



**EFIM**  
[www.efim.org](http://www.efim.org)

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



# AIMS MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The European Federation of Internal Medicine (EFIM) was established in 1996 through a merger of its predecessor AEMI and the Forum of Presidents of National Internal Medicine Societies in Europe.

From the beginning, the aims of the organisation were as laid down in the Statutes:

 To promote scientific, clinical and professional aspects of internal medicine

 To publish research and resolutions

 To organize meetings and congresses

 To establish communication between internists

 To provide information to private and public organisations

The purpose of EFIM is to emphasize the importance of internal medicine in patient care in a world of increasing specialisation. Education, research and the promotion of internal medicine are at the heart of the EFIM mission. The European Congress of Internal Medicine, the European School of Internal Medicine and the Clinical Research Seminar have become popular events, bringing together internists and internal medicine trainees from across Europe and around the world. EFIM will continue to build programmes that will raise the profile of internal medicine and encourage greater collaboration of European internists in years to come.

Internal medicine will remain the cornerstone of every national healthcare system.

A WORD BY EFIM PRESIDENT	2
A WORD BY EFIM PAST PRESIDENT	3
MEMBERSHIP 2020	4
EFIM ACCOUNTS 2020	6
VIRTUAL WORKSHOP WITH THE PRESIDENTS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETIES	7
EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF INTERNAL MEDICINE	8
EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF CASE REPORTS IN INTERNAL MEDICINE	9
EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF INTERNAL MEDICINE 2022	10
POST CONGRESS REPORT ECIM 2021	11
ESIM WINTER	12
EARLY CAREER SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT	13
REPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN BOARD OF INTERNAL MEDICINE	14
REPORTS FROM THE EFIM WORKING GROUPS	15
FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL MEDICINE IN EUROPE	19
EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY	19
YOUNG INTERNISTS SECTION REPORT	20
EFIM 2020 MILESTONES	21

## A WORD BY EFIM PRESIDENT



**DR. DROR DICKER**

EFIM President

It is a common saying that those who do not respect the past will not have a future.

Over the last years, Prof. Montano has led EFIM brilliantly, establishing and strengthening the structure and activities of EFIM. I hope to follow his footsteps along with the successful path he has paved.

During the last year, the SARS COV-2 pandemic has dramatically changed the way we live, but it has also brought to the forefront the importance of the Internal Medicine ward and physician. The present times have highlighted the importance of treatment in uncertain conditions, management of multi-morbidity, remote treatment of patients at home with the aid of virtual tools, and the need for constant learning and adaptation of new tools for better treatment.

In trying to incorporate the lessons from the last year, I will cite four ideas for my vision and plans for the future of EFIM:



**Strengthening our academic activities and developing innovative educational platforms.**



**Strengthening and increasing the level and exposure of our congress and our journals.**



**Increasing the involvement of EFIM in local activities in each member country.**



**Building a system to create our own Position Papers, guidelines and tests that promote our merit.**

My hope is that learning from our past and present will lead us to a prosperous future, and that I will be your successful leader in this unique and challenging period.

I am most open to your ideas and your support.

Rosemary M. Wixom said: "Laugh about the past and dream about the future". I pray that we will meet very soon and could laugh and dream together.

## A WORD BY EFIM PAST PRESIDENT



**PROF. NICOLA MONTANO**

EFIM Past President

It has been an honour and privilege to lead EFIM in the past two years as your President.

Everything started smoothly for me, following the steps of the previous Presidents and Executive members (let me acknowledge, one for all, my predecessor, Runolfur Palsson). However, after one year my Presidency was abruptly interrupted by the pandemic. Since then, we have been living in a dramatic as well as unique moment of our personal history. Healthcare staff, and internists at the front line, have been experiencing a time of unbelievable motivation, exceptional fatigue, frustration, and anxiety. All over the world, we are taking care of Covid patients and simultaneously of our chronic complex patients. We have realised that we need a strong public healthcare system, and that hyper-specialisation is nothing without the support of a generalist's vision. The next years will contain greatest challenges: to search for more efficient and sustainable pathways to take care of the multitudes of chronic complex patients, to prevent disease not only through screening campaigns but by promoting healthy lifestyle, to lobby the political stakeholders for a change in the healthcare system, guaranteeing equal access to care and medicines all over the world. As internists, we can lead this change!

Over the last two years, EFIM has continued to grow, launching new initiatives and programmes, while strengthening the relationship with the national societies and with key organisations in internal medicine, such as the American College of Physicians and the Foro Internacional de Medicina Interna (FIMI). We started lobbying at European level, becoming a founding partner of two relevant initiatives: the European Health Coalition (EHC) and the European Alliance for Value in Health (EAVH). Moreover, we reinforced our presence at the European Medicine Agency (EMA).

Collaboration is and remains key at EFIM. I am pleased to witness the increased involvement of the member national societies in the activities of EFIM, their active participation in the working groups and all other EFIM initiatives. To be able to build this further, we rely on a strong communication

strategy. 2020 has been a challenging year for all internal medicine departments across Europe and worldwide.

Internal Medicine wards have been profoundly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, taking on a crucial role in the prevention and care of the COVID-19 patients in a variety of healthcare settings. EFIM created a COVID-19 resource page which was updated after each webinar to share the experiences and insights from EFIM Members working on the frontline. A new webinar platform was launched via our partner Delta Medical to replace the upcoming face to face meetings and to organise educational webinars resulting in 16 scientific webinars presented by experts on different topics in internal medicine in 2020.

Our flagship journal, the European Journal of Internal medicine, gain another significant increase above the 4.0 threshold with an impact factor of 4.329 ranking 26<sup>th</sup> in the Category: Medicine, General & Internal. Congratulations to our Editor-in-Chief, Prof. Giancarlo Agnelli. Furthermore, our European Journal of Case Reports in Internal Medicine witnessed a massive increase in the number of submissions due to the need of sharing immediate findings on the COVID-19 related submissions.

