

# EURACT

## MESSENGER



## Spring 2014 EURACT Council Meeting, Skopje

In the period from 24 - 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2014, Skopje was the venue of the spring EURACT Council Meeting. National representatives from 28 countries were present. The Meeting Agenda encompassed number of sessions, working in groups and social events.

Before the start of the Council meeting, a Workshop on Medical Education in Family Medicine was organized at the Medical Faculty, University Ss Cyril and Methodius Skopje on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The workshop was opened by the Dean of the Medical Faculty Skopje, Prof. Nikola Jankulovski, followed by presentations of Prof. Francesco Carelli from the Department of Family Medicine, Milano, Italy, Prof. Ruth Kalda from the Department of Family Medicine, University of Tartu, Estonia and As.Prof. Katerina Stavric as the host. Experiences of EURACT were shared with teachers in family medicine but also teachers from other departments.

During the Council meeting work of the committees and task groups was successful and productive, and lot of activities was presented.



The full rapport you can find on the web page: [www.euract.eu](http://www.euract.eu).

In the social activities the national representatives had opportunity to experience the Macedonian tradition, history and food. A visit to the archeological site Stobi was organized, followed by degustation of Macedonian vines in Dudin

winery and a folklore dance show. A visit to the canyon Matka near Skopje was organized the following day. The rainy weather did not prevent the participants from visiting the famous cave Vrelo.

**Katerina Stavric**  
Euract Council representative of Macedonia

## Messages from the Committees

### Specialist Training Committee

The Specialist Training Committee is currently working on a document of assessment. This document describes an assessment model in GP Specialty training. Historically, the assessment has been rigidly defined as either summative or formative but this division has been discredited. It is now recognized that the assessment needs to be embedded within training, be integral to the curriculum and be a driving force which encourages the development of the trainee. The document outlines the basic principles and tools that can be used and can be adapted for local purposes.

The Committee will try to collect the information about specialization in countries, members of the EURACT. We hope that this document will be available prior to the autumn meeting in Porto.

**Katerina Stavric**  
Chair of the ST Committee, Macedonia

### CME/CPD Committee

The CME/CPD Committee's main activities since October 2013 are related to the e-portfolio. The e-portfolio is a good method of self - education, suitable for control of education results, progress achieved, promoting professional development, helps oversee and gather a variety of results of our educational activity: practical and theoretical work, practical skills, research activities, attending conferences, etc.

The Euract CPD/CME committee displays a sample of e-portfolio downloadable and visible on the Euract website: <http://euract.eu/media/system/e-portfolio/index.html> to provide you with help in starting your own e- portfolio.

The e-portfolio is structured and thoroughly organized, and you may download and apply the structure proposed by us here: <http://euract.eu/media/system/e-portfolio/page9.html> and fill prepared folders with your personal files created in any application (Word, Excell, PP etc).

Word template files, within the root directory, are also downloadable in the Euract website. Just click on the blue headings and downloading of the requested Word template starts.

You may even adjust the root directory of the e- portfolio according to your demand after you download it to your device.

**Jáchym Bednář**  
Chair of CME/CPD Committee  
Czech republic

## Basic Medical Education Committee

The EURACT Statement on Family Medicine Undergraduate Teaching in all European Universities, after having been finalized in Autumn 2013, was approved by Executive Board, and presented to the Council, according to the report to Council in Tirana. The Council approved it and this Statement is since 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014 officially on EURACT website and can be used for all national needs.

The Committee discussed how to go forward on a research initiative named “Activities to enforce family medicine around Europe” from what was done in an initial brainstorming plenary session in Tirana. It is the logical consequence after the production of the minimal core curriculum for undergraduate teaching for

family medicine and the subsequent mapping of the situation of undergraduate teaching all around Europe.

More than 60 items arose from the brainstorming session in Tirana, later reduced to 50. The second round was done by e-mail to rank proposals according to Delphi methodology. There are 4 general questions as introduction, so to try to divide according to the national general development.

27 answers arrived till the 27<sup>th</sup> April. We'll analyze the collected data and they will be completed in a short time so to pinpoint a limited number of items really relevant for the majority of respondents.

