

EuroMedLab PARIS 2015: A Living Lab at the Service of Innovation!

by Dr. Bernard Gouget

Chair, COC and Co-President EuroMedlab Paris 2015; SFBC-EFLM Representative; Secretary General, International Francophone Federation of Clinical Biology and Laboratory Medicine (FIFBCML)

It is a pleasure to welcome you, next June 21–25, at the EuroMedLab Paris 2015. This, the 21st IFCC regional congress in Europe, is one of the largest bi-annual lab med conferences worldwide and one of the major European trade shows bringing together the largest number of IVD companies. It was established in 1974 (Munich, Germany) as one of the first conferences for specialists in Lab Medicine facilitating exchanges between countries in Europe and at international level. The mission is to foster international understanding, to encourage cooperation within the lab med community, to pro-

mote high quality science, and to bring together young and senior specialists in Lab Medicine, researchers, physicians, leading government officials, and representatives from industry as well as from non-governmental organizations and healthcare systems worldwide to address the most pressing issues facing Lab Medicine and healthcare systems over the next decade and beyond.

The motto of the conference “R-evolution in Lab Medicine” emphasizes the importance of Lab Medicine in patient care and wellness in the 21st century. The scientific program demonstrates the inval-



able role that the Lab Medicine plays in health care. Emphasis is put on a high quality scientific and educational program. This is realized in scientific sessions, educational workshops focusing on both open discussions and hands-on topics and lectures series that cover the most up-to-date topics in the expanding field of laboratory medicine and bringing together an array of leading international speakers and opinion leaders. The conferences, coordinated by Prof.

Philippe Gillery, will cover various areas of laboratory medicine: the evolution of daily practice (relations with patients, laboratory organization, preanalytical errors), perspectives in organ pathologies (cardiovascular diseases, renal diseases, hematology), new technologies (proteomics, metabolomics, pharmacogenomics), new medical strategies (personalized medicine, rare diseases, addictions, autoimmune diseases) and research fields (microbiome, extracellular vesicles).

It is a tremendous privilege for the SFBC to organize the 21st IFCC-EFLM edition in the capital of France. Paris is constantly reinventing itself in its position as a global megalopolis and leader in innovation. It was recently rated world's best city for students for the third consecutive year by QS rankings. Also, we would like to give the opportunity to the young scientists to present their research to the scientific community and an interested audience as well as to join the exciting party organized by Dr. Guilaine Boursier, French YS coordinator! A number of bursary programs have been planned to support their presence (see www.paris2015.org).

Paris is a magnificent city revered the world over for its heritage and savoir vivre. Paris also excels in innovation and intellectual capital and attractiveness to international investors, while remaining an engine for luxury, fashion, and tourism. EuroMedLab Paris 2015 offers a new perspective on the capital and its monuments. Behind the scenes of the Opera Garnier, Montmartre, the Louvre, or the Musee d'Orsay, there is an exceptional new musical jewel box “The Philharmonie de Paris,” which opened early this year designed by renowned architect Jean Nouvel. The futuristic concert hall is revolutionizing the codes of both architecture and music. Spectacular balconies, acoustics to rival the greatest international auditoriums, inspired programming—the institution is open to all audiences and all music, from baroque to jazz and pop. With the reopening of the Musee Picasso and the Fondation Louis Vuitton designed by Frank Gehry, located next to the Palais des congres in the bois de Boulogne, the famous park on the west side of Paris, Paris has enjoyed a momentous year in the arts. Alongside Paris's assured reputation in the fine arts, one of the city's greatest assets is the excellence of the Paris Opera Ballet. It is considered today to be one of the world's finest companies. Its repertoire is very extensive, ranging from the major romantic and classical ballets to creations by contemporary choreographers.

