

# **Minutes of the 1st European Orthodontic Teachers' Forum Vienna, 03.07.2006**

**Chairpersons: A.M. Kuijpers Jagtman, S. Kiliaridis**

**Attendees:** 48 participants, see attendance list

**Apologies for absence:** 9 apologies for absence, see attendance list

## **1. Words of welcome**

Prof. H.P. Bantleon, President of the European Orthodontic Society welcomed the participants in the Meridien Hotel and wished them a fruitful meeting.

## **2. Introduction**

Prof. A.M. Kuijpers-Jagtman also welcomed the participants. This was the first time European Teachers in Orthodontics could meet, thanks to the EOS who sponsored the meeting. This kind of forum exists in the USA and has proved to be a necessity.

Prof. S. Kiliaridis explained that invitations were forwarded to 240 universities; 63 participants announced their participation from 58 universities and 23 countries. Unfortunately, Norway, Iceland, Spain and Portugal were not represented. Twelve pre-registered participants did not show up and four registered on site, so the total number of participants was 55.

The Erasmus Programme is now 15 years old; it had been a good base for many orthodontic programmes, but despite this common base, a great diversity existed in length of the programmes and content. In addition, a lack of quality assessment appeared in most countries and was not a priority for the European governments. Existing organizations could help in the future; the EFOSA for political questions and ADEE (Association of Dental Education in Europe) for quality control as they funded DentED, a programme to help dental schools to develop and evaluate their undergraduate programmes.

Two PowerPoint presentations presented during the introduction have been attached to these Minutes.

## **3. SWOT analysis**

The assembly was then divided into working groups to discuss orthodontic education in Europe with special emphasis on the Erasmus Programme. As an instrument a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) was used; Strengths and weaknesses being internal factors in relation to the teaching itself and to the schools, opportunities and threats being external factors from outside the institutions.

The results of the breakout groups were presented in the following plenary session. These are summarized as follows:

### *Strengths*

- The Erasmus programme is an excellent framework for institutions launching a new programme
- The Erasmus programme has a good ratio between theory, clinics and research. The minimal number of patients to be treated by each postgraduate is high; the diversity in treatment modalities is large.
- Erasmus programmes have to be given by universities; the environment is ideal for interdisciplinary contacts.
- The postgraduates are involved in undergraduate teaching; this gives them experience and contact with other disciplines.
- 3 years is a sufficient length to finish cases.
- The postgraduates have financial support.
- The Erasmus programme is well recognized
- The specialty is widely accepted among the dental and medical profession and there is high competition from the candidates to enter the programmes. The students are thus highly motivated.
- Most European countries now have an official specialist title.
- Exchange of postgraduates could be organized through the Socrates programme.

### *Weaknesses*

- Diversities in
  - o Lengths and contents of the programmes
  - o Entrance criteria and selection of candidates
  - o Outcome level
  - o Examinations and certifications
- The lack of well trained academic teachers
- The lack of quality assessment of the programmes, teachers, and end product
- No accreditation of programmes
- Lack of communication and exchange inside countries and internationally. Most institutions are in a closed-in environment; for example: it is unknown how many universities have implemented the Erasmus programme.
- The Erasmus programme is an optimum, which is difficult to attain in some institutions
- Financial resources to run the programme are sometimes different within the countries.
- The Erasmus programme needs upgrading, for example: the number of hours for adult orthodontics
- The Erasmus Programme is overambitious

### *Opportunities*

- There is an actual trend in medicine for quality assurance, which we should join.
- ADEE can be used for their experience in evaluation and accreditation of programmes; an analogue to DentED can be used.
- The EOS should continue to organize teachers meetings, which can be used as a forum to meet each other.

