



**Society Members Advisory Board Meeting of the  
Confederation of European  
Otorhinolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery**

Date: Sunday, June 15, 2024 – 13:00 – 15:00h  
Location: Liffey Hall 1, CCD, Dublin, Ireland

## MINUTES

### 1. Welcome

Per Cayé-Thomassen welcomes all the Representatives present at the Society Members Advisory Board Meeting and presents the agenda for the meeting. He informs them that the meeting is being recorded.

### 2. Introduction of current officers of CEORL

Per Cayé-Thomassen introduces the current Presidential Council:

President: Per Cayé-Thomassen

President-Elect: Jan Plzák

Past President: Cem Mecó

General Secretary: Elisabeth V. Sjögren

General Secretary-Elect: Miroslav Tedla

Treasurer: Tomislav Baudoin

Treasurer-Elect: Elisabetta Zanoletti

Congress President 2024: John Russell

Congress President 2026: Ann Hermansson

UEMS Representative: Ricard Simó

EBEORL Representative: Heikki Irjala

Senior Counsellors:

Manuel Bernal-Sprekelsen

Marc Remacle

He presents the Core Presidential Council formed by the President, Secretary General and Treasurer that has been running the daily business of the Confederation and thanks the whole Presidential Council for their support.

### 3. 7th Congress of European ORL-HNS (John Russell, Michael Kuo)

John Russell reports about the preliminary results of the Congress:

- Registration Statistics as of Saturday 17/06/2024:
  - 3.329 participants from 87 countries. In comparison with Milan (2.856 participants) and Brussels (2.813 participants), the number of delegates has increased. The congress is growing and is now the biggest ENT gathering in Europe:
    - 802 faculty
    - 2.411 delegates
    - 116 industry representatives
  - Top 10 countries:
    - United Kingdom: 344
    - Spain: 302
    - United States: 194
    - Germany: 189
    - Portugal: 176
    - Italy: 148
    - Netherlands: 146
    - Ireland: 135
    - France: 98
    - Denmark: 92
  - The congress has representatives from other continents too:
    - Africa: 12 / 0.38%
    - America: 346 / 10.30%
    - Asia: 321 / 9.67%
    - Europe: 2.619 / 78.70%
    - Oceania: 31 / 0.95%
  - Invited countries:
    - Argentina
    - India
    - Japan
    - Kenya
    - South Africa
  - John Rusell presents the representation from European countries:



Confederation of European  
Otorhinolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery  
CREATING ONE VOICE for ORL-HNS in Europe and beyond

### National Society Members Attendance

Albania: 20	Estonia: 34	Malta: 3	Switzerland: 82
Armenia: 4	Finland: 58	Moldavia: 0	Turkey: 54
Austria: 42	France: 98	Netherlands: 146	Ukraine: 16
Azerbaijan: 2	Germany: 189	North Macedonia: 5	United Kingdom: 344
Belarus: 4	Greece: 49	Norway: 34	
Belgium: 62	Hungary: 5	Poland: 29	
Bosnia Hercegovina: 10	Iceland: 6	Portugal: 176	
Bulgaria: 18	Ireland: 135	Romania: 79	
Croatia: 29	Israel: 40	Russia: 8	
Cyprus: 13	Italy: 148	Serbia: 19	
Czech Rep: 49	Lithuania: 13	Slovakia: 12	
Denmark: 92	Luxembourg: 1	Slovenia: 9	
		Spain: 303	
		Sweden: 91	

- Industry:
  - Sponsors: Medtronic, Sanofi, Storz, GSK, Integra, Stryker, Kurz, MedEl, Olympus
  - 62 Exhibitors. In comparison with Milan (56 exhibitors) and Brussels (47 exhibitors) the interest from companies has increased.

Michael Kuo presents the scientific programme and explains that it is constructed by subspecialty societies with the contribution of national societies:

- Faculties participating at the congress: 803 and explains that there have been last minute cancellations due to Visa problems.
- Faculties proposed by national societies:
  - To be proposed: 392
    - Proposed: 295 / 75,26%
    - Invited: 243
      - Accepted: 188
      - Declined/No answer: 55
    - Societies that declined to propose faculties: Belgium, Iceland, Luxembourg, Moldova, Norway and Poland.
- Faculty demographic statistics:
  - By continent:
    - Africa: 5 / 0.59%
    - America: 123 / 14.42%
    - Asia: 33 / 3.87%
    - Europe: 686 / 80.42%
    - Oceania: 6 / 0.70%
- Gender, by subspecialty and role: Over the last three meetings we had an increase of gender balance in the faculty, but this is a topic to be improved for future congresses, especially in some subspecialty societies.
- To finalize he thanks John Russell for the work done and putting together a very well-balanced programme and recommends the next organizers contact some countries to engage them and mentions the good prices for the residents that allow to engage young people.