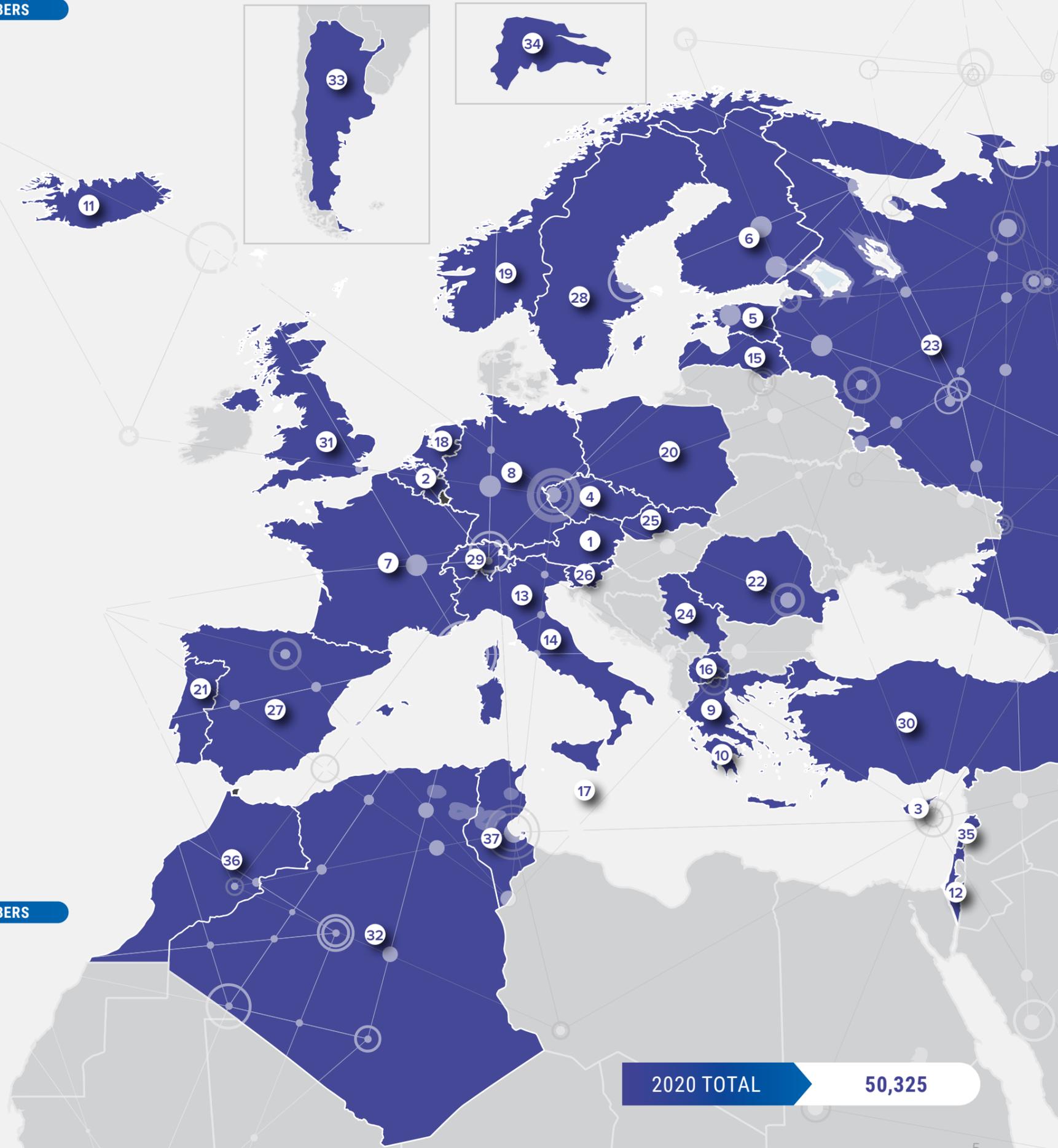
Our upcoming virtual congress was renamed: "Internal medicine in a pandemic world: when one size fits all" focusing on highlighting how the COVID-19 pandemic has stressed exactly how Internal Medicine truly is a cornerstone of any healthcare system. We are looking forward to welcoming many of our colleagues to the ECIM 2021.

Of course, all this work would not be possible without our dedicated team of the EFIM Executive Committee, Societies Members, Working Groups, Subcommittees and our EFIM Secretariat.

I would like to thank you all for your support in 2020 and I would like to wish my successor, Dr. Dror Dicker, a successful and productive mandate in the following two years with plenty of face-to-face meetings.

## MEMBERSHIP 2020

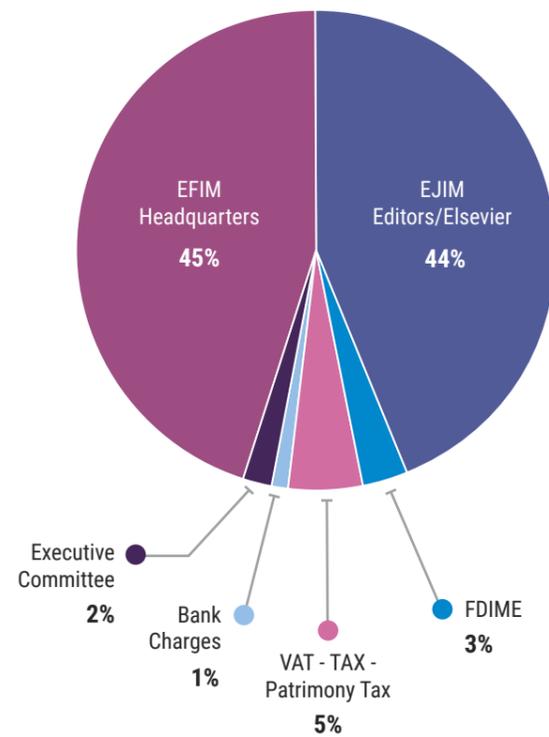
COUNTRY	ORDINARY MEMBERS	MEMBERS	
1	AUSTRIA	Austrian Society of Internal Medicine	967
2	BELGIUM	Belgian Society of Internal Medicine	141
3	CYPRUS	Cyprus Federation of Internal Medicine	85
4	CZECH REPUBLIC	Czech Society of Internal Medicine	1038
5	ESTONIA	Estonian Society of Internal Medicine	97
6	FINLAND	Finnish Society of Internal Medicine	1031
7	FRANCE	French Society of Internal Medicine	936
8	GERMANY	German Society of Internal Medicine	9248
9	GREECE	Hellenic Society of Internal Medicine	613
10	GREECE	Internal Medicine Society of Greece	800
11	ICELAND	Icelandic Society of Internal Medicine	220
12	ISRAEL	Israeli Society of Internal Medicine	448
13	ITALY	Italian Federation of Associations of Hospital Internists FADOI	2565
14	ITALY	Italian Society of Internal Medicine SIMI	2785
15	LATVIA	Latvian Society of Internal Medicine	333
16	NORTH MACEDONIA	Macedonian Association of Internal Medicine	170
17	MALTA	Association of Physicians of Malta	80
18	NETHERLANDS	Netherlands Society of Internal Medicine	2000
19	NORWAY	Norwegian Society of Internal Medicine	1880
20	POLAND	Polish Society of Internal Medicine	400
21	PORTUGAL	Portuguese Society of Internal Medicine	2419
22	ROMANIA	Romanian Society of Internal Medicine	560
23	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Russian Scientific Society of Internal Medicine	988
24	SERBIA	Serbian Society of Internal Medicine	385
25	SLOVAKIA	Slovakian Society of Internal Medicine	506
26	SLOVENIA	Slovenian Society of Internal Medicine	200
27	SPAIN	Spanish Society of Internal Medicine	6180
28	SWEDEN	Swedish Society of Internal Medicine	1010
29	SWITZERLAND	Swiss Society of General Internal Medicine	5977
30	TURKEY	Turkish Society of Internal Medicine	1355
31	UNITED KINGDOM	Royal College of Physicians UK	2415
COUNTRY	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	MEMBERS	
32	ALGERIA	Algerian Society of Internal Medicine	443
33	ARGENTINA	Argentinian Society of Internal Medicine	650
34	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Dominican Republic Society of Internal Medicine	800
35	LEBANON	Lebanese Society of Internal Medicine	190
36	MOROCCO	Moroccan Society of Internal Medicine	210
37	TUNISIA	Tunisian Society of Internal Medicine	200



