

ANNUAL REPORT 2004 – 2005

From Otočec to Munich

1. Introduction

After the very positive and inspiring meeting in Otočec, October 2004, the Board of IDF Europe continued its tasks with great enthusiasm and good team spirit.

When travelling from Slovenia (Otočec) to Germany (Munich) one has to cross the border of only one country: Austria. Is it sheer co-incidence or was it already in the stars that the government of this EU member state realised that it was time to put diabetes on its priority list for the first half of next year? The answer to this question will never be given but the fact remains that there will be a conference on diabetes in Vienna in February 2006 and that IDF Europe, FEND and EASD are partners in the organisation of this important event.

The Board realizes that also in 2004 – 2005 our member associations have done much of the real work for the people with diabetes in their respective countries. A huge compliment to all the volunteers without whom this task could not have been accomplished. When looking at the results while reading through the IDF Europe Newsletters we can be really proud of what and whom we are and what we stand for. The Board and our very small office are trying to facilitate and to stimulate these activities in the 44 countries of IDF Europe. Whenever necessary and wherever possible.

The Board is working (as in the previous year) with shared responsibility, but divided main tasks amongst each other. The shared responsibility means no exclusivity on the individual portfolios for anyone on the board.

These main tasks are (shortly summarized):

Wim Wientjens (President)	spokesman, Corporate Partners, office
Tony O'Sullivan (President-Elect)	deputy-president, contents meetings
Max Hansen (Treasurer, Secretary)	finances
Vida Augustiniene	Central European Countries
Chris Delicata	insurances, discrimination
Michael Hall	EU Affairs, National Diabetes Programmes
Helmut Henrichs	EASD, EURADIA, editorial committees
Laszlo Madacsy	Central European Countries
Marjatta Stenius - Kaukonen	EU Affairs, Council of Europe, Eastern European Countries
Itamar Raz (country representative)	IDF Global

During the period of this annual report this way of working appeared to be effective and efficient and the individual members of the Board concluded that this method should be continued in the years to come.

2. EU Affairs

Before May 2004 the European Union (EU) had 15 member states: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

On 1st May 2004 10 new member states accessed the European Union: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The access of these countries to the European Union was also for IDF Europe a very important event.

On 17 November 2004 we organized in close co-operation with Mr John Bowis (member of the EU Parliament) a roundtable of the informal EU-Parliament Diabetes Working Group in Strasbourg. A presentation was given by Michael Hall (United Kingdom) about "Diabetes in Europe – Apocalypse Now". It was a big meeting with many representatives from the accessing countries, as well as from several EU-institutions. Prior to the meeting the Otočec Declaration, signed after the General Assembly in Slovenia, October 2004, was handed over to the outgoing commissioner Byrne and the newly appointed EU commissioner Markos Kyprianou.

In the same week IDF Europe organized outside the EU Parliament in Strasbourg a diabetes testing event, during which fasting blood glucose levels, HbA1C and cholesterol were measured. It was once again a good awareness event in the EU-parliament.

On 21 June the first EU Diabetes Working Group Meeting (chaired by John Bowis and Michael Hall) of 2005 took place in Brussels (the second meeting will also be organized in Brussels on 30 November 2005). Presentations were given by Dr Gojka Roglic (WHO), highlighting the alarming increase of diabetes worldwide; new member states update by Prof Laszlo Madacsy (Hungary); key EU developments by Michael Hall; research: the 7th Framework Programme (Ms Natalie Vercruyse, DG Re-search); illustrations of the mechanism of diabetes and diabetes as a cardiovascular disease by Prof Helmut Henrichs (Germany). One of the conclusions of the meeting was that the Austrian Presidency will be a key in developing an EU response to the exploding diabetic epidemic in Europe. European diabetes stakeholders call for the urgent development of an EU Strategy on Diabetes and the adoption of an EU Council Recommendation on Diabetes.

Insurance was part of almost all agenda's of the Board. Attempts were made by IDF Europe (Chris Delicata) to improve the situation regarding insurances. Negotiations were made and are still underway with Heath Lambert, a leading UK Insurance Broker. The scope of the Board of IDF Europe is to ensure that our member associations have a quality product (particularly on Life Assurance) for people with diabetes with minimal discrimination when it comes to rating and loading of premiums. Even though we have not yet concluded negotiations, positive progress has been achieved.

