



Asociación de Familias de Diplomáticos
y Funcionarios del Servicio Exterior

XXXIX EUFASA Conference **Madrid, 5th – 6th June 2023**

Conference Report

The 39th Annual EUFASA Conference took place in Madrid on 5th and 6th of June 2023. It brought together delegates of 20 (out of 22) EUFASA Member Associations; and, we welcomed for the first time, the Slovenian Association.

The EUFASA Chair, Chenchá García Cutillas, welcomed all participants back to Madrid, as the city hosted the 2010 Conference. She mentioned how spouses and partners of MFA officers continued to face problems such as a lack of medical insurance or pension benefits which impeded existing and potential careers. Therefore, the Conference was an excellent opportunity to exchange best practices and learn from each other.

The Conference was formally opened by HE Mr. Luis Manuel Cuesta Civis, Under-Secretary of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation. He highlighted the importance that Spain attributed to spouses and families, in order to identify concerns and address the main issues which affected them when officers were posted abroad. Of course, their nomadic life implies advantages as well as disadvantages. However, global trends show an increase in the number of Foreign Service officers who decide to leave for an overseas posting without their family. Consequently, there is the need to provide the normative framework and tools to avoid dysfunctional families in the Foreign Service. This strategy requires an eclectic approach, such as being proactive for employment opportunities for spouses, offering orientation to families before being posted abroad, addressing mental health issues through the help of a professional psychologist at the Ministry, as well as acknowledging the valuable work of Soledad Aizpurua, the indispensable Spanish Family Officer finding ways to combine professional and family life for our Foreign Service officers, their spouses and families should be our goal in the interest of all.

1. Tour de table

The first session of the Conference gave delegates the opportunity to present briefly their Associations, outlining any achievements or setbacks in 2022-2023, regarding work, divorce, pension rights, children, mental health and much more.

Most of the Associations mentioned that they had a good relationship with, and support from, their Ministries of Foreign Affairs; and, although several delegates indicated that the relationship could be improved, many felt that their needs were being heard and solutions in some cases were being provided. Most Associations have regular meetings with their MFA's and contact with an FO or a similar role. Some delegates mentioned they saw that policies related to spouses or children were improving; and, in some cases, that they (i.e. the Associations) had allocated more resources, although, unfortunately, improvement was not the case in all countries; for instance, Spain.

Most of the Associations shared that although they had many members, it was difficult to find a way to attract the younger generation and, that very few members were active members. Most of the Associations work on a voluntary basis and it is hard to find people interested in doing the job that needs to get done. Not everyone recognizes the work done by the Associations. In Lithuania, they created the "Partner of the Year" award which helps to promote the work of their Association.

Countries like Austria or Belgium increased their membership by 10%. Whilst some Associations maintained the same number of members, others experienced a decrease. In the case of Czechia, the diplomats themselves can also be part of the Association.

The use of websites, social media, LinkedIn, or on-line platforms for meetings has attracted new members, as well as allowed participants from all over the world to interact with one another. Several Associations continue to develop offline as well as on-line activities, where they provide their members with the opportunity to meet and share their experiences. The meetings or webinars covered topics such as: pension, divorce, retirement, work, tax, health, financial options, journals, diplomatic life, culture, book clubs, Agenda 2030, language classes, special needs, and psychological support.

Associations from Austria, Finland, Germany and Lithuania shared positive news regarding their MFA's participation in spouses' private pension funds or their system of compensation for lost pension rights, while other Associations were still struggling to maintain or reclaim the support of MFAs for their Association (Ireland), for pension provisions (the European Union, France, Ireland, Spain, Portugal) and for the financing of travel expenses (Spain) as well as children's education fees (Spain, Portugal).

The documents or slides on Associations achievements are available on the Box Intranet [via this link](#)

2. EUFASA AISBL Working Group 1: Children.

*United Kingdom and Portugal (Chair), Czech Republic, Portugal, Luxembourg, Spain,
In consultation with Katja Aegerter (former delegate for Switzerland)*

Mental health is now the priority for a lot of organisations as well as for EUFASA. Our children are the real passengers of our professional lifestyle; and, if they are not in good health, the family will suffer (family first). The statistics, now that we can collect them after the COVID-

19 pandemic, are worrying: UNICEF, in 2021, underlined that at least one in seven young people between the ages of 10-19 worldwide had been diagnosed with a mental disorder.

