



Europäische Regionale Organisation
der Fédération Dentaire Internationale



EUROPEAN REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE FDI (ERO)

Minutes of the plenary session held on
22nd September, 2006
in Shenzhen, China

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A Welcome

Patrick Hescot welcomes all participants and delivers the greetings from our president. José Font-Buxó deplores not being able to assist this meeting, but lets us know that in thought he is with us. He is in good health, but the doctors did not allow such a long flight yet. All people present wish him to get well soon. Patrick Hescot assures that everything we do today has been prepared with the approval of the president.

The president elect specially thanks the CED president, Wolfgang Doneus and the friends from the British Dental Association for their presence and interest in this meeting.

B Standard agenda of the business meeting

B.1 Roll call – Establishment of the quorum

Philippe Rusca welcomes all people present and proceeds to the roll call. The quorum is established. Patrick Hescot begs to excuse the somewhat strange arrangement of the room. Unfortunately there is only this room (besides the big meeting hall) that has translation booths.

B.2 Approval of the agenda

The agenda is approved without any amendments.

B.3 Approval of the minutes of Porto

The FDI president asked for the following amendment in the French version of the minutes :
..... une image saine d'une entreprise repose sur un esprit sain", qui a provoqué des réactions étonnantes remplacer par: une image saine d'une entreprise repose sur un sourire sain", qui a provoqué des réactions positives dans les entreprises (page 2, 2^e alinéa). Besides that, no other correction is asked for and the minutes are approved.

B.4 Reports of the board

It is our great concern that all member associations find an interest in the work of ERO, declares Patrick Hescot. All countries should benefit from being a member of ERO. We hope that at the end of our mandate we will have achieved what we promised. ERO is a member of FDI and thus we try to follow the intentions of FDI, but as well to find solutions that suit the European ways. The board is open for all proposals to improve things.

Philippe Rusca informs about the financial situation of ERO. He is pleased that more than half of the member states have paid their first part of the membership fee. This year ERO and CED had their first consecutive meeting at the same place. He again thanks the Portuguese for the excellent cooperation; working conditions have been very good. 44 persons, slightly more than 50%, attended both assemblies. That's positive and the personal contacts were very much appreciated. In Philippe Rusca's eyes there could have been even a closer cooperation. Concerning the cost he has to admit that Porto has been much more expensive than Athens. 17200 € have been paid for meeting facilities, infrastructure, etc. this year, in Athens we paid 11800 €. The difference of 5400 € is not "peanuts" and we should keep that in mind for future joint meetings.

Stefaan Hanson wants to know if the joint meeting or the extraordinary environment caused these extra expenses. The Portuguese delegation was assigned with the organisation of the event and it seems that there has been an insufficient supervision on the financial part. The fact that we worked with the same technical infrastructure (4 screens, double beamer projection), which has been adapted to the more complex needs of CED, caused the higher price, explains Philippe Rusca.

Stefaan Hanson thinks that we should not forget the advantages the delegations benefited from by reducing their travel expenses. Philippe Rusca agrees

B.5 Working groups

Regarding the reports of the working groups, Patrick Hescot thinks, it is time to look at the interim results. Now is the moment to request changes concerning the main focuses; in Moscow the final reports will be presented.

Continuing education: Alex Mersel as chairman of the "Education committee" comments three points. First point: ethics. What has ethics to do with continuing education? There is no continuing education without money and the money often comes from our partners, the industry. Unfortunately there are no clearly defined rules on relations with the industry. It is important to define our criteria as well as the requirements of our partners. He would like to reach an agreement with them concerning the sponsoring. Actually a first move has been made with IDEM. Alex Mersel hopes that this will initiate a dialogue and that he will be able to

present a first draft of a Charter of Ethics for Continuing Education to be discussed in Moscow.

Second point: "risk management" – How can one protect himself from complaints/lawsuits by the patients? This has become a problem in many countries. There should something be done regarding the information of the dentists. The moment a diagnosis is being made, he must be aware of all its consequences. Nowadays there exists the possibility to sue a dentist (or his successor) even after his death.

