

## **REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE WORKGROUP**

### **Women in Dentistry**

#### **PERIOD 2007-2010**

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The workgroup Women in Dentistry was founded by EROboard because a significant change in the demographic structure within the body of European dentists had been noticed, i.e. a significant rise in the number of women-dentists.

The primary goal of the workgroup was to check the data concerning numbers of women in dentistry, and the influence they have upon the changes in organization and work of dentists in general.

The members of the workgroup devised a questionnaire that was sent each year to all national associations, which in return collected necessary data.

#### **MOSCOW 2007**

At the meeting of ERO in Moscow in 2007 the stated data showed that 69% of the dentist population are women, as opposed to 59% of women in general population.

The question about the ratio between male and female students did not obtain precise answers. They were based on observation, and national associations did not provide any exact data. Based on observation, there were claims that the number of women-students was on the rise.

The analysis of the number of women in dental education showed that the number was extremely high. It was also observed that women acquired equal academic promotion to men, and also held equally important positions.

The analysis of the gender of specialists showed that there was a great number of women in orthodonty and pedodonty, and a small number of oral surgeons.

Most European dental offices are privately owned, and they are equally owned by men and women. There are no reports of differences in their work.

The analysis of the positions in the management of national associations showed marked inequality. Despite a high percentage of women in the general population, their presence on boards of dental associations is as low as 28%, and women are usually secretaries.

#### **ISTANBUL 2008**

In Istanbul, in 2008, alongside the analysis of standard demographic data, which constantly point to a rising trend in female numbers, a need for assistance in education was emphasised. The analysis of internetisation (which is satisfactory in most European countries) showed that e-learning in most countries is not sufficiently used. Specifically female obligations, primarily motherhood, do not allow women at the beginning of their careers to leave home for education. The conclusion was that e-learning was great help in learning. Education is getting more and more demanding and it is essential for promotion, not only of individuals, but also of the whole field of dentistry. It was suggested to all national associations who had not taken these steps that they should include e-learning as an equal form of education that would provide a certain number of points to candidates.

## **ROME 2008**

In Rome, in 2009, along with an analysis of demographic data, another analysis was provided – the analysis of breaks in careers, of income, retirement and leading positions. Breaks in careers are mostly short-term and are linked with motherhood, not influencing further education and development. Incomes for men and women are equal, but in certain fields it is mostly men who specialize. In some countries women can get retired earlier. There is no change for the better in leading positions – the percentage of women on boards dropped to 24%.

It was concluded that a new strategy to improve the position of women in dentistry should be introduced, especially in the domain of leadership. The primary goal is to educate women as team leaders and encourage them to apply for leading and decision-making positions.

The women who attended the above mentioned meetings showed increased interest for a 'female view' on dentistry, proving that it is necessary to further analyse the position of women in dentistry. By presenting and analysing data we encouraged the audience to state various problems faced by women dentists. Female representatives of national associations backed up the idea of organizing a female network, so in the five years of the activities of this group we have encouraged the founding of a number of national female associations. Owing to the internet, they are well connected. Following the initiative of the European workgroup, we will close the FDI congress with a five-day leadership conference.

At the suggestion of the group's president, the data collected in the past period have been prepared for publication, so it is expected that they will be published in the IDJ. Some parts have been published in a number of national journals of the IDT, with the purpose of making a broader population of dentists susceptible to the matter. The group will present its ERO yearly report in the FDI session.

We would like to conclude this report with special thanks to the present leaders of ERO for their support and help. We would also like to extend our thanks to all the national representatives who have since 2005, the year we founded the group, changed their views regarding the group. At first the group was met mostly with incomprehension, but now it receives suggestions and queries which give us guidelines for our future work.