

Federation of European Cancer Societies _____

The Federation of European Cancer Societies (FECS) is part of a comprehensive network linking the major organisations within Europe involved in all aspects of cancer.

FULL MEMBER SOCIETIES

- European Association for Cancer Research (EACR)
- European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS)
- European Society of Surgical Oncology (ESSO)
- European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)
- European Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ESTRO)
- European branch of the International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP Europe)

AFFILIATED MEMBERS

- European Association for Neuro-Oncology (EANO)
- European Group for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT)
- European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC)
- European Society of Gynaecological Oncology (ESGO)
- European Society of Mastology (EUSOMA)
- European Society of Oncology Pharmacy (ESOP)
- Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI)

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

- Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)
- Europa Donna – the European Breast Cancer Coalition (ED)
- European School of Oncology (ESO)
- European Society of Skin Cancer Prevention (EUROSKIN)

The Federation of European Cancer Societies (FECS)



In the early eighties, a few visionaries working in European oncology came together to found FECS, the Federation of European Cancer Societies. Only twenty years ago, multidisciplinary in cancer care, research, and treatment, was a relatively new concept, and FECS set out to create a platform for multidisciplinary working. Over the years, a new structure has been set up providing FECS with the opportunity to develop its field of activities in different domains.

FECS is an umbrella organisation gathering the broad spectrum of all the partners involved in the fight against cancer in Europe – researchers, surgical oncologists, radiation oncologists, medical oncologists, paediatric oncologists, and oncology nurses. Through its membership and activities, FECS is able to develop and leverage the multidisciplinary approach for cancer treatment and management across Europe for the benefit of all cancer patients and professionals. Its multidisciplinary nature also gives FECS considerable potential to move forward the different European agendas on oncology.

MISSION

FECS aims:

- to promote and co-ordinate collaboration between European societies active in different fields of cancer research, prevention and treatment with the ultimate goal of providing the best possible treatment and care for all European cancer patients,
- to promote the implementation throughout Europe of multidisciplinary approach in oncology,
- to promote and provide continuing medical education (CME) and promote and harmonise the accreditation of CME in oncology in Europe,

- to communicate with the relevant authorities, health care providers, the public and patients' organisations and provide them with the best available information about oncology.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

A dynamic network of partners

FECS is in a strong position to ensure that oncology is given the importance it deserves at the European political level. Using its relationship with member societies, it has developed a dynamic network of partners to work on important issues in cancer. Members are regularly informed about its activities in this field and about policy developments. This process is two-way – the same mechanisms are used to ensure that the Federation is informed about member societies' activities, initiatives and concerns, to help them, when needed, to move their agenda forward, targeting the right politicians and other key players at EU level.

Relations with EU institutions

Given the increasing influence of economic factors – healthcare budgets and management systems – on access to treatment and the quality of treatment, it is not enough simply to concentrate on best treatments alone. In order to best defend the interests of patients, FECS is increasingly involved in advocacy activities. FECS has therefore enhanced its relationships and interactions with the European institutions in order to raise awareness about oncology related issues and to move the political agenda in the right direction.

Within the European Commission, FECS is in frequent contact with DG Research (among others of the European Commission's Directorates General); is involved in the process of 'expression of interests' to influence the form and content of calls for proposals; acts as a partner in applications sent for funding; and is often contacted to suggest names of experts who could participate in the different DG's activities.

In the field of public health, FECS is developing its contacts with DG Sanco, and is involved in the "High level reflection process" put in place by the European Commission at the request of the Member States with the aim of mapping centres of reference, and of analysing the access to quality care, in order to draft recommendations for public health Ministers. In order to be able to respond quickly to questions from the authorities, FECS has established a network of experts (2–3 representatives from each member society) in the field of public health.

At the European Parliament, FECS frequently meets MEPs to talk to them about current status of oncology in the EU, drawing their attention to strengths and weaknesses such as the unequal access to quality care. FECS hopes, at a later stage, to organise an event in the Parliament, with the aim of formulating recommendations for the European Commission and the Member States. FECS is also involved in the current Parliamentary debate about the recognition of professional qualifications, the only tool available for the time being to try to obtain the recognition of medical oncology as a specialty across Europe.

The EMEA (European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products) is using the Federation to nominate experts to participate in the "Therapeutic Advisory Group on Oncology" that they have just set-up.