Third point: continuing education in the Eastern countries. At the moment this is under the aegis of the FDI and their continuing education managers. ERO is not informed. We would like to be involved, even though in several countries successful courses have been conducted. He will try his best to guarantee that the ERO member countries will be informed about venues and topics of those courses in time. There is a lot of work to do.

Patrick Hescot initiates the discussion on point 1 by stating that there must be kept an eye on the problem of the speakers' conflict of interest. He inquires how this is handled in the different member states. Stefaan Hanson is a bit worried, that the industry has already received an agreement. He is told that this is not the case, but that a dialogue has been established. The so called "charta" does not yet exist; we are preparing a draft.

The dental chamber of Romania decided that the industry cannot organise courses in continuing education without incorporating the national dental association, declares Voicu David.

Gerard Seeberger refers to the conference on continuing education he held in Porto. In Italy sponsors belonging to the industry or the pharmaceutical branch are forced to register with the ministry of health. They must disclose the amount of their sponsoring and the organiser is kept to verify. They can be made responsible for the content of the programme.

Francisco Rodriguez Lozano explains that in Spain continuing education is easily accessible to the dentists. The scientific commissions organise their own congresses. Sometimes the industry takes part in it. This is why the dental association tries to organise continuing education that must not necessarily be profitable. Further, every second year there is a very attractive congress with discussions about deontological matters, which is not of much interest for the mostly on science focused industry.

The role of the industry is quite a hot subject, remarks Taner Yücel. In Turkey there exists a council that defines the credit points. By means of a report they control who speaks at a congress for how long and about what topic and then the credit points will be allocated. A clearly defined regulation of the sponsoring does not exist; on the other hand we nevertheless do need the support of the industry.

Ralf Wagner informs, that in Germany continuing education is organised by the dental chambers, where they do not allow sponsoring. Besides there is a broad continuing education market by companies and the industry. If they want to allocate credit points though, they have to follow precise criteria. Even a course organised by the industry must satisfy the criteria of an independent scientific part of the programme, where there is no propaganda, competitors must be cited and where lunch/dinner which usually is for free does not count in the total of credit points. Barbara Bergmann-Krauss emphasizes that there exist specific rules established by the main boards that are responsible for the organisation of continuing education events.

Patrick Hescot asks which countries know the credit point system. The answer is: most of them do, except Cyprus, Russia, Portugal and Greece. Francisco Rodriguez Lozano adds that in Spain they even get state-approved credit point diplomas, just no one ever looks at them.

In France, on the contrary, continuing education is mandatory and the booklet with the credit points must be presented every five years.

The Swiss representative, Ulrich Rohrbach, advises not to mix up things. The relation between industry and continuing education events is one thing, the allocation of credits point is another thing. In Switzerland the Swiss academy of medical sciences has established rules, which are valid for all medical continuing education events. If someone should be interested in these rules, he/she can contact Philippe Rusca.

Patrick Hescot's conclusion is that this Charter project will enable those who wish to establish a clearly defined relationship with the industry with regard to Continuing Dental Education. A consensus vote approved the communication of Alex Mersel.

The new working group „**Dental Team**“ will take care of the "risk management", informs Patrick Hescot. It seems to become an issue in many countries. So far there existed no so called result obligation. The result of a dental treatment not only depends on the dentist, but as well on the patient and his "surroundings". There should be established an analogy between obligation of means and obligation of results. This subject is very important and we will discuss it in the working group. In France, they say, every dentist has to face at least one lawsuit in his life. What is the situation in other countries?

Great Britain has a special institution dealing with dental lawsuits, tells Peter Ward. They employ lawyers that are specialised in such kind of lawsuits. If they do not win, there is no fee. This system has led to an increasing number of lawsuits against dentists.

