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## EAMBES 2018: State of the Alliance

### **Dear Members of EAMBES, and all European Biomedical Engineers and Scientists,**

It is a privilege to be writing my last state of the Alliance report. EAMBES has seen a full year of activities and events. All council members and Fellows have, as always, given selflessly their time for EAMBES and for that, I sincerely thank them.

In March, we had our Council, General Assembly and Fellows meeting for the first time held in London, generously hosted by City, University of London. The events were a great success. There have been discussions and decisions for our next strategic approaches towards our lobbying in the European Parliament. We have engaged with leading publishers and discussed how best to strengthen our relation. We welcomed our new Council members and Fellows and enjoyed with them a very pleasant dinner at a beautiful French restaurant in the heart of the City of London.

It was great to see such a large number of our councillors and Fellows actively attending and participating in the World Congress of Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering held in Prague on June 3-8 2018. Also, during the summer the EAMBES Policy affairs group led by Dr Leandro Pecchia has been busy organising the second European Parliament Interest Group on Biomedical Engineering (EPIG) in collaboration with IFMBE and IUPESM. For more details please read Leandro's report on the event below.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas, and a peaceful and productive New Year.

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### **WHAT IS EAMBES?**

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#### **European Alliance for Medical and Biological Engineering & Science**

**A nonprofit scientific society to promote Biomedical Engineering (BME) and Biological and Medical Engineering and Sciences (BMES) with a focus in Europe.**

Members are Scientific Societies, Universities or research institutions across Europe. Today EAMBES represents 27 national & transnational societies and 34 academic and research institutions, and through them a vast number of biomedical engineers and scientists working primarily in research and higher education. EAMBES is also affiliated to the International Federation of Medical and Biological Engineering (IFMBE).

#### **EAMBES aspires to:**

- Support and promote BME and MBES research and development, education, training and accreditation of scientific programmes.
- Recognize individual and group achievements and contributions to the field of BME and MBES.
- Become a strong one voice for academic/research MBEs at EU level.
- Position Biomedical Engineering (BME) on the EU research and policy agenda.
- Develop a dialogue between EAMBES & key policy makers in biomedical engineering and related fields.

EAMBES finds itself as a significant player in this arena, with a focus on Europe. Some might say, what can EAMBES do and what are the challenges? There are a number of key priorities for the Alliance to address over the next few years.

- Primarily we must grow as a community of people with common interests, engaging with colleagues and organisations from many professions and forming a voice which speaks with authority on the status of the profession and its future.
- Continue our efforts to create awareness and “educate” people, that are in key policy making positions within Europe, on the nature and remit of the profession and its contribution to society.
- Bring together professionals from both medicine and life sciences and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects to discuss the latest advances and challenges to influence decision and policy making within the EU (i.e. Horizon 2020 funding).
- Enable networking among different academic, industry and policy leaders, and encourage best practice across Europe.
- Engage with governments, academia, healthcare providers, industry and the wider public to build bridges across all sectors.
- Lastly, we have a unique opportunity to truly promote the impact of physics and engineering in Healthcare through the organisation of National, European and International conferences, symposia and other scientific meetings with the collaboration of all our members and other Societies.

I hope this is an agenda we can all embrace. It will only be through our own actions and determination that these opportunities can be grasped.

### **EAMBES Fellows**

EAMBES fellows have selected the Class of 2018 of new Fellows: out of 24 nominations 18 new Fellows received 2/3 of the votes to be eligible for nomination and 13 new Fellows accepted the nomination. Now, EAMBES Fellows include 80 prominent individuals who have distinguished themselves by identifiable contributions or accomplishments in Medical and Biological Engineering and Science. The 2018 EAMBES fellows are: Luigi Ambrosio, Marcel Breeuwer, Manuel Doblare-Castellano, Olaf Doessel, Daniel J Kelly, Thomas Lenarz, Nicos Maglaveras, Serge Mordon, Constantinos S Pattichis, Heinz Redl, Rui Reis, Robert C Schroter, Gerald Urban, and E.M.J. Verpoorte.

EAMBES Fellows had two meetings during 2018. The first was in London in connection with the EAMBES GA. A Fellows seminar was organized on “BME Challenges in Europe - Fellows Perspectives” with talks from Katja Schenke-Layland, Olof Lindahl, Constantinos S. Pattichis (New Fellow), Sabeth Verpoorte (New Fellow) and Serge Mordon (New Fellow). An invited guest lecture was given by Dr. Petri Pommelin Finland entitled “EU medical device regulations – challenges to research and startups”. Petri is an author of a book “The Survival Guide to EU Medical Device Regulations” – the [slides](#) can be found at EAMBES website!

The Fellows committee for 2018-19 was finalised and the members are: Jari Hyttinen (Chair), Karin Wårdell (Past Chair), Francois Peyrin (Deputy Chair), Constantinos S. Pattichis, Bart M. ter Haar Romeny.

The fellows met again at Prague [IUSPEM World Conference 2018](#) and discussed possibilities for promotion of EAMBES activities by creating a searchable database for the Fellows who present a group of experts with extensive expertise. The database should be made more easily available e.g. for EU panels and reviewer tasks, plenary lectures, etc. Also, they discussed on organizing Fellows seminars in 2019 BME meetings in Europe.

The Fellows would like to thank Heinrich Schima for his dedicated work on the Fellows election committee.

