



EUROSPINE

Advancing a Unified Approach
to Patient Care

Annual Report 2017



Welcome to EU SP

Table of Contents



Welcome Statement from the President	1
The Wonderful Growth of EUROSPINE	3
EUROSPINE: Building Momentum	6
Membership Numbers Reach New Heights	8
EuSSAB – Unifying Europe	11
Education: Improving Access and Increasing Participation	14
EUROSPINE Foundation: Advancing Spine Research, Education and Treatment through Fundraising ...	18
Annual Meeting Report Dublin 2017	20
Research Council Committee Report	24
Spine Tango Committee Report	26
Patient Line Committee Report	29
Stakeholder Council Report	31
General Assembly Report	32
Treasurer’s Statement	34
Financial Statements and Budgets	37
Notes to the Financial Statements 2017	40
Organisation and Officers	42
Organisation Chart	43
Committee Members	44
Future Events	46
Contacts	47





EUROSPINE, the Spine Society of Europe, was founded on 26 June 1998 in Innsbruck, Austria.

The aims of EUROSPINE are to stimulate the exchange of knowledge and ideas in the field of research, prevention and treatment of spine diseases and related problems and to coordinate efforts undertaken in European countries for further development in this field.

Welcome Statement from the President



Frank Kandziora
President of EUROSPINE 2017-18

EUROSPINE: QUALITY ASSURANCE TO OPTIMISE PATIENT CARE

Dear Members, Friends and Colleagues,

2017 has been a year of exciting challenges and unprecedented growth for EUROSPINE. In addition to setting new records in attendance at EUROSPINE 2017 and in membership numbers, we:

- Formed solid partnerships with national societies from all over Europe and around the globe
- Expanded our diploma equivalence programme
- Built upon our educational offerings by enhancing our two diploma programmes and beginning development of exciting new educational services
- Improved access to information for patients and clinicians through Patient Line and Spine Tango
- Launched an accreditation programme for spine centres

The backbone of all of these projects is our determination to ensure the highest level of quality in each and every area of spine education, treatment and patient care.

TOP-LEVEL EDUCATION FOR SPINE SURGEONS

By setting standards for spine education and harmonising diploma programmes, we can ensure that spine surgeons are receiving the same top-level education no matter what country they are in. Furthermore, patients may rest assured that physicians with a EUROSPINE diploma or national society equivalent have received best-practice training. Through EuSSAB, EUROSPINE and its institutional members are actively forming partnerships and pursuing the establishment of standardised education throughout Europe. We have already established diploma equivalence with five countries and are finalising arrangements with three more countries.

EUROSPINE's two diploma programmes, the EUROSPINE Diploma (ESD) and the EUROSPINE Advanced Diploma (ESAD) offer both newer surgeons and experienced surgeons the opportunity to learn from and interact with preeminent presenters and to participate in hands-on practice sessions. Our Education Week was once again booked out, as were our new Advanced Diploma training courses, which were offered twice in 2017, training 121 surge-

ons. Our next projects in education will include the development of a Non-Surgeon Diploma programme and e-learning modules.

CREATING STANDARDS OF HOSPITAL CARE FOR SPINE PATIENTS

This year, EUROSPINE successfully tested a spine centre accreditation programme – the Surgical Spine Centre of Excellence (SSCoE) – as a means of providing a guarantee of quality care to prospective patients seeking treatments. To qualify for certification, spine centres have to adhere to strict requirements, from specialising in spine health, performing a minimum number of spine surgeries each year and leading regular, structured education sessions to implementing quality control mechanisms. The SSCoE programme will be available to all EUROSPINE members throughout Europe starting in early 2019.

INFORMATION RESOURCES AND DATA COLLECTION

Through our newly-relaunched, multilingual Patient Line, patients have access to comprehensive information on their spine condition, empowering them to make appropriate decisions together with their physicians regarding their spine health. The database is being continually updated with new languages added at regular intervals. Spine Tango is an international spine registry for clinicians that documents the effectiveness and safety of spine care, treatment techniques and technologies. The aggregation of data will provide an evidence base for treatment effectiveness and best practice care. Furthermore, future use of these data could include the benchmarking of spine centres and their education programmes.

SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS AND THE EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

The EUROSPINE Annual Meeting has earned a reputation as one of the best and most informative spine events in the world. Our meeting

this year in Dublin was no exception, with record numbers of delegates and industry partners gathered to network with the most esteemed professionals in the world of spine today. The meeting included a rich scientific programme filled with ground-breaking presentations, the best new technologies and cutting-edge treatments, providing valuable information to more than 3600 spine professionals from 78 countries.

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SPINE CARE

EUROSPINE strives to provide quality assurance through excellence in all of its activities to ensure that patients receive the best level of care available today. By means of education, the accreditation of spine centres and standardising care, partnerships with national societies, the collection and analysis of important data, and networking events and meetings, EUROSPINE equips spine professionals with the expertise and latest scientific information to break new ground and take spine care treatment to the next level.

EUROSPINE has many more exciting projects lined up for 2018, and I am really looking forward to another productive year. I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to all my hard-working colleagues on the Executive Committee, committee heads and committee members, who are kind enough to volunteer their valuable time to make EUROSPINE a success. I also wish to extend a heartfelt thanks to my predecessor, Margareta Nordin, for all her incredible efforts in setting the stage so I could begin my term as EUROSPINE President in a highly-functioning and tightly-run organisation.

The Wonderful Growth of EUROSPINE



Margareta Nordin
President of EUROSPINE 2016–17

EUROSPINE represents the best of educators, clinicians and researchers – young and mature – of spinal excellence in Europe, and indeed, worldwide. Our Society is experiencing remarkable growth. The research and clinical studies presented at our meetings are of the highest quality, and most importantly, we are attracting the next generation of skilled men and women interested in spine care.

Serving as the first woman President of EUROSPINE was an honour and a truly rewarding experience. Working alongside the members, Executive Committee, councils and EUROSPINE committees who make this Society the best in spine care, research and education was incredible. All of these individuals are volunteers who contribute their time and expertise to move the Society forward at an astonishing speed. This would not be possible without a dedicated staff, liaison, consultants and supportive funding from diverse and highly-appreciated private industry partners. Thank you to all.

SPINE EDUCATION FOR ALL

Equivalence Programme

The newly-designed basic EUROSPINE Diploma (ESD) and the Advanced Diploma (ESAD) for

surgeons has proven a great success. Thanks to the excellent work of the Education Committee, led by Bernard Meyer, demand is growing by the day. The equivalence programme for diplomas has already been approved for 5 countries: Germany, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey, and we expect to add three more in early 2018. EUROSPINE is proud to be able to provide its members with high-quality continuing education.

EUROSPINE Diploma for Integrated Spine Care (EDISC)

In 2017, the EUROSPINE Executive Committee (ExCom) approved the formation of a multidisciplinary task force to develop an educational diploma for non-surgeons. Recognising the importance of serving all spine care clinicians, including primary care physicians, physiotherapists, chiropractors, osteopaths, naprapaths, rheumatologists, physiatrists, psychologists, geriatricians, surgeons and other spine specialists, the task force, chaired by Margareta Nordin and Pierre Côté, developed the “EUROSPINE Diploma for Integrated Spine Care” (EDISC). The EDISC course will be finalised in the spring/summer of 2018 and sent out to reviewers for a formal launch in the spring of 2019.

Literature Review

As education courses are popular and highly-valued by our members, EUROSPINE has begun initiating and collaborating on specialty courses with universities and institutes on topics such as “Biomechanics” and “How to review literature”. The Task Force Research (TFR) held two voluntary Literature Review courses for surgeons and non-surgeons in 2017 as part of EUROSPINE’s Education Week, and one highly appreciated TFR Research Course. We would like to extend our warm thanks to our terrific local hosts Hans Joachim Wilke, Christoph Siepe and Paulo Peireira, under the leadership of Rachid Salmi.

Patient Line

EUROSPINE’s new Patient Line, a website that provides information to patients, was relaunched in Dublin at the 2017 EUROSPINE Annual Meeting after undergoing a major revision. It is being continually updated under the leadership of the Patient Education Committee (Chair Tamar Pincus). With an astonishing 40,000 hits per month, Patient Line is now available in English, Spanish, French and German, with three new languages to be added each year.

RESEARCH IN SPINE AILMENTS

The Task Force Research (TFR), set up in 2007, has established a vibrant research community throughout Europe and the rest of the world. The TFR offers a research course that has been attended by over 140 participants to date, representing more than 40 countries and most continents. The TFR has distributed €1,058,573 back to EUROSPINE members in funding for 33 projects in proposal development, pilot studies and main studies.

EUROSPINE MEETINGS

The EUROSPINE Annual Meeting is the Society’s flagship event. Our 2017 meeting in Dublin, Ireland was a resounding success, thanks to the Programme Committee (Chair Stavros Stavri-

dis), local hosts (Ciaran Bolger and Frank Dowling), EUROSPINE staff, consultants and sponsors. The meeting was the largest ever with more than 3650 participants. Evaluations were highly-favourable in terms of scientific quality, debates, presentation, QuickFires, organisation and exhibition. In fact, the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting is considered by and large to be one of the best spine meetings in the world by both members and non-members alike. We intend to keep it that way and will continue to make ongoing improvements. Thank you to all for a great meeting in the charming city of Dublin.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER SPINE ORGANISATIONS

As spine ailments and disability are becoming a heavy burden from a human, society and cost perspective, I felt it necessary to further collaborate with other spine NGOs and foundations to improve knowledge in the prevention of spine disability. The EUROSPINE Executive Committee approved the EUROSPINE Spring Specialty Meeting for 26 and 27 April 2018 in Vienna, Austria on “*Prevention Strategies of Spinal Disability: A Global Burden and a Concern for All Communities*” organised by Margareta Nordin, Pierre Côté and Frank Kandziara.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

The best way to achieve success is to maintain a continuum, listen to all stakeholders, and propose new initiatives without losing sight of our key priorities. Through the new organisation of councils in the Executive Committee and each and every committee, EUROSPINE has created an excellent mechanism for growth and quality represented by its hard-working members. I wish to extend my sincere thanks to our strong Executive Committee, a very thoughtful economic advisor/liaison (Beat Leimbacher), a formidable EUROSPINE staff (Judith Reichert, Julie Noël, Claudia Ortner, Anna Farber, Conny Schmutzer and Sandy Sutter), supportive sponsors and truly great consultants (Mondial, APACE|AMFORT and others).

During my term as president, we strove for excellence in all domains, continuing to enhance EUROSPINE as the premier spine society in Europe and beyond. It was with great pride that I handed over the presidency to Frank Kandziora with a warm thank you for excellent collaboration, great support and best wishes. It is truly a joy and a privilege to be the president of EUROSPINE!