Per Cayé-Thomasen thanks John Russell and Michael Kuo for all the great work done.

Per Cayé-Thomasen informs about the three goals defined for the period 2022-2024:

#### 4. Global Outreach programme

One of the initiatives is the global outreach program. There is a webpage section explaining this initiative, consisting of three parts:

1. Establishment of a Bulletin Board to post initiatives from non-profit organizations to facilitate connections among individuals, donors and organizations. One of the initiatives published in the Ear Air Nepal.
2. Global Outreach travel grant: The first grant of up to 5.000€ was awarded to Dr Pandey from Nepal. From the list of 45 developing countries, it was decided to choose Nepal, the grant was posted through the ENT Nepalese Society. The plan is to choose another country for Gothenburg.
3. CEORL Global Outreach session(s) at the biannual CEORL congresses: the first Global Outreach session will take place on Monday with 5 speakers discussing initiatives in Tanzania, Nepal, Pan-African, Greenland and Uganda initiatives. The plan is to organize more sessions in the upcoming congresses.

## 5. New grants/observerships

Elisabeth Sjögren informs on the European initiative grants to increase the awareness of the Confederation in Europe, particularly among national societies. The Confederation implemented two different initiatives:

1. Observership travel grants for members of national, subspecialty or individual members of the Confederation, up to 500 Euro with 12 grants available for 2024 to support young ENT residents or doctors who want to travel. The Confederation received 43 applications, of which 40 were eligible.
2. CEORL-HNS 2024 Dublin Scholarships: Each national and co-opted member society was offered the opportunity to select one young resident colleague ≤35 years for free registration to the 2024 Dublin conference, the only requirement is that they have submitted an abstract for the conference. From a total of 49 societies, 30 applied. She recognizes the support from Sweden, Turkey, Croatia and Spain that added their own grants to this initiative.

Per Cayé-Thomasen informs that the plan for Gothenburg is to offer the same programme or increase it depending on the financial situation.

## 6. New co-opted and affiliated society members. Individual members

Per Cayé-Thomasen informs that the Confederation has now 10 co-opted member societies, which are non-European societies with which it has an informal collaboration to exchange ideas. Some of these societies have organized sessions for the congress. In the same context the Confederation attends some congresses organized by co-opted societies and organizes sessions too.

The Confederation received applications from four new co-opted member societies from Asia and Oceania: Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand, and Australia. 10% of the registered participants at the Congress are from Asia.

The Confederation has affiliated members, European members who have organizations that cross-borders, the Czech-German society has joined the Confederation and increased the number of members to four.

There is the option to be an individual member of the Confederation, the membership fees are 50€ per year.

## 7. New feature in CEORL newsletters - Your Voice!

Per Cayé-Thomasen presents the new section – The Voice of Societies! - to give the opportunity to each national or subspecialty society to promote and inform about what's going on through the Confederation newsletters:

- Starting in March 2024: every newsletter will include information from three national member societies and one subspecialty society.
- Next step, from 2025/2026: publish information from co-opted and affiliated societies.

He reminds the audience, about the option to post their activities on the news and events section.

## 8. CEORL-HNS Academy

Tomislav Baudoin informs about the CEORL-HNS Academy as one of the Confederation educational activities that he coordinates:

- This Academy's task is to improve knowledge and skills among young specialists and residents, preparing them for national and international exams and raising their awareness to belong to a European community.

- The first course was held in Zagreb in 2023, the second in Dubrovnik in April 2024 and the third is planned for Spring 2025, also in Dubrovnik.
- The 1st Course attracted 100 active participants from 24 countries across Europe and beyond, and the 2nd Course had 75 participants.
- The concept of the course was “problem-based learning”, where moderators interactively worked with participants to go through 25 ORL-HNS cases.
- The idea for the future is to share this concept with subspecialty and national societies and to organize it several times per year all around Europe.

### **9. Young Confederation of European ORL-HNS**

Elisabeth Sjögren presents the Young Confederation established in 2022 in Milan:

- The Young Confederation is a group of people within the Confederation whose aim is to create a link between the young ENT consultants in Europe to share experiences, promote education and offer opportunities.
- This group forms a section within the Confederation.
- Membership has grown to nearly 400 members.
- They have created the Educational Track within the congress programme. They organized 7 webinars in 2023-2024 and have planned a head and neck dissection course for 2025, supported by the Confederation with 30.000€.
- The Young Confederation will hold its first assembly on June 18 to elect a new board.

