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Message from the President**The triad of improving quality of care, promoting young surgeons, and fostering research**

ECTES 2023 in Ljubljana has impressively shown that ESTES is a forward-looking, dynamic society that is willing and able to face future challenges in providing optimal care to critically injured and ill patients. This has, *inter alia*, been proven by the first implementation of Young ESTES (Y-ESTES) sessions. The high number of participants in each of these sessions and their feedback clearly indicates the need for this format in future congresses. I would like to thank the session organizers, including the local organizing committee and the 2022–2023 President Hayato Kurihara, for their hard and constructive work to make this congress happen.

In Ljubljana, Hayato handed over the presidency to me, and I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to him for initiating and continuing numerous projects for the benefit of our society. At the same time, Klaus Wendt resigned as the General Secretary of ESTES, and we are also extremely grateful for his tremendous work in developing our society over many years. Without him, ESTES would not be where we are today! However, personally, I would like to thank him for his continuous mentorship. I really learned a lot!

The spirit of recent years needs continuous pursuit to allow for ongoing development of ESTES, so that our society keeps—and even expands—its position as the “number one contact point for trauma and emergency surgery” in Europe. This requires the input and cooperative discussion of all members of our society, independent of their primary surgical background, while maintaining the ability to find timely solutions for the evolution of ESTES. I have known our new General Secretary, Hans-Christoph Pape, for many years and I am certain that he will be able to help ESTES achieve these goals; therefore, he is the perfect choice for the position of the General Secretary. Hans-Christoph is the person who motivated me to become involved in ESTES by submitting my first abstracts to one of our parent societies, the European Trauma Society. More than 20 years later, I am really looking forward to continuing our long-lasting cooperation in our new positions.

ESTES already has a strong history of providing *the triad of improving quality of care, promoting young surgeons as well as education, and fostering research*. Examples of this include the preparation of clinical recommendations (e.g. proximal humerus, lumbar spine), the development and delivery of training courses, as well as the involvement in scientific projects (e.g. Nightingale, Snapshot). However, there is still a lot to do to face the challenges of the future. The shortage of young surgeons, in combination with a trend towards organ- or joint-specific specialization, the lack of scientifically active clinicians in surgical disciplines, and improving visibility in European health politics are major aspects in trauma and emergency surgery that should be in the focus of our efforts over the next few months.

Whitebook and recommendations

To ensure the nationwide long-term provision of high performance and quality-assured medical care, different standards or Whitebooks have been established on the national level.

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Their aim is to define basic structural requirements for networks, infrastructure, installations, equipment, and organization to provide reliability and quality assurance for the care of critically injured or ill patients. Furthermore, the relevance of both well-trained medical teams and the collaboration between rescue service, hospitals, and rehabilitation facilities for optimal treatment results of patients of all ages is emphasized. Besides the definition of personnel resources and structures, evidence- and consensus-based treatment recommendations are also of pivotal relevance to improve the care of the critically injured or ill patient.

However, a Whitebook and treatment guidelines for these patients on the European level are missing. As their treatment represents the core topic of ESTES, our society is predisposed to create such comprehensive references that are suitable to facilitate discussions—within national health care systems and European health politics—on devoting appropriate resources for daily clinical care in the field of trauma and emergency medicine. In addition, the unique composition of ESTES, combining and representing two areas, namely general/visceral surgeons and trauma/orthopaedic surgeons, from almost all European countries, provides the optimal competence to formulate holistic recommendations for the diagnosis and treatment of damaged organs and injuries to the musculoskeletal system.

The Whitebook should also focus on education and research in the field of trauma and emergency surgery, as sufficient training of young surgeons and the development of innovative diagnostic and therapeutic strategies are central to mastering the challenges of the future.

The relevance and need of supporting and involving young surgeons and students, fostering gender equity and promoting research activities has landed in the centre of our society. However, efforts must be sustained to further develop these initiatives.

Young ESTES (Y-ESTES)

To better understand the current expectations and needs of young surgeons in the field of trauma and emergency surgery, it was common sense among the members of the working group “ESTES bylaws revision” that young surgeons be more involved in the daily work of our society. Thanks to the efforts of Hayato Kurihara and the local organizing committee of ESTES, space was given to a group of young surgeons from different European countries (e.g. Italy, The Netherlands, Germany) to organize sessions for the next generation. These young people were solely responsible for choosing the topics and speakers for the sessions. Each session was accompanied by an experienced mentor. The success of the sessions, demonstrated by high number of participants (Figure 1), clearly shows the need for and the potential of the Y-ESTES initiative. Medical students should also be included in this initiative to raise interest and secure the future for our common field of trauma and emergency surgery.

Now, it is of upmost importance to further develop this project and implement permanent structures for young surgeons to become involved in the work of our society. These permanent structures would allow us to realize the bylaws requirements by including a young surgeon on the Executive Board.

Research committee

The strong scientific activities of medical institutions have been related to better treatment results [1]. As this observation indicates that research can beneficially influence patient care, strong scientific activities within ESTES should be in our interest. Trauma and emergency surgeons especially, however, face many unforeseeable emergencies that restrict their ability to be scientifically active. This also limits interaction with scientists. However, the nexus between clinicians and basic science is of upmost importance for successful transfer of research results from bench to bedside.

The barriers to adequately performing research and successfully applying for grants probably represent the most important reasons for both: a reduced number of scientifically active surgeons and funding rates that do not reflect the relevance of trauma and emergency surgery within the medical field in European countries [2].