Suicide figures are also growing dramatically, as it is among the top five causes of death for the 10-19 age group (46.000 adolescents/year). The top three mental disorders among 10–24-year-olds living in 31 European countries are: depression, anxiety and conduct disorders. The children of MFA families are definitely more vulnerable, as they have to face many changes in short periods of time; they have a permanent sense of temporariness; they have the persistent need to adapt to new situations (new schools, new friends, new culture; and, this relatively itinerant lifestyle constitutes a particular challenge for children in terms of social and cultural uprooting.

As the ERD Study on *“Burnout and Resilience”* showed, diplomatic families had lower resilience and higher burnout scores than the rest of the population. Linked to the tour de table, we saw the importance of having a psychologist who could help both children and adults; in short, the importance of accessibility to mental health care of MFA families.

Two questionnaires were sent, one to FOs and another to Associations to find out what level of help existed in the respective member countries on mental health, costs of the service (in case that country had any), conditions and accessibility. Some key findings were as follows:

- Ten countries had no solution for the children of MFA officers.
- Just 4 MFAs had any policy related to children's mental health.

In conclusion, everyone needs to keep working on this key topic, not only in the area of prevention by providing specific tools for our children before going abroad and when returning home, as well as for the parents, but also in the area of support, when depression or suicidal thoughts arise. Immediate attention is required. Therefore, in the letter to our Ministers, it is agreed that children and their mental health should be emphasised as a priority for the EUFASA community.

2.1 Remote presentation by - Katja Aegerter. Topic: Mental Health & TCK

We had the honour of listening to a session run by Katja Aegerter. Katja is not unknown to EUFASA; she was the EUFASA delegate for Switzerland for 5 years and attended several conferences. She is a spouse of a Swiss Foreign Service Employee, a location-independent psychologist and mental health professional with a passion to protect and improve the mental health of globally-mobile families, and Third Culture Kids. Katja has a Master of Science in General Psychology from Roehampton University, UK, with a research thesis on family elements impacting the experience of Third Culture Kids (TCKs); a Postgraduate certificate in Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. Currently she is undertaking a Ph.D. within the Home Abroad program of the Division of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy of Basel University, Switzerland. Her Ph.D. research investigates the link between elements of parental transition stress, its impact on the family system and the well-being of Third Culture Kids.

Katja's presentation was based on the TCK (Third Culture Kids) concept: "A person who spends a significant part of his or her first eighteen years of life accompanying parent(s) in a country that is different from at least one parent's passport country(ies) due to a parent's choice of work or advanced training." (Pollock, Van Reken, Pollock, 2017). The three cultures are the following:

1. Home Culture
2. Host Culture
3. TCK Culture

There are some critical points to consider for the TCK: emotional development, social/relational development, identity, family resources and specific challenges. Prevention is key for any mental health issue (for both parents and children). And for us, as parents, it's important to have the four pillars of support in mind:

1. Predictability
2. Family
3. Relationships
4. Attitude

This is applicable for any mobility career, and we need to balance privileges vs challenges.

3. EUFASA AISBL Working Group 2: Work & Employment

Germany (Chair), Austria, UK, EU, Hungary, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands

For the past year, EWE has been compiling information to produce a guide which would serve as a reference for Foreign Service Families. This guidance document will include a preliminary list of the most important issues which family members of Foreign Service staff face when they want to pursue (remote/online) employment during a posting abroad.

The aim is to provide a general overview of the main legal issues related to Work and Employment of the spouses abroad. It should not be considered as a legal reference. The guide covers the following topics:

- 1) Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations
- 2) Social security law: Each country has its own social security system. Depending on the country, a social security system may include reimbursement of medical costs (=health insurance), family allowance, pensions, and work incapacity allowance.
- 3) Tax law: each country has its own tax rules. All sources of income are taxed, including wages, pensions, benefits, income from immovable property, etc.
- 4) Employment law: Depending on the country, labour laws address forms of employment, remuneration, conditions of work, trade unions, and industrial relations.
- 5) Immigration law: The question is if you are entitled to pursue gainful employment as a diplomatic FS member. Is there a Bilateral Work Agreement between your MFA and the receiving state or do you need to apply for a national work visa/permit?

The mandate of EWE for 2024 is to continue research in remote working, social security, healthcare and tax implications when posted overseas, as well as the yearly updating of our Employment Chart/Guidance Document, so as to circulate the 2023 version of the Guidance Document by the end of this year.

The EWE Guidance Document and Presentation can be found on Box Intranet [via this link](#).

