

# Our Joint Journey

## Wilhelm Schneemeier

As a qualified German actuary, I worked a large portion of my professional career for a Swiss company. Being in an international environment was something that I always valued a lot. The very complex discussions around Solvency II and my experience with the Swiss Solvency Test led to the decision to become active in the European actuarial community in 2011 on behalf of the German Association of Actuaries (DAV). To be honest, those were different times and many topics were only covered by a small group of very active colleagues. For me it was easy to get involved based on my former experiences.

The Actuarial Association of Europe (or by that time the Groupe Consultatif Actuariel Européen) came to a point where it needed to ensure a stronger voice for the profession. Relying on a compact group of very active people from only a small number of countries / associations bared to many risks for the European umbrella organisation and in that sense for its members. It took some time for all parties involved but, in the end, we were able to install a very robust structure for the AAE with an elected Board always

representing small, medium sized and big associations throughout Europe. Many different substantial activities were agreed on and the AAE now is in a very stable and sustainable situation.

More or less at the same time, and perhaps based on a similar motivation, the Instituto Actuarios Españoles made a strategic decision to become more active in the international community as well. The AAE as an institution that strongly relies on the engagement of its volunteers was the main field of activity for the IAE.

The engagement of Spanish representatives in the AAE Board, the Pensions Committee, the Risk Management Committee and also the Education Committee was a tremendous support to the ongoing professionalisation of our European umbrella organisation. Nowadays the IAE is in a position where its voice is recognisably heard by the actuarial community and European institutions.

Another successful initiative in which I also was involved was the cooperation between IAE, the German Association of Actuaries and the European Actuarial Academy (EAA), a joint venture of the actuarial associations from Austria, Germany, Switzerland and The Netherlands, to establish the international risk



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management credential CERA (Certified Enterprise Risk Actuary) for members of the IAE. This cooperation started on 22 September 2016 in a very nice café in Barcelona at the AAE Committee Meetings. We there met with Rafael Moreno Ruiz, Aitor Milner and Eduardo Trigo Martinez representing the IAE and basically starting a cooperation to offer CERA to Spanish actuaries. For me this was the first time I was able to establish a personal contact to very active Spanish colleagues.

Formally agreed on in 2018, all Spanish colleagues can use the preparatory courses of the EAA, and the exams offered by the DAV to qualify as an actuarial ERM expert. To further strengthen this partnership all four CERA exams can be taken in Spanish language based on a close cooperation between IAE, EAA and DAV. For my home association, the DAV, this is the only cooperation where we organize exams outside of German and English.

Of course, this needs active and ongoing management, but I am sure to say that it is beneficial for all partners involved. Over time the IAE has also become one of the most active members in the CERA Global Association as the worldwide umbrella organisation for our actuarial enterprise risk management credential.

A culmination point of the more visible position and strengthened activities of the IAE was of course the European Congress of Actuaries (ECA 2022) on 2 and 3 June 2022 in Madrid. The ECA 2022 was jointly organised by the IAE and the AAE with an organisational support by the European Actuarial Academy.

As chairperson of the Organising Committee of the ECA 2022 I had the privilege of working together with the representatives of the IAE for almost three years. Initially scheduled to take place in summer 2021 the Covid-19 pandemic led to the decision to postpone the ECA by one year and organize it exactly one year later.

We started the preparation in the second half of 2019 after the IAE had successfully volunteered to organise the next European Congress of Actuaries after the also very successful ECA 2019 in Lisbon.

After signing the contract with the congress hotel and the venue for the evening event, the pandemic hit, and all the planning became obsolete.

We quickly decided that we wanted to use the work done and jointly organised the first European Actuarial Days as a pure online congress in June 2021. At the same time, we within the AAE together with a very strong support from our partners in the IAE were able to closely monitor the situation as everyone involved

wanted to offer an interesting and successful onsite event for the actuarial community.

In March 2022 we then jointly decided to go forward with the congress. Still on a shaky foundation marketing started towards industry partners and participants. Especially based on the tremendous efforts of the IAE team we were able to receive 237 registrations from all over Europe, with 105 colleagues coming from Spain.

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The work has finally paid out and today we can look back to a fantastic event with a great scientific program and wonderful hospitality from our Spanish friends. Of course, for those being present the Spanish evening with good food, nice drinks and a sensational musical performance will stay in everyone's memory. I would especially like to thank the president of the IAE Rafael Moreno Ruiz, my fellow AAE Board member Luis María Sáez de Jáuregui Sanz and the IAE Director General Javier Olaechea for their tremendous support in preparing and running the European Congress of Actuaries 2022. Your enormous work paid out and without you the congress would not have been possible.

Let me close with one personal note. It was a great privilege to have received the honorary membership of the IAE at the European Congress of Actuaries together with my fellow colleague Luis María Sáez de Jáuregui Sanz and Thomas Behar. Both have been great supporters during my journey with the AAE that has come to an end in October 2022 with the end of my period as AAE Board member. I look back to a lot of very positive memories, especially the ones that were based on joint efforts towards a common goal. ●