

# EuroLabNews

THE EFLM BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

EFLM Connects National Societies of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine and Creates a Platform for all European "Specialists in Laboratory Medicine"

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**HOT TOPIC IN LABORATORY MEDICINE**

## Haemostatic disorders in COVID-19 patients

Reported by Tatiana Vavilova, M.D., Ph.D., Head of Laboratory Medicine and Genetics Department at the Almazov National Medical Research Centre, the Chief specialist in clinical laboratory diagnostics of the Ministry of Health of Russia, St. Petersburg, Russia



Laboratory tests, that are used to monitor patients with COVID-19, can be considered as part of an assessment of pathogenetic mechanisms. The first and key is the assessment of the pro-inflammatory response by determining leukocytes, neutrophils, CRP, procalcitonin, ferritin, interleukin-6, ESR. In addition - lymphocytes and platelets. The second direction is to determine the state of organs and systems - hepatic function and kidneys, markers of cardiac damage and coagulation.

Vasculopathy and coagulopathy in COVID-19 are associated with lung damage occurs with the development of microthrombi and pulmonary infarction, thrombosis, ischemia and dysfunction of the gastrointestinal tract (at present there is no clear understanding of whether this infection is influenced by the oral route or whether it is the general effect of a virus that has entered the body through the respiratory tract), arterial microthrombi, strokes and transient ischemic attacks.

In addition to systemic and respiratory complications, COVID-19 can manifest itself in a wide range of acute cardiovascular disorders. Increased thrombus formation determines the development of acute cardiovascular events in COVID-19. Among them are acute coronary syndrome and acute myocardial infarction, the development of rhythm disturbances,

*To be continued on page 2*

## Foreword

Reported by Harjit Pal Bhattoa, Editor EuroLabNews



The current issue of the EuroLabNews commences with the Hot Topic column where Tatiana Vavilova highlights the importance of Hemostatic Disorders in COVID-19 patients. Tomris Ozben, EFLM President-Elect reports on the urgent call for action to raise awareness to prevent a collapse of diagnostic testing. The President of

the EFLM, Ana-Maria Simundic presents her "Coffee with the EFLM President" with 4 prominent EFLM personalities. The EFLM Office informs us about the various EFLM bursary programmes on offer. Eric Kilpatrick, Chair of the EFLM Science Committee reports on the new working groups under the EFLM Science Committee. Spread the word on the call for nominations for the EFLM working group "Laboratory Medicine Credit Points". Mark your calendars for the upcoming EFLM events. The Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine report their latest activities. Under its regular column, the IFCC corner presents global perspectives in Laboratory Medicine. The Calendar of Events lists all major happenings with its usual and unfortunate COVID-19 alert. Keep Safe!

**Editorial information:**

Newsletter Editor: Dr. Harjit Bhattoa, Faculty of Medicine, Dept of Laboratory Medicine, University of Debrecen, Hungary

**EFLM Executive Board:**

AM. Simundic, M. Neumaier, T. Ozben, G. Lippi, K. Kohse, P. Fernandez-Calle, D. Vitkus

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heart failure up to cardiogenic shock, fluid accumulation in the pericardium and cardiac tamponade, thromboembolism. The manifestation of thromboembolic complications includes events in both the venous and arterial bed: deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism, thromboembolism in the artery, intracardiac thrombi, stroke, and also, which is typical, thrombosis in the microcirculation zone.

The main events that determine the severity of the pathological process and the degree of respiratory failure are associated with active microthrombus formation in the pulmonary circulation. The lungs fall into fibrin captivity, the exit from which can only be due to the active work of the fibrinolytic system.

Fibrinolysis in COVID-19 is also undergoing significant changes. It should be noted that the SARS-CoV-2 virus itself has some plasmin activity, which helps it to carry out its villainous intentions and spread in tissues. In response to the activation of coagulation and the formation of blood clots in the pulmonary bloodstream and other parts of the vascular bed, the natural reaction is the activation of fibrinolysis, which increases as the patient's condition becomes worse. Plasmin levels increase in cases of moderate to severe disease. In the case of a severe and extremely severe course, the capabilities of the fibrinolytic system are depleted and an imbalance in the production of tPA and PAI develops. However, in critically ill patients, hyperactivation and overload of the fibrinolysis system is observed, which leads to a deficiency of plasminogen and plasmin. This situation is regarded as a "plasmin paradox". That is, the fibrinolysis system in patients with COVID-19 is in an activated state and resists the generation of fibrin, but when it goes into an extremely severe form, it "cannot withstand the load" and is suppressed. Two reasons for this suppression are considered: 1 - deficiency of plasminogen as a result of consumption, 2 - pronounced suppression of plasminogen activators (tPA and uPA) through overproduction of the plasminogen activator inhibitor PAI-1.

Coagulopathy in COVID-19 demonstrates clinical and laboratory features distinct from disseminated intravascular coagulation and sepsis: the lack of consumption of platelets and coagulation factors, high level of fibrinogen, as well as a very low frequency of bleeding, damage microcirculation in the lung tissue, but less in liver and kidney. DIC syndrome can complicate coronavirus infection, but it occurs mainly in the terminal stage of the disease. In general, clinical conditions that meet the criteria of the ISTH scale are quite rare in COVID-19 (prothrombin time is rarely significantly lengthened, just as platelet counts rarely decrease). D-dimer and fibrinogen have received the greatest attention in COVID-19 as available and well-known markers. The shift in D-dimer depends on the severity of the disease, the presence of thrombotic complications and survival [Jin et al., 2020]. It was found that the concentration of D-dimer > 2.0 µg / ml FEU at hospitalization is a predictor of death [Zhang et al., 2020]. The sensitivity of this cut-off was 92.3%, specificity 83.3%, area under the curve (AUC) 0.89, which is quite good, given that the model uses only one laboratory parameter that is widely available for measurement in routine practice.

The described mechanisms of disturbances in the haemostasis system determine the development of thrombotic and throm-

boembolic complications. The prevalence of venous thromboembolic complications (VTEC) in patients with COVID-19 ranges from 0 to 13% in general wards and from 4 to 35% in intensive care units, even despite adequate prophylaxis with low molecular weight heparins (LMWH). An even higher level of VTE, up to 58%, was recorded according to autopsies performed in patients with COVID-19, without suspicion of having VTEC before death. These discrepancies can be explained by the fact that only part of the studies carried out systematic screening for the presence of VTEC (taking into account all the difficulties of its implementation in a pandemic). It is assumed that a significant part of thrombotic episodes could remain undiagnosed.