4. EUFASA AISBL Working Group 3: UN Agenda 2030:

Italy (chair), Austria, Belgium, France, Portugal

The WG, which was established in 2019 following the guidance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focused this year on the following SDGs:

- 1) Good health and wellbeing
- 2) Clean water and sanitation
- 3) Affordable and clean energy
- 4) Responsible consumption and production
- 5) Climate Action
- 6) Partnerships for the goals

This working group presented MFAs' actions for environment preservation such as:

- 1) Good health and wellbeing: good attitudes at office (Greening the ministry)/AT. Good health behaviour (taking the stairs, stimulating physical exercise, reducing gym fees, organising yoga classes). Waste: adopting the circular economy, promoting selective waste collection, promoting recycling, arts and crafts with recyclable materials.
- 2) Clean water and sanitation: water dispenser, distribution of recycled aluminium water bottles, storing and using rainwater, solar water heater.
- 3) Affordable and clean energy: promote the use of energy from renewable sources, solar panels on the roofs, installation of energy efficient systems, using LED's, no umbrella heaters, bioclimatic embassies, development of organic vegetable gardens, revegetation of inner courtyards, installation and caring of beehives, minimise chemical products for the vermin control.
- 4) Responsible consumption and production: reusable glasses, plastic free, zero miles products, waste sorting, food leftovers donated to an NGO, paperless events.
- 5) Climate action: sustainable mobility, public transport-bicycle, locker rooms, bike racks promotion of carpooling, use of public transport, electric & charging electric stations.
- 6) Partnerships for the goals: promotion of global projects to reduce the environmental impact of diplomatic representations abroad: bioclimatic embassy of Belgium in Morocco, contest among embassies (Farnesina verde award), ambassade verte, spreading the green embassy guide, Luiss seminars, Retake Roma, Bazar diplomatic (second hand), among others.

In summary, this WG and EUFASA are spreading awareness on UN Agenda 2030 topics. EUFASA can officially be recognised as representative of civil society, and partner up with other entities, promoting synergies with public and private actors in order to participate in achieving the SDGs of UN Agenda 2030. This WG also proposes to include the following 3 lines in country charts:

1. What the MFA is doing for the environment.
2. What the Association is doing for the environment.
3. What the members are doing for the environment.

The UN AGENDA 2030 WG PowerPoint presentation is available on the Box [via this link](#).

5. EUFASA AISBL Working Group 4: Research Department (ERD)

Ireland (chair), Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, EU, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Switzerland, UK

ERD summarised their objectives which could be used as guidelines to conduct quantitative and qualitative research to inform evidence-based policy making. The WG also endeavours to translate findings into policy recommendations and actionable information and collaborate with academic institutions. There were three ERD projects published over the past year:

1. An interview study on dual career models and equality.
2. A policy paper that deals with pensions and social security (access to health care and social security coverage), both at headquarters and on posting.

For the pension report and the components of social insurance, one can see that, in many cases, pension provisions cover only minimal contributions and, in some cases, are below the minimum wage, taking into account that some MFAs discourage spouses from working. Therefore, it can be predicted that, for the spouses, this is not only an unacceptable solution but it puts the spouses in a very vulnerable (or precarious) situation for the future.

3. A paper on burnout and resilience was published in the journal *Sustainability*. This appears to be the first ever published research on stress, resilience and burnout in Foreign Service spouses; and, the paper can be a strong tool for Associations to help push this important topic forward with MFAs. The WG also presented research guidelines in the form of practical tips and information in order to assist other working groups when carrying out surveys.

The ERD WG PowerPoint presentation is available on the EUFASA Box intranet [via this link](#)

6. EUFASA AISBL Working Group 5: Legal Matters

EU (Chair), Austria, Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland

This WG focused on data protection. Despite its non-profit character, EUFASA is subject to European data protection legislation, mainly GDPR, UK Data Protection Act 2018 and Article 13 of the Swiss Constitution. It aims to give control back to users and to offer transparency. In case of misuse of data, individuals can submit a complaint to the Belgian Data Protection Agency.

What does data protection mean for EUFASA? To become compliant, EUFASA needs to adopt four documents: a **data protection statement** (internal), a **privacy notice** (published on the website, in order to inform the public about how EUFASA deals with personal data), a **consent form** for EUFASA (contains what use will be made of personal data) and finally a privacy

disclaimer. The four documents are on-site, and the Board will adopt the documents after the AGM.

EUFASA members are also advised to act in this matter. Lectures of publications related to privacy notices should be revised, the information regarding the usage of data should be accessible and delivered in time, both in EUFASA as well as every association's website or social media to avoid misunderstandings or claims.