## EFIM ACCOUNTS 2020

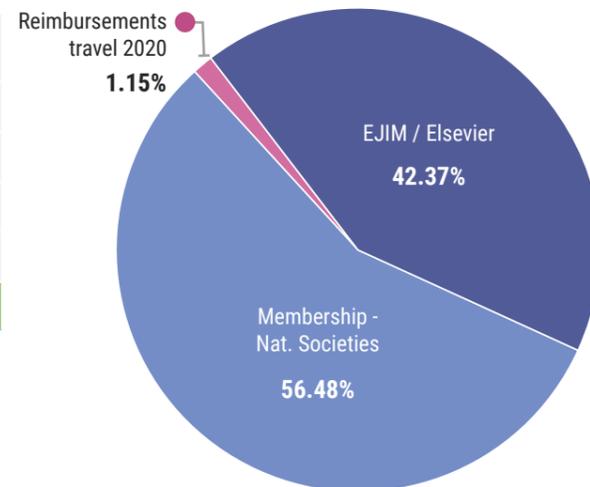
### Expenses

	EXPENSES APPROVED	FINAL 31.12.2020
Executive Committee	€ 35,000.00	€ 4,957.92
EFIM Headquarters	€ 94,726.48	€ 92,023.81
EJIM Editors / Elsevier	€ 77,000.00	€ 90,658.50
FDIME	€ 5,000.00	€ 5,000.00
EFIM Website	€ 5,678.00	€ 79.23
EFIM Working Groups & Exchange programme	€ 9,000.00	€ 220.31
EFIM Subcommittee	€ 0.00	€ 0.00
Marketing	€ 875.00	€ 875.00
VAT - Tax - Patrimony Tax	€ 13,000.00	€ 10,543.90
Bank Charges	€ 500.00	€ 1,557.94
EFIM Projects & Meetings	€ 10,000.00	€ 0.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>€ 250,779.48</b>	<b>€ 205,916.61</b>



### Income

	INCOME APPROVED	FINAL 31.12.2020
EJIM / Elsevier	€ 90,000.00	€ 104,978.78
Membership - Nat. Societies	€ 135,000.00	€ 139,937.44 *
EFIM Endorsements	€ 1,000.00	€ 0.00
Reimbursements travel 2020	€ 0.00	€ 2,851.75
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>€ 226,000.00</b>	<b>€ 247,767.97</b>



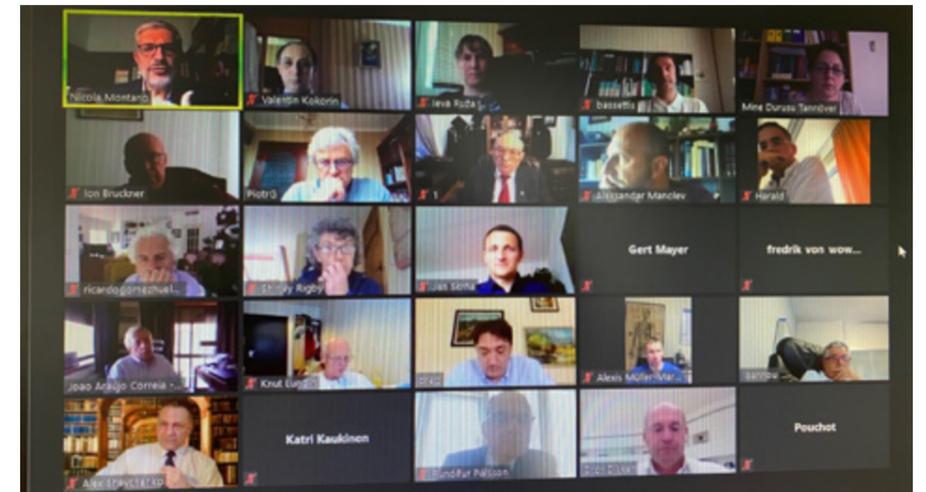
\* of which €5,542.32 remain unpaid

### 2020 - Result Preview

	ACCOUNTS APPROVED	FINAL - 31.12.2020
Income	€ 226,000.00	€ 247,767.97
Expenditures	€ 250,779.48	€ 205,916.61
Provision - social liability		€ 1,800.00
Provision - website		€ 2,000.00
Provision - IT equipment		€ 5,000.00
Withdrawal of provisions - legal liabilities		€ 5,000.00
<b>RESULT</b>	<b>- € 24,779.48</b>	<b>€ 38,051.36</b>

## VIRTUAL WORKSHOP WITH THE PRESIDENTS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETIES

27 participants from 23 member societies joined the virtual workshop organised via EFIM Zoom platform on 10 June.



The virtual workshop was intended to bring together all the EFIM member societies on a digital platform, to discuss and share their experiences and talk about EFIM's future projects.

Prof. Nicola Montano welcomed the Presidents to the 1<sup>st</sup> virtual workshop presenting the Annual Report of 2019. Prof. Montano thanked all members societies for allowing stable activities of the Headquarters via the membership income in a very challenging 2020 and reflected at greater length on the events of the past few months across the world.

Prof. Montano was pleased to present the latest functionalities available on the EFIM homepage, the spring newsletter dedicated on COVID-19 and the 3 webinars organised on the topic of COVID-19. Additionally, Prof. Montano presented the Elsevier information centre, which is offering open access to all papers published on COVID-19, as a resource available to all EFIM internists. In addition to this, future activities were presented, including the upcoming congress in Malaga 10-12 March 2021.

Prof. Montano reported the ongoing collaboration with Delta Medical regarding the development of EFIM educational platform, which is planned to be launched after the ECIM 2021.

All the Presidents and national societies' representatives took active part in the discussions about current and future EFIM projects, benefitting from the virtual meeting by exchanging ideas and discussing projects in different areas.

Several proposals were discussed regarding the organisation of webinars focused on specific topics different from COVID-19, such as general updates in internal medicine. A suggestion to organise a national survey with the objective

of understanding how internal medicine departments were affected by the COVID-19 round Europe was brought up by Dr. Dror Dicker. Dr. Dragan Lovic suggested organising EFIM registry study of COVID-19 patients with comorbidities, with the main aim of understanding how these patients respond to treatments and how to best target treatments.