- EFOSA should be addressed and asked to send representatives to Brussels, so that general dentists do not represent orthodontists.
- Use of IT, videoconferences, blackboard for common courses; creation of pools of relevant subjects.
- Postgraduate meetings within the framework of the EOS Congress are a platform for postgraduates
- EPSOS is a forum for communication, which could be used.
- Exchange of students and teachers.
- A network of institutions applying the Erasmus programme should be founded.
- New EU-countries start to develop postgraduate programmes now; they can start an Erasmus Programme from the beginning

### *Threats*

- The specialist title is not well recognized by patients. In some countries, there is confusion in relation to the title 'Master in Orthodontics', which is given to general dentists after a short period of part time education.
- We are not well represented in Brussels
- The lack of teachers and their financial position in relation to private practitioners.
- The name of the 'Erasmus Programme' is often misused for programmes that do not follow the guidelines.
- Orthodontic courses organized by commercial companies.
- For part time programmes, the financial attractiveness of working in private offices is a detriment for the universities.
- Outsourcing: commercial companies offer treatment planning, bracket placements, etc. Why do we need orthodontists?
- Influence of governments and insurances.

### **Conclusions of the SWOT-analysis**

- Erasmus is still a good base after 15 years, but it needs updating
- There is too much diversity in entrance criteria, programme contents, lengths and certification criteria due to lack of quality control.
- EOS, EFOSA and ADEE can help in many ways: organization of meetings for students and teachers, representation in Brussels and accreditation of programmes
- More collaboration between programmes is necessary, which can be done by using IT, videoconferences and blackboard
- A Teachers' Network is a necessity
- Lack of well trained teachers

### **4. Priorities, collaboration**

In the second session with breakout groups, a discussion in six new groups took place. The task for each group was, based on the results of the first breakout session, to identify priorities and possibilities for collaboration that could improve the education. The group chairpersons reported the results of their group to the plenary session.

### *Priorities*

- Urgent need for data: A database of institutions, teachers, and programmes
- Updating of the Erasmus programme
- Establishing of a network of Erasmus based programmes
- Criteria for quality assessment: self analysis, site visits, interviews with PG's
- Establishment of minimum entrance criteria
- Standards for teachers and quality control for them (they should have pedagogical training)
- Accreditation of programmes
- Political representation in Brussels
- Study groups on specific subjects
- Criteria for examination, board examiners
- Exchange of students
- Support for academic careers

### *Collaboration*

- Task forces should be created for:
  - o Establishing of a database
  - o Update of the Erasmus programme
  - o Establishing a network to develop criteria and collect data
- A Teachers' Forum should be held on a regular basis
- Exchange of teachers and students
- Use of videoconferencing, website, blackboard for common courses
- Collaboration with ADEE and EFOSA

### *Aims*

- Standardization of programmes
- Exchange of students and teachers (this will help to assess programmes): demand for funds to Socrates
- Network of universities with Erasmus based Programmes
- Database of institutions and teachers (this is now established by EFOSA)
- Common courses in the frame of the EOS meetings

## **5. Conclusion**

Participants agreed that EOS should be asked to let the Teachers Forum continue and volunteers accepted to act in:

- Task force 1:
  - o will develop a Network of Erasmus based Programmes and develop criteria for inclusion of postgraduate programmes in this Network,
  - o will update the contents of the Erasmus programme
  - o will contact ADEE and discuss possibilities for use of their accreditation system
  - o will contact EFOSA for database
- Task force 2:

- will come up with proposals for collaboration that can be implemented shortly and with proposals for a long-term planning concerning
  - common courses that could be repeated on a 3-year basis
  - use of IT, videoconferencing, Blackboard in postgraduate teaching between institutions
  - EOS supported/endorsed courses, as part of a formal training, that could be repeated on a regular basis in connection to the EOS meeting
- will make an overview of existing collaborations a regional, national and international level.

At the end of the meeting, Prof. R.-R. Miethke, President-Elect EOS 2007 joined the Forum, thanked for the work of the participants and he stated that he would organize the next meeting in Berlin.

Geneva, 11th July 2006

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