The prestige of Paris involves placing innovation and appeal front and center. Paris is reinventing itself as a major leader in supporting the talents. EuroMedLab Paris 2015 will be the fireworks of Lab Medicine. Don't miss the plenary lecture on “Innate immunity: from insects to humans” by the Nobel Prize laureate, Prof. Jules Hoffmann (France). At this landmark conference we look forward to sharing our thoughts in the hope of promoting rewarding discussions. With a large audience and participation of specialists in laboratory medicine at EuroMedLab Paris 2015, the city of lights will shine even more brightly!



**21st IFCC - EFLM
European Congress of Clinical Chemistry
and Laboratory Medicine**

**EuroMedLab JIB – 2015 exhibition
22-24 June 2015**

**PARIS, FRANCE – Le Palais des Congrès
21-25 June 2015**

www.paris2015.org



12th Greek National Congress Held in Athens on November 7-8, 2014

The 12th Greek Congress of Clinical Chemistry was held at the Army Museum in Athens (Greece), November 7-8, 2014. The meeting was organized by the Greek Society of Clinical Chemistry-Clinical Biochemistry (GSCC-CB) under the auspices of IFCC (International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine) and EFLM (European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine).

The total number of participants was 300 (170 delegates, 30 residents/technicians and 100 students). The scientific program included 4 plenary lectures, 7 roundtable discussions, 16 oral presentations, and 30 poster presentations.

The Congress was honored by the participation of IFCC president-elect Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, EFLM president Prof. Mauro Panteghini, IFCC vice president Dr. Howard Morris and IFCC treasurer Dr. Bernard Gouget.

Prof. Howard Morris presented the opening lecture entitled "Vitamin D and pathophysiology of bone." Other plenary lectures focused to the activities and achievements of Prof. Seferiadis (by Assoc. Professor E. Bairaktari), the automation in the modern clinical laboratory environment (by Dr. I. Vamvoukakis, sponsored by Leriva) and the new developments in cardiology – High sensitivity troponin (by Dr. L. Lennartz and sponsored by Abbott).

The Roundtable discussions focused on:

- Emerging new and known infections (by Dr. P. Ioannidis, Dr. S. Karabella, Dr. V. Zevgolis, and Dr. S. Tsiodras);
- Molecular diagnostics (by Dr. A. Apessou, Dr. F. Tsoplou, Prof. G. Nasioulas and Prof. E. Lianidou);
- Bone turnover markers and their biochemical and clinical utility (by Dr. C. Makris, Prof. H. Morris and Dr. S. Tournis);
- S-100 as biomarker (by Dr. C. Psachoulia, Dr. S. Korfiatis and Dr. A. Papadimitriou);
- Point-of-care testing (by Dr. K. Dima, Dr. S. Murray and Prof. V. Spiropoulos);
- Current issues related to the profession of clinical chemist (by Prof. C. Croupis, Dr. C. Mitropoulos and Prof. D. Rizos), and during the



Photo: IFCC vice president Prof. Howard Morris, EFLM president Prof. Mauro Panteghini, IFCC president-elect Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, Congress Scientific Committee chairman Prof. C. Croupis, GSCC-CB president Dr K. Psarra, IFCC treasurer Dr. Bernard Gouget, and EuroMedLab 2017 president Dr. Alexander Haliassos.

closing ceremony the round table;

- Future challenges for laboratory medicine (by IFCC president-elect Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, EFLM president Prof. Mauro Panteghini, and IFCC treasurer Dr. Bernard Gouget).

Oral and poster presentations dealt with various subjects within the field of Clinical chemistry/biochemistry and the laboratory medicine in general.

Dr. Otto Panagiotakis, former general secretary of the GSCC-CB, in piano, and his daughter Ms. Manto Panagiotaki, vocals, gave an excellent performance during opening ceremony with songs from Greece and other countries. During the subsequent welcome reception delegates had the opportunity to get together in a relaxing and friendly atmosphere.

All members of the organizing and scientific committees had significant contributions to the success of the congress. Special note should, however, be made for Congress president Mrs. E. Botoula, GSCC-CB president Dr. K. Psarra, the Congress Scientific Committee chairman Prof. C. Croupis, and EuroMedLab 2017 president Dr. Alexander Haliassos.