Communication

Advocacy activities can be very effective, but they need to be communicated to supporters. FECS is launching a campaign targeting the patients' associations, the national cancer leagues (via regular multidisciplinary newsletters), and the lay public (via articles to be published in the lay press). Among each FECS member society 2 to 3 experts regularly inform the Federation about news in their field. A professional will collect the information and put it into lay language.

A more specialist version of the multidisciplinary newsletter will be sent electronically to FECS member societies for dissemination to their members in order to keep them updated about the developments in other fields. FECS strongly believes that it is necessary to improve relationships with patients' groups and will develop ways of helping them to become better advocates in defending their interests in oncology.

A Platform for Scientific Exchange

FECS is dedicated to establishing platforms for scientific and clinical exchange for all those working in cancer.

Every two years, FECS organises ECCO, the European Cancer Conference. This conference provides a multidisciplinary forum to discuss all aspects related to cancer from bench to bedside. Around 10,000 participants attend this conference.

FECS recognised the importance of nurturing young oncologists, therefore the FLIMS workshop was established. The FECS–AACR–ASCO Workshop on Methods in Clinical Cancer Research is an annual course organised by FECS, in Flims, Switzerland. This course is designated to young European oncologists of all disciplines to teach the methodology of clinical trials. The FLIMS Workshop will be going into its six year and with its Alumni Club, it has helped to forge professional links among all young dedicated specialists in the field of cancer.

As part of its mission to facilitate further exchanges, FECS organises conferences for its member societies.

Education

The conferences and workshops organised by FECS have an educational value in themselves. But the Federation has also developed other projects in order to maximise its influence on multidisciplinary cancer education.

In 2001 FECS received a grant from the European Commission for a three-year project which aims to evaluate the needs and gaps in “Continuing Medical Education” (CME) in oncology, the accreditation of CME across Europe and to develop new tools for CME (web-casting, CD ROMs, case studies). The final report will be sent to the Commission in January 2004 and FECS will then look into future funding possibilities in order to pursue its activities in the field of new CME tools. FECS works in close relationship with UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists) and its European Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education, to streamline the overall process of harmonisation and mutual recognition of the accreditation system throughout Europe. In order to speed up the process, FECS has now decided to also meet with the authorities in the EU Member states where CME is already compulsory or recommended.

FECS is also funding some special pan-European projects, which are multidisciplinary and conducted in collaboration with member societies (e.g. late outcomes of cancer treatment, management of early breast cancer, a survey of the status of medical oncology across Europe), and some of these have a high educational value.

The future

The Federation of European Cancer Societies, with the help of its members, is in a strategic position at European level and has exceptional tools:

- To monitor, identify and influence the political developments which impact the oncology community,
- To proactively raise awareness among politicians, patients and the lay public about strengths and problems in the field of oncology, with the goal of ensuring equal access to quality treatment for all European cancer patients,
- To pursue its educational mission, organising important conferences and workshops and maintaining its activities in the field of Continuing Medical Education and its accreditation.

This overall mission – which can only impact positively on the health care environment in which cancer patients are treated – will only be achieved with help and commitment from all the important players active in the field of oncology.

Further information on FECS activities can be obtained from the Secretariat: FECS, avenue E. Mounier 83, B-1200 Brussels, Belgium. Tel: +32 (0)2 775 02 01, Fax: +32 (0)2 775 02 00, E-mail: info@fecsb.be, website: www.fecsb.be.

European Association For Cancer Research (EACR)



With 5000 members in 58 countries, the European Association for Cancer Research (EACR) represents the largest professional cancer research organisation in Europe and is steadily becoming the European representative of experimental cancer research.

Five national cancer research associations have joined EACR as Society Members:

- Spanish Association for Cancer Research (ASEICA)
- British Association for Cancer Research (BACR)
- Division of Experimental Cancer Research of the German Cancer Society (AEK)
- Hungarian Cancer Society (MOT)
- Italian Cancer Society (SIC).

EACR is devoted to the advancement of cancer research in all areas of oncology from basic research to prevention, treatment and care. EACR members are working in academic and industrial laboratories or conducting research as clinical oncologists. Current major topics of research include:

- Prevention: genetics, risk modelling
- Molecular biology and genetics: oncogenomics, signal transduction networks
- Experimental therapeutics: pharmacogenomics, new targets
- Translational research: genetic susceptibility, drug discovery and drug development
- Clinical research: clinical trials, imaging techniques, minimal residual disease.