Given the relatively low incidence of deep vein thrombosis (DVT), it is possible to assume that the occlusion of blood flow in the lungs observed in patients with COVID-19 may be caused by local thrombotic microangiopathy, and not the result of embolization due to DVT.

The most complete analysis of the prevalence of VTEC was performed in the meta-analysis by S. Nopp et al. [Nopp et al., 2020]. 86 studies (33,970 patients) were identified, and 66 studies (28,173 patients, mean age: 62.6 years, 60.1% men, 19.4% of ICU patients) were included in the quantitative analysis. The overall estimate of the prevalence of VTE was 14.1% (95% confidence interval [CI], 11.6-16.9), 40.3% (95% CI, 27.0-54.3) during ultrasound screening and 9.5% (95% CI, 7.5-11.7) without screening. Subgroup analysis revealed a high heterogeneity in the prevalence of VTE of 7.9% (95% CI, 5.1-11.2) in patients outside intensive care units (ICU) and 22.7% (95% CI, 18.1-27, 6) in ICU patients. The prevalence of pulmonary embolism (PE) was 3.5% (95% CI, 2.2-5.1) and 13.7% (95% CI, 10.0-17.9), respectively. Patients who developed VTEC had higher D-dimer levels (weighted mean difference, 3.26 µg / ml; 95% CI, 2.76-3.77) than patients without VTEC. Based on their analysis, the authors concluded that the risk of VTEC is also increased in all hospitalized patients, and the thromboprophylaxis strategy needs further research and evaluation. People hospitalized for acute somatic pathology or exacerbation of chronic diseases, but not suffering from COVID-19, show a significantly lower prevalence of VTE.

The incidence of thrombosis and embolism after discharge from hospital with COVID-19 is low. So, the majority of experts and societies don't **recommend** VTE prophylaxis after hospital discharge for patients with COVID-19.

The above facts about the pathogenesis of disorders of haemostatic functions in COVID-19 and the clinical manifestations of these disorders have formed an unambiguous opinion in the medical community about the necessity and the usefulness of the use of anticoagulant therapy both for the prevention of thrombotic complications and for the pathogenetic therapy of coronavirus infection in order to reduce the severity of the disease and, first of all, respiratory disorders. The majority of experts suggest that the appointment of low molecular weight heparin (LMWH), at least in prophylactic doses, is indicated for ALL hospitalized patients and should be continued at least until discharge. There is no proven benefit of any one LMWH over others. If LMWH is unavailable or contraindicated, unfractionated heparin (UFH) may be used.

In conclusion

- COVID-19 is accompanied by severe blood clotting disorders, which are realized by thrombotic events in different parts of the vascular bed. Potential mechanism is endothelial damage, hypercoagulability and inflammation;
- Laboratory methods should be used for a comprehensive assessment of the various links of pathogenesis associated with the activation of haemostasis;
- Background risk of thrombosis worsens COVID-19;
- The severe course of COVID-19 significantly increases the risk of thrombosis compared to other diseases;
- Timely and active anticoagulant tactics prevent thrombotic complications, but should be used with a consistent assessment of the benefit / risk ratio for each individual patient.

# Urgent call for action to raise awareness to prevent a collapse of diagnostic testing

Reported by Tomris Ozben, EFLM President-Elect



The new European In Vitro Diagnostic Regulation (IVDR) EU/2017/746, published in the Official Journal of the European Union on May 5, 2017, entered into force on May 25, 2017. The official transition period for full implementation is five years. The biggest changes are the scope enlargement and the introduction of a risk-based approach to classification in combination with increased Notified Body (NB) oversight, without grandfathering. The IVD companies need to re-register their entire IVD portfolio under the new regulation by the end of the five-year transition period. The IVDR is planned to be implemented in all EU Member States by May 2022.

Currently, the one-year countdown to the IVDR Date of Application has started. Yet, as the EU Regulatory infrastructure for certifying and allowing market access of conventional medical tests under the IVDR is not in place, the continuity and availability of conventional medical tests is endangered. Till April 2021, only 7 medical tests out of ~19, 000 tests got CE-approval under the IVDR.

BioMed Alliance, of which EFLM is a member, and the [EFLM Task Force on European Regulatory Affairs \(TF-ERA\)](#), urge the National Representatives of the scientific Laboratory Medicine Societies of all EU member States to take immediate action to prevent a collapse of diagnostic testing".

A statement entitled **"Implementation of the new EU Regulation for In Vitro Diagnostic Medical Devices: a ticking time bomb for the diagnostic sector"** (and [related Table](#)) was prepared by BioMed Alliance in collaboration with Prof. Christa Cobbaert, as EFLM TF-ERA Chair,

and the European Haematology Association (EHA) to clarify the **hard stop** that the diagnostic sector will face for conventional CE-IVDs if we do not collectively stand up now.

National Representatives from EU countries are therefore asked to approach their national Ministers of Health in the next weeks/before end of May, to inform them about the difficult situation that laboratory professionals, caregivers and patients will be facing by May 2022 if nothing happens. **The National Representatives should request their Ministers of Health to speak up during the next EPSCO meeting in June:** EPSCO meeting on 14-15 June. This meeting is organized by the Council of the European Union and focuses on Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs.

We understand that the IVD Regulation will be on the agenda. If some Ministers of Health speak about the urgent need to fix the IVDR challenges at the EPSCO June meeting, that would hopefully trigger real discussion at the political level and will lead to solutions. Discussion at an EPSCO meeting was what also led to solutions for the MDR system (the grace period was extended and then a 1-year postponement was agreed). Therefore, the 14-15 June 2021 EPSCO meeting is an important chance to make the IVD Regulation a priority for member states. The more Ministers of Health speak up, the more likely there could be timely solutions for the IVD Regulation!



