

**1999 Report
on
EFMI as IMIA Regional Member in 1998
to the
IMIA Board and IMIA General Assembly**

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Objectives

The objectives of the European Federation for Medical Informatics (EFMI), founded in 1976, are:

- to advance international co-operation and dissemination of information in Medical Informatics on a European basis;
- to promote high standards in the application of medical informatics;
- to promote research and development in medical informatics;
- to encourage high standards in education in medical informatics;
- to function as the autonomous European Regional Council of IMIA.

Activities

All European countries are entitled to be represented in EFMI by a suitable Medical Informatics Society. The term medical informatics is used to include the whole spectrum of Healthcare Informatics and all disciplines concerned with Healthcare and Informatics. The organisation operates with a minimum of bureaucratic overhead and each national society supports the Federation by sending and paying for a representative to participate in the decisions of the Federation's Council. Also, and again to reduce overhead, English has been adopted as the official language, although simultaneous translation is often provided for congresses in non-English speaking countries.

Currently, 28 countries have joined the Federation, the latest member being Bulgaria who joined in 1997. The EFMI Council normally meets twice a year. Furthermore, it is represented by a Vice-President (Europe) at meetings of the Board and the annual General Meetings of the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA).

Congresses and Publications

So far, 14 general Congresses (Medical Informatics Europe - MIE) have been organised by EFMI. These have taken place in Cambridge (1978), Berlin (1979), Toulouse (1981), Dublin (1982), Brussels (1984), Helsinki (1985), Rome (1987), Oslo (1988), Glasgow (1990), Vienna (1991), Jerusalem (1993), Lisbon (1994), Copenhagen (1996) and Thessaloniki (1997). As 1998 was a MEDINFO year no MIE Congress was held. The proceedings of these congresses have usually been published by Springer in the series Lecture Notes in Medical Informatics and by IOS Press in 1996 and 1997.

A selection of the best papers from the Copenhagen and the Thessaloniki conferences has been published in an issue of the International Journal of Medical Informatics, edited by Professors Arie Hasman and Charles Safran. The next MIE congress will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia in 1999.

The last conference in this millennium was held in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. The motto of this year's conference "Bridges of Knowledge" reflects this historical event – bridges between millenniums and bridges between various countries and various disciplines.

The response to the call for papers was overwhelming, 263 contributions from 28 different countries were received and 208 high quality papers were accepted for oral or poster presentations. Each paper has been reviewed by at least two reviewers coming from 35 countries. The quality, clarity and originality were the main criteria for accepting or rejecting a paper.

All accepted presentations are divided into the following topics:

- Information systems in health care and medicine
- Telemedicine and telematics
- Security
- Biomedical processing, data analysis and image processing
- Data warehousing, data mining and knowledge discovery
- Training and education
- Internet/Intranet
- Resources management
- Intelligent medical systems
- Health guidelines and protocols
- Electronic patient encounter, card technology, electronic data interchange
- Terminology
- Nursing informatics.

IOS Press published the proceedings. Again a selection of the best papers will be published later in a special issue of *The International Journal of Medical Informatics*.

To date the official journals adopted by the Federation are: *The International Journal of Medical Informatics*, *Methods of Information in Medicine*, *Medical Informatics*, and *Health Informatics Europe*.

So far, ten EFMI-Working Groups have been created:

1. Minimum Basic Data Sets, Case-Mix and Severity of Cases (Chair: Francis H. Roger-France);
2. Data Protection in Health Systems (Chair: François Allaert);
3. Standards for Medical Records Exchange has now been replaced by CEN TC 251, as a European entity covering the scope of « Telematics in Healthcare » (Chair: Georges De Moor);
4. Information Planning and Modelling in Health Care (Chair: Bryan Manning);
5. Nursing Informatics (Chair: Irma Iversen);
6. Training and Education (Chair: Arie Hasman);
7. Primary Care Informatics (Chair: Nicholas Robinson);
8. Natural Language Understanding (Chair: Robert Baud);
9. Organizational Impact of Health Informatics (Chair: Jos Aarts);
10. Health Informatics and Development (Chair: Marcelo Sosa-Iudicissa).

Countries

The participating countries are Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, (The) Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom. Applications are open to representative societies in countries within the European Region of WHO.

Information

In January 1996 and confirmed in January 1997, a new EFMI Council was elected and the new function of « Information Officer » created. The list of officers can be found on the EFMI page of the 1998 IMIA YEAR BOOK, (page 21) and under Addresses of IMIA Member Societies (Page 11 - 20).

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