A remarkable development in Denmark was that the Danish Diabetes Association succeeded to find a solution for the problem of unacceptable high insurance rates, after negotiations that went on for a period of 15 years.

Within the European Union not only the EU Parliament is important for us, but of course also the EU Commission and the Council of Europe. During the second half of 2004 The Netherlands held the Presidency of the EU. Unfortunately diabetes was not one of the Dutch Presidency's priorities, despite the efforts of IDF Europe and the Dutch Diabetes Association. These efforts continued toward Luxembourg and the United Kingdom without great results, but thanks to Austria diabetes is back on the road, and a conference is planned in Vienna mid February 2006, focussing on diabetes type 2. The Austrian Government will organise the conference with the assistance of IDF Europe, FEND and the EASD.

IDF Europe has started discussions with the EU about the EU Public Health Programme to participate in a programme to tackle the problems of the diabetes pandemic. IDF Europe is active as partner in The European Heart Network to make a proposal in the Public Health Programme and has become member of Health First Europe, a discussion platform to represent the patients needs, the medical technology industry and all key players in health in the EU at a high level.

IDF Europe and FEND are also involved in a partnership with Burson Marsteller in a new audit of national policies for diabetes to further strengthen our campaign for an EU strategy. This work is supported by an educational grant from Novartis.

IDF Europe has applied with the Council of Europe to become a recognized International Non Governmental Organization (INGO). A motion for a recommendation "An European Framework for Diabetes – a Call for European Leader's to Act" has been presented to the Assembly of the Council in May 2005 by Finnish MP Ms Krohn and others. The Council of Europe is a body of 46 National Parliaments in Europe.

Together with our member association in Uzbekistan IDF Europe has applied for an EU TACIS institution building partnership programme with the aim to enlarge and increase the level of diabetes care in Uzbekistan.

IDF Europe also applied for membership of the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. The application was accepted and since 21 September IDF Europe is an active member of the Platform.

3. Central European Countries (CEC)

The third Diabetes Experts' Panel from Accessing Countries (DEPAC) meeting was held on April 14-16 in Crakow (Poland). Some 23 representatives from IDF member associations in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland Slovakia and Ukraine participated in the conference. Presentations from the various organizations for people with diabetes were made, and the preliminary results of the survey on diabetes control in Central Europe and the development of Action Plans were discussed. First results will be presented during EASD, Athens, September 2005. The next DEPAC meeting will be held in early November 2005 in Prague (Czech Republic).

Within IDF Europe we consider 15 countries as the Central European Countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Eight of them entered the European Union in 2004.

4. Eastern European Countries (EEC)

Within IDF Europe we consider 8 countries as the Eastern European Countries: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. The third Eastern European Countries (EEC) meeting was held in Minsk (Belarus) on April 22-24. The event, very well organized by the Belarus Diabetes Association with the support of the East European branch of Novo Nordisk A/S, was a big success. Topics included : the outline of the new IDF strategy (Prof Martin Silink, IDF President-Elect); the prevention of type 2 diabetes (Dr Liisa Hiltunen, Finland); effective lobbying (Anja Strootker, IDF consultant); the implementation of the IPA model law; diabetes care in rural areas – survey results and discussions (Dr. Tony O’Sullivan); an update of paediatric care (Prof Martin Silink and Prof Valentina Peterkova) and the DAWN Programme (Oksana Bereznyak, Novo Nordisk). Participants came from Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The fourth EEC meeting will be held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on April 29-30 2006.

5. Prediabetes

In the beginning of 2004 a new initiative entitled “Gluco-forum” was started by IDF Europe (and supported by Merck Santé) aimed at delaying or even preventing the progression of pre-diabetes to type 2 diabetes. A steering group with representatives from 7 different countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and United Kingdom) has formulated the aims of the initiative in more detail and the productions of folders, posters and a tape measure have been accomplished. The European (scientific) paper was published by the end of August in “Diabetes and Metabolism”. The remainder of 2005 and 2006 will be used to involve local volunteers in the programme and to raise awareness on country level about pre-diabetes.

6. Communication within IDF Europe

We are very happy that since the end of 2003 the Newsletter of IDF Europe is translated into Russian. We receive many positive reactions to this initiative.