EACR seeks to develop the education and training of young cancer researchers and offers:

- Free membership for postgraduate students
- Fellowships to promote technical exchange and foster collaboration
- Awards for lectures and posters at meetings
- Bursaries to attend meetings
- Special programmes to assist researchers in Eastern Europe.

The strengthening of communication within EACR and with the global oncology scene is one of EACR's main aims. This is provided

- by meetings especially the biennial EACR meeting and ECCO
- at additional special conferences
- through collaboration with international partner organisations
 - Federation of European Cancer Societies, (FECS)
 - American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)
 - World Alliance of Cancer Research Organizations (WACRO)
- in our official Journal, the European Journal of Cancer
- on the EACR Website (www.eacr.org) and in our regular EACR Newsletters.

EACR seeks to achieve its goals through concentrating on crucial high priority areas of cancer research. It awards fellowships, supports conferences, brings together key researchers, provides special grants to small groups to develop expertise and strengthens education and training in oncology (from basic to clinical).

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European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS)



The European Oncology Nursing Society was established in 1984. EONS is dedicated to developing and promoting the practice of cancer nursing in Europe through educational, research, and practice-based initiatives.

EONS is comprised of national oncology nursing societies, individual cancer nurses and institutions and agencies involved in cancer care. It has a membership of over 40 organisations, representing around 18,000 oncology nurses and also 300 nurses as individual members across Europe.

Several pan-European educational programmes have been initiated by EONS.

The European Cancer Conference (ECCO) is a very important educational event for EONS, offering a platform for interaction and professional exchange between cancer nurses from all over the world.

The second most important initiative is the EONS Spring Convention. The 3rd EONS Spring Convention was held in Venice, Italy from 11 to 13 April 2002. The next Spring Convention will take place in Edinburgh, UK, from 15 to 17 April 2004. General theme of the Convention will be *Quality of life: the key in cancer care. The nursing contribution to quality cancer care.*

One of EONS' important activities is the accreditation of educational programs in cancer nursing. The ultimate aim of accreditation is to improve the quality of educational courses offered to cancer nurses throughout Europe.

The official newsletter of the Society is *the European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, EJON. EJON seeks to address issues of importance to oncology nurses throughout Europe. EJON aims to inform the practice of cancer nursing through the report of current and ongoing research and relevant developments in practice, policy and education.

As from March 2002, the *EONS Newsletter* has been providing the EONS' members with information on the Societies activities and practical information of interest as well as offering a networking forum for cancer nurses throughout Europe.

To know more about EONS, just visit our website at <http://www.cancereurope.org/> or contact the secretariat at eons@village.uunet.be, fax 0032 2 779 99 37

European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)



Founded in 1975 as the Société de Médecine Interne Cancérologique, ESMO took on its present name when it transformed into a pan-European organisation in 1980, establishing itself as a leading and highly respected institution in the field of oncology.

Today, ESMO's flagship journal, *Annals of Oncology*, ranks among the top 20 international medical oncology journals. The Society's biennial ESMO congresses, held alternately with the biennial ECCO conferences, present the latest developments in research and technology and offer up to 10,000 participants the opportunity to exchange views with professional colleagues working in the field.

The major focus of all ESMO activities is the improvement of prevention and early diagnosis of cancer, as well as diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care of cancer patients. To achieve this, the Society places great emphasis on (1) promoting the art, science, and practice of medical oncology, (2) providing continuing medical education to medical oncologists and healthcare professionals, (3) creating a partnership with patients who are afflicted with the diseases oncologists are trying to prevent or cure, and (4) fostering theoretical and clinical research through fellowships, technology transfer grants, and specific projects to support talented young medical oncologists.

To promote the specialty of medical oncology, ESMO is expanding its Medical Oncology Status in Europe Survey (MOSES) project. By assessing information provided by ESMO National Representatives and related healthcare professionals, it seeks to gather important data regarding inequalities in the prerequisites for the practice of oncology in various countries. The analysis will be used to help identify necessary improvements in the infrastructure of those countries with suboptimal healthcare systems and to address the challenge of reducing disparities in the quality of care available to patients residing in different European countries. It will also provide further evidence for the need for the recognition of medical oncology as an independent specialty. Furthermore, ESMO is taking a leading role in establishing a global curriculum for medical oncology and is working closely with the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) to this end.