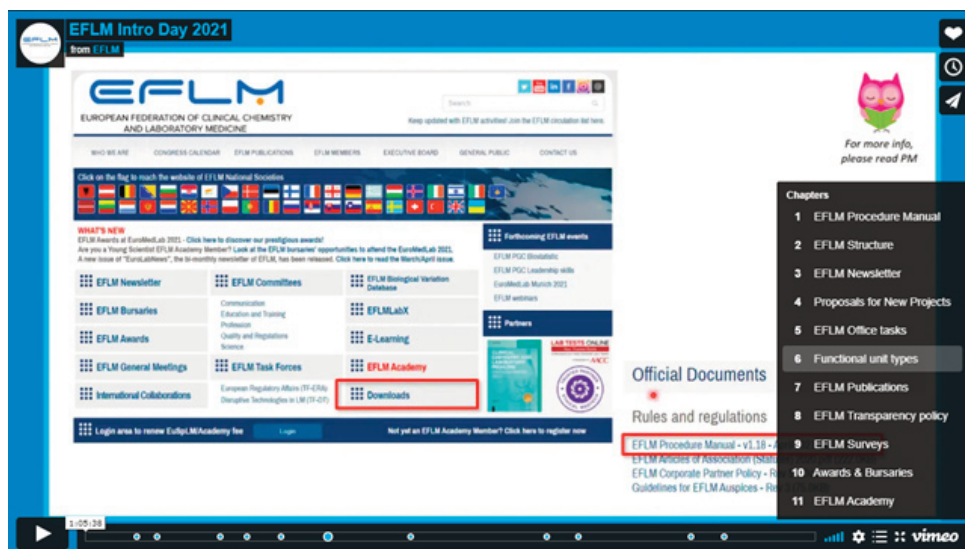
To conclude: since the COVID pandemic, most resources and efforts of the European Commission, the Notified Bodies and the IVD-manufacturers went into developing and certifying COVID (self) tests. That clarifies to some extent the unreadiness of the EU Regulatory System for Certification of medical tests. Due to the COVID pandemic, the MDR implementation, which had already a quite mature regulatory system, had to be postponed with one year. As there is now light in the tunnel with the progressing vaccination campaigns against COVID and as the MDR will be implemented per May 2021, attention should now go to proper IVDR implementation. Therefore, EU-politicians should find solutions for a responsible and safe IVDR implementation, according to its original objectives, i.e. for safe and effective patient diagnostics and patient care across Europe.

**National Representatives and members of the Laboratory Medicine Societies: we as EFLM Executive Board count on you and your urgent action!**

## EFLM Intro Day

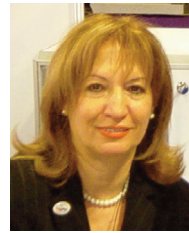
On May 6 2021, the EFLM President, Ana-Maria Simundic, explained core information on how EFLM works, how EFLM officers can be involved and what are EFLM Academy advantages.

If you want to know more about the EFLM structure & regulations [play the recording of this event.](#)





## Coffee with Tomris Ozben



### When did you join EFLM? What is your current role in EFLM? What are the activities of the functional unit in which you work?

I joined EFLM in 2020 as the President-elect. Before that, I was always in close contact with EFLM.

If I go back many years ago, I was Advisory Board member of FESCC during the Presidency of Vic Blaton and attended the meeting in Brugge upon his invitation.

As the Chair of the IFCC Congress and Conferences Committee (C-CC), I worked with Prof. Elizabeta Topic, the Chair of EFLM Education and Training Committee to review the bids to host EuroMedLabs and also as the organizing committee member of EuroMedLabs for several years. Again, I worked with Prof. Elizabeta Topic at the EFLM TFG: CPD crediting system.

As the Past-President and current Executive Board (EB) member of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), I met several EFLM officers at the BCLF congresses. I attended several EuroMedLabs and WorldLabs and met several EFLM officers at those meetings.

As the IFCC Executive Board (EB) member for six years (2015-2020), I was always in close contact with EFLM since EFLM representative is a member of the IFCC EB. In addition, IFCC and EFLM are exchanging their Executive Board Minutes allowing to know the activities and decisions of each other reciprocally.

I share a secret. I was working happily with Silvia Cattaneo at the IFCC and she left IFCC and moved to EFLM. I keep telling Silvia that I moved to EFLM to follow her and to be able to work with her again 😊.

### What do you like most about EFLM?

EFLM brings together scientists in laboratory medicine from different countries of Europe as a networking platform, to share wide-ranging scientific expertise, knowledge, and challenges. I like the feeling that our teamwork brings new ideas and offers joint projects, educational activities, such as the recent Syllabus course and EFLM Academy.

I appreciate voluntary work, expertise, and services of the motivated EFLM officers at different EFLM functional units contributing to the improvement of healthcare through laboratory medicine to national professional societies, diagnostic industry and governmental and non-governmental organizations and to the achievement of EFLM to be the European leader in Laboratory Medicine.

### How do you see EFLM in 10 years from today?

EFLM will keep and maintain its position as a valid and credited reference resource of expertise for quality assurance standards, implementation of the criteria for harmonization of quality indicators for total testing process (TTP) and extra-analytical phases, biological variability, performance criteria, accreditation, education, evidenced base practice, standardization, harmonization, metrological traceability, commutability of reference materials, clinical and cost effectiveness with novel applications and multiplex diagnostic technologies, application of emerging and disruptive technologies to clinical laboratories, adapting to the digital health era efficiently using information technology/electronic communication tools, services and processes to deliver healthcare services; pursuing recognition of the importance and clinical value of laboratory medicine, especially outside of the laboratory.

Our profession is facing major challenges and we need to create effective professional platforms and tools to cope

## COFFEE WITH THE EFLM PRESIDENT



Dear EFLM friends,

in this issue of the EFLM Newsletter, I present you a new edition of the "Coffee with the President" - interviews with four EFLM officers: Tomris Ozben, Snežana Jovičić, Timo Kouri and Lejla Alić.

These short interviews are a wonderful opportunity to get to know people who significantly contribute to EFLM with their time, energy and enthusiasm and who make EFLM what it is today. We all have a chance to meet them on professional and personal level and to hear what their close collaborators within EFLM appreciate about our interviewees. Moreover, as a new feature that we offer, I invite you to listen to the interviews as podcasts, which are available [here](#).

I would like to thank all our interviewees for accepting my invitation and I hope you all enjoy these interviews as much as I did.

Ana-Maria Šimundić  
EFLM President

with the challenges. Closer interactions with national societies, regional federations, corporate members, clinicians, healthcare policy makers/authorities and international bodies are necessary to achieve optimal patient healthcare. We should focus more and contribute to shaping laboratory medicine instead of responding to changes.