EUROSPINE: Building Momentum



Tim Pigott
Vice President of EUROSPINE

EUROSPINE has enjoyed tremendous growth over the past few years as a result of strong planning and targeted activities in the areas of membership, education, meetings and organisation. Our membership is at record levels, our education programme is second to none and our meetings offer a state-of-the-art scientific programme and the opportunity to network with the best minds in spine care. Our organisation is continually evolving to deliver top-quality services in each of these areas, and to make continuous improvement.

It is a great honour to follow in the footsteps of my colleagues, Margareta Nordin and Frank Kandziora, in assuming the vice-presidency of EUROSPINE. It is my pleasure to be able to continue and evolve the great work that they have done, to enable a secure future for the organisation.

SECURING FINANCIAL STABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Our largest source of revenue continues to be the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting. We are delighted that year on year our meeting is attracting increased numbers of delegates and industry sponsors. It is important not to take this success

for granted. In the future it will be vital that we continue to offer high-quality, innovative content and topics of relevance to those with an interest in spinal practice.

The expansion in the number of participants makes the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting more attractive to sponsors and MedTechs who purchase booth space. Competition with peer societies for this revenue is intense. It is therefore very important that we provide the proper infrastructure for our partners from industry to be able to engage with the spinal community.

CONTINUOUS INNOVATION

Innovation is an important vehicle to allow us to offer something different from our peer societies. In the immediate future, measures which would allow us to offer a different profile from other societies include the development of e-learning services and embracing digitisation. Our Spine Tango registry is currently used primarily for research, but with the impending changes in European Device Regulations it is likely that we will be able to play a role in providing monitoring services for industry. This could enable Spine Tango to become self-funding.



SETTING PRIORITIES

As EUROSPINE looks to the future, it will be important to set priorities and carefully evaluate potential investments. As a non-profit organisation, we must always be mindful of costs and attaining the best value for our members. Unfortunately, this also probably means that we will not be able to undertake all the activities that we would like to. It is our mission to facilitate continuous improvement to patient care in the field of spinal practice. To finance our efforts, income from our annual meeting and other activities supported by sponsors will be essential.

We are clear that we want to be a major force in the alignment of spinal education across Euro-

pe, with the help of our partners in EUROSPINE's European Spine Societies Advisory Board (EuS-SAB). This will entail further investment in education and planning for future developments.

With the proper funding, clear vision and careful planning, we have an excellent chance of achieving these goals. Furthermore, we will ensure that all regulatory obligations are met, such as compliance with the EU's new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

As Vice-President, I am looking forward to the future with EUROSPINE, and I am very grateful to have such strong and dedicated colleagues who are as committed to making EUROSPINE the leading spine society in Europe as I am.

Membership Numbers Reach New Heights



Serdar Kahraman
Chair, Membership Committee

The **EUROSPINE membership base grew by a further 15% in 2017**. Our international, multi-disciplinary Society attracted **232 new members** who wish to take advantage of EUROSPINE's rich offerings in meetings, education, research and networking. At EUROSPINE,

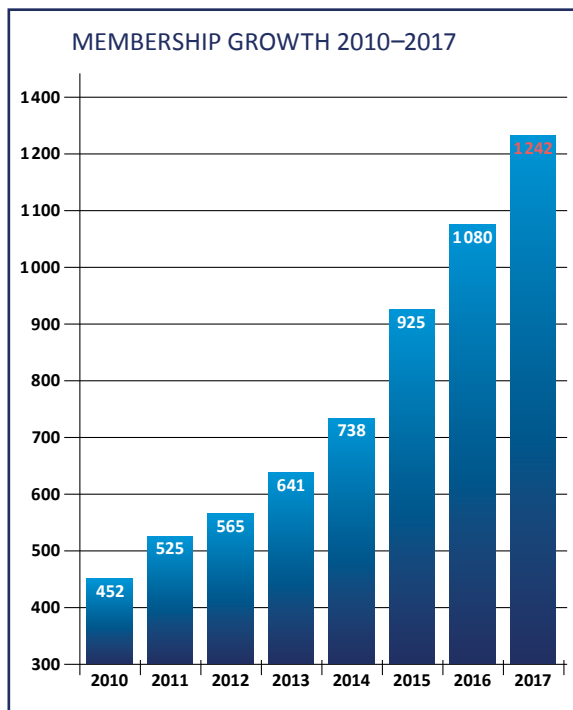
spine specialists can meet, exchange ideas and share expertise with fellow clinicians from **79 different countries**, and learn about the latest in technology, research and innovation.

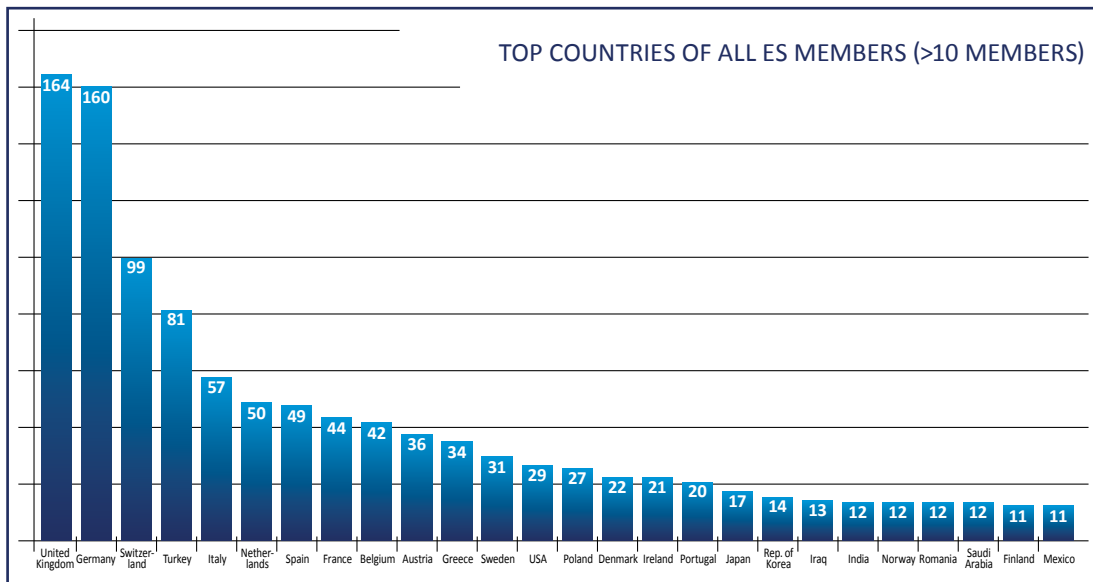
MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES

The membership incentives initiated since 2014 as part of EUROSPINE's Way Forward strategy have proven extremely popular, leading to increasing growth year on year. **In 2016, our membership base topped 1,000 for the first time, and continued to grow in 2017, reaching 1,242, another record high.**

The following incentives are available exclusively to members of EUROSPINE:

- **Special reduced registration fees** at EUROSPINE educational events
- **Low membership fees** remaining at €140/year (€70/year for Young Members)
- **Discounts** for the Annual Meeting, the Spring Specialty Meeting and Task Force Research courses
- **'Young Member' category** offering professional colleagues under the age of 40 the opportunity to join EUROSPINE for 50% of the regular membership fee for the first two years





- **‘Institutional Member’ and ‘Associate Member’** categories, inviting national spine societies to join as *Institutional Members*, with the added benefit that all their members automatically become *Associate Members* of EUROSPINE
- **EUROSPINE’s EuSSAB**, a neutral platform for *Institutional Members* to come together and work jointly on common issues
- **Further membership benefits**, such as a subscription to the *European Spine Journal* and access to research grants, the Open Operating Theatre (OOT) platform, Annual Meeting webcasts and more.

NEW DATABASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

We are proud to announce the implementation of a powerful new online tool that facilitates data administration for both users and the EUROSPINE administration. This system will be used for membership administration and registration to EUROSPINE educational events.

With the **EUROSPINE eSociety** you can:

- Check your membership status
- Update your data (address, specialisation, portrait picture)

- Make your annual membership payments
- Download payment confirmations
- Register for EUROSPINE educational events
- Download your CME certificates
- Read the *European Spine Journal* online

The new system offers many new benefits, both for members and the Society:

- New user-friendly application form
- Self-administration of personal data and payments
- Direct online access to the *European Spine Journal*
- Online database for the evaluation of new applications
- Improved handling of member, faculty and officer candidate data for statistical purposes (age, gender, nationality, specialisation, etc.)

SIMPLIFIED APPLICATION PROCESS

In order to facilitate the new member application process, pre-ratification is now carried out by the Membership Committee (MemCom) via email on a monthly basis. The process for reactivating terminated memberships has also been simplified, with a letter of motivation replacing the lengthy re-application process. A PDF



membership certificate is now available for individual download.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Beginning in 2018, honorary members will be elected for their outstanding contributions to the Society and/or in the field of spinal disorders and related problems. The following rules for nomination for honorary membership have been defined and agreed upon by the ExCom:

- EUROSPINE membership is not mandatory for candidates
- Up to 3 people per year may be nominated / elected for honorary membership
- There is no age range set for candidates
- Candidates should be recognised for their remarkable service in the field of spine

MEMBERSHIP GOALS FOR 2018

Next year, our first honorary membership will be awarded during EUROSPINE 2018. Furthermore, members will be able to benefit from collaborative educational activities in cooperation with

other societies. We will be encouraging more active involvement of corresponding members and introducing a non-surgeon diploma.

We are currently working on several initiatives to ensure that young members are heard and that their needs are taken care of. It is our goal to attract more young talent to EUROSPINE through a new **“Young & Strong”** project to be launched in 2018. The objective of this project is to motivate young members to become active in the Society, take over council functions and tasks and participate in other core activities. The young members of today are the future officers and faculty of EUROSPINE.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to new members and thank all our existing members for your support and your contribution in making EUROSPINE a society that can open new horizons in spine care. **It is our goal to attract 250 new members in 2018.** If you are interested in working with talented specialists and sharing new ideas and techniques, please join our dynamic organisation!

EuSSAB – Unifying Europe



Christoph Siepe
EuSSAB

Since its inaugural meeting in 2014, EUROSPINE's European Spine Societies Advisory Board (EuSSAB) has become the primary communication platform for EUROSPINE's institutional members — national spine societies from across Europe. EuSSAB provides an international forum where national spine societies can address issues related to spine health and education, standardise processes and influence political policies with one strong, united voice. Its core activities focus on promoting education, guidelines, meetings and research amongst many others.

EUROSPINE'S ROLE IN EUSSAB

EUROSPINE founded EuSSAB as an unbiased, communal platform where national societies can meet to discuss and resolve issues of common interest. EUROSPINE's role is that of a facilitator. The internal policy states that all institutional members have the same political weight and equal voting rights. EuSSAB members identify shared challenges and goals and develop strategies as equal partners as to how they should be addressed.