Prof. Montano informed the participants of the opportunities for EFIM to get involved in different studies in the European Horizon 2020 programme, adding that with EFIM's knowledge and experience, EFIM has a solid chance to be accepted for a project grant.

Another topic recommended was a registry on Pericarditis involving Dr. Antonio Brucato from FADOI Italy, who was confident that this topic would attract pharmaceutical companies to support the initiative.

Prof. Montano brought one last suggestion for EFIM to organise an electronic registry for internal medicine patients compiling the data in a large-scale European registry.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, Prof. Montano announced that the General Assembly will be held virtually this year. Furthermore, he added that despite the challenges of 2020, EFIM continued with the daily activities, meeting the community's needs and expectations and offering the same programme as always.

Prof. Montano thanked the Presidents and the societies' representatives involved for their active participation, and the commitment shown and thanked all the colleagues across EFIM, the EC members and EFIM secretariat for all the achievements of 2020, which proved to be a very challenging year.

Executive Summary

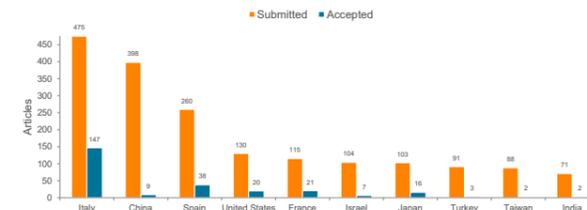
Elsevier is happy to report that the European Journal of Internal Medicine (EJINME) shows very strong increases in all relevant metrics for 2020. Most importantly 2020 was marked by EJINME receiving an Impact Factor of 4.329 continuing its impressive Impact Factor growth. Another important factor for EJINME’s 2020 performance has been the COVID-19 pandemic: submissions to the journal increased by almost 70%, Editors had to juggle clinical and editorial obligations more than ever before and EJINME published highly relevant and much debated COVID-19 related content.

Submissions



There has been a 69.2% growth in the number of submissions in 2020 in comparison to 2019 with a strong rejection rate of 85% (of which 76% of articles were rejected without going out to peer review). The highest number of accepted articles continues to originate from Italy and Spain. Notable is also the high number of submissions coming from China in 2020: 398 manuscripts (2019: 231ms) with a rejection rate of 97%. In terms of ranking countries by acceptance rate (all article types): ms from the Netherlands are ranked at number 1 (acceptance rate of 33%, 13 out of 42 submissions were accepted in 2020) at rank 2: Canada with a 31% acceptance rate (4 out of 14 submissions were accepted) and at rank 3: Italy with an acceptance rate of 29% (128 out of 471 submissions were accepted). However, all these additional submissions did not translate into the number of published articles: again, there has been a decrease in the number of published articles of about 5% in comparison to the previous year (192 published articles in 2020 vs. 202 published articles in 2019). The Editorial handling times have remained extremely competitive, with a further reduction in handling time from submission to first decision of 6.1 weeks in comparison to 7.2 weeks in 2019. The time from submission to online publication was around 9.9 weeks in 2020 and faster also in comparison to 11.8 weeks in 2019. The journal’s fast Editorial handling times are especially admirable in a year of increased challenges caused by the pandemic.

Submitted and Accepted Articles by Country in 2020



Usage

As of 2020 EJINME is an online-only journal and is being downloaded through several platforms. Please note that the statistics for full text downloads provided in the table below reflect ScienceDirect downloads, downloads from [www.ejinme.com](http://www.ejinme.com) and Clinical Key, in total showing a strong surge in downloads in comparison to 2019 (plus 39.71% !) reflecting the continuous high interest in the journal’s content.

Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
ScienceDirect	306,389	292,747	318,982	295,281	367,880
www.ejinme.com	36,457	59,562	137,429	169,138	306,400
Clinical Key	31,207	29,635	44,993	41,479	32,534
<b>Total</b>	<b>374,053</b>	<b>381,944</b>	<b>501,404</b>	<b>505,898</b>	<b>706,814</b>

Journal Titles Ranked by 2019 Impact Factor (and EJINME)

The Impact Factor in the 2019 JCR Science edition has increased from 3.66 in 2018 to 4.329 in 2019. It gained a rank from position 27 to 26 out of now 165 journals listed in the MEDICINE, GENERAL & INTERNAL category of JCR. This is a very impressive gain and will continue to increase the journal’s attractiveness to submitting authors.

Financials

The journal’s finances have not yet been finalized, however based on an un-audited overview, it would appear to have performed well. Preliminary findings show hardly any change in overall revenues in comparison to 2019. It is too early to predict the royalties over 2020.

2020 has been a challenging year for everybody, and EJCRIM is no exception. We went from a high number of submissions – which had doubled in the previous year – and doubled it again. At the present time, EJCRIM is receiving about 650 articles per year, while in 2018 we received only 162. A big growing leap for a small case reports journal. The main factors responsible for this growth are being on PubMed, which makes every Journal more attractive, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has created a need to immediately share information, which has resulted in a large quantity of COVID-19 related submissions. Authors from everywhere in the world were keen to share their immediate findings with the academic community and found EJCRIM an easy means of doing this.

We wasted no time in implementing the WHO recommendations to waive publications fees for COVID-19 articles, and subsequently proceeded to implement a fast-track system for such articles. The “EJCRIM against COVID-19” program was born and took place from March 2020 to June 2020. After June 2020 we reinstated the publication fee for such articles, while trying to publish everything COVID-19-related as quickly as possible.



We can now count about 40 articles published for free in under 5 days, and these publications keep on collecting citations – so much that 2021 could be the year for Scopus inclusion and the much sought-after Impact Factor.

Given the exponential increase of submission, our rejection rate is now almost reaching 60%. In the mare magnum of case reports to have plenty of submissions it makes it easier to weed out the manuscripts that are not novel enough.

The editorial handling times slightly increased, mostly because of the efforts that the authors had to put into their clinical practice that caused inevitable delays in the responses to the revision requests of the Journal. Handling time remains within the 2 weeks, while the time to publication did increase slightly: during the first pandemic wave the Journal published even twice a day in order to shorten waiting times and created issues with up to 30 articles. At the time of writing, mid-February 2021, the Journal has already received 100 submissions – confirming that the pace set in 2020 is likely to continue.

In 2021 we will publish the official Abstract Book of the 19<sup>th</sup> European Conference in Internal Medicine as a journal supplement and we will support the conference’s Best Case Report Competition and Award.