Also, we need to come back to discuss what we

mean about some proposed items and to explore criteria when divided in 3 groups according to the medium national development.

We are realizing that the topic is complex, driving to more topics as research, with a really multifaceted situation also inside the national contexts.

We invited comments and suggestions to be sent to [zarbailovnatalia@gmail.com](mailto:zarbailovnatalia@gmail.com) and also to send articles and papers connected to this research.

All Committee members will cooperate in between meetings so to be able to use space in the plenary during the Council Meeting in Porto. This space will be requested from the Executive Board in due time.

**Francesco Carelli**

*Chair of the BME Committee, Italy*

## An Executive Summary on EURACT Policy

Based on the reports from the Survey on services for members (Yvonne van Leeuwen), the Policy Planning Task Group (Peter Prydz) and the Council discussion in Tirana Council meeting, October 3-5, 2013, the following items shall be pursued during the coming period:

- Our vision shall be **making it worthwhile to be a EURACT member**.
- The starting point is the EURACT constitution. We shall **fulfil the aims and tasks** which are stated in Article 2.
- We shall **improve things that we are doing well**: courses, producing documents.
- We shall **increase EURACT visibility**:
  - We shall keep our newsletter. An editorial board should help with the newsletter.
  - We shall keep our presence at conferences (WONCA).
  - We shall keep organizing the courses.
- We shall promote our documents:
  - Teaching agenda had the highest score.
- Creating a **teaching agenda for the BME**:
  - How to introduce GP/FM as a new discipline.
  - Minimum core curriculum exists.
  - Bologna template should be used.
  - Invite lecturers from other countries/universities to teach and to build up scientific units.
  - Reduce lectures to a minimum and increase seminar/ group work.
  - Producing teaching materials – second highest score.
  - Overview of recommended textbooks.
  - Kit of teaching methods.
  - Kit of assessment tools.
- Every three years a **EURACT Educational Conference** (first in 2016) shall be organized, where any member can submit an abstract. In this way we can attract more members.
- We shall introduce **Collective Membership** from universities and national colleges. In that respect we shall adapt EURACT rules.
- We need **academic input**, but the Council has its tasks for the council meeting, so any activity like that could serve more as “refreshment” during the council meeting.
- We shall strengthen the collaboration with other organizations like family medicine departments at universities.

## Short reports of Task Forces

### Appraisal of GP Teachers

The Task Group was organised in the EURACT Council Meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2014

The purpose of the project is to produce a proposal for the assessment of teachers of general practice. There are seven partners in this project, including EURACT. The competence framework used for the Leonardo course for trainers in family medicine will form the basis for the assessment process.

The meeting started with a review of the current arrangements for the assessment of teachers in the eleven countries represented. The conclusion from this was that there appears to be very few countries that currently have a formal system for the assessment of teaching, but that there was a need to do this. It was agreed that the project was therefore a useful and timely one.

The basic principles of how this assessment should occur were discussed. It was envisaged that an individual would present evidence that would demonstrate how the competencies were being achieved. This would be submitted for peer review and a decision reached as to where the teacher was on the spectrum – Novice, Competent, Proficient, Expert.

Individual countries may choose to adopt the process completely, others may wish to adapt it to individual needs. This latter option should be available, particularly to the partners in the project. In those countries that do not adopt it, there should be an option for EURACT members to participate in it, independently.

The choice of reviewers was discussed – they will need to speak the same language as the teacher, so they can understand the evidence. Training will be required for reviewers.

A brief discussion was had about the data set – the only conclusion reached was that this should include feedback from students/trainees. The importance of recognising that feedback does not always have to be positive was discussed – the quality of reflection on the feedback is more important than the fact that the feedback is uniformly positive. The discussion on content will be continued at the next council meeting.

The ‘Open PDF document’ is an attractive medium for the presentation of evidence as it does not require website maintenance, can be translated into different languages and can be adapted to individual country requirements.

**Jo Buchanan**

*Chair of the Task Group, UK*

### Educational Research Task Force

It was decided that we will continue to focus on scrutinizing the literature and on producing literature reviews to be published in the EURACT newsletter. Some of the themes that were addressed during this meeting (amongst others) were: Effectiveness of a training program on supervisors' ability to provide feedback on residents' communication skills, factors influencing the effectiveness of multisource feedback in improving the professional practice of medical doctors: a systematic review and Data dredging, salami-slicing, and other successful strategies

to ensure rejection: twelve tips on how to not get your paper published.