VOTING AND NEW MEMBERS

Important decisions are voted on by EuSSAB's institutional members. Each national spine society has one vote, including those that have more than one spine society in their home country. As a rule of thumb, the members agreed that each country will be represented by one society, and each representing society has one vote. Thus, in countries with multiple spine societies, voting rights may change on an alternating basis between societies.

New applicants must first become EUROSPINE institutional members – confirmed by EUROSPINE's Executive Committee (ExCom). Subsequently, a vote is held by existing members in accordance with strict inclusion criteria. We are proud to announce that this year **three new national societies were welcomed into EuSSAB:**

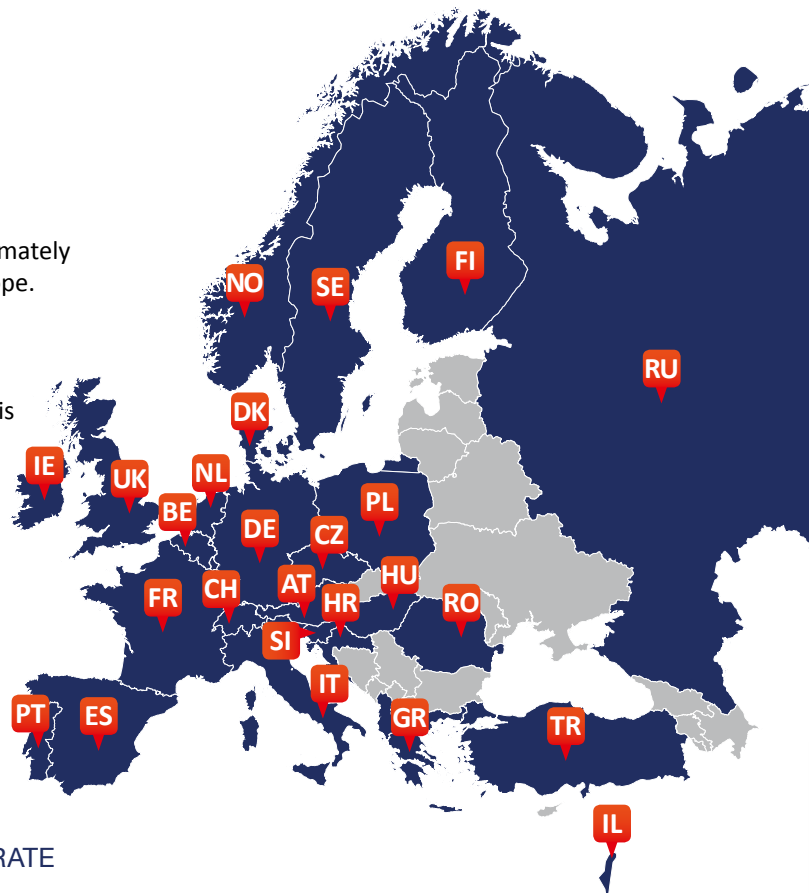
- Israeli Spine Society
- Croatian Vertebrologic Society
- Danish Spine Society

Over the first three years, EuSSAB's total number of institutional members grew to 29 nati-

onal societies, who represent approximately 7,000 spine specialists from all over Europe.

DIPLOMA EQUIVALENCE

One of EuSSAB's current top priorities is to assist in the creation of a common and homogenous educational programme, whereby validated graduates of national society diplomas qualify to obtain the EUROSPINE Diploma (ESD), and ESD graduates may obtain the corresponding national society's diploma. For further information, please see the Education Committee Report: "Spine Care Education: Improving Access and Increasing Participation on page 14."



SWOT ANALYSIS: PARTICIPATION RATE 100%

A SWOT analysis was introduced to EuSSAB members for the first time in 2017 under the guidance of Johan van Lerbeirghe, the former elected EuSSAB Representative to the EUROSPINE ExCom. The objective of the SWOT analysis was to ascertain strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats faced by spine specialists and societies across Europe. 100% of the institutional members completed the analysis, which demonstrates strong dedication and commitment on behalf of all members to making EuSSAB a success. Due to this highly-favourable outcome, the SWOT analysis will be continued in 2018. This analysis is unprecedented, as it delivers information about the situation of spine societies and spine surgeons from all over Europe for the first time in history.

EUROSPINE'S EUSSAB SPRING MEETING AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The EuSSAB Spring Meeting was held this year on 22 May 2017 in Munich, Germany, and was attended by 14 societies. The goals of this successful spring meeting, which was initially designed as a smaller, preparational meeting in

between the larger annual meetings, were to provide updates on recent developments, assess the progress that was made in connection with EuSSAB activities, to introduce the SWOT analysis and to discuss operational issues. Another EuSSAB meeting was held in Dublin at EUROSPINE 2017 on 12 October 2017, where items including education, Spine Tango, Patient Line, and spine centre certifications were addressed.

PLANS FOR 2018

Promotional Efforts

Over the coming year, we plan to promote EuSSAB activities through EUROSPINE in order to enhance visibility for spine care activities throughout Europe and also to build a stronger spine community for our patients. Projects which will receive special attention include the introduction of a certification programme for spine centres, EUROSPINE's Patient Line platform, the EUROSPINE Spine Tango registry and others.

EUROSPINE and the national spine societies have committed to promoting each other's societies and activities. In turn, EuSSAB members will promote EUROSPINE activities such as the equivalence programme, Patient Line, Spine Tango and all other EUROSPINE meetings & activities through their websites and other communication channels.

Upcoming meetings

A ¾ day Spring Meeting will be held in Munich, Germany on 16 April 2018, and a 2-hour session is planned for EUROSPINE 2018 in Barcelona.

Special Recognition

We wish to extend our warmest thanks to **Johan van Lerbeirghe** from Belgium, the first EuSSAB Representative, for his excellent work over the past year. We would also like to thank EuSSAB's Vice Representative, **Christoph Josten** of Germany, who took over the position of EuSSAB Representative for 2018. **Ioannis Magras** of Greece was elected to take on the role of EuSSAB Vice Representative during EUROSPINE 2017 in Dublin.



Spine Care Education: Improving Access and Increasing Participation



Bernhard Meyer
Chair, Education and Fellowship Committee

The mission of the EUROSPINE Education Committee (EduCom) is to improve the quality of patient care through education, a key driver in achieving best-practice care in the treatment of spine disorders. For this reason, EUROSPINE is actively developing and implementing standardised education programmes for spine care specialists that transcend borders and languages, offering a diploma programme, educational initiatives and a diploma equivalence programme.

In 2017, EUROSPINE was very successful in its goal to advance education and lifelong learning by:

- Continuing development of the EUROSPINE Diploma programme (basic and advanced diplomas)
- Delivering high quality live events (EduWeek 2017, advanced courses)
- Forming additional partnerships in the EUROSPINE Diploma Equivalence programme
- Relaunching the Observership Grant programme
- Beginning development of the Non-Surgical Diploma programme

EUROSPINE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

The EUROSPINE Diploma programme initiative has been running since 2012, and was updated and streamlined this year, including the addition of advanced surgical training. Upon completion of five basic modules, surgeons are awarded the EUROSPINE Diploma (ESD). They may then move on to advanced surgical training for the EUROSPINE Advanced Diploma (ESAD), in which two advanced modules and a six-month validated fellowship (delivered by an endorsed host training centre) must be completed.

217 EUROSPINE Diplomas have been conferred in the past five years. The first EUROSPINE Advanced Diplomas are expected to be awarded in early 2018.

EDUWEEK 2017 AND ADVANCED COURSES

EUROSPINE diploma courses are delivered each year during Education Week (EduWeek). This year, EduWeek took place in Strasbourg, France from 19–23 June 2017 at the world-renowned IRCAD facility. The five basic diploma modules were delivered over a very intensive five days. 101 participants from 23 countries, 40



distinguished faculty from all over Europe and 6 industry partners took part. The two modules of the Advanced Diploma courses were also delivered in Strasbourg from 9–11 January 2017 and 16–18 October 2017, attracting more than 60 participants from over 20 countries, more than 20 distinguished faculty members from all over Europe and five industry partners.

The programmes delivered basic and advanced education, offering innovative learning opportunities for spine specialists. Participants engaged in classic plenary sessions, highly-interactive and challenging case discussions,

group case discussions and a roundtable discussion between experts. They also received hands-on skills training in workshops with cadavers, synthetic bone models and simulators.

Participants had the opportunity to meet with their peers and interact with faculty, made up of renowned surgeons from all over Europe. Surgical pearls of wisdom, notions, up-and-coming innovations and future trends in state-of-the-art spine surgery were exchanged between faculty and participants throughout these courses.

The **Innovation Hour** was also introduced, in which industry partners present their latest innovations in seven minutes and 21 slides to faculty and course participants. Presentations are followed by a three-minute Q & A session for all participants. This offers an opportunity for both industry and participants to envisage future trends in spine care.

DIPLOMA EQUIVALENCE PROGRAMME WITH OTHER SOCIETIES

EUROSPINE believes that aligning its education programme with other national curricula that deliver the same learning outcomes will move us closer to the goal of creating a recognised European Spine Specialty. Through its European Spine Society Advisory Board (EuSSAB), EUROSPINE has formed partnerships with many of its institutional members, whereby national spine societies can adapt their programmes to the EUROSPINE Diploma learning outcomes, '5+2 modules' model and formats.

The faculty of these programmes run by national societies are themselves EUROSPINE Diploma holders. Validated graduates of a national society diploma may obtain the EUROSPINE Diploma after attending their respective national society courses. Conversely, EUROSPINE Dip-

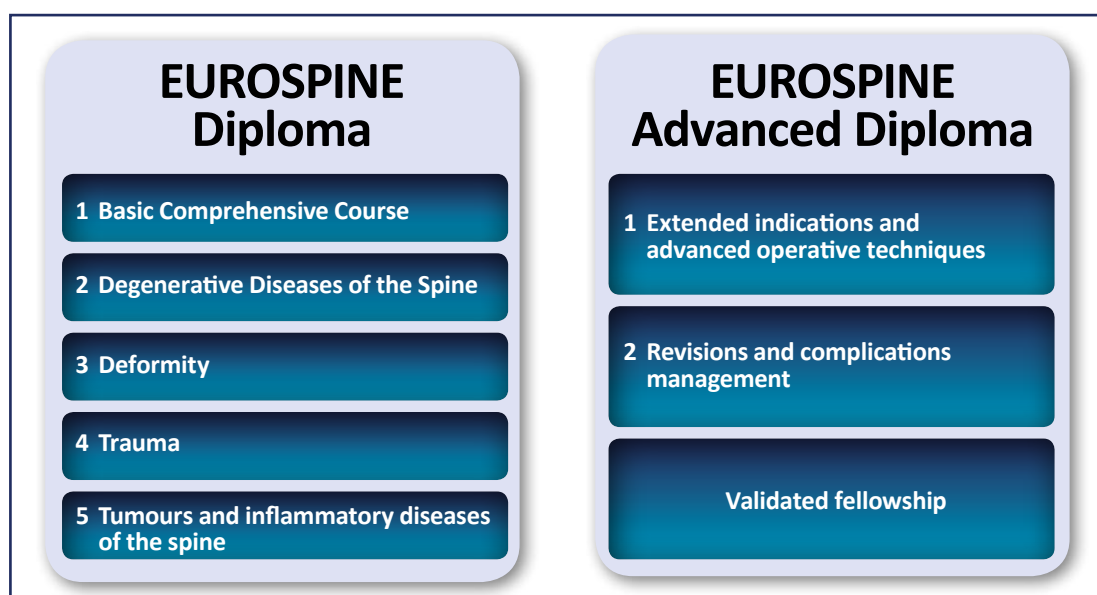
loma graduates may obtain the corresponding national society diploma.

