



## European Society for Trauma and Emergency Surgery (ESTES)

[www.estesonline.org](http://www.estesonline.org)

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## Message from the General Secretary

Dear colleagues and friends,

First, I wish you a happy and healthy new year and hope that all your personal and professional plans will be realized. 2020 was an extraordinary year. During the preparation of our congress in Oslo, the COVID-19 pandemic spread. After first signals from China, COVID-19 hit Europe very hard in February. Italy was the first region that had great difficulties but it was soon followed by other European countries. In March, we had to postpone our yearly congress and went into crisis mode. All members had to fight against the pandemic in their own country and hospital. Despite this, everyone still had time to help our society to be as good as possible through this pandemic. On behalf of the executive board I want to thank everyone who was able to participate in managing this crisis.

We were not able to organize a physical meeting, so we had to learn about web-based alternatives. We had already used WebEx for board, council, and section meetings but we never organized a web-based general assembly. In the first weeks, part of our board discussion was about how to handle this: should we wait until the end of the pandemic or should we explore new ways to communicate. We decided to follow new ways. With our new tool, ZOOM, we organized a successful web-based general assembly in July. As you know we moved with our society from Belgium to Austria and had to establish a new ESTES society in Austria. That took place but we are still busy with the dissolution of our Belgium society. According Belgium law, a physical meeting has to take place to do so. This means that the definitive dissolution must wait until 2021. This has no consequences for our new Austrian society but we realized that we had to change our bylaws to be able to hold a web-based general assembly in the future. This happened at our extraordinary general assembly on 19 December 2020. At this meeting we could welcome 70 new individual members and as an institutional member the Donegal Clinical and Research Academy from Ireland. Now 35 national societies are members of ESTES.

During the past year, concerns were expressed about the declining number of individual members in the society. There are different reasons such as the move from Belgium to Austria and the cancelling of our congress in Oslo but we must ask ourselves, how our society can become more attractive for individual members. In Prague 2019 we established a social media working group. They brought out a very useful plan to make our society more visible in social media. The Executive Board discussed this topic in the last month as well. Our association manager, Manuela Walland, has a background in public relations, which is why we asked her to make a public relations plan for our society. Manuela presented this plan at the Executive Board meeting and the extraordinary assembly. We decided to merge this plan with the advice of the social media group. Together they will work out a comprehensive plan for our society in 2021.

Furthermore, the last revision of our bylaws took place 5 years ago. As mentioned we already had to change the bylaws to be able to organize a web-based general assembly but there may be more parts that have to be changed. Therefore we decided at the extraordinary



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assembly in December to establish a committee to coordinate this process. The committee will represent all parts of the society. There are three members from the executive board (Inger Schipper, Jonathan Tilsed, Klaus Wendt), the chair of the Advisory Council Roberto Faccincani, a national delegate and a section chair, respectively. All ESTES members are invited to bring out proposals in this process.

As mentioned earlier, we realized in the autumn of 2020 that it would not be possible to organize a physical congress in 2021. Therefore we decide to postpone the congress to 2022 and to organize a web-based ESTES week from Sunday 25 April until Friday 30 April 2021. Every afternoon and evening there will be two sessions organized by our section and the educational committee. Tina Gaarder, congress president, and Radko Komadina, ESTES president, are busy with the scientific committee and our PCO Conventus to coordinate this process.

This is not the only activity we organized during the pandemic. Jonathan Tilsed started ESTES webinars in July. Every fortnight on Monday evening there is a very interesting topic about trauma of acute surgery moderated by Jonathan. This is another excellent possibility to stay in touch with colleagues all over the world. We thank Alan Biloslavo, Diego Mariani, Hayato Kurihara and Mauro Zago who coordinate the webinars.

In the hope that the world will become normal again at the end of this year, we are planning our next physical congress in April 2022 again in Oslo and 2023 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

In summary many things happened and had to be changed during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. We encountered a serious worldwide crisis with much sorrow for those who lost family, friends or patients but it also shows that our society can survive in very difficult circumstances. The society is as strong as the members who participate.

Looking forward to meeting you again and stay healthy.

Klaus W. Wendt  
ESTES General Secretary



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## Announcements

### Upcoming related congresses & courses

**ESTES Webinar “Closure of complex soft-tissue wounds in emergency surgery: extremities, abdomen, others...”**

January 25, 2021  
18:00–19:00 CET  
Webinar

**ESTES Webinar “Trauma care in times of COVID—when resources are limited”**

February 8, 2021  
18:00–19:00 CET  
Webinar

**ESTES Webinar “Pediatric polytrauma: diagnostic and therapeutic procedures”**

February 22, 2021  
18:00–19:00 CET  
Webinar

**ESTES Webinar “With and without: can surgeon-performed point of care ultrasound really improve acute surgical practice?”**

March 8, 2021  
18:00–19:00 CET  
Webinar

**ESC – Emergency Surgery Course**

March 22–23, 2021  
Graz, Austria

**ECTES Virtual Week**

April 25–30, 2021  
Virtual Congress

More congresses and courses to be found in the **ESTES events calendar** at

[www.estesonline.org](http://www.estesonline.org)

**European Society for Trauma and Emergency Surgery**

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