# 20<sup>TH</sup> European Congress of Internal Medicine

Internal Medicine -  
from Disease to Wellbeing

10–12 March, 2022  
Malaga, Spain

EFIM / ECIM 2022 President:

Dr. Dror Dicker, Israel

ECIM 2022 Congress Chair:

Prof. Ricardo Gómez Huelgas, Spain

# MALAGA



## POST CONGRESS REPORT ECIM 2021



The 19<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Internal Medicine (ECIM) took place from 18–20 March 2021. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and for the first time in its history the congress was held online. For over 1100 specialists around the globe, the congress provided the same great opportunity and an outstanding forum to exchange ideas, network with fellow professionals, acquire expert knowledge, learn, and share successful experiences and discuss the latest breakthrough in the clinical areas related to internal medicine.

The theme of ECIM 2021, "**Internal Medicine in a pandemic world: when one size fits all**", reflected the importance of health promotion strategies in the context of disease management. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how internal medicine truly is a cornerstone of the healthcare system. Internists worldwide have responded to the outbreak by working hard at all levels of the health services, including in emergency rooms, general wards, critical care, primary care as well as in internal medicine departments. Internal medicine is the one size that fits all!

The congress brought together physicians, young researchers and leaders in the field of internal medicine. Five pre-congress workshops, five plenary sessions, twenty-one parallel sessions, 23 live Q&A sessions, four oral presentation sessions, 3 poster discussion sessions and award ceremonies were showcased. Two new successful formats were introduced: short scientific sessions as well as joint sessions with several international associations. The scientific program was awarded 15 European CME credits by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME).

---

**All sessions remain available on demand for all participants until 20 June 2021. If you missed the congress, you may still register, enjoy the full scientific programme and get CME credits!**

---

It proved to be a truly international event with participants from 68 countries around the world, over 1100 abstracts were submitted and the quality of the scientific programme was judged to be very high.

In the closing ceremony the 20<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Internal Medicine, ECIM was announced to take place in Malaga from 10–12 March, 2022 under the leadership of EFIM President Dr. Dror Dicker and the ECIM 2022 Congress Chair Prof. Ricardo Gómez-Huelgas. EFIM is looking forward to seeing you in Malaga for this **special anniversary edition!**

## ESIM WINTER



The 10<sup>th</sup> ESIM Winter School took place at Hotel Hullu Poro in Levi, Kittilä, Lapland, Finland from 20 – 24 January 2020. The course consisted of 15 lectures, 4 Workshops, 2 Clinico-Pathological Conferences, and 23 clinical case reports during 4 different sessions. A total of 17 speakers from different 10 countries were invited.

The organising committee had 7 members from 3 countries. One of the workshops included a more extensive Ultrasound course with 4 ultrasound machines which were especially transported from Helsinki.

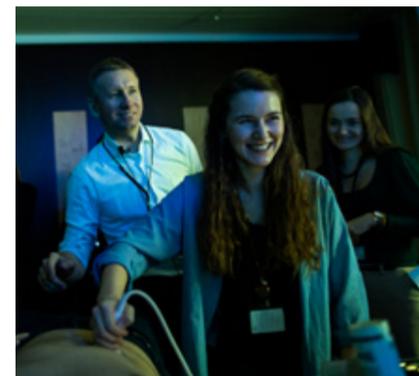
A total of 49 residents from 21 countries participated in the Winter School.

In the beginning of the course each resident completed a pre-test with 30 multiple choice questions designed by the lecturers. At the end of the course the residents completed the same test again; a clear improvement was seen for every resident.

The highest score at the pre-test, post-test and the best improvement were premiered.

The study program started each morning with a lecture, which was mostly followed by another lecture or a clinico-pathological conference. After the morning coffee break the workshops were completed. After lunch, every day, there was a 3-hour daylight break with spare time activities. The afternoon program usually started at 15.30 with a lecture followed by a coffee break. The late afternoon was dedicated to the clinical case presentations with one presentation per country.

The Winter Course was launched by a meet & greet dinner on Sunday. On Monday, a 3-hour-Cross-Country-Skiing-school was organized in the afternoon by the Director and Administrators of the course. On Tuesday, a Husky Safari adventure was arranged during truly arctic temperatures. The cold limbs were warmed up with a Piano recital at a nearby Chapel where "The Trees op. 75" by Jean Sibelius was performed. On Wednesday there was a visit to the Ice Castle followed by a Buffet back at the hotel. On Thursday, a Faculty Dinner was enjoyed at a local restaurant followed by a Gala Dinner on Friday with diverse program from all participating countries. Breath-taking northern lights were clearly visible during several nights.



## EARLY CAREER SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT



The Early Career Group is still a relatively new EFIM subcommittee, formed early last year with the aim of strengthening the specialty identity of Internal Medicine by connecting enthusiastic Internists across Europe in the first 10 years of taking up specialist post and supporting them in the development of their professional and personal skills.

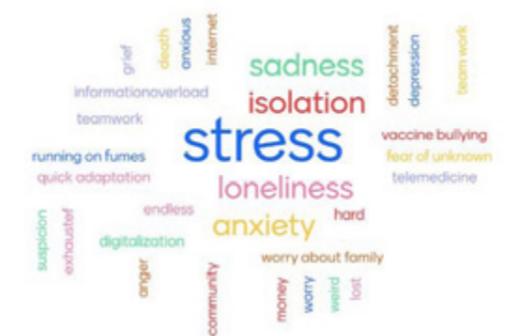
The first face to face meeting was planned for April 2020 in Berlin but for obvious reasons had to move online – in fact not all committee members have met in person yet, but that has certainly not reduced the creative energy of the group!

We started with surveying all EFIM member societies about any existing activities or structures specifically designed to support Early Career Internists in their countries, and discovered that there is very little existing support in place.

We agreed to focus our activities on non-technical skills such as leadership, training and supervision and team building, in order to support Early Career Internists in taking up senior posts and in becoming role models in Internal Medicine. Our social media presence focuses on this and encourages networking and debate on the challenges of leading and supporting our teams as relatively new specialists.

We held a webinar on Physician Wellbeing during COVID-19, and are currently preparing sessions for the upcoming ECIM: a pre-congress interactive workshop focusing on leadership and communication skills, and sessions on conflict resolution in Medicine and on risk communication.

We want to know how #COVID19 is affecting you. What words describe your feelings or experiences?



We very much hope that at next year's congress, we can finally implement some of our planned face to face activities, such as networking opportunities and a best abstract award celebrating team projects aimed at improving workplace culture.

Last year's European Advanced School of Internal Medicine – which should have been our main networking and educational event and was planned for November 2020 – had to be deferred and was instead replaced by a much smaller, online meeting for alumni of the previous editions of the School. Pandemic permitting, we hope to be able to make the next EASIM edition happen later this year in Riga, provisionally on 27 – 29 November 2021.



## REPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN BOARD OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

The Board planned to meet in Utrecht in March but this was postponed due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Instead we have resorted to Zoom and have had several meetings to further our activities online rather than face to face.

The main focus of our efforts has been to complete the revision of the Accreditation of Training Centres and the Certification in Internal Medicine documents. These have both reached the stage where they are ready to be implemented. In order to progress further, both of these documents would need to be launched using an appropriate web-based package with support, security and maintenance. The cost and processes of approving each application is being worked through at the current time.