Since 2016, EUROSPINE has formed partnerships with spine societies in Germany, Turkey, Spain, Portugal and Greece. Diploma equivalence has been established with the following programmes:

1. **Iberian Peninsula Basic Spine Diploma** of the Sociedad Española de Columna Vertebral (GEER) and Sociedade Portuguesa de Patologia de la Coluna Vertebral (SPPCV)
2. **Greek Basic Spine Diploma** of the Hellenic Spine Society (HSS)
3. **Diplôme Interuniversitaire de Chirurgie du Rachis** of the Société Française de Chirurgie rachidienne (SFCR)

A further European professional society, the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS) has agreed to a partnership for diploma equivalence related to the EUROSPINE Diploma and the EUROSPINE Advanced Diploma. The **EANS Spine Course** and **EANS Advanced Course** are aligned with and equivalent to the EUROSPINE basic diploma and advanced diploma courses.

94 individual EUROSPINE Diplomas have been granted on the basis of society equivalence.



OBSERVERSHIP GRANT PROGRAMME

Observership grants of €1,500 (up to 14 days) are available to EUROSPINE members as a means of gaining valuable experience. This year, seven observership grants were awarded to EUROSPINE members with worthy educational observership projects. Furthermore, cycles and deadlines of the application process were streamlined.

NON-SURGICAL DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

A similar diploma programme in non-surgical spine care is taking shape. A task force has been formed and is currently developing a diploma which will be open to a wider range of health care professionals who have a strong interest in spine care (MDs and non-MD allied health professionals). This education programme will be evidence-based, patient-centred, interprofessional, and collaborative.

PLANS FOR 2018

2018 is shaping up to be a very successful year for EUROSPINE education with the following activities:

- **EUROSPINE Diploma Programme:** The application process and awarding of the EUROSPINE Advanced Diploma will be in place.
- **EduWeek 2018:** Both the basic and advanced diploma courses will be held at the IRCAD in Strasbourg, France on 18–22 June 2018. The intermingling of basic and advanced groups should enhance and intensify the engagement of faculty, participants and industry partners. A research course on the critical appraisal of spine literature will also be offered as an optional module during this intensive week. Innovative formats such as e-learning components, case-based discussions, and hands-on skills workshops (simulators, cadavers and bone models) will be explored and further enhanced.

- **Diploma Equivalence:** We are looking forward to granting more individual equivalent diplomas through our existing EUROSPINE diploma equivalence programme partnerships. Furthermore, we will continue work on advanced course equivalence with Germany and Turkey. Our next priorities for equivalence will focus on Benelux, Italy, Russia, Scandinavia and the UK.

- **E-learning Programme:** In keeping with our mission, we are proactively moving forward to align spine education across Europe in coordination with all of our EuSSAB partners. Together we will ensure the development of effective delivery options, including affordable e-learning modules that are well-tailored to the needs of course participants.

- **Observership Grant Programme:** With the new application process in place, we expect to award more observership stipends to deserving EUROSPINE members.

- **Non-surgical Diploma Programme:** The modules, learning outcomes, educational format and delivery will be finalised in 2018 for a pilot delivery of the diploma courses in 2019.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

We wish to express our utmost gratitude to Tim Pigott and Alberto Zerbi. Throughout their years of service on the Education Committee, both have worked extremely hard and made important contributions to the development and execution of the programmes and initiatives.

CONCLUSION

EUROSPINE endeavours to deliver high-quality education and training to spine specialists. By increasing participation and accessibility through partnerships with national societies, spine centres, MedTechs and other professionals involved in spine care, it is our goal to enable our participants to excel in patient care and safety.

ESF: Advancing Spine Research, Education and Treatment through Fundraising



Everard Munting
Chair, EUROSPINE Foundation

Founded by EUROSPINE and the *European Spine Journal* in 2007, the EUROSPINE Foundation (ESF) is a non-profit, charitable organisation set up to:

- Advance knowledge and understanding of spinal disorders
- Improve the standard of care, recovery and well-being for patients with back and neck problems
- Foster the development of new, and the evaluation of existing, treatments
- Support the education of care providers at the highest, evidence-based level

A SMALL DONATION GOES A LONG WAY

Over the past year, the EUROSPINE Foundation (ESF) initiated fundraising activities to support its objectives through several means:

- Patient donations
- Accreditation of Spine Centres of Excellence
- Donations from EUROSPINE members
- Support from the ON Foundation (promotes research in the field of orthopaedic tissue regeneration)
- Sponsored running event at the 2017 EUROSPINE Annual Meeting in Barcelona

- Other activities are currently being evaluated

Donations would allow ESF to start funding a research fellowship for Spine Tango and provide useful real-life outcome data for Patient Line and all EUROSPINE members. In order to facilitate contributions, an online donation facility has been made available on the ESF website at www.eurospinefoundation.org. We have also set up a link between the membership fee payment facility on the EUROSPINE website and the ESF website. The ESF Board is actively exploring additional funding opportunities to ensure that the Foundation is in a position to make a significant contribution to spine research and education.

EUROSPINE SURGICAL SPINE CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE ACCREDITATION

A task force with specialists from different fields has been established to prepare the pilot phase of the EUROSPINE Surgical Spine Centres of Excellence certification procedure. It is expected that certification will commence in the coming months and be made available to all spine centres across Europe wishing to become accredited through EUROSPINE. The income earned from the accreditation process will allow fi-



nancing other important spine-related projects through the ESF.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ON FOUNDATION

Thanks to Norbert Passuti, one of our board members, we were able to form a partnership with the ON Foundation for the regeneration of musculoskeletal tissues. The ON Foundation is planning to fund research projects selected jointly by the Task Force Research (TFR) and representatives of the ON Foundation. Specific awards and travel fellowships may be funded in the future through this partnership.

ACCOUNTS APPROVED

On the administrative side, our 2016 accounts were approved by the Swiss Federal Supervi-

sory Authority for Foundations. We have kept our expenses to the strict minimum, only using funds to pay administrative obligations related to Swiss law in relation with foundations.

HELP US SUPPORT SPINE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Donations from EUROSPINE members and their patients to help us meet our goals of advancing research and sponsoring education in spine treatment are welcome. If you wish to make a contribution, please do so via our online form or participate in one of our fundraising activities. It's a great networking opportunity for a cause dear to all our hearts.

Annual General Meeting: EUROSPINE 2017



Stavros Stavridis
Chair, Programme Committee

GOING WEST BUT ALWAYS AIMING UP!

A new all-time record was set! 2,331 registered delegates with a total of 3,684 participants from 78 countries attended the 2017 EUROSPINE Annual Meeting, held in the “Far West of Europe”. Dublin, the capital of Ireland, one of Europe’s fastest growing economies, proved to be an ideal setting for our meeting. In an ultra-modern and yet very warm and welcoming congress centre within walking distance to the city centre, delegates were presented with a high-quality scientific programme and the opportunity to interact with spine experts and industry representatives.

All participants were offered the opportunity to take part in animated discussions and networking activities designed to inspire fresh ideas on technique and innovation in spine care both within Europe and globally.

“Combining the latest updates in spinal care in an interactive and constructive way with meeting new colleagues from all around the world, in a fantastic venue, really made me love every moment in Dublin!”

P.N.A., Neurosurgeon, Mexico, delegate EUROSPINE 2017

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME 2017: LIVING UP TO LAST YEAR’S RECORD

The record number of abstracts received last year in Berlin placed high expectations on us for this year’s meeting. Once again, we were delighted to receive close to 1000 abstracts, as recognition grows of the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting as the leading spine congress in Europe and one of the most important spine meetings worldwide. Keeping in mind that spine care covers a wide spectrum that extends far beyond surgery, we created new submission categories to enhance and spice up our programme “menu” in Dublin.

Our Programme Committee conducted an exhaustive selection process from the papers submitted to present a rich and well-rounded scientific programme. Following a meticulous selection process, 75 were chosen as oral presentations, 80 qualified for oral ‘quick fires’ and 142 were presented as e-posters.

A high point of the scientific programme was two animated debates on controversial issues facing spine care today. Delegates showed their appreciation through high rates of attendance and strong evaluations in the **EUROSPINE 2017 Delegates’ Survey**.

EUROSPINE 2017 IN FIGURES

Participation		Countries Represented	78
Total Number of Attendees, (excl. Pre-day)	3,684		
Registered Delegates	2,331	Top 10 Countries	
Industry Representatives	1,353	UK	171
Participants at Pre-day Courses	226	Mexico	136
Patient Day	105	USA	128
		Spain	124
Scientific Programme		Germany	99
Pre-day Courses	2	Turkey	97
Scientific Presentations	75	Italy	96
Debates	2	Switzerland	90
Quick-Fire Presentations	80	Thailand	89
E-Posters	142	France	63
EUROSPINE Lunch Symposia	6		
Industry Lunch Workshops	20		
Exhibition			
Total Number of Exhibitors incl. Spine Village	117		
Platinum, Gold, Silver Partners	7		
Sponsors and Contributors	18		
Industry Exhibition in net sqm.	2,132		

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE 2017

Chair and Coordination	Stavros Stavridis	Greece	
Members	Paulo Pereira	Portugal	Cervical Spine (all pathologies) & Epidemiology
	Werner Schmoelz	Austria	Basic Science: Biology & Biomechanics
	Tamàs Fekete	Switzerland	Degenerative (thoraco-lumbar) & Economics
	Matti Scholz	Germany	Trauma, Tumour, Infection (thoraco-lumbar)
	Emre Acaroğlu	Turkey	Adult Deformity & Growing Spine
	Ibrahim Obeid	France	New Techniques, Imaging, Patient Safety, Complications & Non-operative

We would also like to extend our deepest thanks to our **co-reviewers**, for their huge contribution and support:

Cervical Spine (all pathologies) & Epidemiology	Trauma, Tumour, Infection (thoraco-lumbar)
Carmen Vleggeert-Lankamp, The Netherlands John Duff, Switzerland	Andrzej Maciejczak, Poland Zdenek Klezl, United Kingdom
Basic Science: Biology	Adult Deformity & Growing Spine
Karin Wuertz-Kozak, Switzerland Stephen Ferguson, Switzerland	Viola Bullmann, Germany Rene Castelein, The Netherlands
Basic Science: Biomechanics	New Techniques, Imaging, Patient Safety, Complications & Non-operative
Stephen Ferguson, Switzerland Hans-Joachim Wilke, Germany	Nasir Quraishi, UK Elias Papadopoulos, Greece
Degenerative (thoraco-lumbar) & Economics	
Aron Lazary, Hungary Sven Kevin Tschoeke, Germany	

PRE-DAY MEETING AND LUNCH SYMPOSIA: NEW INSIGHTS INTO MODERN SPINE CARE

Our hard-working **Lunch Symposia and Pre-day Meeting Committee** organised the perfect kick-off to a great event with two well-structured **pre-day symposia**, providing valuable information for **Spine Tango Users** and an expansive update to **the current concepts in the management of the elderly spine**.

