

EFSUMB Newsletter meets Croatia



Facts:

- ▶ Largest cities: Zagreb 1.000,000 (capital and largest city); Split 300,000; Rijeka 300,000
- ▶ Population 4.3 million
- ▶ The Croatian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology joined EFSUMB in 1994



Prof Boris Brkljacic, Vice President of the Croatian Society of Ultrasound and Medicine and Biology

Professor Boris Brkljacic, (BB) Vice President of the Croatian Society of Ultrasound and Medicine and Biology is interviewed by Michael Bachmann Nielsen (MBN). Croatia hosted the successful EUROSON meeting in 2004 in Zagreb. Croatia is one of the societies who have joined bulk subscription for Ultrasound in der Medizin/European Journal of Ultrasound.

- ▶ MBN: First of all thank you for volunteering for this interview; I have been looking forward to talk to you. Could you tell us a little bit about what you work with?
- ▶ BB: I am a radiologist and chairman of the Radiology Department at the University Hospital Dubrava in Zagreb. Approximately half of my time is devoted to ultrasound examinations, mainly vascular ultrasound, breast and urogenital.
- ▶ MBN: I really enjoyed my visit to Zagreb in 2004 for the EUROSON meeting which was very successful. I did have the feeling that there were more members than the 65 currently listed in EFSUMB's homepage.
- ▶ BB: Well we used to be over 100 members, I think 110 was listed a couple of years ago. Then we introduced bulk subscription of Ultrasound in der Medizin/European Journal of Ultrasound

and also increased our membership fee from approximately 20 € to 60 €. Probably because of this the membership number fell. This was surprising because we think that Ultrasound in der Medizin/European Journal of Ultrasound is an excellent journal and I don't know if that was the entire reason why we lost so many members. We hope they will eventually come back. There are approximately 4 million citizens in Croatia so we should have a potential for a much larger membership number.

- ▶ MBN: Apart from Ultrasound in der Medizin/European Journal of Ultrasound, what are the potential benefits for member of the Croatian Society; do you have newsletters, website, low fee for courses?
- ▶ BB: We don't have a national newsletter since we now have the Ultrasound in der Medizin/European Journal of Ultrasound. At present we don't have a website, some information about how meetings can be found on the radiology website and on the website of the Medical Faculty. Being a member of the Society will give a reduced fee for our courses and our national congress.
- ▶ MBN: Could you tell us about your national meetings?
- ▶ BB: We have a bi-annual national meeting. In 2004 it was together with the EUROSON congress. In 2006 it was in Umag and this year it will be in Zagreb. We hope to have between 120-150 participants. It is the national meeting of

Croatia but we have a lot of participants from Slovenia and also several speakers from Slovenia.

- ▶ MBN: I apologize for not knowing very much about Slavic languages, but are Croatia and Slovenian language similar?
- ▶ BB: No it is not the same language. Croatian is actually very close to Serbian and Bosnian.
- ▶ MBN: Could you tell something about your courses in ultrasound?
- ▶ BB: I am personally involved in two annual 3 week courses on Doppler which is a mix of both the lectures and hands-on. The course has run for almost 10 years. The course is completed with a test. The gastroenterologists run a 4 weeks course in abdominal ultrasound and there are also courses in breast ultrasound and musculoskeletal ultrasound and others. It could also be arranged to have an individual based course coordinated by the medical faculty. For trainees in radiology, ultrasound is part of the curriculum. All the courses and certificates are under the auspices of Zagreb Medical School.
- ▶ MBN: Your Society is probably multidisciplinary like in the rest of Europe?
- ▶ BB: Yes, ultrasound is mostly performed by radiologist and gastroenterologists but also other specialities like cardiology and others are represented, probably like in most of Europe.
- ▶ MBN: How is the health care system organized in Croatia?
- ▶ BB: It is mostly financed by the state but because of increasing waiting lists private clinics are appearing like it is in many other countries.
- ▶ MBN: Well thank you very much for taking your precious time to give this interview.



St. Mark Church of Zagreb