The development of a knowledge-based examination is another goal of the board. A European diploma examination in Internal Medicine will require a significant amount of organisation. We have liaised with the European Paediatric section on how they developed their exam and with CESMA. We plan to explore the idea of creating an Exam Board and

Question Writing groups along with the governance required to run an exam of this nature.

The Terms of Reference of the Board have also been reviewed and been approved by the UEMS Section of Internal Medicine. Next, it will be discussed within the EFIM Executive Committee as to the make-up of the board and how the selection of members and elections of the key posts are organised.

The Board has developed a questionnaire on the state of training in Internal Medicine. It remains open and to date it has had over 200 responses. An update on the outcome of this questionnaire with results is planned for later this year.

There is also a plan to consider a survey on the effects of the pandemic on postgraduate training.

We will continue meeting online, but it is hoped that once the pandemic situation allows then a further meeting in Utrecht will take place.

### MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN BOARD OF INTERNAL MEDICINE



**REINOLD GANS**  
President of EBIM



**RUNOLFUR PALSSON**  
UEMS Section of Internal Medicine



**WERNER BAUER**  
EFIM



**MARIA D. CAPELLINI**  
EFIM



**MARK CRANSTON**  
EFIM



**JAN WILLEM ELTE**  
EFIM



**IEVA RUZA**  
EFIM

## REPORTS FROM THE EFIM WORKING GROUPS

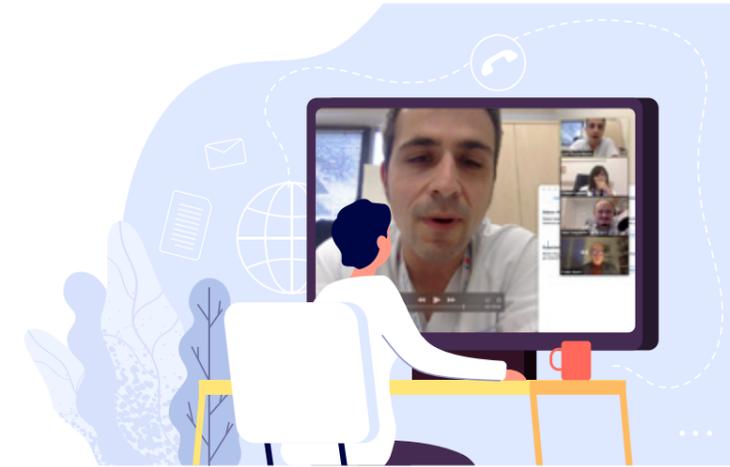
### ULTRASOUND WORKING GROUP

This year the Working Group activity of the Ultrasound group has been scarce due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the Working Group has been working on organising a webinar about "Lung ultrasound in COVID-19" beginning 2021, and an Ultrasound session during the upcoming ECIM 2021.

The session will be focusing on "Lung ultrasound in COVID-19" and "Point of care ultrasound in heart failure".

We hope the Working Group will return to pre-pandemic activity in the course of 2021.



### CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF GUIDELINES IN INTERNAL MEDICINE WORKING GROUP

Most of our medical practice relies upon Guidelines. However, Guidelines are far from being "exact and flexible" tools and instead suffer from major limitations. These limitations are even more accentuated when we try to use them within our Internal medicine setting, and the aim of our new Working Group on the Appraisal of Guidelines (AGWG) was to adapt existing European Guidelines relevant to our work in Internal Medicine departments and outpatient services to our daily clinical practice. 23 members from 20 countries met twice during 2019 (EFIM DAY and ECIM) and set the action plan and the objectives for 2019-2020. Due to the events in 2020 the WG meetings did not take place but virtual meeting took place in order to prepare the guideline appraisal. The following actions were carried out in 2020:

- **Develop a methodological tool to appraise existing guidelines**
  - A steering committee including Dr. Wiktor Lesniak, Prof. Laura Morbidoni and Prof. Ignacio Marin developed this unique and innovative tool. The paper was published in EJIM.
- **Two steering committees worked on the following topics:**
  - Community Acquired Pneumonia
    - Serhat Unal (Chair)
    - Prof. Stefano Bassetti
    - Prof. Kutay Demirkan
    - Prof. Ahmet Gorkem Er
    - Prof. Patrick Lacor
    - Prof. Hardmut Lode
    - Prof. Ignacio Marin
    - Prof. Abdullah Sayiner
  - Pulmonary Emboli
    - Prof. Cecilia Becattini (Chair)
    - Prof. Valentin Kokorin (Co-Chair)
    - Dr. Wiktor Lesniak
    - Prof. Javier Medrano
    - Dr. Alberto Marra
    - Dr. Ewelina Biskup
    - Dr. Antonio Riera-Mestre
- **Our aim for 2020 is to decide on:**
  - The steering committees chose the 5 most relevant and important PICOs according to the methodological tool for each appraisal topic, in order to focus the search, and subsequently appraised the guidelines.
  - The two new guideline appraisals will be presented during ECIM 2021.

Thanks to all the working group's members who have worked very hard to prepare for the first time this innovative endeavor of EFIM.

## REPORTS FROM THE EFIM WORKING GROUPS



### Choosing Wisely Working Group

2020 was the most challenging period in our professional lives, and that evaluation extends naturally to the Choosing Wisely Working Group activities.

With the difficulties of meeting in person, we had to rely on online techniques to keep the group together. But of course this approach is filled with problems, not least the challenges of spending extended periods of time online.

Despite these hurdles, we were able to organize and implement several events and meetings.

#### Meetings

##### Annual Choosing Work Working Group Meeting 2020

Choosing Wisely Working Group organized their annual meeting on 12 October 2020, 17.00-19.00 h.

##### Choosing Wisely International Roundtable 2020

Choosing Wisely Working Group attended the Choosing Wisely International Roundtable 2020 in a session with Dr. Don Berwick on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Most of the WG members were present through both events, with a very positive feedback from the attendees.

#### Publications

After several rounds of review, the Choosing Wisely Working Group paper was published in EJIM.

Omar Kherad, Nathan Peiffer-Smadja, Lina Karlafti, Margus Lember, Nathalie Van Aerde, Orvar Gunnarsson, Cristian Baicus, Miguel Bigotte Vieira, António Vaz-Carneiro, Antonio Brucato, Ivica Lazurova, Wiktor Leśniak, Thomas Hanslik, Stephen Hewitt, Eleni Papanicolaou, Olga Boeva, Dror Dicker, Biljana Ivanovska, Pinar Yldiz, Patrick Lacor, Mark Cranston, Frauke Weidanz, Giorgio Costantino and Nicola Montano. The challenge of implementing Less is More medicine: A European perspective. *Eur J Intern Med* 2020 Jun;**76**:1-7. doi: 10.1016/j.ejim.2020.04.014. Epub 2020 Apr 15.