All delegates, who are full members of the association, must send a consent form the moment they join their association. Technically, the websites and social media should fulfil the requirements related to data protection; be able to manage the data properly; and include disclaimers in their sites stating that the information won't be used for personal, professional, or business purposes.

The mandate of this working group for 2024 is to review the Statutes and Rules of Procedures. The two updated documents will be distributed for consultation before being adopted for the 2024 AGM. Fabio (Belgium) inquired whether a data protection officer inside EUFASA was needed; and, if affirmative, he suggested that the position be assigned to Revaldo (UK).

More information on the Legal Matters WG may be found on Box Intranet [via this link](#)

7. Collaborative Session with the Family Officers

With the invited FOs from *Austria, Belgium, EU, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, UK*

The Spanish Presidency of the 2023 annual conference welcomed the opportunity to meet the Family Officers (FOs) from 12 EUFASA AISBL Member States and to discuss with them how FOs and Associations can work together to support diplomatic spouses, partners and families. Four topics were selected as the key focus of collaboration with the FOs for this conference

7.1 Children. Mental Health

Many countries do not offer mental health support for children; consequently, there is a long waiting period for mental health specialists in EU countries. Owing to the aforementioned shortcomings, it is evident that the children of MFA families are more vulnerable, and more "in danger" because of their lifestyles.

The FOs were sent questions on the Mental Health provision for Children of MFA families in advance from the Working Group. Revaldo, from the UK opened the session with the following questions: 1. Why isn't a solution for children in place? 2. Are MFAs working on policies to provide support for children in the area of mental health?

Ginette (EU) commented that an inspection made by the UN concluded that the EU didn't do enough for people with disabilities. In 2021, the EU enacted help for children with disabilities and, nowadays, 100% of non-medical costs are reimbursed. There is a 5% to 35% contribution up to 65,000 euros per year.

The Dutch Association raised concerns about MFAs' policy regarding special education needs, allowances, mental health, social workers, and medical service. The FO for the EU (EEAS)

indicated that for the EEAS, special educational needs are covered by the general disability policy: medical costs are reimbursed by the EU's health insurance scheme (=JSIS), there is financial aid for non-medical costs; with the rate for seconded staff being identical to headquarters staff. There is however no dedicated special needs policy in place. Within the EEAS, there is a psychological support service that affected families can make use of, but only for one or two sessions.

The Spanish FO commented that the MFA did not have a policy for mental health issues or for special needs. In Spain, the ministry may allow some limited funds, via MUFACE, if you have children with special needs. For education, the budget has remained unchanged since 2001. There is a psychologist, but the functions haven't been defined and they are in the process of signing an agreement with the Colegio de Psicólogos to give some support for the civil servants working abroad. They are considering allocating 50% of the working hours of the MFA psychologist to families and children.

France has no mental health policy but has psychological support for spouses, whilst children are sent to private consultants. Social service, independent from psychology, can be offered as well as school assistance. Currently, decision-makers are rethinking the situation and, in maybe 2 years, they may implement a 24-hour hotline. Social services, which include webinars about parenthood and mobility, will continue to be offered. Recently, one such webinar, on how to be a parent abroad, was organised.

Austria's MFA offers one psychological support session for spouses and children. Officers and families on a posting can access local services which will be financed by medical insurance and the balance covered by MFA. If there is a case of special needs, a decision will be made on a case by case basis. The association offers counselling sessions online including during times of crisis.

Germany has a huge dearth of psychologists and social workers; the MFA doesn't have internal support but professionals working for the German government travel in order to cover during a crisis. Allowances for the children's special needs are offered and if required, medicines and for entitled teenagers can be dispatched from Germany.

The Finnish FO stated that when families are posted abroad, the MFA doesn't have official policies regarding mental health for children. If a (Finnish) child is prescribed medicine by a doctor, the cost of the medicine is covered by the (Finnish) government's travel protection plan.

In Italy, instead of an established policy regarding the mental health of children, there is a psychology service for the ministerial staff only. Whilst abroad, the costs for covering children with special needs are covered by the Italian health service, bilateral agreements, or insurance. In the case of school needs, the minister has an allowance for schooling, if the family has special needs prescribed by the Italian medical services, the child/ren can't join the family, and they can stay in Italy keeping an allowance.

In Switzerland they work on the prevention of mental health issues. There is a course for families to raise awareness, and a travel protection plan is also offered.