**What do you like about your current job?**

During my term as the Vice Rector, I have been the founding Director of the Central Laboratory of Akdeniz University Hospital bringing all the medical laboratory disciplines under the same roof to work together in harmony and efficiently. The central lab is managed by an Executive Committee formed by the Directors of different disciplines. It has been a well-equipped, accredited, routine, and advanced diagnostic central laboratory at the European high standards providing healthcare services to the clinicians and patients and specialty training to the residents from different disciplines allowing them easily to rotate among different laboratories in the central lab.

We, as the diagnostic data providers of the Akdeniz University hospital, have established common interdisciplinary discussion platforms with clinicians to discuss selected patients' laboratory data and health status on a case-by-case basis.

The research laboratory established by me and funded using my research grants have provided several post-graduate Specialty, Master and Ph.D. students to perform their thesis studies in these laboratories.

**Do you have a role model? If you do, what makes this person so special?**

I do not have a role model, but I am open to learning. I respect and try to benefit and learn from the knowledge of experts. I am enthusiastic to learn different topics in science and daily life, different technological developments, cultures, cuisines, trying to adapt to the changing environments, trying to expand the angle of my view and vision.

**What are the qualities you appreciate most about people?**

I like people honest, reliable, transparent, intelligent, having humor, keeping commitments and promises, having communication capacity, respecting other people and different ideas, self-confident, and having empathy. It might be difficult to find all these qualifications in the same person, but these are good qualifications to exist in an ideal person.

**Do you have some hobbies? What are the things outside of your work that you are passionate about? How do you like to spend your free time?**

I have similar hobbies with my husband. We like hiking, swimming, sailing, working in the garden, planting vegetables, cooking, visiting antique fairs and shops, museums, historical places, listening classical music and dining with friends.

**How would your spouse (wife, husband) describe you?**

This should be asked to him privately. I think we are happy to live together and share our lives as it is clear in the painting.



**What are your greatest challenges?**

My greatest challenge has been to live and work in a different country than my husband. I keep travelling between our countries more than 15 years. We

have been very busy at our work as senior academicians, not at the beginning of our career to change our work and accepted each other without putting any condition. After pandemic, travel has become a big risk and problem, so, I have changed my priorities in order to stay with my husband, to dedicate more time to EFLM. I have decided to change my work at my university, keeping my office and research laboratory, continuing to perform research project studies with my international research groups, publications, and post-graduate teaching commitments at three different universities, but stop doing routine work and under-graduate teaching to medical students.

**Are you good in time management?**

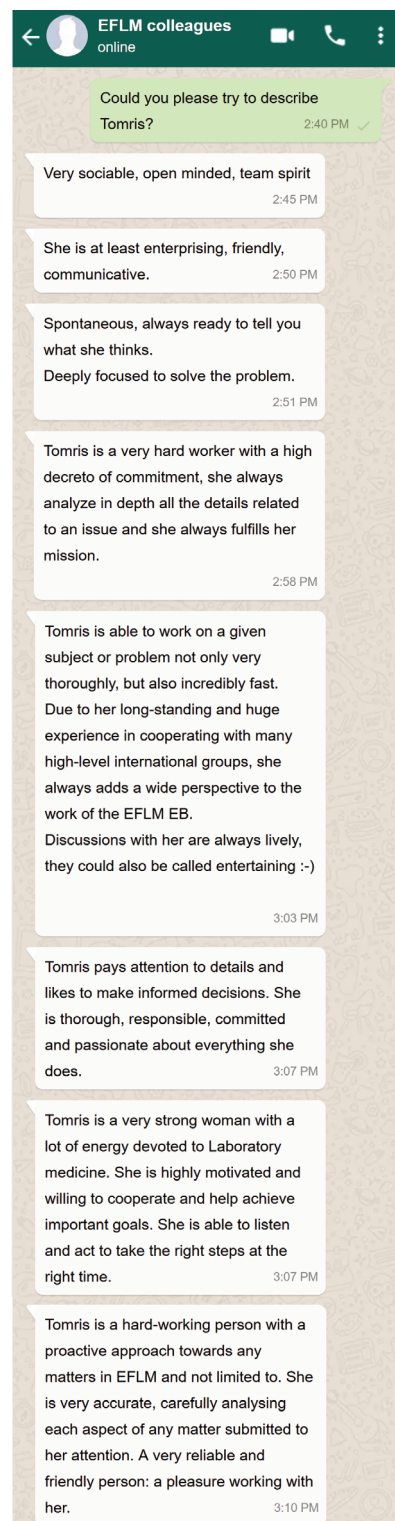
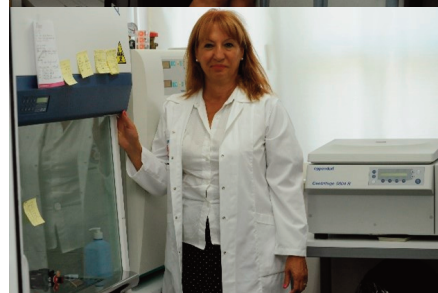
I think I am quite good in time management for my work responsibilities. Time is the most valuable asset in our lives. It is priceless. I try to make daily, weekly, monthly plans. Every morning, I make a list of things to be done that day and I try to complete them. Unfortunately, due to my hectic work schedule, I am not able to allocate much time to my family, my friends, and my hobbies.

**What do you value most about your country and its culture?**

I have two countries as a double citizen. I love both of them. The nature of both countries are very beautiful having crystal clear sea and beautiful coasts and beaches, mountains, lakes, rivers, valleys, four climates. They both have impressive histories as if they are open-air museums with many historical places. They have been the lands of big Empires (Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, etc.). They are a mixture of different cultures. I like cuisines of both.

**Do you have a pet? (feel free to share its photo with us, if you like)**

We used to have dogs, but I cannot keep them anymore due to my frequent travels. Now, we have cats, they are quite wild and able to live in nature without needing our care and constant feeding.





### Coffee with Snežana Jovičić



#### **When did you join EFLM? What is your current role in EFLM? What are the activities of the functional unit in which you work?**

I joined EFLM in 2013, as a corresponding member of the Patient-Focused Laboratory Medicine Working Group (PFLM-WG). I became a Full member in 2019, and from the beginning of 2021 I act as the Chair. I do not need to say how honoured I feel taking over this position after the excellent work of Past Chairs Ian

Watson and Wytze Oosterhuis. Our terms of reference are to explore and promote the engagement of patients and professionals in enabling patients to receive individualized support in understanding what their results mean for them. We also conduct surveys on quality of alternative sources of laboratory medicine information for patients, for example smartphone applications or over-the-counter point-of-care tests.