### **10. Health Technology Assessment**

Per Cayé-Thomassen explains that this is a new European initiative to evaluate all new things coming to the medical field as medical devices and medicines. It will influence all European countries and all societies; patient groups are involved too. Basically, all new medications and medical devices will have to be assessed at a European level.

Two years ago, Prof. Thomas Deitmer from the German Society of ORL-HNS approached the Confederation and proposed joining the stakeholder network in 2023.

The representatives of the Confederation in the EU-HTA are Thomas Deitmer and Per Cayé-Thomassen (as the current CEORL president). Prof. Deitmer attended a meeting on June 11 in Brussels and provided an update:

From January next year, the European Union Clinical Assessment will be split, with a group of EU people handling the clinical assessment centrally, and national groups assessing local economy, social and ethical aspects.

Currently, different paperwork is being elaborated on how to implement these acts, methodology, procedural guidance, etc.

Starting in January 2025, an application will be required to introduce new medicines or medical devices to HTA and EMA (European Medical Association). Initially, this will only apply to cancer drugs, orphan drugs and innovative drugs (advanced therapy medicinal products, ATMP) and later extending to medical devices.

The EU will conduct a Joint Clinical Assessment of drugs, and the economic consequences will be decided on a national level.

This process involves the European Medical Association receiving the application for a medicine to be used in the EU. Simultaneously, the pharmaceutical industry must submit documents with clinical studies for HTA-assessment coordinated at the European level, involving stakeholders and patient groups.

- The CEORL role in the future is to propose specialists who have experience in the biometric methods, as well as clinical practice, to evaluate new drugs and medical devices.
- The evaluation process will use existing guidelines. The Confederation will probably need to establish a library of guidelines for ENT in Europe.

## 11. European Archives of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology

Per Cayé-Thomasen thanks Prof. Manuel Bernal-Sprekelsen for negotiating on behalf of the Confederation for online access at a reduced fee for the Confederation members to European Archives of Oto-Rhinolaryngology:

- Individual e-subscription to the European Archives of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology for EUR 25 + VAT for all members of the Confederation member societies including co-opted and individual members of the Confederation.

## 12. UEMS

Per Cayé-Thomasen provides an update on the situation with UEMS Executive and what is going on:

- In January 2021, a new European Training Requirement (ETR) paper was put forward by the Oro-maxillo-facial surgery (OMFS) section of UEMS.
- UEMS ORL had major concerns on the contents of this ETR and fought for it to be rejected. OMFS wanted to cover everything from the ORL field.
- In this context, this ETR was rejected by vote in the UEMS Council in April 2021.
- A revised version of the ETR was presented for re-discussion at the subsequent UEMS Council meeting. The revised OMFS ETR was accepted at Council meeting October 2021 (13 votes to 11).
- CEORL has supported UEMS ORL from the beginning and decided to file a European Court lawsuit against UEMS Council claiming the illegitimacy of the vote procedure in October 2021, and that the OMFS ETR would lead to an intrusion into the ORL field of expertise.
- In July 2023, a court evaluation concluded that there was insufficient documentation to determine whether the voting process had been illegitimate or not, and that a direct relevance/consequence of the OMFS ETR upon the work of ORL doctors in Europe needed to be proven for the lawsuit to go to trial properly.
- A second legal opinion was obtained and based on this and the overall evaluation by the CEORL lawyer, CEORL decided not to pursue the matter further through the legal system.
- In October 2023, the new UEMS ORL board/section had a reconciliation meeting with UEMS Executive.
- By request, UEMS ORL subsequently wrote a detailed review of the OMFS ETR that was submitted in February 2024. ETRs need to be revised every four years.
- This was subsequently discussed with UEMS President, Mr. Papalois, at a Council meeting in April 2024, and we are still awaiting official feedback.
  
- Heiki Irjala, President of UEMS ORL Section informs that they are trying with UEMS to get back to normal track and now are revising their Logbook- They plan to review the ETR in 2026. He informs that to review the Logbook has contacted all the subspecialty societies and is waiting for responses from audiologists and otologists.
- Pedro Escada, representing the Portuguese Society, asks what they recommend that national societies should do in their countries. Heiki Irjala indicates that at this moment there is not much they can do. He explains that when they get back feedback from UEMS, they will contact the national societies.
- Francis Marchal, President of MSGS, informs that he has been in the UEMS from the last 22 years and states that have been fighting to use the name head and neck surgery in our specialty but has been always refused by UEMS Executive. He stresses that the ORL specialty has been taken by MaxFac and that this could have serious consequences. He thinks that this issue should be seriously considered at the highest level of the Confederation, as it is a significant issue for specialists and patients.
- James Denny, Executive Vice President/CEO of AAO-HNS, explains that this situation reflects what they experienced in US three years ago and offers the Confederation to share information to try to help with this situation. ENT won because they established better training programmes.
- Per Cayé-Thomasen stresses that at the national level, it is crucial to inform and involve the National Medical Association (NMA) representative to UEMS (this may be and often is a non-ENT doctor, e.g. a cardiologist), as this is the person voting on behalf of the individual nation

concerning all matters brought to a vote in the UEMS Council. In addition, it is important to ensure that ENT physicians do not educate MaxFacs trainees in ENT procedures.