Ralf Wagner does not dispose of a statistic as does Patrick Hescot, but he has noticed that patients and insurance companies do not hesitate very long before suing a dentist. In Italy there is a plethora of lawyers, which all are looking for work, notices Gerhard Seeberger. His colleague Stefano Briganti adds, that in the region of Tuscany an arbitration board has been established that will take care of these problems. And in Spain they already had several lawsuit cases and judgments as well, which has led to the introduction of a result obligation.

According to Brita Petersen, Germany disposes of a well functioning risk management system. There exists the possibility of having delivered an expert opinion before starting the treatment and there is as well an independent consulting service for the patients. If one compares the number of treatments with the number of complaints, the latter is relatively small. In his country in 66% of all cases, where the dentist is accused of not having achieved the treatment goal, the accusation was not cogent and the case was dismissed, adds Gerhard Seeberger.

There remains the problem of insurance costs, remarks Patrick Hescot. An increasing number of lawsuits will lead to higher charges for liability insurances. We have to think about how we can handle the procedures and ameliorate the defence of the dentists. After all, concludes Nicole Schumann, the dentist is not responsible for everything; there should also be compliance of the patient.

ERO-Enlargement: Little time has passed since Porto, but still enough that Bedros Yavru-Sakuk could make contacts with some potential new member countries. After these discussions he has elaborated some sort of a list of wishes. It shows above all the need of prevention programmes. Often the state of oral health in these countries is quite poor. The enlargement group will work closely together with the prevention group. Very important as well are education and a well-balanced continuing education. The basic education should at least include all subjects that are taught in the Western world. Here ERO can contribute. This concerns practical continuing education too and that's why the collaboration with Alex Mersel's group is very important. But first of all, these countries have to become member of ERO. The more numerous we are, the more powerful we get. He thanks all his colleagues for their support, which is essential to move on.

ERO-Parity: Simona Dianišková thanks all her working group members for the good work and the participants of the Porto meeting for their feedback. Once again she presents the questionnaire, to which a representative of the German delegation has made a considerable contribution. It contains questions about cost analysis, need of investment, use of dental practice, annual costs, expenses for material, etc. Minimal requirements and average numbers will be asked and thus it will hopefully be possible to establish a price comparison. She hopes that the questions are clear and everybody will be able to - at least in parts - answer them. Ultimately all will make use of the analysis.

Patrick Hescot reminds that we did not want any concrete numbers, but preferred percentages. The goal is to establish a average cost profile of a dental practice.

Prevention: The working group has been following two directions over the last two years, Claude Bouchet says. One is the publication of a series of recommendations in 2005 in Athens and the other is a global prevention plan, which has been elaborated this year in Porto. Now the commission has a new project. They are trying to analyse information about oral health in Europe. A series of indicators have been defined using a system that will be presented by Denis Bourgeois. The next step will be to collect information on this basis and then to create a kind of a warning system, which would allow to call the considered institution's attention to health deficiencies. This should be realised in 2007/2008.

Denis Bourgeois presents the global project by the European convention; the one Claude Bouchet has already talked about. It is intended to recommend and develop an information system on oral health. Target groups are all decision makers, the ministries of health and as well the international dental associations. The project started in 2003, 40 indicators have been validated. Those indicators partially concentrate on the clinical aspect, others on the expectations of the public and the care providers. This is one of the biggest projects of the European convention. At the moment information is being collected in Europe. The pilot phase will start in 2010. ERO as a European organisation should become partner (with equal rights) of the programme. ERO could take on an important strategic role.

Besides that the commission intends to organise in 2008 a European public event to promote oral health. This should take place on the same day all over Europe and each country can choose its subject in the field of oral health. This is an important project. In Moscow they will present proposals.

Finally the working group will look in to the problem of oral cancer prevention. WHO and the national cancer institute have contacted ERO regarding the first congress on oral cancer. It will take place in February 2007 in Paris. The working group will represent ERO at this event.