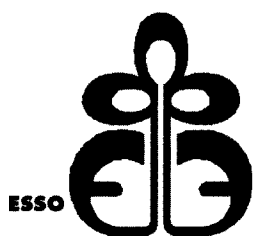
In addition, ESMO serves its members by supporting them in their daily practice. ESMO's *Minimum Clinical Recommendations* assess diagnosis and treatment of various cancers, as well as the optimal use of growth factors. They are intended as both guidelines for clinical practice and prerequisites for basic healthcare services. The guidelines are freely accessible from the ESMO homepage: www.esmo.org. For ESMO members who seek a specialist's opinion on difficult and complicated cases, a Web-based Clinical Discussion Forum will soon be available on the ESMO Web site, allowing them to consult directly with ESMO Faculty members.

ESMO believes that information, knowledge, and experience are the backbones of excellence in clinical practice. To this end, it provides educational courses, webcasts and the ESMO Examination in medical oncology. An e-learning project is being designed to provide quicker and increased access to ESMO's educational materials, and to expand ESMO's global communications network. The biennial ESMO Summer Educational Conference (ESEC), the Society's purely educational meeting, focuses primarily on young medical oncologists and provides a comprehensive overview of state-of-the-art medical oncology for major cancer types. An ambitious 5-year educational program has been tailored to the regional needs of Central and Eastern Europe, reinforcing ESMO's commitment to support the training of medical oncologists in this geographical area. Upon request from several developing countries, ESMO is offering workshops on palliative care in collaboration with local oncologists, with the scope of integrating supportive care into existing healthcare facilities. In the near future, ESMO will identify Designated Centers for Palliative Care, capable of providing specific training in this important aspect of patient care.

Through its European Patient Seminars, both in Nice, France, and Edinburgh, Scotland, ESMO has widened its mission to embrace patients' needs. The initial theme of patient-physician communication has led to the founding of a patient-physician partnership, to which patients bring their needs and direct experiences, while physicians contribute with evidence-based science, in a united effort to improve healthcare services throughout Europe.

Great strides and improvements on the horizon bring with them the need to transform ESMO from a scientifically oriented organisation into a society that is willing and equipped to face the multifaceted challenges of cancer care, scientific research, education, information, patient involvement and interaction, political tasks, and ethical responsibilities. As the voice and driving force of medical oncology in Europe, ESMO is eager to further expand its role to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

European Society of Surgical Oncology (ESSO)



The European Society of Surgical Oncology was established in 1981 to further the practice of surgery in the treatment of cancer. With a membership of more than 1000, the society's aim is to ensure that the highest possible standard of surgical treatment is available to cancer patients throughout Europe.

ESSO endeavours to foster a multi-disciplinary collaboration in the management of cancer patients. As a full member of the Federation of European Cancer Societies (FECS), it is able to ensure that surgeons can interact with those professional groups responsible for other modalities in the treatment of cancer.

It is well recognised that 75% of all cancer patients are treated by surgery, however, surgical oncology is not recognised as a sub speciality in all European countries. One of the Society's missions is to have this field

established as an important speciality in oncology. Hence, the Education Committee of ESSO offer fellowships to support trainees in surgical oncology. The aim of these fellowships is to allow young surgeons to work in another specialist centre to expand their experience and learn new techniques.

Further to these fellowships, ESSO has developed a surgical oncology examination, in conjunction with the Surgical Board of UEMS (the Union of European Medical Specialists). This examination is open to suitably qualified European candidates, and will provide validation of a surgeon's continued professional development in the field of surgical oncology as well as indicating his/her competency to practise in this area. The first examination will be held on Saturday 21 September 2003 during ECCO 12 in Copenhagen.

The Society recognises the importance of organ based societies in the field of surgery. To accommodate this, ESSO has provided a platform, in the form of their biennial meeting, to encourage organ based surgeons and surgical oncologists to discuss and disseminate information related to the area of surgical oncology. Further exchange of information is encouraged in the official journal of ESSO, the European Journal of Surgical Oncology, EJSO.