The popular lunch symposia presented both surgical and non-surgical “burning issues” of modern spine care in six sessions. The Live Surgery Session with its related discussion was especially well received.

We wish to extend our sincere thanks for their valuable contribution:

- Luis Alvarez Galovich, Spain (Chair)
- Hossein Mehdiyan, UK
- Klaus John Schnake, Germany
- Pedro Berjano, Italy

PATIENT DAY: THE PATIENT AT THE CENTRE

Playing a leading role in spine care throughout Europe and worldwide is only feasible with the patient at the centre of our philosophy. Our most important scientific event must not be an exception. At our annual **Patient Day**, Dubliners who reserved their spot in advance were offered the opportunity to ask questions, discuss their problems and share their thoughts with the experts (held during Pre-day). The participants’ great interest made the event a resounding success. Promotion for Patient Day was supported by Dublin’s newspapers.

AWARDS 2017: HONOURS WELL EARNED

Following a first-rate round of presentations, the audience selected the top paper via the conference app for this year’s **“Best EUROSPINE Podium Presentation 2017”**. We wish to thank our Awards Committee, who did an excellent job of evaluating the superb papers deserving of the **“EUROSPINE Full Paper Award 2017”**. *Our warmest congratulations to the winners!*

MEDAL LECTURE: AN INSPIRATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Medal lecture is traditionally a highlight of our annual meeting, but this year's presentation took our breath away with a powerful example of strength and perseverance in the face of adversity. Following an introduction by Frank Dowling, **Mark Pollock, Explorer, Innovator & Collaboration Catalyst** touched the deepest parts of the soul and mind of each and every person in the audience. **"Expecting Problems as We Explore Possibilities"** was not only an awe-inspiring journey in time and space, but a true testament to the strength of human will and nature. We were all honoured and privileged to have been in attendance.

THE KEY TO SUCCESS: ORGANISATION AND HOSPITALITY WITH AN IRISH FLAIR

The path to success for our annual meeting was paved by the relentless efforts of our colleagues, **Ciaran Bolger** and **Frank Dowling**. Thank you so much for being such great hosts for the 2017 EUROSPINE Annual Meeting in the lovely city of Dublin!

For the first time in the history of EUROSPINE, a head of state, President of Ireland Michael D Higgins, welcomed participants to the annual meeting and to Dublin. In his specially-recorded video message (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPcoB121PTc>), he welcomed delegates to Ireland and emphasised the significant contribution EUROSPINE members make, changing people's lives through the treatment of patients with spinal disorders.

PUTTING GREAT IDEAS INTO ACTION

We were delighted to see that **the number of full responses to the "Delegates Survey" topped 1,000 for the first time ever!** Constantly improving the quality of our meeting is our priority and your contribution makes this a much easier task. We received valuable input and

some great ideas. Thank you so much for your incredible response!!! We truly are **shaping the future of EUROSPINE together.**

Visit our website for detailed information on EUROSPINE 2017:
<http://www.eurospineMeeting.org/congress-report-2017.htm>

**THIS IS YOUR MEETING.
YOU ARE EUROSPINE.**

So "Go raibh maith agat" Dublin and "Hola" Barcelona!

We're looking forward to welcoming you in Barcelona in September to celebrate our 20th Anniversary Meeting!



Research Council Committee Report



Björn Rydevik
Chair, Research Council

IMPROVING PATIENT CARE THROUGH RESEARCH

EUROSPINE recognises that research is an essential element for achieving excellence in spine care. The Research Council aims to stimulate, facilitate and promote an active research community within EUROSPINE with the goal of advancing knowledge of spinal disorders, thereby optimising care for spine patients.

The main objectives of the Research Council are to:

- (1) Support spine research
- (2) Educate spine researchers
- (3) Foster an active spine research community within the Society

The Research Council works to reach its objectives by supporting current and new groups of researchers who will produce high-quality research projects.

The Research Council is responsible for managing three programmes:

- (1) Task Force Research (TFR)
- (2) Spine Tango

- (3) EUROSPINE Awards

SUPPORTING RESEARCH: RESEARCH GRANTS AND AWARDS

The Task Force Research (TFR) evaluates applications for research grants. The paperless applications system can be accessed by members of EUROSPINE via the EUROSPINE website (www.eurospine.org/rules-for-submission-of-proposal-for-funding.htm). Grant applications undergo a rigorous review process by the TFR, who then recommends funding for selected applications to the EUROSPINE Executive Committee (ExCom). Funding is subsequently distributed in accordance with the ExCom's decisions.

There are three grant categories (www.eurospine.org/types-of-grant.htm):

- (1) Development grant – up to €10,000
- (2) Pilot study grant – up to €30,000
- (3) Main grant over 3 years – up to €100,000

A total of **€1,058,573** has been distributed in research grants during the period 2011–2017 for research projects managed by EUROSPINE members. Funding has been provided for 33 projects run by research groups from 13 coun-

tries: Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK and the USA.

The Awards Committee manages two awards presented at the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting:

- (1) the **“EUROSPINE Full Paper Award”** (€10,000)
- (2) the **“Best EUROSPINE Podium Presentation Award”** (€2,000)

EDUCATING RESEARCHERS: RESEARCH COURSES

The 2017 TFR Research Course **“Fundamentals of Spine Research Methodology: how to make your research more relevant, feasible and publishable”** was held in Munich, Germany from 13–17 March 2017. Christoph Siepe was the local host. The faculty was comprised of TFR members, ExCom members and other EUROSPINE members led by TFR Research Course Director Rachid Salmi. 16 participants from 5 countries with multidisciplinary backgrounds took part. This five-day course, which included lectures, small working groups and workshops, was well-appreciated by the participants.

EUROSPINE and the Institut Franco-Européen de Chiropraxie (IFEC) collaborated to deliver the research course **“Critical Appraisal of the Spine Literature: The Fundamentals”** on 21 June 2017 during the EUROSPINE Education Week in Strasbourg, France. This course, which had 30 participants, included a presentation of basic study designs and a discussion on the various threats to the validity of clinical studies. Learning methods consisted of lectures, group work and workshops.

EUROSPINE also organised a Research Symposium on 9 November 2017 in Cairo, Egypt at the 7th Annual Meeting of the Egyptian Spine Association (ESA). The objective of the two-hour symposium, which had approximately 50 par-

ticipants, was to clarify the importance of research on spinal disorders for patient care and to provide information on EUROSPINE activities in terms of support for research such as training and funding.

FOSTERING AN ACTIVE RESEARCH COMMUNITY

For the third time in Dublin, Ireland, the networking alumni gathering was held during the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting. Former research course participants and research grant recipients gathered together in the spirit of exchange and community.

The Research Council will continue to work to ensure continuity during 2018 in the delivery of EUROSPINE research grants, the development and delivery of high-quality research courses and the growth of an active research community of spine researchers.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

We would like to thank everyone who has been or is currently involved in the important work carried out by the Research Council. Such commitment and contribution is instrumental for EUROSPINE to reach its goal of becoming the leading spine society in Europe.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH: VITAL FOR PATIENT CARE

Through its efforts to foster and support the spine research community, EUROSPINE aims to facilitate the delivery of excellence in research, leading to the very best care for spine patients.

Spine Tango Committee Report



Thomas Zweig
Chair, Spine Tango Committee

Spine Tango (ST) is an international spine registry that documents the effectiveness and safety of spine care, treatment techniques and technologies through EUROSPINE's unified registry approach to generate a (collective) evidence base for prevention, treatment effectiveness, patient safety, and best practice.

The Spine Tango registry contains the following data (approximate numbers) from 19 countries and 72 centres:

- 113,000 surgery cases
- 79,000 clinician follow-ups
- 268,000 patient self-assessments (COMI)
- 208,000 other outcome measures (e.g. ODI)

In late 2017, the Spine Tango Committee was transformed into a task force to provide a more flexible structure for tackling the more demanding tasks of the future. Previously an advisory group in clinical and methodological questions for the improvement and development of content (forms), the acquisition and activation of new ST country modules, and new and ongoing research projects, the ST committee structure

was adapted in light of the new EU device directives (effective April 2017). These directives have increased the level and complexity of the previous workload.

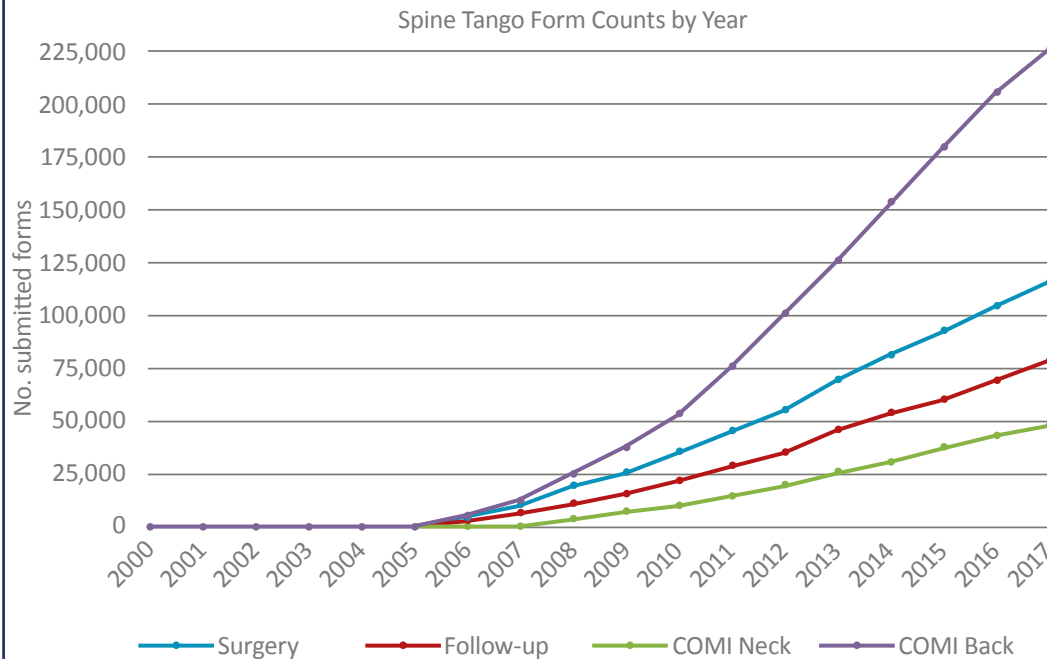
Following a decade of valuable work on Spine Tango, Rolf Sobottke (Germany) resigned from the committee. We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks for all his efforts and dedication to the cause.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2017

In our planning for 2017, we set a number of objectives for Spine Tango. We are pleased that we were able to make significant progress on each and every one:

- The third **ST User Meeting (STUM 2017)** was held in Dublin in conjunction with the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting. Under the theme "**Registries and Industry**", the meeting generated intense interest from both sides. In addition, the **Spine Tango Users Survey** was presented by the University of Bern.
- The newly-designed **ST Annual Report 2017** was released in Dublin and contained a concise scientific presentation of data surround-

GROWTH OF SPINE TANGO: TYPE OF FORMS



ing the common pathologies of the spine.