- Cem Mecoc, EBEORL President stresses that ENT needs to be strong in the community and create a good training programme, especially in head and neck surgery, and create fellowship programmes.
- Francis Marchal suggests writing an editorial/article at European Archives to inform all the ENT Community about the situation.
- Heiki Irtala informs that he has always distributed all the data to UEMS delegates who are selected by national societies and must keep their respective societies informed.
- Pablo Parente, representing the Spanish Society, notes that he belongs to UEMS Section and reminds that UEMS is a private organization; it is not an institution of the EU and has no power in Spanish institutions. Per Cayé-Thomassen informs that the situation is similar in the Nordic countries, but UEMS still has some power in certain countries.

### **13. Internal PC board suggestions for changes to the constitution**

Per Cayé-Thomassen reminds that the Confederation was created in 2009 and is now celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Back then, a constitution was established and one of the jobs of the Presidential Council is to revise it. He informs that at the General Assembly on Monday, some changes to the current Constitution will be voted on, but that at the Gothenburg General Assembly, more extensive changes are expected to be implemented.

The Presidential Council will consider some changes for the near future:

- Concerning the Presidential Council the following has been suggested:
  - With the exception of the General Secretary (GS) and the President (P), who start as GS-elect and P-elect and end up as past-GS and past-P (thus total time in office 6 years), officers should not stay more than two terms in the PC (total 4 years). After at least one term out of the PC, any past officer may become a candidate again.
  - There will be an open call for election of officers by email to all society members (National and Subspecialty), at least three months before the general assembly (GA).
  - The core-PC (GS, P and treasurer) is responsible for the day-to-day business and urgent decisions. Major decisions are to be taken by the whole PC, if needed in an extraordinary meeting. In case of an impediment, each officer shall be substituted by the respective vice-position.
- Concerning the GA: Full Members can request additional items for the agenda of the GA up to two (instead of the current four) weeks before.
- Concerning bid for upcoming congress: The call for bids to organize the upcoming CEORL congress should be announced by email to all members (hitherto only posted on webpage), at least three months before the GA.

Per Cayé-Thomassen presents the internal guidelines that have been followed during the last couple of years with the following considerations to be taken into account when selecting new officers:

- Ideally, all the major subspecialties should be represented in the council.
- Diversity of gender and ethnicity should be aspired for.
- Diversity of geographical representation (south, north, east, west) within Europe should be aspired for.
- Candidate double roles is discouraged (e.g., simultaneous board membership/presidency/congress presidency in a subspecialty society).
- Subspecialty societies should be consulted in case of lack of given candidate(s).

All changes must be ratified at the General Assembly.

#### **14. 8th Congress of European ORL-HNS, Gothenburg**

Ann Hermansson introduces the Gothenburg Congress that will take place from April 25-29, 2026, to avoid clashing with IFOS.

- The Scientific Committee is formed by Linda Marklund and Per Cayé-Thomas as Scientific Chairs and Rosie as Vice Scientific Chair
- The venue is the Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre and Gothia Towers, located in the centre of Gothenburg, with a hotel integrated in the building and other hotels within walking distance.
- The scientific programme will be organized similarly to the Dublin congress and will follow the same structure but introducing some minor changes.
- An International Track and more Global Outreach sessions will be introduced.
- The Scientific Committee is currently recruiting two key people from each subspecialty society to propose sessions for the scientific programme and has secured representatives from all subspecialties in Nordic countries.
- They are looking for options for the networking programme.
- To conclude the presentation, she shows a video of the city of Gothenburg and invite all present delegates to attend.

#### **15. Topics proposed by National and Subspecialty Societies**

James Deneny thanks Cem Mecoc for his collaboration with the AAO-HNS.

Per Cayé-Thomasen informs that the Confederation is considering creating a position of an International Officer to work more closely with the co-opted and affiliated societies.

Per Cayé-Thomasen thanks all the participants for their attendance and their inputs and asks for their support in bringing new ideas.

The Society Members Advisory Board meeting is closed at 14:30h