We must take the opportunity to improve our website. Full reports of meetings are already on the website. At present we have little information about the use of the website by member associations and we have taken the initiative to include a special training programme for webmasters in the Together We Are Stronger Meeting in Munich, October 2005.

The success of the Association Village in Munich, September 2004, was followed by another Association Village in Athens in September 2005, during the EASD Conference. Also during the IDF Congress 2006 in South Africa a big Association Village will be organized once again.

During the period of this annual report the Dutch Diabetes Association (DVN) celebrated its 60th Anniversary (28 May, RAI, Amsterdam) and organized an excellent and very inspiring meeting together with almost 5.000 persons with diabetes. The Finnish Diabetes Association (FDA) started to celebrate the year of its 50th Anniversary (22 May, Tampere).

Other well worth mentioning activities include:

- the activities organized for World Diabetes Day, and about which we reported in our Newsletter
- the launch of a National Action Forum in Berlin (Germany)
- the launch of a programme to help children with diabetes in Azerbaijan, an initiative of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, the Azerbaijan Diabetes Society and Novo Nordisk on December 7 2005 (see also www.first-lady.az)

The IDF newsletter was published in January, June and September 2005, and on the occasion of the General Assembly in Otocec also a first edition of the EU Newsflash appeared.

The Nordic countries have been holding a joint meeting of diabetes associations for 50 years. This year they invited Dr Tony O'Sullivan of IDF Europe to attend the meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, on 11th-14th August. The meeting included small group and plenary sessions covering diverse issues such as association membership or discrimination, and new initiatives like a new activity-promoting cartoon called 'Lazy Town', which has received international acclaim. The meeting also contains a social programme, to reward hard-working diabetes advocates for another innovative year. At the meeting a proposal was discussed to involve IDF in this meeting every year, and we hope that this will be realised next year.

7. Office IDF Europe

Lex Herrebrugh became the new regional office manager of IDF Europe from the beginning of June 2004 and has signed a contract for an indefinite period to serve as such until his retirement in 2011. Together with his assistant Lala Rabemananjara and three external consultants (Anja Strootker, Louise Fox and Debra Lord) they try to facilitate the activities of the Federation.

The Board is still very happy with the official status of IDF Europe and our official By-laws according to Belgian law (the newly formulated By-laws have been approved by Belgians' Ministry of Justice).

8. Finances

The financial report 2004 will be given separately. IDF Europe ended the year 2004 with a positive balance of almost € 48.000. (The year 2003 ended with a loss of € 28.000).

For the year 2005 we expect again a small positive result. Our reserves (cash on hand and in the bank) at the end of 2004 were € 64.000. In 2004 we have made every effort to encourage early payment of money due.

IDF Europe receives a yearly payment of 15.000 euro from IDF Global and fees from the Corporate Partners. We are very happy with the support (in cash or in kind) from about 5 member associations directly to IDF Europe, and we hope that also other member associations will support directly IDF Europe for the increasing activities.

9. Partnerships

From paragraph 8 you can conclude that our activities are very much dependent on support from our member associations or industry. IDF Europe did not receive anything from governments nor from the European Union. So, without the support of the industry (from their headquarters and from their affiliates) we would be very restricted in our activities.

At the beginning of the period of this annual report the following eleven companies were (Corporate) Partners of IDF Europe (in alphabetical order): Aventis, Eli Lilly, GlaxoSmithKline, Lifescan, Merck, Novo Nordisk, Pernod Ricard, Pfizer, Roche Diagnostics, Sanofi-Synthélabo and Servier.

After good discussions Nutrition & Santé (belonging to Novartis) also joined us as Corporate Partner.

We are all of them very thankful for making our activities possible.

10. Closing remarks

From the previous paragraphs we conclude that 2004-2005 was an extremely energetic and positive year. Not only the finances of IDF Europe are stable, also the number of activities of the member associations, the positive co-operation with our Corporate Partners and MA's, the feeling that we are getting attention on EU level and the progression within the Eastern and Central European Countries are positive signs for the future.

The Board of IDF Europe wants to say thank you to all those who have made this possible (volunteers and office) and wishes to continue to work in the coming years for the benefit of all people with (pre-) diabetes in Europe.

The Board of IDF Europe