- **Eight peer-reviewed papers** were published in 2017.
- The **new surgery form 2017** was developed and released in early 2018 and represents the most mature version yet. A few confusing or redundant question items from the previous version were removed, and some important new items were added. Among the most significant improvements is the ability to specify the treated segment(s) for each surgical measure.
- We have made excellent progress on the **development of the conservative form** and plan to make this a continued priority in 2018. A great deal of input on changes to the content was collected over the year and a workshop

with a group of international experts was held in Zurich to finalise the form.

- Before the general release of the new Spine Tango surgery form 2017, the **German Spine Society (DWG) Registry** adopted the form as content for their national spine registry to go live on 1 January 2017. It can be considered an electronic registry as it is entirely paper free.
- We continued our work developing an **implant reporting system for industry** in an attempt to make available all relevant data for an implant (by single or grouped article numbers).
- The Spine Tango follow-up calendar can now send patients a link to a patient form via email and allows for remote data entry. This



approach should help increase follow-up rates.

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

We have made great progress in improving the registry's content and technology, taking Spine Tango to the next level and remaining in the field of leading registries with respect to size (number of cases) and increased distribution through user-friendliness. Follow-up is still presenting some difficulty, due to differing structures and resources available in participating countries' healthcare systems. We hope to work on electronic solutions to this problem in 2018.

PLANS FOR 2018

- Due to the end of the contracting period with the University of Bern, the demand for transparency and the wish to further develop the ST system, we are planning to set up and run a **tender process** throughout 2018 for the hosting and managing of Spine Tango.
- Because of **recent changes in regulations for medical devices and implants**, EUROSPINE is striving to establish mid- and long-term collaboration between Spine Tango and industry.

This task is labour-intensive for all involved parties.

- The **next STUM will be prepared as a half-day symposium** to take place before the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting 2018 in Barcelona.
- Once a final consensus is reached on the content of the **new Spine Tango Conservative Tool**, work will begin on putting the tool into practice.
- A **lunchtime workshop focussed on registries** will also be held at the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting 2018 in Barcelona.
- We are discussing the feasibility of **developing a tablet- and smartphone-adapted version of Spine Tango**.

As the leading spine registry in Europe for documenting the effectiveness of techniques and treatments for spine disorders, Spine Tango is evolving rapidly. Following an extremely productive year in 2017, we are looking forward to maintaining our momentum for a highly successful 2018.

Patient Line Committee Report



Tamar Pincus
Chair, Patient Line Committee

Patient Line is a website operated by EUROSPINE that provides comprehensive, up-to-date information to patients and their families on spine diseases and related problems. Managed and edited by a multidisciplinary committee of experts, Patient Line aims to empower patients to work together with their physicians to determine the best courses of action related to their spine condition.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

Our main objectives for 2017 were twofold:

1. Relaunch Patient Line as a modern, easy-to-navigate source of information for patients, providing new, evidence-based data that is directly relevant to patients' spine conditions, accompanied by visual illustrations and video clips.
2. Begin the process of translating the new website into the languages of EUROSPINE member nations.

The updated Patient Line was successfully relaunched in October 2017 at the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting in Dublin. Created with the same look and navigability as the main

EUROSPINE website, patients can now access pertinent data in English, French and German. Newly-created content written in plain language by an award-winning writer and visual graphics and videos provides comprehensive guidance for patients.

PLANS FOR 2018

Over the coming year we plan to translate Patient Line into the three additional languages most highly-spoken by the EUROSPINE membership. Moreover, we will create a process whereby EuSSAB members can commission a translation into any specified language in a given year.

To raise awareness of our service, we plan to reach out to primary patient societies such as Arthritis Research UK to explore common ground. At the same time, we will continue to develop new subject matter, including FAQs and short videos. We will also propose support for Patient Day activities.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The Patient Line Committee is chaired and led by Tamar Pincus, a psychologist and researcher

in the field of acceptance and commitment therapy for chronic pain. Members include Anna Havslava (physiotherapist), Ahmed Ezzat Siam (spine surgeon) and Erland Hermansen (spine surgeon). The committee is supported by Karen McRae (nursing professional) as editor and Julie-Lyn Noël (Director of Education and Research and a general medical doctor) for administration.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Julie-Lyn Noël for her on-going commitment and support, without which we could not achieve our goals.

A DEPENDABLE RESOURCE FOR PATIENTS

Patient Line will continue with its mission to help patients suffering with spine diseases by delivering the latest treatment information, increasing accessibility through the addition of new languages, and improving visibility of this valuable service. On Patient Line, patients can be sure the information they are reading is accurate, helping them to understand their situation and enabling them to make appropriate treatment decisions with their doctor.



Stakeholder Council Report



Christoph Siepe / Joerg Franke
Co-Chairs of Stakeholder Council



Beat Leimbacher
Delegate of the ExCom

The Stakeholder Council's primary objective is to strengthen relationships with our network of stakeholders, including the national/international spine societies, the MedTech industry, government, political institutions and others.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

29 national societies have now united as institutional members of EUROSPINE, working together through EUROSPINE's European Spine Societies Advisory Board (EuSSAB). The societies have worked in concert this year to realise an important strategic priority: **establishing an equivalence programme to align education across Europe based on the two EUROSPINE diplomas ('5+2' module format)**. For further information, please see "Education: Improving Access and Increasing Participation" on page 14 and "EuSSAB – Unifying Europe" on page 11.

Beyond Europe, EUROSPINE is actively working in cooperation with spine societies in China, Brazil and other countries.

Patient Line was relaunched with great success in October 2017, after a complete redesign (see "**Patient Line Committee Report**" on page 29). **Furthermore, Spine Tango has made tremend-**

ous progress in improving the registry's content and technology (see Spine Tango Committee Report on page 26).

We are actively working with the MedTech industry, exploring potential sponsorships and mutually-beneficial partnership opportunities.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES

We will continue to widen and strengthen sponsorship of educational and research activities, and to make political institutions a primary focus in our efforts to raise the profile and priority of spine treatment in their policy setting. In addition, we plan to further explore the potential of sponsorships from pharmaceutical companies and evaluate stakeholders such as universities, health insurance companies and patient organisations.

General Assembly Report

**Thursday, 12 October 2017, 17:30–18:30
(Members Only)
Dublin (Ireland) Convention Centre CCE,
Wicklow Hall
65 Members Present**

1. WELCOME

Approval of the last protocol: Berlin, 6 October 2016: *Approved*

2. PRESIDENTIAL UPDATE

(Margareta Nordin, EUROSPINE President 2016–2017)

Address on major achievements and advancements in meetings, education, members, research and the EUROSPINE organisation

3. OUTLOOK 2017/2018:

(Frank Kandziora, Incoming President)

Address on the future of EUROSPINE, reviewing EUROSPINE's vision, mission, future goals and strategic priorities

4. SOCIETY BUSINESS FINANCIALS

Financial Report 2016–17 (Marco Teli, Treasurer)

Approval of Balance Sheet as per 31 December 2016, Income Statement for 2016 and 2017 and Budget 2017: *Approved*

Refer to details, incl. Audit 2016, pages 37–40

Budget approval – preliminary Budget 2018: *Approved*

Re-election of Treuhand von Flüe AG, Zug for the financial year 2017

ExCom proposes to re-elect the auditors: *Approved*

5. ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES & FUTURE MEETINGS

Overview (Thomas Blattert, Secretary)

1) Organisational Governance Directives

- As agreed at our last GA, the EUROSPINE Business Rules have been made available on our website to all members of EUROSPINE in line with today's corporate compliance requirements

2) Future Planning of the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting

- Venues that can accommodate the size of our meeting need to be reserved 5–6 years ahead
- We want to maintain our preferred mid-October date
- We have to extend our planning cycle and schedule our event calendar up to 2023
- 2020: Vienna, Austria (Messe Wien), 7–9 October
- 2021: Gothenburg, Sweden (Svenska Mässan) 6–8 October
- 2022: Milan, Italy (MiCo) 10–14 October
- 2023: Frankfurt, Germany (Messe Frankfurt) 4–6 October

All sites/venues have been approved by the GA

6. NOMINATIONS/ELECTIONS

Presented by Thomas Blattert, Secretary



The following nominations were supported by the EUROSPINE Executive Committee and ratified by the GA:

President:

Frank Kandziora, Germany

Vice President:

Tim Pigott, UK

Councils and Chairs:

Chair Pre-Day & Lunch Symposia Committee:

Hossein Mehdian, UK

Chair Spine Tango Committee:

Thomas Zweig, Switzerland

Committee Members:

Education Committee (EduCom):

Peter Vajkoczy, Germany;
 Enrico Tessitore, Switzerland;
 Stephane Genevay, Switzerland;
 Lukas Panzenboeck, Austria

Membership Committee:

Alessio Lovi, Italy

Programme Committee:

Baoge Liu, China

Pre-Day & Lunch Symp Committee:

JM Cavanilles Walker, Spain

Patient Line Committee:

Derek Cawley, UK

Website & E-Learning Committee:

No new member proposed. Committee dissolved and integrated into the EduCom.

20 October 2017

Thomas Blattert, EUROSPINE Secretary

Judith Reichert Schild, EUROSPINE Administrative Director

Treasurer's Statement



Marco Teli
EUROSPINE Treasurer

Dear EUROSPINE Members,

In order to allow you to review the figures well in advance of the General Assembly 2018, to be held in Barcelona, this report will cover fiscal year 2017.