Also ready to use “off the shelf” binders with selected articles will be made available for interested EURACT members. The following themes have been selected for these binders: research methods, portfolios and reflective learning, assessment methods and curriculum development. To be continued...

**Jan Degryse**

*Chair of Educational Research Task Force  
Belgium*

# Upcoming conferences and courses

18 – 21 September 2014, Sarajevo - Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Third AGP/ FM SEE Congress: *Who are we and what is our future?*

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Organizational Board of AGP/ FM SEE Congress we would like to wish you welcome in our country and our city. This Congress will take place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina from 18 to 21 September 2014.

The theme of Upcoming Third AGP/ FM SEE Congress is „Who are we and what is our future?“.

Association of Family Physicians of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ASFP FBiH) as a host of this Congress has a goal to discover new trends of the General Practice and Family Medicine and in this way explore future of our speciality.

We would like to invite all general practitioners/family physicians and primary care organizations, to participate in the scientific program with submitting their works in some of five defined congress topics as well as in open topic.

The Congress represents a opportunity to meet colleagues, professionals and researchers, in the area of General Practice and Family Medicine from different countries of South-East Europe.

We are looking forward to see you in Sarajevo on September.

**Venue (centre/city/country):** Hotel Hollywood, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Organising Society/Institution/University:** Association of Family Physicians of FBiH with Association of general practice/family medicine of South-East Europe AGP/FM SEE

**Contact information:**

[organizational.board@BH-Congress2014.ba](mailto:organizational.board@BH-Congress2014.ba)

[scientific.board@BH-Congress2014.ba](mailto:scientific.board@BH-Congress2014.ba)

[Secretary@BH-Congress2014.ba](mailto:Secretary@BH-Congress2014.ba)

[info@BH-Congress2014.ba](mailto:info@BH-Congress2014.ba)

**Website:** <http://bh-congress2014.ba>

**Official language of the event:** Languages of BiH and English

**Deadline for early registration fee €150 -** June 30, 2014

**Late registration fee €180 -** July 1, 2014 – September 18, 2014

**Onsite registration fee €200 -** On the day of the Congress

## International EURACT Bled Course 2014

### The Scope and Limits of General Family Medicine.

The annual EURACT course for family medicine teachers at all levels will be held again at Bled in Slovenia 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September. This year's topic recognises that Family Medicine is facing many challenges as our population ages and there is a drive to move more medical care into our communities. There are ever increasing demands for Family Doctors to take on new and wider responsibilities in diagnosis, treatment, prevention, education and administration in addition to our traditional roles. Within the profession there are some voices calling for a broader role for Family Doctors while others strive to set rational limits to the scope of the work. This course aims to address these issues.

The course is aimed at educators in primary care who are involved in teaching at the university or practice level. It will be of interest to educators at all stages of their careers and will offer the opportunity to experience working with in

a small group of peers from across Europe.

The course takes place over 4.5 days: each day starts with a plenary session which consists of a plenary lecture on one aspect of the course theme; the rest of the day is spent in small groups during which the participants will have the opportunity to explore the theme in greater depth. A highlight of the course is the opportunity provided by Bled Health Centre to visit patients in their homes.

Each group will produce a teaching module by the end of the week which participants can then take back with them to their own setting. Feedback from the Bled course has been consistently positive as the combination of the course content and an active social programme makes for a refreshing and interesting week.

If you are interested in finding out more the course details can be found on: <http://www.bled-course.org>

**Jo Buchanan**

[Jo.buchanan@nhs.net](mailto:Jo.buchanan@nhs.net)

## Leonardo 1 in Georgia

The Leonardo EURACT Level 1 Course for teachers in family medicine will take place in Tbilisi, Georgia 15-17 October 2015

Trainers: Adam Windak, Egle Price, Roger Price.

There will be 12 sponsored places covered by EURACT; this includes course materials, organization of the course, conference attendance, coffee breaks, lunches and dinner. Travel expenses should be covered by participants.