To learn more about the Society, visit their website, www.esso-surgeononline.be.

European Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ESTRO)



ESTRO (the European Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology) is a European Society with individual members from 87 different countries, involved in the fields of radiotherapy and oncology. Created in 1980, the Society has now close to 6000 members and represents the vast majority of European professionals involved in radiation oncology. 20% of its members come from overseas.

The Society aims at improving standards of cancer treatment:

- By encouraging intra- and interdisciplinary co-operation,
- By fostering the exchange of knowledge and expertise, the transfer of technology and the mobility of professionals,
- By organising scientific meetings, workshops and teaching courses for basic and continued education,
- By providing guidance at the European level for best practice, education and quality assurance
- By stimulating/co-ordinating research.

ESTRO core activities remain the organisation of scientific meetings: the annual ESTRO meeting (which, in uneven years, is included in the large ECCO clinical oncology conference) is where all disciplines involved in radiotherapy come together to discuss and evaluate new approaches in radiotherapy. In uneven years, radiation physicists, technologists and biologists, also, meet separately in their own biennial meetings. A topical conference focusing on brachytherapy is organised annually.

ESTRO also offers a modular curriculum of courses. The mainstays are the basic and advanced teaching courses. The basic teaching courses supplement the basic training in radiation oncology provided at the local level and add at the same time a European dimension to the trainees' education. The advanced teaching courses aim at providing state-of-the-art teaching for continuous medical education. The modular courses are supplemented by a range of pre-conference teaching-workshops at the ESTRO meetings. Last year, more than 1200 participants attended these courses.

In 2002, no less than 4 ESTRO projects were selected for funding under the last calls of the Commission's 5th Framework Programme. Three EU programmes are involved: Health and Consumer Protection (Europe against Cancer), DG Research (Quality of Life) and Euratom (Nuclear fission-Radiation protection). The diversity of the projects reflects the

Society's concern to carry forward its core activities: education and quality assurance, while also addressing some aspects of a broad new task, formulated during its second strategy meeting in 2000, which is to play a co-ordinating role in research for radiotherapy.

ESTRO and the EU collaborate in the following projects:

1. ESQUIRE 2: This project will ensure, for one more year, support for ESTRO activities in the field of education and quality assurance
2. ENLIGHT: A European Network for the co-ordination of research in Light ion Hadron Therapy.
3. GENEPI: Setting up a tissue bank and database for research in the genetic basis of variability in individual radio-sensitivity.
4. QUARTS: Aiming at quantifying the needs for infrastructure and staffing for radiotherapy. As a first step existing national guidelines as well as infrastructure and staffing data will be compiled for a comparative analysis.

The Society publishes a monthly journal, *Radiotherapy & Oncology*, a newsletter, teaching books and course syllabi. The prime concern of the Society remains the implementation of optimised, high precision radiotherapy in routine practice and the convergence of European standards of care at the level of excellence so as to guarantee to every cancer patient in Europe the best available treatment in radiotherapy and equal chances for survival.

SIOP Europe

SIOP Europe is the only pan European organization involved in childhood cancer. At present SIOP Europe has a membership of over 600 individuals - membership is interdisciplinary and includes paediatric oncologists, radiotherapists, surgeons, scientists etc.

The aims of the society are to:

1. Facilitate and increase professional medical, scientific and educational co-operation throughout Europe, in particular by supporting exchanges and meetings between doctors, nurses and other professionals involved in the care of children and adolescents with cancer
2. Promote and support collaborative clinical trials within European countries
3. Participate in the development of European guidelines for, and standards of, training and care in paediatric oncology
4. Support and develop European socio economic policies for the reintegration of children and adolescents into education and employment after diagnosis and treatment for cancer
5. Promote and develop collaborative relationships with organisations representing children and adolescents with cancer and their families.

SIOP Europe maintains strong links with others working in paediatric oncology across the world through the other continental branches of SIOP International but principally its role is to lead in developing paediatric oncology across Europe. Current initiatives include, for example, the development of a European curriculum for training in paediatric oncology, links with the parents organisation (ICCCPO), fellowships to support colleagues in less well resourced countries in central and eastern Europe, working more closely with the SIOP nurses group, and a review of its role in supporting European clinical trials.