European Federation for Medical Informatics (EFMI) - A Brief Outline

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Objectives

The European Federation for Medical Informatics Association (EFMI) is the leading organisation in medical informatics in Europe and represents 32 countries. EFMI is organized as a nonprofit organisation concerned with the theory and practice of Information Science and Technology within Health and Health Science in a European context.

The objectives when founded in 1976 were:

- To advance international co-operation and dissemination of information in Medical Informatics on a European basis;
- To promote high standards in the application of medical informatics;
- To promote research and development in medical informatics;
- To encourage high standards in education in medical informatics;
- To function as the autonomous European Regional Council of IMIA

Activities and Governance

All European countries are entitled to be represented in EFMI by a suitable Medical Informatics Society. The term medical informatics is used to include the whole spectrum of Health-/Socialcare Informatics and all disciplines concerned with Health-/Socialcare and Informatics.

The organisation operates with a minimum of bureaucratic overhead. Each national society supports the federation by sending and paying for a representative to participate in the decisions of the Federation's Council, the membership assembly. Apart from the Council, an elected board consisting of nine members governs EFMI.

English has been adopted as the official language, although simultaneous translation is often provided for congresses in non-English speaking countries.

Membership and Organization

As already been stated, 32 countries have joined the Federation, including Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Moldova, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom. All representative societies in countries within the European Region of the WHO are entitled to apply for membership.

EFMI is also open for institutional membership. Typical institutions, which become EFMI members, include universities, research organisations, federations, industries and organisations. Currently, 16 organisations have become institutional members of EFMI: 3 universities, 9 industrial companies and 5 not for profit organizations.

EFMI has a long tradition in working groups (WG) which are organising and supporting events and projects on a European basis but also worldwide in close co-operation with national and international WGs and institutions. The EFMI council has extended the model of WGs during MIE2011 in Oslo by Project Groups (PG). PGs are established for 3 years. When the concept of the project group proofs to be successful there is an option to become a working group of EFMI. EFMI does not offer personal membership except for the working groups.

Congresses and Publications

EFMI organizes two main series of conferences: the Special Topic Conferences (EFMI-STC) and Medical Informatics Europe (EFMI-MIE). In conjunction or independent of the main congress series, working groups in addition organize topic specific workshops, tutorials and seminars.

Medical Informatics Europe Conferences (MIE)

So far 24 MIE congresses (Medical Informatics Europe) have been organised by the national members and EFMI with up to more than 1000 participants. The concept includes per-reviewed presentations according to the type of paper as oral or poster presentation. Workshops and tutorials prepared or supported by EFMI working groups are an essential part of EFMI MIE conferences.

Medical Informatics Europe Conferences have been organized in Cambridge (1978), Berlin (1979), Toulouse (1981), Dublin (1982), Brussels (1984), Helsinki (1985), Rome (1987), Oslo (1988), Glasgow (1990), Vienna (1991), Jerusalem (1993), Lisbon (1994), Copenhagen (1996), Thessaloniki (1997), Ljubljana (1999), Hannover (2000), Budapest (2002) and St. Malo (2003), Geneva (2005), Maastricht (2006), Gothenburg (2008), Sarajevo (2009), Oslo (2011), Pisa (2012) and Istanbul (2013).

The next MIE congress will be organized in Madrid in 2015.

Special Topic Conferences (STC)

STCs are conferences, specialized in current topics. Special Topic Conferences follow a successful concept including the following components:

- Organisation by a member society in combination with its annual meeting
- Topic defined to the needs of the member society
- Relevant EFMI Working groups are engaged for the content
- Contributions mostly on invitation
- Small 2-day conference with 100+ participants

STCs were so far organized in Bucharest (2001), Nicosia (2002), Rome (2003), Munich (2004), Timisoara (2006), Brijuni Island Croatia (2007), London (2008), Antalya (2009), Reykjavik (2010), Lasko (2011), Moscow (2012), Prague (2013) and Budapest (2014).

Publication

Publication of the conference proceedings of the EFMI conference series was done in close co-operation with IOS Press in its Medline indexed series "Health Technology and Informatics" in the last years. Selected papers from the EFMI conferences were also published in Methods of Information in Medicine. The accepted papers are available from the EFMI-pages for conference participants.

As complement for the conference proceedings a series has been established as CD-ROM publication. The ENMI (European Notes in Medical Informatics), Rolf Engelbrecht, Arie Hasman, György Súrjan (Eds.), continues the tradition of the Lecture Notes in Medical Informatics and follows the demands of different ways of publication.

Communication

EFMI is running a website for external and internal communication. Different Mailing lists are established. The EFMI portal is based on open source content management system Joomla. Traditional functions are extended for internal and external news such as council members list, member countries (with additional information), working groups, downloads (council meetings material, reports, presentations, etc.), links, events, and news. There is an extended news management, RSS news feeder into EFMI pages available. For 2013 an extension and relaunch of the EFMI information system components is planned, including the EFMI's website.

Further information about EFMI and EFMI related activities can be obtained via EFMI's website: http://www.EFMI.org

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