For self-paying members the registration fee will be 300-350 Euros (not finally defined) and the hotel price per night – 60-65 Euros

**Givi Javashvili**, [gjavashvili@hotmail.com](mailto:gjavashvili@hotmail.com)

*Euract Council representative of Georgia*

## EURACT projects

### EURACT partner in a LdV project

In January 2014, the new Leonardo da Vinci project Continuing Educational Development and Harmonisation of Expert Teachers in General Practice/Family Medicine in Europe through a systematic process of quality improvement CE-DinGP-II started and will continue until the end of next year. Besides EURACT there are six other partners in this project. A task group on appraisal of GP teachers reviewed the current status of teachers' appraisal. We found out there are different local rules for university teachers' appraisal but there is lack of consistent certification and

## Past Courses

### Leonardo EURACT course level 2 in Skopje

In the period from 3 to 6 of April 2014, the Center for Family Medicine, Medical Faculty Ss Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje was the host of the Leonardo EURACT course level 2 for trainers in Family medicine. The Course for a second time was conducted by Prof Justin Allen, Prof. Igor Svab, Prof. d-r Egle Price and Prof. d-r Roger Price. 26 experienced teachers in family medicine from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Slovakia, Romania, Malta, Turkey and Finland attended the course. 12 participants (3 from Macedonia, 2 from Croatia, 3 from Serbia, 3 from Turkey and 1 from Slovakia) were sponsored by EURACT.

3 days of intensive work in small groups with mentors in a safe environment resulted in a successful course. The participants have obtained skills and knowledge in small group leadership and facilitation, how to manage problematic trainees, the use of consultation as a teaching opportunity and how teachers can convert learning outcomes from curricula in real teaching sessions. This course created great friendship between the participants who achieved new skills and fresh ideas how to improve teaching of family medicine. They will have an opportunity to replicate and disseminate the level 2 course in their countries in their native language.

This course also offers an experience of the beauty of Skopje and its surroundings. The participants had the opportunity to see Skopje, the old bazaar and Ss. Spas, as well the beauty of Canon Matka near Skopje, taste the Macedonian food and vine and dance to Macedonian folk music.

The overall feedback from participants as well as from teachers was positive which support the efforts of EURACT to continue with the courses towards building an international network of expert teachers in family medicine.

Local organizer: **Katarina Stavric**  
*Euract Council member, Macedonia*

recertification of GP teachers outside medical schools. We agreed a systematic process is needed.

The competence framework used for the Leonardo course for trainers in family medicine will form the basis for the assessment process. It was envisaged that an individual would present evidence that would demonstrate how the competencies were being achieved. This would be submitted for peer review and a decision reached as to where the teacher was on the spectrum of Novice, Competent, Proficient or Expert Teacher. On behalf of EURACT, past president professor Justin Allen takes part in the project, but during the next meeting the following EURACT experts are invited to share their expertise: Ilse Helleman, Francesco Carelli, Paula Vainiomaki and Renzo De Gabriele.

**Janko Kersnik**

*President of Euract, Slovenia*

## EURACT Performance Agenda

The EURACT Performance Agenda (EUPA) is the third paper in a row following the European Definition of General Practice/Family Medicine (WONCA Europe) in 2002 identifying 6 core competencies and 11 abilities every family doctor should master, and the EURACT Educational Agenda in 2005 which provided a framework to teach the core competencies by setting learning aims and monitoring their achievement. Performance (in contrast to competence) is understood as the level of actual performance in clinical care and communication with patients in daily practice.

Small groups of EURACT Council members from nearly 40 European countries have dis-

cussed and developed EUPA since 2007. EUPA is a general, uniform and basic agenda of performance elements every GP masters in daily practice, applicable and adaptable to different countries with different systems. It deals with the process and result of actual work in daily practice, not with a teaching/learning situation.

EUPA discusses in depth the psychometrics and edometrics of performance assessment. Case vignettes of abilities in GPs' daily practice in every chapter illustrate performance and its assessment. Common assessment tools are e.g. on-site assessment by a peer and audit of medical records, making it also part of CPD.