The day prior to the beginning of the congress, the twentieth anniversary for the establishment of post-graduate studies in Clinical Chemistry at the National and Kapodistri-

an University of Athens was celebrated by faculty members from the chemistry, biology, and medical departments of the university, as well as from the Technological Institute of Athens (TEI). The event was organized by the current coordinator of the Clinical Chemistry program at the University of Athens, Prof. E.

Lianidou.

During all the sessions, constructive exchange of views and discussion took place between the presenting the experts and the audience. At the end of the congress it was decided that the coming 13th Greek Congress of Clinical Chemistry will be organized next fall at Heraklion-Crete.

Hungarian and Swiss Societies Elect New Leadership

- The Hungarian Society of Laboratory Medicine (HSLM) announced its new leadership for the term of 2015-2017 as follows: President: Eva Ajzner MD, PhD; Secretary: Béla Nagy Jr. MD, PhD; Treasurer: Ferenc Liszt PhD; Dr. Béla Nagy will act also as EFLM National Representative.
- The Swiss Society of Clinical Chemistry has a new president since the beginning of this year. He is Prof. Dr. Martin Hersberger, who is also the Swiss Society of Clinical Chemistry national representative at the EFLM.

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57th Conference of the Hungarian Society of Laboratory Medicine (HSLM): A Report

About 550 laboratory professionals and representatives of companies marketing in vitro diagnostic products convened in the Eastern Hungarian town of Nyíregyháza, on August 28-30, 2014, on the occasion of the 57th National Congress of the Hungarian Society of Laboratory Medicine (HSLM57). The congress was organized under auspices of organizations European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) and European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS). Prof. Tomas Zima, member of EFLM Executive Board represented personally EFLM at the Congress.

From the Scientific Program delegates could get an insight into specific interest areas of laboratory medicine as well as look into the future of our profession. The main topics of the conference included inflammation and immunology; vascular and thrombotic diseases; therapeutic drug monitoring and toxicology; clinical microbiology; and the role of laboratory medicine in clinical research. In addition, two sessions have been devoted to those scientific works that focused on the interpretation of laboratory findings to clinicians and patients, emphasizing that

the patients themselves and clinical outcome should be in the center of laboratory work.

Plenary lectures kept by the recently awarded honorary member of the society and by Jendrassik-awardees are usual highlights of HSLM conferences. These awards recognize the awardee's outstanding educational, research, or organizational activities in the field of laboratory medicine. This year Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, president elect of IFCC received the Honorary Membership of HSLM. He gave an overview on the future of molecular biology in the diagnostic laboratories in his lecture.

The International Jendrassik Award – named after Lóránd Jendrassik, the scientist who described the method for bilirubin detection – honored Prof. Thomas Szekeres (Director of the Clinical Institute for Laboratory Medicine, Medical University of Vienna), who presented the effects of natural and synthetic polyhydroxyphenolic compounds on inflammation and tumor cells in his lecture.

The next speakers were the Hungarian Jendrassik-award winners. Prof. Janos Kappelmayer (Past President of HSLM, director of the Depart-



Photo: Organizing and Science Committees of HSLM57

ment of Laboratory Medicine in University of Debrecen) presented in his lecture how results of basic and applied research can be transformed to daily diagnostic work. Katalin Hetesy (Associate professor of University Pecs, head of the Central Laboratory in the Teaching Hospital of Győr) highlighted the contribution of laboratory staff to the improvement of preanalytical phase with a special emphasis on the role of emergency departments.

The future of laboratory medicine was in the focus of this conference from many perspectives.