REVENUES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

As stated in last year's Treasury Report, EUROSPINE's financial performance always reflects a strong correlation to revenues generated by the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting. Revenues from EUROSPINE 2017 (held in Dublin) exceeded the forecasted amount.

The Society's total income in 2017 of €2,067,726 was slightly higher than our 2016 revenue of €2,042,522. This higher income is indicative of the measures taken by the Executive Committee (ExCom) to counterbalance the fluctuations in revenues from the EUROSPINE Annual Meeting.

Income from membership fees in 2017 increased by €30,000 over the previous year, and income from educational activities rose by

€200,000, thanks to additional courses presented in 2017 (this will not be the case in 2018).

HIGHER THAN EXPECTED NET INCOME

Following the transition year of 2015, in which EUROSPINE made a number of investments to ensure the appropriate implementation of our Way Forward strategy, and the excellent fiscal year of 2016, in which we were able to make a provision of €300,000 in order to secure the long-term prosperity of the Society, our income statement presented an overall profit of €39,037 against the projected loss of almost €300,000.

The main reason for our better-than-expected financial results in 2017 was the €350,000 surplus generated from our meeting in Dublin, accentuating the high correlation between annual meeting revenue and EUROSPINE's net profit.

COST CONTROL

EUROSPINE expenses are grouped into the following categories:

- **Major Activities** (mainly education and research)



This expense category increased from €517,912 to €755,664, due mainly to higher costs resulting from the newly-established advanced courses and the two education weeks held in 2017. These additional costs were counterbalanced by increased revenue. Although our aim is to offer educational activities on a cost-recovery basis, which is already the case for Education Week, advanced courses are still in the investment phase. On the other hand, we have reduced spending on research grants by €60,000 (to a still respectable €150,000) in an effort to remain cost conscious.

- **Special Projects (Spine Tango, Patient Line, Springer/ESJ) and Committee Costs**

Special project expenses (€295,941 / + 8.5%), with the highest portion allocated to the Spine Tango registry and its task force (€177,171), are under control.

The relatively low annual investment for Patient Line (€18,968) has made a great impact.

Returns based on the new website generate on average of 40,000 hits per month.

The higher costs for Springer (subscription to the *European Spine Journal* included with our membership) were due to the strong increase in our membership numbers.

The committee costs of €95,357 covered committee work (travel costs and meeting-related expenses) and are in general well-controlled and managed.

- **Human Resource Expenses**

Human resource expenses have increased the most over the last few years due to the implementation of the Way Forward strategy and the addition of many services and activities for our individual and institutional members, our patients and other important stakeholders.

In 2017, personnel expenses grew modestly by approximately 4.4 % to €640,838, due to

the hiring of an education specialist from 1 June 2017.

We are, however, aware that the workload for our team is constantly growing. Exciting new projects planned for the development of a non-surgical diploma and e-learning will necessitate finding resources for additional employees.

STRONG AND SOLID BALANCE SHEET

As of 31 December 2017, our cash and liquidity position remained solid at €1,697,604, which is an increase of 8.4 % compared to the year 2016. Due to our profit, our equity also remained secure and stable at €1,717,919.

OUTLOOK for 2018

Looking into 2018 and beyond, EUROSPINE will continue to need this strong balance sheet, as market challenges are growing and it will likely become more difficult to obtain sponsorships from industry and other potential contributors. Our Executive Committee remains fully committed to our mission and vision, which not only means further growth of the Society, but also efficient delivery of high-quality services to

our members and stakeholders at a reasonable cost.

We are aware that we will have to continue our hard work in 2018 to meet the forecasted loss of plus / minus €250,000. There will also be some new projects, including the Non-Surgical Spring Meeting and the evaluation of e-learning options, that will require an upfront investment before a return can be expected.

Our financial result in 2018 will once again be highly dependent on attracting as many delegates as possible to our Annual Meeting in Barcelona and on how quickly we invest in new projects.

As Treasurer, I am proud of the fiscal restraint maintained by the EUROSPINE ExCom, Councils and Committees, and am grateful for the continuing industry support of our meetings and educational activities. This discipline has helped us to achieve a positive result without drawing on the reserve position set up last year. May this summary serve as testament to our full commitment to further improve our efficiency and get the best out of our current investments.



Financial Statements and Budgets

Balance Sheet as of 31 December (in EUR)

	Notes	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		1,697,604	1,565,406
Other short-term receivables		11,583	26,748
Prepaid expenses	2.1	4,841	55,997
Accrued income			
due from third parties		678,200	712,789
due from members		33,320	40,770
Total current assets		2,425,548	2,401,710
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>		<u>2,425,548</u>	<u>2,401,710</u>
LIABILITIES & SOCIETY'S EQUITY			
Short-term liabilities			
Trade accounts payables		127,761	249,059
Other short-term liabilities		13,126	3,836
Prepayments from members		53,160	48,330
Provision for long-term prosperity of the Society	2.2	300,000	300,000
Accrued expenses		213,582	121,873
Total short-term liabilities		707,629	723,098
Total liabilities		707,629	723,098
Society's equity			
Society capital		1,678,912	1,648,929
Profit for the year		39,307	29,683
Total society's equity		1,717,919	1,678,612
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SOCIETY'S EQUITY</u>		<u>2,425,548</u>	<u>2,401,710</u>

**Income Statement for the year ended 31 December
(in EUR)**

Notes	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Member fees	141,337	117,361
Profit EUROSPINE Berlin 2016	0	1,647,794
Profit EUROSPINE Krakow 2016	0	8,094
Profit EUROSPINE Dublin 2017	1,456,421	0
Education / TFR	469,968	269,273
Total net revenue	2,067,726	2,042,522
Annual meetings	(39,971)	(37,512)
Education week	(234,350)	(192,763)
Advanced course	(251,066)	0
Education	(21,379)	(14,608)
Research Task Force, Course	(58,416)	(59,419)
Research Task Force, Grants	(150,482)	(213,610)
Total activities	(755,664)	(517,912)
Spine Tango	(177,171)	(171,379)
Patient Line	(18,968)	(16,858)
Journal (Springer)	(78,430)	(68,800)
Non-Surgical Diplomas	(6,959)	0
Foundation	(2,413)	(3,064)
Awards	(12,000)	(12,650)
Total projects	(295,941)	(272,751)
Ex Com	(52,232)	(37,954)
Research Task Force	(11,478)	(25,414)
Smaller committees	(6,968)	(6,839)
Cooperation with related societies	(24,679)	(1,383)
Total committees	(95,357)	(71,590)
Total activities / projects / committees	(1,146,962)	(862,253)
<u>Gross profit</u>	<u>920,764</u>	<u>1,180,269</u>

**Income Statement for the year ended 31 December
(in EUR)**

	Notes	2017	2016
Gross profit		920,764	1,180,269
Personnel expenses	3.1	(640,838)	(613,882)
Office and services expenses		(107,605)	(103,687)
Lawyer (projects and administration)		0	0
Marketing expenses		(22,286)	(20,143)
IT and website		(57,356)	(48,243)
PR and annual report		(37,165)	(40,429)
Various expenses		0	(300,000)
Total other operating expenses		(224,412)	(512,502)
Operating result		55,514	53,885
Financial expenses / income		(8,210)	(4,538)
Financial and currency exchange expenses realised		141	(554)
Financial and currency exchange expenses unrealised		(8,138)	(19,110)
Total financial income and expenses		(16,207)	(24,202)
<u>Profit for the year</u>		<u>39,307</u>	<u>29,683</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements 2017

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

These financial statements were prepared according to the principles of the Swiss Law on Accounting and Financial Reporting (Art. 957–962 Swiss Code of Obligations).

1.1 Currency and exchange rates

The functional currency of the Company is Euro, as it is the currency of the primary economic environment in which the entity operates. The reporting currency of the Company is Euro.

In preparing the financial statements of the Company, transactions in currencies other than the Company's functional currency are recorded at the rates of exchange prevailing at the date of the transactions.

2. KEY ACCOUNTING AND VALUATION PRINCIPLES

The main accounting and valuation principles used, which are not already specified by the Code of Obligations, are described as follows:

2.1 Prepaid expenses

Prepaid expenses are prepayments made for meetings in the following years.

2.2 Provision

A provision of €300,000 has been made in order to secure the long-term prosperity of the society and to straighten income fluctuation over the years.

3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

3.1 Number of full-time equivalents

The annual average number of full-time equivalents for the reporting year, as well as the previous year, did not exceed 10.

3.2 Pension scheme liabilities

In 2016 there are liabilities towards the pension scheme of €8,476 (previous year: €0).

3.3 Tax exemption

The exemption from income and capital taxes was approved by the Cantonal Tax Office Zurich on 31 July 2008. EUROSPINE is a non-profit organisation.

3.4 Significant events after the balance sheet date

There are no significant events after the balance sheet date which could impact the book value of the assets or liabilities or which should be disclosed here.

4. OTHER NOTES

4.1 Profit EUROSPINE Congress Berlin 2016 and Dublin 2017

Congress accounts were prepared by external service providers. The Society's accountants have performed procedures agreed in accordance with the Swiss Auditing Standard 920 in respect to these congress statements. The net result of these accounts which were reviewed by the Society's accountants are received by EUROSPINE.

4.2 Profit Spring Speciality Meeting Krakow 2016

The Society decided not to audit the accounts for the Spring Speciality Meeting Krakow in 2016.

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Report of the statutory auditors
on the limited statutory
examination to the
General Meeting of
**EUROSPINE, the Spine Society of
Europe**
8610 Uster

Zug, May 9, 2018

As statutory auditors, we have examined the financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes) of **EUROSPINE, the Spine Society of Europe** for the year ended **December 31, 2017**.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the board of the society. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination on these financial statements. We confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law.

We conducted our examination in accordance with the Swiss Standard on the Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of company personnel and analytical procedures as well as detailed tests of company documents as considered necessary in the circumstances. However, the testing of operational processes and the internal control system, as well as inquiries and further testing procedures to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the society's articles of incorporation.