In Luxembourg the MFA has free psychological service for officers and spouses only when they are abroad. Since January 2023, psychologist fees are reimbursed by the MFA's medical services.

7.2 ERD Divorce

After this topic was discussed, there was a session where FOs and members of different associations were given questions on how to train families before moving, as well as on how to deal with problems which can arise in the post such as divorce and other related topics.

The questions and answers of this session are available on the EUFASA Box intranet [via this link](#):

7.3 Communication Tools

This session was presented by the Family Officer and delegate Pim de Regt of the NL. They shared a live view of the communication platform which served as a communication tool for Dutch partners, FO and officers offering a safe space for communications between FOs and partners. This platform has a community officer who keeps the forum alive and thriving.

It was funded by the MFA with an initial cost of 8.000 euros and a yearly contribution of 2,000 euros. It was launched on July 1st, 2022 and administered the FO.

Partners are granted access to the platform when they go on a posting and up to one year after they return home. There are different groups on the platform, for example, a Brussels group, a China group, a group for the Association which is private and not accessible by the FOs. Country reports are also available on the platform. To register on the platform, the FO sends an approval form to the (officer) partner to request the spouse's email address. In the future, when the FO is aware from MFA that an officer will be posted abroad, they may be able to ask directly for the partner's email.

The Presentation for this session will be made available on Box.

7.4 Cross Border Telework.

Geraldine presented the main findings of the Global Remote Working Survey of International Organizations by Deloitte.

The presentation for this session can be found on Box [via this link](#).

8. The General Assembly of EUFASA AISBL

GENERAL MEETING

The General Assembly Meeting of the EUFASA AISBL was held on Tuesday 6th of June 2023. The 19 EUFASA Affiliated Member Associations present at the meeting Hungary and Iceland paid, but were not present. Poland's membership/affiliation is dormant - not paid or present and did not vote on the 2023 agenda, the activity report of the Board for 2022-2023, the

financial report, the EUFASA AISBL Glossary 2023 and the Timeframe Conference Planning Document.

The President of EUFASA AISBL presented the activity report of the Board for 2022-2023:

- 1) Opening of the session. Welcome to the Slovenian diplomatic association as an Affiliated member (Chencha)
- 2) Determination of the quorum (more than the majority have attended, Poland is still a member, but they have not paid, Iceland and Hungary paid but did not attend).
- 3) Reading and adoption on the agenda (Lourdes)
- 4) Reading and adoption of the Annual General Minutes 2022 (Revaldo, all agreed)
- 5) Presentation of 2023 activity report on the Board of Directors (Chencha)
- 6) Presentation of 2023 Financial Report of the Board of Directors: Daiga presented the report and also commented that the issue of applying for a grant from the EU was raised but as EUFASA is a non-profit association, the only area that could benefit would be ERD. Also mentioned was that Research costs should be reimbursed to Jarka (ERD). Private donations and advertising are welcome.
- 7) Vote on the endorsement of the Annual Accounts 2022 and the provisional budget 2023 (18 votes)
- 8) Discussion on the observer membership of the Turkish MFA Association: It was agreed by the next host (Belgium) that the Turkish association will not attend, nevertheless some Associations were open to allowing the Turkish association to become an observer member if they embraced the European Values.
- 9) Results of the votes: EUFASA AISBL Affiliated Member Associations participating in the AGM: **19** Do you approve the Agenda of the Annual General Meeting of EUFASA AISBL 2023?

YES: 19 NO: 0 ABSTENTION: 0

Do you approve the Activity Report 2022 of the Board of Directors?

YES: 19 NO: 0 ABSTENTION: 0

Do you approve the Financial Report 2022 of the Board of Directors, including the annual accounts of 2022 and the budget for 2023?

YES: 19 NO: 0 ABSTENTION: 0

Do you approve the Chair Timeframe Conference Planning Document 2024?

YES: 19 NO: 0 ABSTENTION: 0

Do you agree to discharge the EUFASA AISBL Board of Directors 2022/2023?

YES: 19 NO: 0 ABSTENTION: 0

- 10) Results of the Elections of the Board Members for 2023-2024: The following new board members were elected unanimously:

President: Fabio Melchiorri (Belgium)

Vice-President: To be determined (Spain)

Vice-President: To be determined

Member of the Board and Treasurer: Daiga Bondare (Latvia)

Member of the Board: Melissa Woods (Switzerland)

Member of the Board: Nicki Epinay (France)

Member of the Board: Directors: Zoe Meyer (France),

Member of the Board: Sarah Harmala (Finland)

11) Introduction of the Board of Directors 2023

12) AOB

13) Closure of the Session

Chencha closed the Session and gave best wishes to Fabio.