Francisco Rodriguez Lozano announces that Spain will conduct a national information campaign for the public and the dentists in the first quarter of 2007.

Quality: This working group has a close relation to all other working groups. Quality has a lot to do with continuing education, with the enlargement group and the mobility in Europe, states Francisco Rodriguez Lozano. More and more things have to be harmonised and it has a lot to do as well with parity and prevention. Quality is the red thread of next year's programme. He stresses on three points: we believe it is important to organise every two years a consensus conference on specific topics. This would lead to a better relation between ERO and the scientific aspects in the different countries; our organisation could lay more stress on scientific questions. There should be contacts with the bureau of standards in order to validate the clinical aspect of the standards. Contact will be made with the CEN to this effect.. It is demanding and complicated, but we must continue this path. Finally the programme for Moscow should be defined. It might be interesting to concentrate on quality programmes in Europe. Some countries could present their projects. We should proceed like in Spain where contacts with the bureau of standards have been made and where not only technical aspects are discussed, but all topics in relation with dentistry.

Philippe Calfon, chairman of the subcommittee "dentistry and nomenclature of TC 106", is very pleased to be here and to be able to deliver an insight into what these standards are all about. Since 10 years he is working with ISO and he considers it is absolutely necessary to have practitioners participate in this as well. Europe does have more and more rules and regulations; that is why contacts between ERO and CEN (European Committee for Standardization) are indispensable, like FDI has relations with ISO in order to have a certain control over the quality of medical equipment. CEN has established a Taskforce that will elaborate a paper on standardization. It might even be possible to create quality standards especially for dentists. In any case there should be regulations concerning quality

Bedros Yavru-Sakuk wants to know if there already exist quality controls in Europe, because quality has a relation to risk management too. This is affirmed by Francisco Rodriguez Lozano; we just do not know how good they are. He doubts that those control systems are

very professional; often it is more about administration than quality of treatment. We would prefer an effective control system which is uniform and harmonised in Europe and which considers professional aspects as ethics, etc.

Portugal is introducing a quality control system, says Orlando Monteiro da Silva. In Slovakia, explains Simona Dianišková, so far the dental chamber is responsible and they decided to collaborate with a certified institution, which will create a quality model together with the dental chamber. They are also discussing information programmes for dentists.

Patrick Hescot reminds that in Moscow the programme of Saturday morning will be dedicated to quality and that various experiences will be presented.

Liberal dental practice: Voicu David thanks all those that voted for the resolution in Porto and all those who supported him. Now the resolution should be submitted to the governments of the member countries. In Moscow we might already have results on how this resolution has been implemented. The working group will now terminate the questionnaire and send the results to all member associations. The WG has met in Shenzhen and has reached the following decisions: all national association are invited to list the most important professional problems in their country. Then we will try to set up a new resolution for Moscow. All information should be submitted before December 1, 2006. As a conclusion to his statements he invites everybody to take part in the 6th European Forum for Dentistry as a Liberal Profession in Brussels.

Women in dentistry: The statements of Porto made it quite clear: men are out in dentistry, declares a winking Vesna Barac-Furtinger. She is sorry, that once again there are only few women at this table, but she is confident that this will change soon. They have been working on a new questionnaire since Porto trying to find out how women can be made to participate in taking decisions. The results will be shown in Moscow. They need the support of the enlargement-group, which Bedros Yavru-Sakuk is happy to offer. He even thinks that women's quality in dentistry is better than men's.

Patrick Hescot concludes the presentations of the work groups by underlining that the final reports will be presented in Moscow.

B.6 ERO Website

Edoardo Cavallé presents the ERO website project which has been elaborated in accordance with the president and the board. The program will cost about 6000 € and the maintenance will amount to about 600 € per year. There are decisions to be taken about title and content of the website, access authorization, language, webmaster, format of the documents, protected areas, target audience, possibilities of advertisement, etc.

The board will discuss this at its next meeting. Further, it has to decide on the financing, the logistic and organisation, explains Patrick Hescot. There will be more about it in Moscow.

