed by other sources, such as the suggestions made by participants in training events when evaluating them, researches developed by EUROSAT working groups/taskforce, and the questionnaire developed in the context of INTOSAT-Donor Cooperation in 2010 in what refers to the European region.

- Monitoring quality and evaluating training activities: the ETC discussed the evaluation tools already produced making some suggestions for improving them. Agreements for some modifications in the evaluation questionnaires were taken. Some common conclusions were identified by the ETC from the training evaluation done, in what regards topics selected, preparation and organisation of events, programmes and time-schedule, number of participants, interaction among speakers and participants, practical approach of events, quality of materials, advantage of involving external partners in training events or tailoring events to participants' expectation.

➤ *Strategic priority 2.- Knowledge and information sharing:*

- Improvement of the use of the EUROSAI website and publications for this purpose: The ETC was informed by the SAI of Spain, in its capacity as the EUROSAI Secretariat and host of the website, of the new ETC materials available on it since the last ETC meeting (2010) and the ones in process of being uploaded. Information was also provided on the new links made to training materials and to materials of the joint Conferences of EUROSAI with other INTOSAI Regional Working Groups. Discussion was raised on how to give more visibility and promote a greater use of the EUROSAI website and how to get a higher involvement of EUROSAI members for keeping the website updated. Reference was made to the new needs that the EUROSAI Strategic Plan and the Goal Teams would require from the website and the necessary process of adaptation and modernisation that it will need.

- Promotion of expert networks on training and auditing: Following the replies to the questionnaire on training needs and priorities, the ETC agreed to prepare a list of contact persons in the EUROSAI SAIs that had expressed their readiness to provide expertise to the EUROSAI community, as well as the necessary steps for keeping the list updated.

- Strengthening cooperation with EUROSAI working groups: An analysis of common areas for collaboration was made by the ETC. Among others, the following areas were identified: the provision of training, identification of training needs, facilitating platforms for exchanging information and experiences, sharing networks and databases, evaluation techniques, sharing lessons learnt, setting links among the respective websites, providing information in EUROSAI publications.

➤ *Strategic priority 3.- Institutional development:*

- Promoting cooperation with INTOSAI and its Regional Groups: Representatives of the INTOSAI Capacity Building Committee and IDI detailed their activities and products developed in the last year, and their strategies for the future. Information on the cooperation between EUROSAI and the Regional Working Groups of INTOSAI was offered as well. In view of this information, the ETC discussed how to go further in the already existing collaboration with them.

Expanding this cooperation to the technical level was considered a good way of increasing its impact to areas such as: training, exchange of experiences and information, sharing databases and materials, setting wider links between their working groups and committees, impelling joint activities, promoting contributions in their respective publications, establishing more links between their respective websites.

- The ETC remarked the interest of exploring new formulas and new areas for cooperation, as well as new partners within the INTOSAI community. The higher involvement of INTOSAI in a role as catalyser and coordinator of cooperation among

its Regional Working Groups for getting the maximum synergies of existing activities in the INTOSAI-area was pointed out.

- The convenience of reinforcing cooperation with external partners was also highlighted: with already existing partners (i.e., SIGMA, European Confederation of Institutes of Internal Audit-ECIIA- a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation has been recently signed with them-) and with new external partners.
5. Updated information on the situation of the EUROSAI budget devoted to training was provided. A general discussion on common criteria to be taken into account by the ETC when reporting to the GB on financial requests, was raised. The EUROSAI Secretariat was entrusted by the ETC for preparing a paper in this regard.
 6. The ETC supported the financial requests made by the SAI of Poland for reimbursing some costs of the Seminar “SAIs’ communication with the public opinion via de media” (Warsaw, Poland, May 2011).

The ETC also supported granting a financial contribution of 30,000€ from the EUROSAI budget for the participation of six EUROSAI Members in IDI’s “Trans-regional Capacity Building Programme in Audit of Public Debt Management (2009-2011)” in 2011.

The ETC requested the Co-chair to communicate these agreements to the EUROSAI Secretariat, in accordance with the financial provisions for granting subsidies approved by the V EUROSAI Congress, for the GB to decide on the financial requests received.

7. The ETC agreed on the papers and documents to be presented to the VIII EUROSAI Congress; namely, the activity report 2008-2011, an evaluation report of the performance of the Training Strategy 2008-2011, and a draft resolution containing the agreement of dissolving the ETC.

Following previous discussions, and taking into account that the ETC would not operate any more in the future, the ETC agreed to draft a paper summarising all the activities developed since 2000, as well as the products and materials produced. Also the drafting of a document containing the ETC experiences and lessons learned in dealing with training for eleven years, was decided. These documents could be useful for the implementation of the EUROSAI Strategic Plan 2011-2017.

A global discussion was raised on the content of each of the documents to be presented to the Congress in order to fix the general lines for producing them. Responsibilities were distributed among the ETC members for dealing with the pending tasks, fixing a calendar for performing them.

The XIX ETC Meeting was closed by the Co-chair, thanking the ETC members and guests for all the good work done along so many years and the contributions made to the improvement and better impact of training within the EUROSAI Community.

The ETC thanked the Co-chair for their performance aimed at giving impetus to their work and expressed its readiness to cooperate in the future with Goal Teams in the implementation of training actions in the performance of the EUROSAI Strategic Plan.