9. Votes on Topics for the Annual Conference 2023

9.1 The Slovenian Association proposed as a new WG connectivity and enhancement group (Facebook group and twitter account just for EUFASA members of our associations to connect the EUFASA community)

9.2 The Spanish Association suggested defining a framework for collaborative sessions the FOs

9.3 Fabio, as the host for the next Conference, suggested extending the collaborative sessions and having the FOs on the same table as the delegates.

9.4 Revaldo suggested adhering to the conference agenda timings so that all associations have equal time for the 'Tour de Table'. Communication between the Board and a representative of the FOs is also essential in order to agree a format for the collaborative sessions well in advance of the conference.

The Working Groups (WGs) agreed for the next conference were as follows:

9.5 Permanent Working Groups: ERD, Intranet & Website, Children and Legal Matters

9.5 New Working Groups for 2023/24: Work and Employment (EWE), UN Agenda, and Welcome Team a Sub-Group of the Intranet and Website WG.

9.6 WG topics for 2023/24 are as follows:

A) WG Children (Education). Topic: A Review of School fees paid by MFAs

Members: UK, Estonia, Czech Republic, Portugal, Luxembourg, EU

B) WG Work and Employment (EWE) Topic: Remote/TeleWorking

Members: Austria, UK, Italy, Czech Republic, Austria

C) WG Welcome Team – Topic: Promote EUFASA to attract new members, help with creating their own associations and create other Social Media presence for EUFASA

Members: Finland, Slovenia, Portugal, UK

Fabio proposed inviting the head of each WG to participate in Board meetings.

10. Working Group 6: Intranet and Website

UK (Chair), Czech Republic, Finland, Latvia, Spain, Switzerland.

Revaldo presented some updates on our website (eufasa.org) and Intranet (Box.com).

Website Update: All content on the site has been re-written thanks to Melissa. Items for the “News” page are always welcomed, please send to the WG so this page can be refreshed regularly. There is ongoing work on the ‘Members’ area of the site, to include a file storage section and links to social media platforms. The WG group also suggested adding video clips to the website to promote EUFASA.

Intranet update (Box.com): Box.com it is the main file storage for EUFASA. It contains documents from 1985 including; working group presentations, rules and procedures, templates, and the EUFASA charts which should be updated annually. Access to the Intranet is given to the President and two delegates of member Associations. As a reminder, please add your country's abbreviations after your name.

The delegate from Slovenia Association suggested starting a closed Facebook group for EUFASA delegates which could then be extended to Association members. Revaldo stated that this would require a Content Manager to be sustainable and also proposed that a paid secretary for EUFASA could help this, website correspondence and Board issues.

Revaldo also suggested that one option for income stream could be through adverts on the website. However, there may be limits to the amount of income earned depending on the legislation for AISBLs. Zoe mentioned that in France for example, the French Association has five types of sponsor companies: those working with expatriates, international banks, moving companies, relocation agencies, and health insurance companies. Italy commented that on their website, members also can sell their own products to other members, provided that the income is not over 20,000 euros; the non-profit status of the Association does not change. The rules around income generation for AISBLs should be checked before these options can be implemented.

Conference closing ceremony

Mrs. Hilda Jiménez Núñez, General Director of the Foreign Service of the Spanish MFA, delivered the closing speech. She highlighted the importance of EUFASA, dedicated to proposing and impelling new areas of cooperation so that they can offer better support to spouses, partners and families of diplomats. She then shared with the delegates some of the concerns which she believed could be the next areas of improvement in the Spanish MFA.

The arrival, in the labour market, of new generations with different aspirations, the geopolitical instabilities, the diversity of family units, as well as other factors have accelerated and emphasised changes which the Spanish MFA must consider in the human resources or family policies, she said.

In this context, there are two challenges for the MFAs as well as for EUFASA: First, to document these new trends; and, second, to share ideas and feedback on the research, projects or exchange with other Associations and Institutions.

The 39th EUFASA conference was closed by Mrs. Chenchá García, President of the EUFASA AISBL.

EUFASA list of contacts:

- Website: info@eufasa.org or contact@eufasa.org
- Board of Directors: board@eufasa.org
- Conference host: conference@eufasa.org or “cityyear”@eufasa.org
- Box and website: WGintranet.website@eufasa.org
- Research WG: research@eufasa.org