I also represent Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia in the WG Register, as a corresponding member. My activities here are primarily directed to promoting enrolment of our members to the EFLM Academy.

Also, I have the pleasure of being the Secretary of the EFLM Task Group for Syllabus Course, thanks to the kind invitation of prof. Ana-Maria Šimundić. This exciting project gathers more than 350 eminent speakers from all over the globe in producing a series of highly educational lectures to support the harmonization of postgraduate education of specialists in laboratory medicine in Europe. I am honoured and privileged to be a part of such an inspiring team of TG-members and module coordinators.

#### **What do you like most about EFLM?**

I like the initiatives in promoting the profession of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine, like the EFLM Academy and EFLMLabX, providing equal opportunities for all member societies, endeavours for harmonization of postgraduate education of specialists in laboratory medicine in Europe, as well as for the professional recognition of European Specialists of Laboratory Medicine.

#### **How do you see EFLM in 10 years from today?**

As one strong, leading professional organization that defines and sets standards of our profession, with the important impact not only in Europe, but worldwide.

#### **What do you like about your current job?**

I like the combination of clinical laboratory work and teaching. Being able to transfer my knowledge to young colleagues, to show them the importance of laboratory medicine profession and the responsibility we have in the healthcare system, really fulfils me.

#### **Do you have a role model? If you do, what makes this person so special?**

I could not distinguish only one. I am blessed with meeting people

who have inspired me and keep inspiring me still, and each one of them left an indelible mark on my life and on my career, either with their life philosophy, attitude, kindness, or tolerance. I admire them sincerely and consider them all to be my mentors and role models.

#### **What are the qualities you appreciate most about people?**

Honesty, kindness, tolerance, caring for others, patience.

#### **Do you have some hobbies? What are the things outside of your work that you are passionate about? How do you like to spend your free time?**



My passion is scuba diving. Emerging into the world so close but so different from ours, seeing all those wonderful creatures all around, discovering the amazing sceneries and enjoying the absence of sounds of civilization make me feel calmed and grateful for the opportunity to be a part of it. I also like to travel, discover new countries, cities, cultures, that enrich me and build my personality. In the past two years something

that really fulfills me is learning Italian. With getting to know the language, I enjoy discovering the culture and history of this incredible country.

#### **Are you good in time management?**

I would like to think that I am, I am trying to be, but sometimes the problem is that I cannot refuse a kind request, and I end up completing everything in the last minute. My greatest challenge would be how to set my priorities and understand that sometimes I need to say "no" to a certain task that was offered to me.

#### **What do you value most about your country and its culture?**

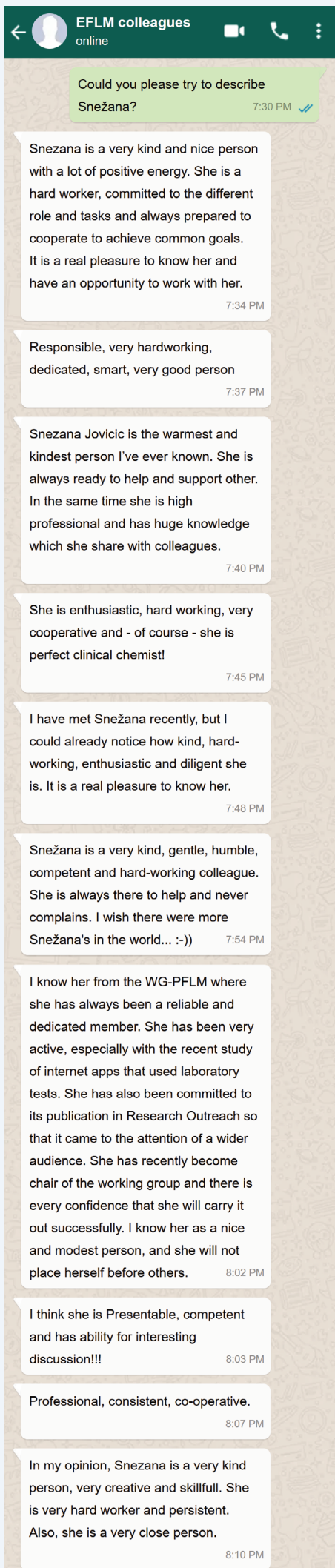
Even though my country has been over some difficult and challenging times in the past 30 years, I admire our people that somehow always manage to get to their feet and continue, no matter what. I am proud of our culture and of many talented young athletes, scientists, musicians, artists, that represent Serbia all over the world. Our hospitality, culture and the abundance of natural beauties attract a lot of tourists, and it always makes me happy to hear a mixture of foreign languages from all around the world on the streets of Belgrade.

#### **Do you have a pet? (feel free to share its photo with us if you like)**

I am a big animal lover, but I do not own a pet. I would hate to think how lonely it could have felt when I am absent most of the day. On the other side, I consider all animals worthy of being pets to all of us, disregarding the species, they all deserve respect and kindness. Of course, my favourites are



all the sea animals that I meet during my dives, like this cute Nemo (Ocellaris Clownfish), who came to play with me.



## Coffee with Timo Kouri



### When did you join EFLM? What is your current role in EFLM? What are the activities of the functional unit in which you work?

I joined EFLM actually during the FESCC times in 1990's, together with the Finnish Society of Clinical Chemistry. As an active participant, I started as a Chair of the Task and Finish Group Urinalysis in 2018. The TFG Urinalysis has a targeted task to update the European Urinalysis Guidelines published by my previous group under the ECLM (European Confederation of Laboratory Medicine) in 2000.

It was then a joint project with ESCMID (European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases) that has promised to consider endorsing of the current update.

### What do you like most about EFLM?

It is a professional platform and networking for international laboratory community within a reachable geographic region, out of which you may learn to know the colleagues for mutual interests for education and research. It is also a steppingstone for global co-operations, e.g., through IFCC, or with other continental organisations.

### How do you see EFLM in 10 years from today?

I wish to see a scientifically elaborated, further organized network of European professionals under clinical chemistry and related laboratory disciplines, with a resource to hold up an umbrella of co-operation with those from other laboratory disciplines as well. I hope to see an increased impact of laboratory science and practical profession in the eyes of other health-care professionals and politicians.