Orlando Monteiro da Silva is a bit astonished about how much there has already been done. Wouldn't it be easier and less expensive to "pass through" the FDI website? Patrick Hescot confirms that this had been discussed in the board. Of course, we will start via the FDI website, where we have one page and where will be a link to our website. The implementation will be discussed with the FDI.

Edoardo Cavallé adds that he only was mandated to set up a plan and evaluate the costs.

According to Philippe Rusca, Edoardo Cavallé has presented a very elegant catalogue of possibilities. This solution would very well suit the needs of the secretariat. Documents could be published on this site and retrieved by the user. There is no risk that continuing education

will be offered on the ERO website in the near future. The board will make a choice and then present it to the plenary.

Patrick Hescot thanks Edoardo Cavallé for his work.

B.7 Information on FDI matter

Patrick Hescot reports about the meeting of the FDI-Council and representatives of the regional organisations. They agreed that the regional organisations should continue. As a result of the "Governance" there will be some small amendments to be made in our "Constitution". This will be discussed in Moscow. One point is the liaison officer, which should as well be mentioned/defined in our „Constitution“. According to a discussion between Burton Conrod and Patrick Hescot, this will not be difficult to solve.

Nothing is to be said against the fact, that various people/institutions offer continuing education, remarks Patrick Hescot, but there should be some coordination.

There are four continuing education managers in the FDI, who act independently in the education committee of the FDI, states Alex Mersel. He noticed two negative cases (one in Africa, one in Eastern Europe). In Africa the education manager organizes English spoken courses, but even the English speaking dentists receive the programme very late; whereas in Eastern Europe local associations get support that aren't even member of FDI or ERO. On Sunday there will be a meeting to discuss and solve these problems and to harmonise existing and planned courses.

Patrick Hescot refers to the demand for a resolution presented by the Israeli delegation. In several countries we notice a tendency towards creating commercial structure with the aim of providing dental and medical treatment that are in no way controlled by the professional institution. This is a great menace, because it is not health, but benefit they are interested in.

It is a fact that in several countries non-professional non-dentists make use of the legislation and open, own and manage dental clinics, confirms a representative of the Israeli delegation. Pure commercial interests of non-professional investors that are not subject to ethical standards can have negative influence on the dental practice and can damage the professional independence and the quality of the medical treatment and threaten the public health. Dentists that are employed by such institutions risk to be put under pressure, to subordinate their duties to commercial motives and may thus fail to comply with their duty to serve the patient. It would be very much appreciated, if this would be brought up for discussion and resolution in the FDI.

This issue has already been discussed at the last meeting in Porto, reminds Bedros Yavru-Sakuk. Independence and freedom of the dentist is in our view one of the most important topics. We hope to work out a resolution which would enable us to keep those commercial institutions in certain limits.

This problem exists in almost all European countries, adds Voicu David. A solution offered by the ERO would be extremely useful. Maybe we could pass a resolution in Moscow. Nicole Schumann remarks that in commercial and specialised centres employees are put under pressure.

Patrick Hescot is convinced that we can discuss this in the working group as well as in the plenary session. Alex Mersel suggests that the plenary session adopts the principle of the IDA delegation and accepts that the working group "liberal dental practice" elaborates a resolution for Moscow. The plenary approves this motion.

B.8 Plenary session 2007 – Moscow

The next plenary session will be held on the 20th/21st April 2007 in Moscow, announces Patrick Hescot. This will be the moment to strike a balance on the work of the last three years.

Concrete projects will be presented and we will have elections. Of course the member associations will receive more information. He reminds that candidates must file their application with CV 45 days prior to the elections at the latest.

The next plenary session will not only allow getting to know a beautiful city, but as well to concern oneself with the situation in the host country and its neighbouring states. We keep talking about continuing education, relations with sponsors, etc. but for us, emphasizes Vladimir Sadovsky, the relation with our government is important, too. The increasing number of governmental prescription does not only in the former countries of the Soviet Union create problems. A research conducted by Prof. Leontiev states the difficulties and the hierarchy of the responsibilities. We are responsible, but expect the same from the government. An article on the research will be published in the beginning of winter.