#### Presentations

As the Chair of the Choosing Wisely Working Group, Prof. António Vaz Carneiro was invited to give several talks:

- At the Global Summit of Internal Medicine y XLIII Congreso Nacional de Medicina Interna of Mexico, with a talk on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 on "Choosing Wisely".
- At the EFIM SAM Journey in Buenos Aires, November 20 2020, in an online panel entitled "Choosing Wisely in Pandemics", giving a talk on "Choosing Wisely. Principles and examples".
- Meeting of the Portuguese Society of Geriatrics, with a talk on "Opportunities and challenges in geriatric research", November 13, 2020.
- Talks on CW in 3 post-graduate courses at the University of Lisbon, University of Coimbra and University of Porto.

## REPORTS FROM THE EFIM WORKING GROUPS



### Gender Medicine Working Group

As COVID-19 disrupted most of the aspects of professional and private domains, it certainly led to an increase of public awareness in terms of the importance of sex and gender in personal and public health. Both biological sex and gender have been shown to have a significant influence on and in the pandemic, from vulnerability to disease to follow up and finally to debates and evidence around vaccination.

#### Gender medicine session at the European Congress of Internal Medicine 2021

The ECIM 2021 will host a session with two lectures, one by Prof. Sabine Oertelt-Prigione and one by Prof. Valeria Raparelli (IMAGINE), moderated by Dr. Tiffany Leung (ACP) and Dr. Biskup (IMAGINE). The lectures will be focused on the sex and gender added value to clinical practice and research in internal medicine, structured and narrated as a dialogue between a senior mentor and an advanced mentee (March 20<sup>th</sup>, 13.00-14:00).

#### Publications

The IMAGINE survey manuscript has been finalized and approved by all group members. It is now in submission process, with insightful reviewer comments from top journals.

In addition, Prof. Raparelli and Dr. Biskup co-authored a letter response in JAMA Internal Medicine, initially titled "IMAGINE the future - a voice of young internists", modified for conformity to "Sex, Gender, and Precision Medicine".<sup>1</sup>

#### Collaborations

Further groups have expressed an interest in collaborative work with IMAGINE. The most important engagement was created by [representing IMAGINE](#) in the Gender and COVID-19

Working Group, constituted at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health.

By joining the group as collaborator, IMAGINE was able to massively enlarge the network with global KOLs and central organizations, such as UNESCO, UN and WHO.

In addition, research collaborations are being established with this global group of researchers, health practitioners, policy actors, who share resources and expertise on topics related to gender equity, women's empowerment, and COVID-19. The group meets online on the third Wednesday of every month to discuss key issues, activities, opportunities, and ideas for collaboration.

#### Webinar series

A first webinar is being planned, featuring Prof. Jeanette Wolffe (Boston) and Dr. Lavanya Vijayasingham, PhD, United Nations University, International Institute for Global Health on Sex on "Biological sex in therapy and diagnostics of COVID-19". The exact time will be determined in the upcoming days.

#### Research agenda

Anahita Fathi is setting up a multicenter project (with the assistance of IMAGINE) that will aim to assess sex differences in immunity to different vaccines against COVID-19. Details will be discussed internally and shared when appropriate.

#### Varia

Next virtual meeting of the group is scheduled during the ECIM 2021. The exact time will be determined in the upcoming days.



### ADVICE Working Group

The COVID-19 pandemic has once again shown that vaccines are one of the most important cornerstones of healthy and wealthy communities. The ADVICE Working Group, in this regard, aims to build up an effective network between important stakeholders and institutions in the region in order to increase the confidence in vaccines and vaccine coverage rates. The Middle East Eurasia and Africa Influenza Stakeholders Network and Hacettepe University Vaccine Institute are to be approached in the coming period for future collaboration with EFIM.

<sup>1</sup>Biskup E, Raparelli V, Leung TI. Sex, Gender, and Precision Medicine. *JAMA Intern Med.* June 2020. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2020.1599

## REPORTS FROM THE EFIM WORKING GROUPS



### Quality of Care and Professional Issues Working Group

These have been difficult times for our countries, for healthcare professionals and for internists in particular, who have been at the forefront in combating Pandemic by COVID-19. For that reason, the activity of our working group has been limited. Our initiatives were the organisation of two webinars broadcasted by EFIM and the organisation of a workshop that will take place during ECIM 2021.

The first webinar took place on November 3, 2020, under the theme "Lessons from the pandemics to change the hospital model". This webinar was moderated by the President of EFIM, Prof. Nicola Montano (Italy), and the topics covered were: "Organization and human resources", Prof. Luis Campos (Portugal); "Emergency", Prof. Giorgio Costantino (Italy), "Adapting hospital design for COVID-19", Dr. Eve Edelstein (USA) and "The hospital in the healthcare system", Prof. Xavier Corbella (Spain). This webinar was attended by more than 150 participants.

**EFIM Quality and Professional Issues Subcommittee Webinar**

**Lessons from the pandemic to change the hospital model**

**November 3, 2020**  
 17:00-18:30 GMT  
 18:00-19:30 CET (Europe)  
 13:00-14:30 EST (USA and Canada)

**Moderator: Prof. Nicola Montano (Italy)**

**17:00-17:15**  
 Organization and human resources  
**Prof. Luis Campos (Portugal)**

**17:15-17:30**  
 Emergency  
**Prof. Giorgio Costantino (Italy)**

**17:30-17:45**  
 Adapting Hospital Design for COVID-19  
**Dr. Eve Edelstein (USA)**

**17:45-18:00**  
 The hospital in the healthcare system  
**Prof. Xavier Corbella (Spain)**

**18:00-18:30**  
 Discussion, Question&Answers

**Registration** You can register to the webinar by clicking this form. You will receive the webinar access link to your email after registering.

The second webinar will focus on the theme "Keeping patients and healthcare providers safe during the pandemic" and is scheduled to take place on 12 January 2021.

The working group has also organised a pre-congress workshop about "Improving quality of care and patient safety in healthcare", which will take place during the 19<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Internal Medicine in March. The coordinators of the workshop are Dr. Matthias Raspe (Germany), Prof. Mine Durusu Tanriover (Turkey) and Dr. Monica Bivol (Norway).

The aim of the working group is to organise another webinar about "The Impact of information and communication technologies on post-pandemic health care" after ECIM 2021.

Currently the working group counts 23 representatives from 18 countries.