### What do you like about your current job?

I retired in December 2019 from a position at HUSLAB Automation laboratory in Helsinki, Finland, with a medical role in emergency and automated laboratory services. In addition, I had a part-time chair as a professor in clinical chemistry at the University of Helsinki, responsible for training of medical specialists in clinical chemistry until May 2020. After retirement, I am enjoying the possibility to maintain my best expertise at an emeritus position.

For EFLM, I initiated the TFG Urinalysis in 2018, to update the document when some of the primary colleagues are still available. As a chair, I am highly motivated to fulfil that task under EFLM together with invited colleagues, when the COVID-19 pandemic allows us to continue the job.

### Do you have a role model? If you do, what makes this person so special?

I have learned to know several distinguished colleagues with highly respected characters. First, Professor Walter G. Guder, Munich, Germany, with a sincere life-long interest in his research topics, and willingness for international sharing of his knowledge. Others include Professor Elvar Theodorsson, Linköping, Sweden, and Professor Sverre Sandberg, Bergen, Norway, who keep having enthusiastic and friendly approaches to laboratory medicine despite decades of working.

### What are the qualities you appreciate most about people?

For individuals in general: honesty, endurance, humbleness, and respect of basic values of life.

In professional coworking, efficiency, skills of co-operation and scientific compatibility.



**Do you have some hobbies? What are the things outside of your work that you are passionate about? How do you like to spend your free time?**

I enjoy nature, hiking and picking gifts of nature. Moreover, I like cross-country skiing in winter, and swimming in natural waters in summer. My passionate hobby is music, in particular playing with the Finnish national instrument kantele.



**How would your spouse (wife, husband) describe you?**

He is a multi-faceted person who is often very punctual but loses his sense of time regularly with professional work. Nature is a place of sports, but also a place for refreshment for him.

**What are your greatest challenges?**

Learn to select between the numerous opportunities still available in life.

**Are you good in time management?**

I may occasionally appear efficient but tend to collect too many simultaneous tasks. Hopefully, wisdom of age helps to solve this.

**What do you value most about your country and its culture?**

Close relationship with nature with lakes and forests, and hills in Lapland.

Honest culture of working and supporting mutual benefits by taxes, usually paid as expected.

Public education and healthcare, mostly fair and safe society.

Close relationship with nature with lakes and forests, and hills in Lapland.

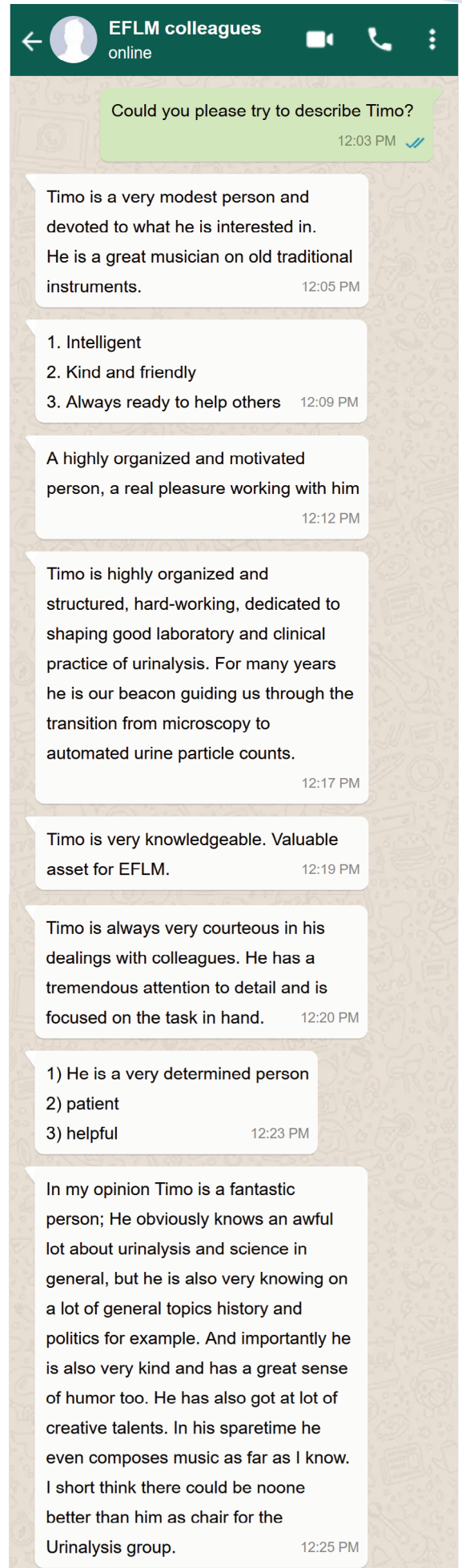
Pragmatic endurance to survive in the northern climate, preparing creativity for exceptional times.

Unique features of art that are based on our nature (music, architecture, design products).



**Do you have a pet? (feel free to share its photo with us, if you like)**

No (unfortunately)







**When did you join EFLM? What is your current role in EFLM? What are the activities of the functional unit in which you work?**

I joined EFLM in March 2020, as a member of the Working Group Promotion and Publication, within the Communication Committee. Our fantastic group is composed of very creative, positive and proactive members, and we work on promoting the EFLM and Laboratory Medicine in the community using different communication channels. We are responsible for assembling the content of the bi-monthly EFLM Newsletter – EuroLabNews. Additionally, we promote the main messages of scientific publications published by EFLM working and task groups by our creative infographics. I like our group because we are constantly applying new tools and approaches, and I can learn a lot from my colleagues. Moreover, I have recently joined the Task Group for the EFLM Syllabus Course. We are currently preparing the most comprehensive course in laboratory medicine that I am sure all EFLM Academy members will enjoy.

**What do you like most about EFLM?**

EFLM is the most influential organization for our profession, and I am delighted to witness an enormous amount of enthusiasm and creativity among its members. I am grateful to have a chance to meet and learn from inspiring and devoted colleagues. What I genuinely appreciate are the expanding educational resources and activities offered by the EFLM.