Vladimir Sadovsky indicates that there will also be a scientific programme before the ERO Session. He shows pictures and points out all amenities of Moscow and its environment. He hopes that many of the people present will come and enjoy the hospitality of his fellow countrymen.

Patrick Hescot promises to provide all essential information as soon as possible and asks the participant to register as quickly as possible.

B.9 Miscellaneous

The Spanish delegation would appreciate having an up-to-date statement from the FDI concerning the (ban) of amalgam. Since there is a proposition in the UE to ban amalgam as from the end of 2007 the statement elaborated with the WHO is outdated. They believe that there are no scientific proofs that amalgam has indeed negative effects. False data is being displayed. According to a study made by CED, in 23 countries the use of amalgam is not forbidden. In addition it will be impossible to reach a similar price-performance ratio with other materials. FDI should try to put pressure on the European commission and clearly state that amalgam holds no risks; not for those using it, nor for the environment. Moreover, a ban of amalgam would create negative effects, especially in the developing countries.

Taner Yücel is very grateful for the Spanish colleague's statement. The scientific committee of the FDI has learned about the amalgam ban discussion in the European Parliament. The CED was informed that we - from the scientific point of view - do not consider amalgam a risk. He begs Wolfgang Doneus to explain what exactly has been debated in the European Parliament. He thinks it is extremely important, that FDI and ERO continue to follow the same direction.

Not amalgam but mercury in general has been discussed in the Brussels's parliament, explains Wolfgang Doneus. Mercury is mainly mined in the North of Spain and it's the ecologists in the European Parliament that do not want to permit any more mercury trade from Europe to other countries in the world. Actually there is a scenario for abandoning mercury mining and trading. Since mercury is part of the amalgam this concerns us indirectly, too. He relates to a resolution voted on in Porto. There are permanent contacts to the European parliament and the commission. Sanderson has elaborated an excellent paper. Wolfgang Doneus is confident that our arguments will be heard, although many things in politics do function on an exchange basis. Why the ecologists succeeded with their request is not obvious.

Of course all statements and resolutions are helpful. In case of a scenario of abandoning mercury the dentists would have to come up with some ideas. Another unanswered question is, if social policy would be able to meet our requirements. This will be different from one nation to another; hardly all social systems will accept to replace amalgam by more expensive materials. CED has a good working taskforce and he is sure that we are on the right path.

This topic looks quite scary to Rodriguez Lozano. The ecologists play an important role in environmental policy. There are no regulations on amalgam waste. It would be important to have a consensus on how to handle and reduce amalgam waste. Then we must explain the politicians that amalgam is not posing a threat if correctly used and disposed of its waste. Of course waste management is not everywhere as good as in our countries; there is lot of work still to do. Although we have good arguments you can never be sure that amalgam will not be banned anyway; our profession must try to convince everybody to separate residues of amalgam and so avoid environmental problems.

Patrick Hescot confirms this project and believes we should unite our efforts on this issue.

Ulrich Rohrbach is pleased to hear that the liberal dental practice is being promoted by organizing this Forum in Brussels, for instance. On the other hand he notices tendencies that tend to the opposite direction, regarding quality control, for instance. He vehemently advises against calling the government or the administration for assistance in as far as quality control is concerned. This should under all circumstances be kept in our own ranks. He pleads for a quality control and promotion in the sense of quality guidelines and to stress on a good education as well.

Patrick Hescot confirms that this is the aim of the quality working group, whose results will be presented in Moscow.

C Close of the meeting - adjournment

Patrick Hescot thanks the interpreters for their patience and their precious work and all colleagues for the active participation.

See you in Moscow!

Dr. Patrick Hescot
President elect

Monika Lang
Minutes