EUPA can help to shape performance assessment activities locally in general practice/family medicine e.g. in continuing professional development cycles, re-certification/re-accreditation/licensing procedures, peer review programmes or practice audit programmes in quality management. It can give orientation for self-assessment for reflective practitioners in their CPD.

The EURACT Performance Agenda (EUPA) will be presented to the public for the first time during the 19<sup>th</sup> WONCA Europe Conference, 2-5 July 2014, Lisbon/Portugal. It will be available in a printed version and from an open access source.

**Stefan Wilm**

*Euract Council representative of Germany*

## EURACT's 'Ask the expert!'

As stated in the Articles of Association of EURACT (the European Academy of Teachers in General Practice/Family Medicine), the aim of EURACT is to foster and maintain a high standard in European primary health care by the promotion of study and education in the field of general practice. This can be achieved by 9 different tasks, amongst which are:

- Providing support and information for Academy members.
- Establishing a communication network between members.

At present EURACT has a good opportunity to increase this activity, using the website and newsletter.

However it is obvious that the Academy can further increase its value for members and gain prestige if communication with members is made more dynamic, lively and prompt.

### THE AIM OF PROJECT

To provide timely informational support for EURACT members, using the great wealth of intellectual and informational potential of EURACT council members, and their knowledge, skills, and links.

### METHODS AND DESCRIPTION

The project proposes to establish a *one month "duty" of Council members on the website as experts. Their responsibility will be to collect questions and requests of EURACT members and answer them through e-mail.*

**1. The choice of responsible persons** should be done on a volunteer basis. The leader of the project will gather information from all Council members about their field or area of expertise and negotiate with each about their opportunity to participate.

**2. The announcement about the opportunity to "Ask the expert"** can be done through the website, through the newsletter and by e-mails from country representatives to their members. The name of the expert and his/her photo will be posted on the website.

**3. The expert declares** preliminary about their preferable field of expertise, but in the

case of difficulties in answering a question or to help the person asking it, he can forward the question to another Council member or to ask for information from Council.

**4. The proposed content** of the expert's assistance or support of members will include:

- To refer to EURACT publications about teaching, learning, education
- To refer to the courses' agenda
- To refer to future EURACT workshops and conferences
- To provide a link with outside experts (educators, trainers and academics) from different EURACT member countries
- To give descriptions about EURACT's aims and tasks
- To explain possible ways of education and learning according to the person's interest
- To help with links to receive financial support through grants, stipends, sabbaticals and other kinds
- To help in the field of educational research (references, leading experts, websites and so on)
- To establish contacts with Council members from different countries

**5. Communication** should be provided in English. Council members from native English-speaking countries can help in case of inadequate language skills.

**6. The regularity** of communication depends on the amount of questions. The expert should give priority to answer EURACT' members during his/her duty.

**7. The confirmation** of receipt of a question should be done within one week.

**8. The answer to the question should be sent** within a further 2 weeks. If the expert could not provide the answer during this time, he/she has to send to the person asking it an explanation (e.g. the need to find people, links, etc.)

**9. The leader of the project** should be informed and the answer can be sent with cc to the leader.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of this project are:

1. To improve the relationship between Council and members of the organization;
2. To provide prominence for Council members not only in their own countries, but in the whole of Europe (as they deserve);
3. To improve the relationship between Council members;
4. To gain prestige for EURACT and to make it well-known in Europe among the Family Medicine teaching community;
5. To involve young EURACT members (and non-members) who prefer the use of networks, internet communities and dynamic communication;
6. To gain new members of EURACT.

### PROJECT EVALUATION

For each Council meeting the experts will have to prepare a short report about their activity, the numbers of questions, contents, difficulties and so on.

After one year of the project:

1. The leader sends an evaluation form to participating experts and to people who asked questions about their satisfaction with the communication;
2. The leader asks (through national representatives) EURACT members if they know about this possibility and if they made use of it;
3. The leader (with the help of the Chairperson of the Website Editorial Board) counts the number of questions asked and answers given;
4. The leader asks each expert's opinion about this activity and his/her intentions to continue or to improve;
5. The leader analyses the questions' content and the most frequent problems, and presents the results to Council.

### Participants of the project:

Elena Frolova – the leader  
Yvonne van Leeuwen  
Mario R Sammut