**How do you see EFLM in 10 years from today?**

We could already notice that the EFLM community is growing exponentially, and there is more interest in the EFLM and laboratory medicine in general. I think that EFLM has taken a very dedicated trajectory towards transparent work, promoting the importance of somehow underestimated laboratory medicine profession, raising the network of a new generation of laboratory medicine professionals and putting its services available to both professionals and non-professionals.

**What do you like about your current job?**

Currently, I am working as senior teaching and research assistant at the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sarajevo, in the field of medical

biochemistry and molecular medicine. Additionally, I am finishing my PhD thesis a few weeks from now. My current job comprises diverse activities, including teaching, scientific and research challenges. The previous year has been primarily spent in online teaching, but in the future, I would like to devote more time to research in the field of oxidative stress and immune responses to oxidative stress-related products.

**Do you have a role model? If you do, what makes this person so special?**

During my doctoral studies, research stays in Hamburg and Vienna, and my specialization, I have met many inspiring and prominent scientists and individuals who have contributed to my personal and scientific development. I am grateful to all of them for introducing me to new and fresh viewpoints, but I would rather not list anyone because I may accidentally miss someone.

**What are the qualities you appreciate most about people?**

Kindness, hard work and professionalism

**Do you have some hobbies? What are the things outside of your work that you are passionate about? How do you like to spend your free time?**

I love to travel and discover other cultures, which was unfortunately not possible in the previous year. The top two destinations that are on my bucket list are New Zealand and Japan. Also, recently I have discovered my love for cooking – I love cooking and trying different national cuisines and dishes. Luckily, people around me gladly participate in my cooking experiments (or they are just too kind).



**How would your spouse (wife, husband) describe you?**

I know that he would say that I am amazing! Joking aside, I think he would say that I am a good and empathetic person, perfectionist, overthinker and his best friend.

**What are your greatest challenges?**

I tend to undervalue the need for sleep. I chronically lack time, but I guess this is due to my bad time management, inability to say no to people, tasks and projects and unrealistic estimation of time and resources needed to finish things.

**Are you good in time management?**

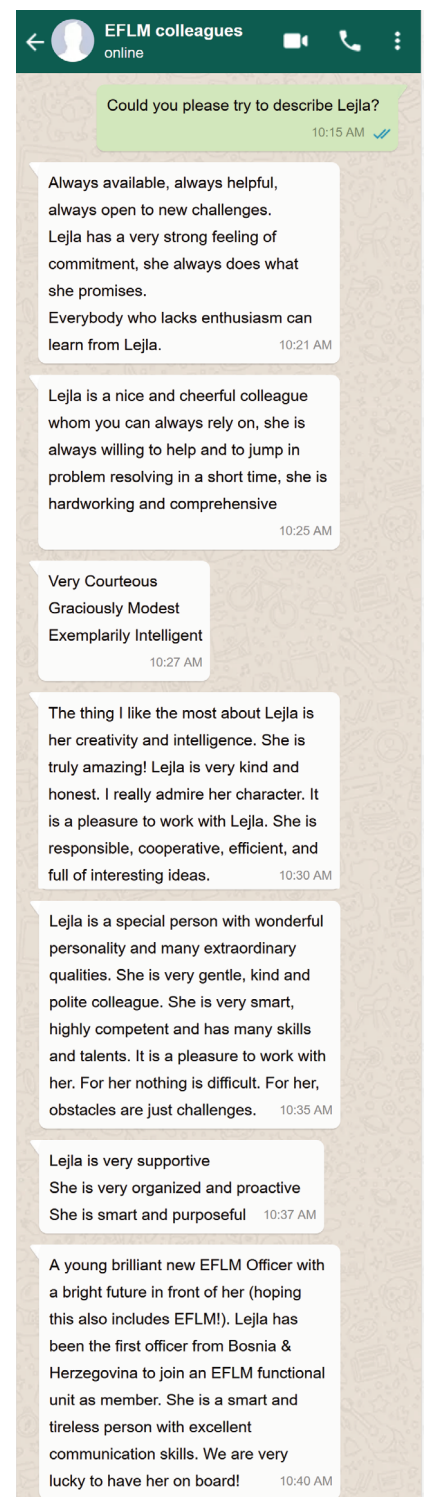
Unfortunately, I am terrible at time management, as mentioned before.

**What do you value most about your country and its culture?**

Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is unique in many ways, but what I love the most about it is the goodness, resilience and creativity of its people. Bosnians and Herzegovinians can always find positivity and humor in every situation. Additionally, B&H has beautiful nature, and in only a two-hour drive, you can go skiing in the mountains or swimming in the sea. It is a heart-shaped country, and it describes the cordiality of the country and its people. You should come to visit it!

**Do you have a pet? (feel free to share its photo with us, if you like)**

Currently not, but I would like to get a cat – I am definitely a cat person.





## EFLM Scholarship Programme in memory of Prof. Vic Blaton

### EFLM OFFICE INFORMS

## Sponsoring Opportunities for EFLM Educational activities

Communication Committee has created the first version of a leaflet that clearly summarizes sponsoring opportunities for EFLM Educational activities. The leaflet is intended for **IVD companies** and contains detailed information about sponsorship of:

- E-Learning platform
- EFLM Syllabus courses
- EFLMLabX
- EuroLabNews Newsletter
- Postgraduate courses

More information can be found at [this link](#).



The new "EFLM Scholarship Programme in memory of Prof. Vic Blaton" has been initiated by the EFLM Executive Board in 2020 and is addressed to a defined group of EFLM National Societies selected according to UN and World bank classification criteria. This new EFLM initiative is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Vic Blaton who was a pioneer of our Profession. He was especially committed to help and support the nondeveloped and developing countries in Europe to reach professional and educational standards of the Western countries in the European Community at times of big political and economic changes. With this initiative the EFLM Executive Board aims to move forward his vision for the years to come. [Click here to know more about this EFLM Scholarship.](#)

#### Open opportunity:

[click here for the invitation to apply for EuroMedLab 2021](#)

#### Open opportunity:

[click here for the invitation to apply for EFLM only Postgraduate Courses 2021](#)

## A new issue of CCLM is available online! Vol 59, Issue 6

A new issue of CCLM, the scientific Journal of EFLM, is available on-line. Click [here](#) to access the list of contents of CCLM Vol 59 n. 6.