TREUHAND VON FLÜE AG

H.-P. von Flüe
lic.oec. HSG
licensed audit expert

G. Biotti
auditor in charge
licensed audit expert

Enclosures:

- Financial Statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes)

Organisation and Officers



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Frank Kandziora
Vice President	Tim Pigott
Past President	Margareta Nordin
Secretary	Thomas R. Blattert
Treasurer	Marco Teli
Assistant Treasurer	Zdenek Klezl
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Meeting Council	Stavros Stavridis
Membership Council	Serdar Kahraman
Research Council	Björn L. Rydevik
Stakeholder Council:	Jörg Franke
Stakeholder Council:	Christoph Siepe

CHAIRS (list of committee Chairmen)

Membership Committee	Serdar Kahraman
Education and Fellowship Committee	Bernhard Meyer
Programme Committee	Stavros Stavridis
Pre-Day and Lunch Symposia Committee	Hossein Mehdian
Task Force Research	Björn L. Rydevik
Patient Line Committee	Tamar Pincus
International Relations Committee	Thomas R. Blattert
Task Force Spine Tango	Thomas Zweig
Site Committee	Thomas R. Blattert
Non-Surgical Diploma Task Force	Margareta Nordin

PAST PRESIDENTS OF EUROSPINE

Margareta Nordin, France	2017
Michael Ogon, Austria	2016
Haluk Berk, Turkey	2015
Philip J Sell, UK	2014
Ferran Pellisé, Spain	2013
Jean Charles LeHuec, France	2012
Ciaran Bolger, Ireland	2011
Hans Joachim Wilke, Germany	2010
Federico Balagué, Switzerland	2009
Robert Gunzburg, Belgium	2008
Charles Greenough, UK	2007



H. Michael Mayer, Germany	2006
Max Aebi, Switzerland	2005
Petr Suchomel, Czech Republic	2004
Dieter Grob, Switzerland	2003
Norbert Passuti, France	2002
Gordon F.G. Findlay, UK	2001
Jiri Dvorak, Switzerland	2000
Carlos Villanueva, Spain	1999

PAST PRESIDENTS OF ESDS

Rudolf Bauer, Austria	1996–1998
Alan Gardner, UK	1994–1996
Charles Picault, France	1992–1994
Ben Veraart, the Netherlands	1989–1992
G. Monticelli, Italy	1986–1989
Alf Nachemson, Sweden	1983–1986
Pierre Stagnara, France	1982–1983

PAST PRESIDENTS OF ESS

Jürgen Krämer, Germany †2011	1997–1998
Franco Postacchini, Italy	1995–1996
Alain Deburge, France	1993–1994
Michael Sullivan, UK	1991–1992

Organisation Chart



EUROSPINE Committee Members



A warm thank you to all EUROSPINE Committee Members for your hard work and dedication. Thanks to your positive attitude and enthusiasm, EUROSPINE is growing stronger every day. Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Frank Kandziora

President of EUROSPINE 2017–18

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Frank Kandziora, Frankfurt, Germany (President)
Tim Pigott, Liverpool, UK (Vice President)
Margareta Nordin, Romorantin, France (Past President)
Thomas R. Blattert, Schwarzach, Germany (Secretary)
Marco Teli, Liverpool, UK (Treasurer)
Zdenek Klezl, Derby, UK (Assistant Treasurer)
Stavros Stavridis, Thessaloniki, Greece (Chair, Meeting Council)
Björn L. Rydevik, Gothenburg, Sweden (Chair, Research Council)
Bernhard Meyer, Munich, Germany (Chair, Education Council)
Serdar Kahraman, Istanbul, Turkey (Chair, Membership Council)
Christoph Siepe, Munich, Germany (Co-Chair, Stakeholder Council)
Jörg Franke, Magdeburg, Germany (Co-Chair, Stakeholder Council)

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Philipp Becker, Vienna, Austria
Alessio Lovi, Milan, Italy
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Tamás Fekete, Zurich, Switzerland
Baoge Liu, Beijing, China
Ibrahim Obeid, Bordeaux, France
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Werner Schmoelz, Innsbruck, Austria
Matti Scholz, Frankfurt, Germany
Thomas R. Blatter, Schwarzach, Germany (Institutional)
Frank Kandziora, Frankfurt, Germany (Institutional)

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Pedro Berjano Coquillat, Milano, Italy
Jose Maria Cavanilles Walker, Barcelona, Spain
Klaus John Schnake, Fuerth, Germany

TASK FORCE RESEARCH

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Pierre Côté, Toronto, Canada
Louis-Rachid Salmi, Bordeaux, France
Marek Szpalski, Brussels, Belgium
Karin Wuertz-Kozak, Zurich, Switzerland

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Derek Cawley, Dublin, Ireland
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Sarvdeep Dhatt, Punjab, India
Jorge A. Mineiro, Barcarena, Portugal



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Andrea Luca, Milan, Italy
Samuel Morris, Nottingham, UK
Rolf Sobottke, Würselen, Germany
Martin Wilby, Liverpool, UK

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Finn Bjarke Christensen, Aarhus, Denmark
Martin Wilby, Liverpool, UK
Robert Gunzburg, Antwerp, Belgium (Institutional, ESJ Editor-in-Chief)

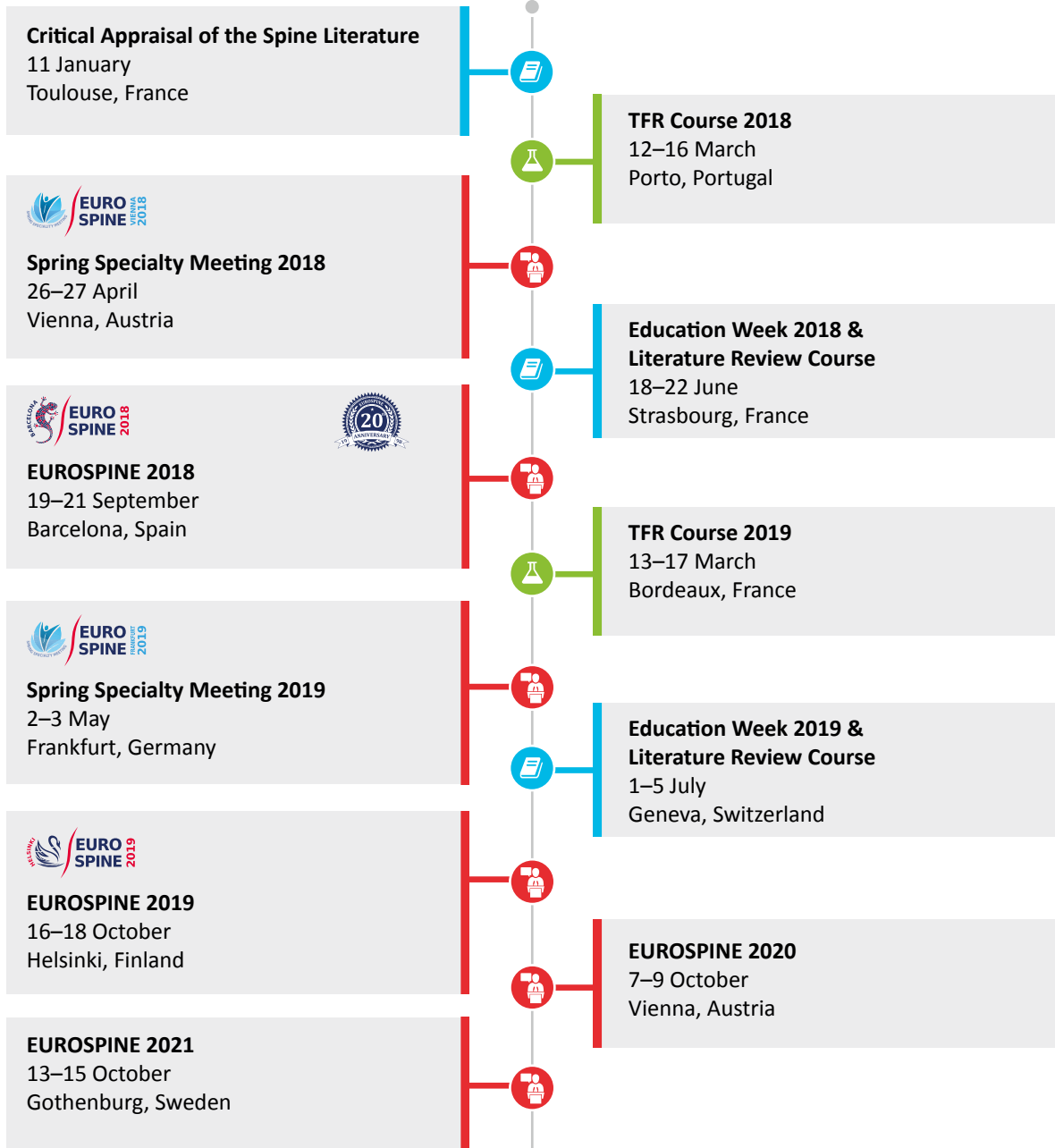
NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Margareta Nordin, Romorantin, France (Institutional-Chair)
Lukas Panzenböck, Vienna, Austria
Dominique A. Rothenfluh, Oxford, UK
Karin Wuertz-Kozak, Zurich, Switzerland
Thomas R. Blatter, Schwarzach, Germany (Institutional)

SITE COMMITTEE

Thomas R. Blatter, Schwarzach, Germany (Chair)
Judith Reichert Schild, Uster, Switzerland
Frank Kandziora, Frankfurt, Germany (Institutional)
Marco Teli, Liverpool, UK (Institutional)

Future Events



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For further information please visit: www.eurospinemeeting.org

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Since October 2014,
29 national societies
representing more
than **7,000 spine
specialists**
from across
Europe have
joined
EUROSPINE as
Institutional
Members
in EuSSAB



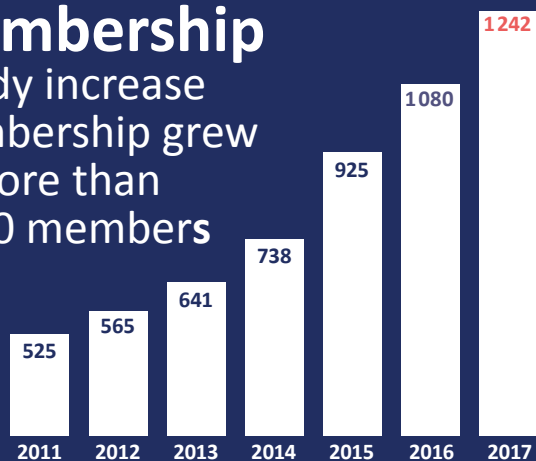
Since 2012:
7 EduWeeks,
training
725 surgeons &
240 diplomas
were given



In 2017 the **AdvCourse** ran twice
training 121 surgeons

Membership

steady increase
membership grew
to more than
1,200 members



Social Media

Facebook:
2,600+ followers
Average post
reach: 400

Twitter:
1,950+ followers
Average tweet
impression: 800



New
Patient Line Website
launch in October 2017

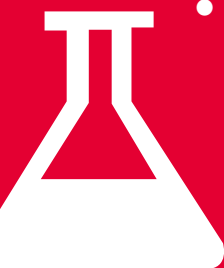


Almost
3,700 participants
from
78 countries
attended
**EUROSPINE
2017**
in Dublin



Since 2012:

- **6 TFR courses with 106 participants**
- **2 Biomechanic courses in collaboration with Ulm University**
- **2 Literature review courses with 46 participants**



More than
1 million Euros
were distributed in
research grants from
2011 to 2017 to spine
projects run by
members of EUROSPINE.



Since 2016, 11 observership
grants given, 8 for 2017.



CCD – Convention Centre Dublin



www.eurospine.org