Lectures of the training and an education program entitled "The laboratory of the future – The laboratory's future" demonstrated the state of the art and future opportunities of the fastest evolving areas of laboratory medicine in disease management. Speakers also put a special emphasis on the fact that all the exciting opportunities of technological inventions of this profession can be utilized for patients' sake if laboratory professionals will be sufficiently experienced in how apply high tech feasibilities and how to interpret the obtained results' clinical meaning in specific disorders.

The engagement of knowledgeable, creative, devoted and motivated young professionals to laboratory medicine principally determines the future of the laboratory medicine. A specific plenary session (Youth Forum – "You have the X FACTOR") has been dedicated to novel research achievements of young laboratory scientists who competed for the award of "The best young speaker of HSLM57." The prize providing opportunity to present the winner's study on the forthcoming EuroMedlab conference stimulated 18 young colleagues to participate in the competition.

A block about education in laborato-

ry medicine from national and European perspectives is a traditional session of HSLM conferences. This year the presentation on undergraduate and postgraduate education in laboratory medicine in Europe kept by Prof. Tomas Zima (Rector of Charles University, Prague) induced a particularly vivid discussion on potential future directions of education of our profession.

On HSLM57 each author of posters had an opportunity to summarize their work in a very short oral presentation using two slides during e-poster sessions. E-poster sessions were novel elements of this congress and received general appreciation of the attendees. This way of poster presentation resulted in better poster recognition and induced real discussions.

The Congress site, the wonderful park of the College Campus provided an ideal environment for memorable social and sport activities including the outdoor get-together party and a morning campus exercise to ensure a dynamic start for the scientific sessions.

Based on the feedbacks of the attendees, both scientific and social events of this conference will make nice memories. The conference provided good opportunity to meet colleagues, induced good professional discussions, which has probably initiated new collaborations, stimulated new ideas in participants and, finally, improved the everyday work of the laboratory professionals. However, most importantly, our feeling is that this congress of HSLM is created an atmosphere that inspired and attracted young talented professionals who will engage themselves with laboratory medicine in the future and will contribute to the establishment of scientifically astonishing environment in general laboratories.


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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

EFLM held its Seventh General Assembly (GA) during the 3rd EFLM-UEMS Joint Congress in Liverpool (UK), on Tuesday, 7 October, 2014.

During the GA EFLM President, Prof. Mauro Panteghini (MP) has provided an overview of the recent EFLM activities pointing to some important facts about EFLM: EFLM is an organization with 40 NS members, it represents almost 22,000 laboratory specialists in Europe and its key values are Transparency, Profession, Education, and Quality.

EFLM Strategic plan (SP) for 2014–2015 was presented. SP has 33 actions related to several different chapters, highlighting main strategic goals and important aspects, such as the assessment of the outcome of activities of the EFLM Committees (C) and Working Groups (WG). C chairs are working closely with the respective WGs in their C to achieve maximum contribution to various aims of the SP.

During the GA, National representatives had the opportunity to discuss with the IFCC President (Graham Beall) the “Shaping the future of laboratory medicine” proposal as well as the results of the IFCC ballot on Regional representation in the IFCC EB and how will this affect the future of IFCC.

EFLM Treasurer Huib Storm (HS), has reported about the recent EFLM census, according to which there are 22,000 lab professionals within Europe. The financial report and balance were approved.

C-ET chair has informed the GA participants that Warsaw (Poland) has been selected as the host venue for the 4th EFLM-UEMS Joint Congress in 2016.

The next GA will be held in conjunction with the EuroMed-Lab congress in Paris on June 21, 2015.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Through the EFLM Program entitled EFLM Presence at NS meetings, during 2014, EFLM Executive Board members have participated in the following National society meetings:

- 1) Mauro Panteghini, 12th National Congress of Clinical Chemistry, GREEK SOCIETY OF CLINICAL CHEMISTRY-CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTRY, November 7-8, 2014, Greece;
- 2) Tomas Zima, 57th National Conference of Hungarian Society of Laboratory Medicine, August 28-30, 2014, Hungary;
- 3) Mauro Panteghini, National Conference of Clinical Laboratory, Bulgarian Society of Clinical Laboratory, 11-13 September 2014, Bulgaria;
- 4) Tomas Zima, XII Baltic Congress in Laboratory Medicine, September 18-20, 2014, Latvia.