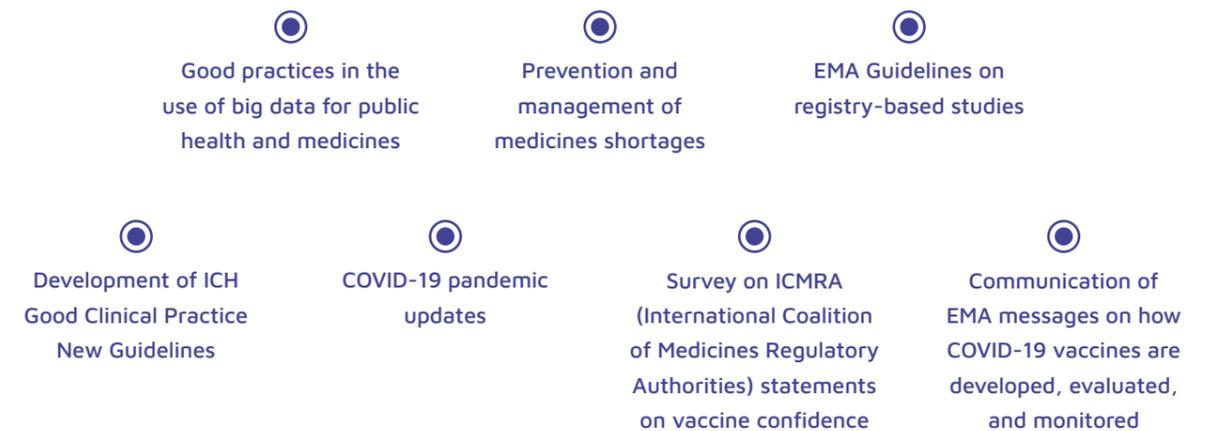
## EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY



In 2020, EFIM delegates to the EMA Healthcare Professionals Working Party (Daniel Sereni and Gualberto Gussoni) participated in several virtual meetings, conferences, and webinars. They collaborated with EMA by participating in consultations and giving advice on EMA communication policy: for example, on the design of a survey aimed at collecting input from Healthcare Professionals on EMA's Action Plan.

As usual, the delegates disseminated relevant regulatory information or alerts on medicines to EFIM and EFIM members.

Besides, during this year new specific topics have been brought to discussion during meetings of the Healthcare Professionals Working Party (HCPWP) as well as in joint meetings with the Patients and Consumers Working Party (PCWP). The main issues discussed were:



## FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL MEDICINE IN EUROPE



Since March 2020 the activities of the Foundation have been significantly influenced by the COVID-19 crisis. All board and management committee meetings were virtual. The annual Seminar on Clinical Research programmed in June in Paris had to be cancelled. Fortunately, the support from the Foundation's main donor in France was given again this year, allowing us to maintain the majority of FDIME activities. Two research grants were awarded as follows:

Dr. Peter Wolf (Austria) for an amount of Euro 17,500 for a Study Project entitled "Musculoskeletal comorbidities in acromegaly – from identification of a disease specific profile to the development of a diagnostic algorithm in growth hormone excess".

Dr. Marco Lanzillotta (Italy) for an amount of Euro 8,750 for his Research Study Project "Towards treatment optimization in autoimmune pancreatitis (the TOP Study)".

The FDIME supported two Young Internists for their participation to the ESIM winter school of January 2020. Besides the Foundation has initiated a new activity dedicated to the information of the public on critical questions raised by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Foundation has issued nine newsletters since May 2020. The aim was to explain to the public the major aspects of the COVID-19 disease: ways of transmission, characteristics of the virus, symptoms and complications, immune response, diagnosis, treatments, measures taken in different EU countries for limiting spread of the disease. The three most recent newsletters were focused on vaccination. These newsletters have been published on the [FDIME website](#). They were also sent to an email list of around 3,000 people and put on the Foundation's Facebook page. Each newsletter reaches an average 100,000 persons and produces around 5,000 interactions.

## YOUNG INTERNISTS SECTION REPORT



### Webinars

In 2020, when the pandemic forced most of the education to go online, we continued this project launched by the EFIM Young Internists in 2019. With granted access to the Zoom platform, and with the help of the Delta Team, we were able to organize this activity much better and accommodate a wider audience, ranging at about 100 live participants per webinar.

We hosted three successful webinars in the second semester of 2020, starting with "The clinical approach and management of patients with headaches" on September 14<sup>th</sup> with professor Ben Lovell from Plymouth University Medical School, UK. On November 11<sup>th</sup> professor Gheorghe-Andrei Dan from Carol Davila University Bucharest, Romania, one of the ESC guidelines' authors, presented "ESC Atrial Fibrillation 2020 Guidelines: the path to a new paradigm", and on December 21<sup>st</sup> professor Nikolas Papanas from Democritus University of Thrace, Greece, President of the European Diabetic Foot Study Group, spoke to us about the "Diabetic Neuropathy". Each webinar was moderated by two young internists from different countries, selected from the Young Internists Assembly based on affinity and subspecialization in Internal Medicine.

Each webinar was well received and gathered a large live audience, with lively debates and active questions and answers sessions at the end of each one. We received great feedback from the participants and we are looking forward to organizing the upcoming events for 2021.

### The Young Internists' COVID-19 Survey

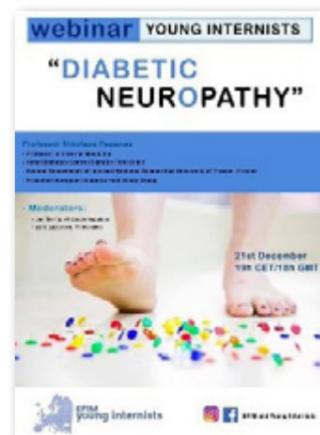
To assess the international experience of Young Internists across Europe during the COVID-19 pandemic we launched a short online survey asking about the impact on professional as well as personal life, research and academic studies, and future perspectives. We saw this as a great opportunity to relate to peers across Europe and to share our perspective during the uncertain times, to reach out to all our colleagues in different countries coping in different ways with the pandemic.



We gathered initial responses from 130 participants, mainly from Portugal, Romania, UK and a few other European countries. Results will be presented and discussed at the 19<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Internal Medicine.

### The Young Internists' Corner from the European Journal of Internal Medicine

Under the close guidance of Professor Giancarlo Agnelli, the Editor-in-Chief of the EJIM, the Young Internists made progress in regard to this project that was proposed in 2019. We reached an appropriate methodology and we established multinational teams of talented young researchers to collaborate on topics of their expertise. The groups are working on manuscripts that will be submitted for peer review under this new section of the journal.



EFIM moved from face to face meetings to a digital platform



EFIM organised 16 scientific webinars in the course of 2020



EFIM launched the Multimorbidity WG and Telemedicine, Innovative Technologies and Digital Health WG



EFIM offered COVID-19 resources via the website homepage



EFIM has joined the European Alliance for Value in Health



# EFIM 2020 MILESTONES



**EFIM**  
[www.efim.org](http://www.efim.org)

Grensstraat 7  
1831 Diegem - Brussels  
Belgium  
TEL +32 2 725 9424  
FAX +32 2 660 3821  
E-MAIL [info@efim.org](mailto:info@efim.org)