Notwithstanding, ESTES is heavily involved in many clinical research projects (e.g. Nightingale, Snapshot, recommendations) and has a journal (*European Journal of Trauma and Emergency Surgery*) that has shown impressive development under the guidance of Editor-in-Chief Ingo Marzi. Still, further opportunities in clinical science, particularly the promotion of basic science, needs strengthening to facilitate interactions between clinicians and basic scientists. This implies that we also attract scientists to become involved in ESTES, thereby taking an important step in bringing the souls of scientists and clinicians together. Our society has already given the proof of concept that a combination of people with different backgrounds but a common goal can be extremely successful.

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Based on these considerations, a research committee that represents the primary contact for all scientific matters of ESTES was established. This committee can also help coordinate scientific efforts between the sectors and foster the integration of scientists within ESTES.

All the aforementioned initiatives can only be successful if each and every of us becomes involved and provides input. Please follow these and other ESTES activities on our website (www.estesonline.org).

Please also prepare and submit abstracts for ECTES 2024 in Lisbon. Motivate students and colleagues to visit both the precongress courses and the scientific sessions of the congress.

Hopefully we will have the chance to meet virtually or personally on different occasions, at the latest in Lisbon. I am strongly convinced that we will have a great and successful congress in Lisbon and a productive year to develop our society!

Frank Hildebrand
President of the European Society of Trauma and Emergency Surgery

References

1. D'Arrietta LM et al. Rethinking health professionals' motivation to do research: a systematic review. *J Multidiscip Healthc* 2022;15:185–216.
2. Hildebrand F et al. Research in orthopaedic trauma surgery: approaches of basic scientists and clinicians and the relevance of interprofessional research teams. *Eur J Trauma Emerg Surg* 2023;49:75–85.



Figure 1. a,b Session of Young ESTES during ESTES 2023 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Report of ESTES Congress Grant Winner Nils Becker



“From colleagues to friends”—22nd European Congress of Trauma and Emergency Surgery (ECTES) 2023 in Ljubljana

As a resident in the field of trauma and emergency surgery and according to my own scientific interests in improving the treatment and preventing complications in polytraumatized patients, participating in ECTES in Ljubljana provided an exceptional opportunity to gain insight into the current advances in this wide-ranging and meaningful field. Regarding the continuously high rates of trauma-associated mortality worldwide and the current global challenges, developments in trauma surgery are of significant importance. Thereby especially the international exchange of experience and collaboration can facilitate significant improvements.

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Fig. 1 Ljubljanica River and Ljubljana Castle

According to this background, the 22nd ECTES under the motto “from colleagues to friends” took place from 5–9 May 2023 in the picturesque city of Ljubljana, Slovenia. The city welcomed us with sunny weather, warm temperatures and many plants in full bloom. As early arrivers we were able to enjoy an interesting tour through the historic city center including several cafes and restaurants next to the Ljubljanica River and a visit of the impressive Ljubljana Castle. It was a perfect way to meet fellow surgeons from Europe and the world. The impressions of the history of the city were a suitable contrast to the modern *Cankarjev dom*, the congress site of this year’s ECTES.

The well-chosen and varied program of the congress started with an interesting lecture on updates of the sequence of fracture fixation in polytrauma. With the focus on relevant factors for surgical decision making and timing, this session addressed one of the major research topics in trauma surgery, including main parts of my own primary research interest. The talks gave a stimulating impression on recent progress in patient assessment strategies, shaping early and ongoing treatment decisions.

In addition to the invited lectures, the open free oral presentation sessions and oral quick shot presentations were an excellent chance to get an impression of the scope of current research topics. During the short talks, several young clinicians and scientists presented their results on topics ranging from the assessment of surgical complications to planning fracture fixation in space. Particularly the diversity of participants was outstanding and a major opportunity. The well-attended workshops of the Young ESTES (Y-ESTES) contributed to this diversity by addressing unconventional but significant topics like mentorship in surgery from different perspectives.

As my research is focused on the cellular reaction to major trauma and the resulting development of posttraumatic complications, several interesting presentations throughout the congress were a part of the program. The discussion of my talk on the results of the assessment of patients at risk for posttraumatic complications brought valuable comments and suggestions for further research projects. Furthermore, by

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presenting first results of our recent project evaluating the impact of different surgical approaches in polytraumatized patients, new possible collaborations evolved that can highly improve the impact of our research. Lastly, an excellent social program including a spectacular opening ceremony and a great social evening with a fascinating view over the city of Ljubljana helped me to meet colleagues easily. Thus, an inspiring exchange was possible including new ideas and promising collaborations.



Fig. 2 Opening ceremony and congress grant award presentation by ESTES president Hayato Kurihara

Through the variety of presented opinions and the different perspectives, participating in this congress vastly contributed to progress my clinical understanding and my research motivation, stimulating new ideas and enabling international collaborations. Special thanks to the European Society for Trauma and Emergency Surgery (ESTES) for organizing such a memorable congress and for facilitating and honoring my participation with the congress grant award, sponsored by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Unfallchirurgie (DGU).

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Announcements

Upcoming related congresses & courses

7th E.S.T.R.O.T. Congress

July 3–5, 2023

Frankfurt, Germany

12th Interdisciplinary Polytrauma Course in cooperation with ESTES

September 14–15, 2023

Zurich, Switzerland

DSTC – Definitive Surgical Trauma Care

September 18–19, 2023

Graz, Austria

DSTC – Definitive Surgical Trauma Care

September 25–26, 2023

Graz, Austria

Nuove Prospettive nella Sintesi delle Fratture dell'Omero Prossimale

October 10, 2023

Turin, Italy

More congresses and courses to be found in the **ESTES events calendar** at
www.estesonline.org