EFLM EB feel this is an excellent opportunity to strengthen collaboration between EFLM and its member societies. The program will be continued in 2015.

EFLM EB has launched a working group on Harmonization whose aim is to act as a collector of the harmonization initiatives arising from other EFLM WGs and from National Member Societies active in the field and to promote dissemination and application of particular harmonization activities. Through this WG, EFLM will promote the use of harmonized nomenclature for analytes, common reference intervals and the use of amount of substance units in the European countries, wherever and whenever this approach is feasible.

Becton Dickinson has agreed to sponsor the EFLM Walter Guder Preanalytical Award. A contract has been signed to cover 3 subsequent awards (2014, 2016, and 2018). The award is aimed for scientists under 40 years of age who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of the pre-analytical phase. The 1st award has been presented during the Opening ceremony of the 3rd EFLM-UEMS Joint Congress in Liverpool, October 2014.

EFLM is determined to further strengthen its collaboration with commercial companies and has therefore recently released its Policy for commercial partners.

EFLM Publication policy document has been produced to ensure standardized classification and management of EFLM publications as well as uniform way of acknowledging EFLM contribution. The list of EFLM publications is available on the

EFLM website at the following link: www.efclm.eu/index.php/eflm-publications.html

EFLM has held its 1st Strategic Conference in November 2014. EFLM EB has decided to create a Task Force on Performance Goals in Laboratory Medicine (TF-PG) to coordinate the activities of the groups established as the 1st Strategic Conference outcome. EFLM is willing to take the lead in this topic as the main driver focusing its activities in the next two years on the a) Performance criteria models for specific laboratory tests, b) Harmonization of allowable limits in EQAS, c) Total error, d) Performance criteria for pre- and post-analytical (extra-analytical) phases, and e) Biological variation database.

Since July 2014, EFLM has 1 full-time employee (Silvia Cattaneo) engaged to exclusively handle EFLM matters in the IFCC/EFLM Office in Milan.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee – Communications (C-C)

C-C activity has undergone reorganization with a new Chair appointed in July 2014. The C-C activities are focused to increase the EFLM visibility and to improve the efficiency of the communication channels (both for internal and external communications). Among these activities, a major effort was dedicated to the renovation and continuous update of the EFLM Publication list, and to the creation of a Twitter account through which important news and information can be easily distributed. To improve the communication towards its Member Societies, regular notes were sent to the Presidents and National Representatives to involve them actively in the EFLM projects. To establish contacts with the single members of the National Societies, a mass mailing list was created as a tool to disseminate information of interest in a rapid mode.

Particular attention was dedicated to the liaison with IFCC, contributing regularly to the IFCC e-Newsletter with reports about the main EFLM activities.

The Task and Finish Group on History is active and currently collecting information with the aim to create communication tools such as books and web section on the history of EFLM.

Committee – Education and Training (C-ET)

C-ET has produced Guidelines for EFLM-UEMS joint congress, including the bid evaluation form, EFLM Meeting guidelines, and a standardized procedure for evaluation of the EFLM bursaries. C-ET has prepared the EFLM Speakers Bureau.

C-ET is promoting active participation of young scientists in EFLM events through a number of EFLM bursaries (10 for EuroMedLab Congress, 5 for EFLM-UEMS Congress, 8 for EFLM Continuing Postgraduate Course, 3 for EFLM-BD Pre-analytical Conference).

WG-Distance education (WG-DE) has been reestablished and has produced two e-seminars in 2014: “How can biological variation data for high sensitive troponins be related to current recommendations for diagnosing acute myocardial infarction” (KM Aakre) and “Bias in clinical chemistry” (E Theodorsson).