More information on EAMBES Fellows webpages: <http://eambes.org/Fellows>

### **Policy Affairs Working Group (PAWG)**

In October 2018, the EAMBES Policy Affairs Working Group (PAWG) organised the second meeting of the European Parliament Interest Group on BME (EPIG BME), in collaboration with the IFMBE, IUPESM, and WHO, and with representatives of the African Community of BMEs. The meeting's main focus was to discuss with the European Parliament how to create awareness on the following:

- recognise BME as an independent profession, including BME as an independent discipline in the ESCO database
- to provide an independent space for research in biomedical engineering creating a BME panel in the 3 European schemes for excellent science (e.g., ERC, FET and MSCA)
- establish stable collaboration with Africa Union in order to help them harmonizing their regulations on medical devices and medical locations among different African Courtiers and Europe, in the best interest of African citizens and also European medical device manufactures (mainly SMEs).

The meeting was very well attended, with 7 MPs participating to the meeting: Nicola Caputo (Italy), Lara Comi (Italy), Neena Gill (UK), Lojze Peterle (Slovenia), Marijana Petir (Croatia), Davor Škrlec (Croatia), Cécile Kyenge (Italy). From the European Commission, Bernd Rainer, DG Research also attended the meeting. The [meeting agenda](#) is available at the EAMBES website.



Photo of the EPIG participants.

Regarding the recognition of BME as an independent profession, we raised the same issue in 2015, during the first EPIG BME meeting. During that meeting we have prepared a Parliamentary question which was tabled by the EPIG BME Chair (MEP Nicola Caputo) in collaboration with MEP Lara Comi. During that time BME was not listed in the ESCO database. Following that action BME is now listed, although it is listed under 'other engineering not elsewhere listed'. Our efforts to achieve even better results will continue.

Prof. Jämsä, President-Elect of EAMBES, is also Chair of the IFMBE Council of Societies Europe-Africa Regional Group. EAMBES co-organized with the IFMBE Council of Societies an IFMBE European CoS Meeting for the European BME societies in London, March 12, 2018, with active discussions on joint efforts of EAMBES and IFMBE in promoting BME in Europe and worldwide as well as scheduling of future regional conferences. IFMBE Council of Societies has made initiative for collecting best practices in Biomedical Engineering.

### **EAMBES activities during the last year**

EAMBES organized the annual Council meeting and General Assembly together with the EAMBES Fellows Seminar, 12-13 March 2018 (City, University of London, London, UK)

EAMBES participated in the World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering, June 3-8, 2018, Prague, Czech Republic

Prof. Jämsä represented EAMBES in the Members Workshop of Health First Europe (HFE, <https://healthfirsteurope.eu/>) in Brussels, October 12, 2018. He presented the recent activities and perspectives of EAMBES, including the outcome of the EPIG Meeting in the European Parliament. The workshop discussed on building synergies in European programmes and brainstormed future priorities within HFE.

EAMBES has initiated a working group to establish the BME Code of Ethics. The current constitution of the group is as follows: Prof Nicolas Pallikarakis (Council member and Fellow), Prof Sergio Cerutti (Fellow), Prof Jari Hyttinen (Past EAMBES President, Council member and Fellow), and Prof. Helmut Hutten (as the Code of Ethics Group Chair and initiator of the respective effort).

EAMBES was invited by the European Commission's Scientific Panel for Health (SPH) to participate in the consultation for the consensus document 'Building the future of health research'.

EAMBES Councillor for Regulatory Affairs, Almir Badnjevic, together with his team published a unique book titled: Inspection of Medical Devices - for regulatory purposes. The book is published by Springer. This book offers a guide to implementing verification systems for medical devices to ensure they satisfy their regulations. The book primarily focuses on diagnostic and therapeutic medical devices and reflects the latest international directives and regulations. More about the book in [EAMBES Newsletter](#) and in [Springer website](#).

### **Upcoming EAMBES events**

EAMBES General Council and EAMBES Fellows Seminar 11-12 March 2019 in Brussels

EAMBES General Assembly during the International Conference on Medical and Biological Engineering (CMBEBIH 2019), 16 to 18 May 2019 in Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

EMBEC Conference, Portoroz, Piran, Slovenia, June 14-18, 2020

### **EAMBES website [www.eambes.org](http://www.eambes.org)**

EAMBES new web site, launched with better service to the community, including profiling various relevant events endorsed by EAMBES, is continually updated with news, policy documents, and event announcements. Also, the website creates a forum where all members can inform BME educational programs across Europe. If you have any relevant programmes (Undergraduate or Postgraduate) that you wish them to feature in our web site, please let us know.

Get in touch with our Secretary General Prof. Eleni Kaldoudi (kaldoudi@med.duth.gr)

EAMBES has had a very active year and we are continuously preparing new activities to promote BME. Our aim is to continue to strengthen EAMBES policy work and collaboration with the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Council, Scientific Panel for Health and other stakeholders on European BME schemes including EUCOMED. Another goal is to strengthen the scientific scene by reinforcing the European conference series on BME and now with IFMBE we are achieving this status. We are convinced that our council with members from nine European countries and thirteen organizations has the expertise and energy to successfully tackle these goals. I would like to thank all our Council Members, especially our chair of the PAWG Dr Leandro Pecchia, for their great contribution on EAMBES activities.

We would like to stress that our work depends on the continuing support and the resources provided by you - our members! We hope that our work is serving your needs as an EAMBES member.

We will warmly welcome all feedback and suggestions in order to improve our work further.

We are looking forward to your continued support to strengthen the Biomedical Engineering Community in Europe!



Panayiotis Kyriacou, President



Jari Hyttinen, Past President