C-ET has been involved in the organization of several meetings (14th EFLM Course in Dubrovnik; 10th Symposium for Balkan region; 3rd EFLM-UEMS joint congress; 1st EFLM Strategic Conference). Educational materials (PPT presentations, abstracts, e-seminars) arising from these EFLM events have been made available on the EFLM website.

Committee – Profession (C-P)

Working Group on Common Training Frameworks and Syllabus (WG-CTF) has progressed well with compiling version 5 of the EC4 syllabus for education/training in laboratory medicine, further drawing of parallels with UEMS’ Blue Book will be welcomed in 2015. Working Group on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (WG-RPQ) continues to liaise via CEPLIS with the EU Commission in seeking guidance on the content and presentation of a Common Training Framework (CTF) for science and pharmacy trained specialists in labora-

tory medicine. A document proposing the establishment of a CTF including its drivers, an audit of laboratory medicine practice in the EU Community, the definition of equivalence of standards, the context of specialists’ contributions has been prepared with view to refinement during 2015 before submission to the EU Commission with support of 10 EU member states

Committee – Quality and Regulations (C-QR)

Two working groups within this Committee interrelate in many aspects. The WG Accreditation and ISO/CEN Standards (WG-A/ISO) focuses on influencing activities in ISO TC212 and CEN TC140. This relates to standards on quality management, risk management, POCT, measurement uncertainty, pre-examination aspects and others. Furthermore, it works on composing European Guidelines relating to these fields. Instances are: use of flexible scope by accreditation bodies, retention time, and implementation of reference values. It participates in the Health Care Committee of EA (European cooperation on Accreditation). The WG IVD tries to influence the new draft Regulation on IVD. It focuses on in house testing, information supplied to users, and traceability aspects. EDMA has representatives in this WG.

Committee – Science (C-S)

The eight working groups (biological variation, cardiac markers, guidelines, harmonization of the total testing process, patient focused laboratory medicine, personalized laboratory medicine, postanalytical phase, test evaluation) and two task and finish groups (laboratory testing for dyslipidemia and critical results) constitute the backbone and substance of the Science Committee. All groups have been active in pursuing their terms of reference: performing studies, publishing original research reports, reviews, and position papers. Members of the groups have also lectured at several international conferences. Cooperative projects have been established, which also include industry partners. Projects are ongoing with the intention of applying for research grants in international competition.

EC4 FOUNDATION BOARD

Together with the EFLM Profession Committee the Board met in Istanbul (June 2014, IFCC WorldLab) and Liverpool (October 2014, EuroLabFocus2014). Progress towards attracting 10 EU member states as signatories to a CTF under EU Directive 2013/55/EU has been slow. To date Slovenia has obtained national society and government confirmation that EC4’s Equivalence of Standards (an integral part of a CTF) is met. While Croatia, Slovakia, France and UK’s national societies are optimistic that government support can be elicited, more intense initiatives at government liaison with the support of the EC4 Foundation Board and EFLM EB are required if the end 2015 deadline is to be met.

At its Liverpool meeting the Board approved the transfer of 15% of EC4 registration fees to EFLM to acknowledge the secretarial and administrative support of the EFLM office. The process of enhancing the functionality and ease-of-use of the registrants database, which began late in 2013, is scheduled for completion late in 2014. The number of registrants rose from 3,104 to 3,112. Two bursaries of EUR 1200 each were awarded for participation in EuroLabFocus 2014.

MEETINGS

EFLM has organized 4 meetings during 2014:

- 1) 10th EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region, Belgrade, Serbia, September 11–12, 2014;
- 2) 3rd EFLM-UEMS (EuroLabFocus) Joint Congress in Liverpool, October 7–10, 2014;
- 3) 14th EFLM Continuing Postgraduate Course in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine in Dubrovnik, October 25–26, 2014;
- 4) 1st EFLM Strategic Conference, November 24–25, 2014, Milan, Italy.

Mauro Panteghini EFLM President