**Do you wish to freely access all articles in CCLM?** Become an EFLM Academy Member! [Click here to know more.](#)

We remind EFLM Academy Members that to free access papers in CCLM is only possible through the [personal area in the EFLM Academy](#) where some other interesting opportunities await for you such as for example the access to some other international journals, the EFLM webinars and the access to CLSI documents\* (\*this latter opportunity is reserved only to EFLM Academy members en-bloc registered by National Societies).

To know more, contact: [eflm@eflm.eu](mailto:eflm@eflm.eu)

## EFLM bursary programme for Munch 2021

EFLM has launched a bursary programme to encourage the participation of Young Scientists EFLM Academy Members from EFLM National Society Members to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> IFCC-EFLM European Conference for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine "EU-ROMEDLAB 2021" that is to be held in Munich from 28 November to 2 December 2021.

**Number of available bursaries:** 10

**What the bursary covers:** travel and 4-night accommodation up to Eur 900,00 (plus congress registration kindly waived by the Congress Organizing Committee)

**Deadline to apply:** within 5 October 2021

**How to apply:** [click here to know more](#)



## New Working Groups under the EFLM Science Committee

Reported by Eric Kilpatrick, Chair of the EFLM Science Committee

The Guidelines Working Group (WG-G) within the Science Committee of the EFLM has been very active in supporting its constituent Task Groups (TG) and Task & Finish Groups (TFG), namely the TG-Cardiac Markers, the TFG -Urinalysis, the TFG-Autoimmunity Testing and the TFG-Chronic Kidney Disease.

It became increasingly obvious that the activities within some of these WG-G elements warranted them being Working Groups in their own right, while for others there was an opportunity to involve additional organisations in their activities. As a consequence, with the agreement of the WG-G and the Science Committee Chairs, the decision was taken by the EFLM Executive Board to form the **WG-Cardiac Markers** and the **WG-Autoimmunity Testing**, with officers from these former T(F)Gs being appointed as Members of the new groups. The Urinalysis group opted to remain as a TFG to complete its time-limited review of urinalysis guidelines, while the TFG-CKD is now in discussion with the European Renal Association – European Dialysis and Transplant Association (ERA-EDTA) regarding a joint proposal for a new WG.

These changes mean the Guidelines Working Group is discontinuing but its hard-working Chair, Michel Langlois, continues as a member of the WG-Cardiac Markers, and both the Executive Board and the Science Committee are extremely grateful for the contribution he has made to developing the WG-G. Indeed, the need for expansion in Working Groups could only have happened through this work and that of the associated T(F)Gs.



### VACANCIES IN THE EFLM FUNCTIONAL UNITS

## Call for nominations for the EFLM Working Group “Laboratory Medicine Credit Points”

Reported by Daria Pasalic, Chair of the EFLM Education & Training Committee and Sedef Yenice, Chair of the EFLM Working Group “Laboratory Medicine Credit Points”

The Call for Nominations of new Members for the EFLM Working Group “Laboratory Medicine Credit Points” (WG-LMCP) under the new chairmanship of Prof. Sedef Yenice is open.

WG-LMCP has focused on tasks that promote the profession, encourage professional development and support the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of Laboratory Medicine Specialists. CDP consists of systematic educational activities, which serve to maintain, increase the knowledge and develop professional skills and behaviors, and ongoing competence to the practice of laboratorians.

The “Terms of References” of WG-LMCP to achieve the above-mentioned goals are as follows:

- to institute an EFLM credit system to control the activities of high-quality continuing education content for laboratory specialists leading to CPD points,
- to evaluate applications and allocate credit points to various educational activities/programs,
- to provide a certificate of credit upon successful completion of an EFLM CPD.

Specifically, we are calling for nominations of:

- **1 Full Member position**
- **1 Young Scientist Full Member position (≤ 35y at the time of appointment)**

The first term of office will start now, ending on 31 December 2022 with the potential extensions for two more terms beyond 2022. WG-LMCP members meet face-to-face once or twice a year and may meet via conference call several times throughout the year.

**Requirements:** the basic requirements, in addition to a strong commitment to being an active participant in this working group, stipulate that candidates for full member position should:

- Have worked at least five years in curriculum development, analytics, and/or project management - previous experience is relevant to the essential duties and responsibilities of this WG - Provides examples of previous hands-on experience with specific details to demonstrate knowledge
- Have a demonstrated ability to perform professional assessments - Provides evidence of expertise and experience in post-graduate and professional specialty training, examinations, evaluation process, and methods, etc.
- Have expertise in developing requirements for CPD - Provides evidence of knowledge and experience in practice, etc.
- Have demonstrated interpersonal skills – Provides examples of conflict resolution, teamwork, collaboration, project coordination, etc.
- Have demonstrated effective verbal and written communication skills - Provides experience with presentations, writing for various audiences and in various formats such as e-mail, memos, etc.
- Have demonstrated analytical ability skills - Provides examples of planning based on strategic issues and outcomes, preferably evidence of knowledge on problem-solving techniques, statistical analysis, etc.

Candidates for the young scientist full member position should:

- Complete or continue post-graduate training - Provides diplomas, certificates, and any other proof of official documents
- Have a strong interest in learning and development of educational activities to support professional skills and competence – Provides evidence of attendance in courses, conferences, seminars, symposia, workshops, scientific meetings, etc., honors and awards, certificates, oral presentations, dissertation, and publications
- Have demonstrated curiosity and continual learning and proving to learn about subjects through experimenting for professional advancement in laboratory medicine – Provides evidence of pursuing and participating in scientific projects, research studies, clinical trials, and any other related tasks, etc.



- Have demonstrated adaptability skills - time commitment and experience working with multiple deadlines or in ambiguity. As per the general requirements, candidates for the full and young scientist member positions should have an ability to communicate effectively (in person and/or through writing), and reliability in following through on commitments and meeting deadlines, attend all group meetings, prepare for meetings adequately, participate in discussions thoughtfully and responsibly and provide feedback on materials presented for input.

**Procedure for applications:** each EFLM National Society Member in good standing with the membership fee can submit one nomination through the attached application form. A brief plan of the applicant's contribution to the aims and objectives of the relevant Working Group has to be included in the form. Together with the application, a short CV should also be submitted underlining the qualifications and prior demonstrated experience in the relevant area according to the requirements above. Candidates have to be officially recommended by their National Society through a formal letter of support. Applicants who are not selected as full members may be eligible for corresponding membership.

Please be informed that in order as many of the EFLM's constituent countries to have an opportunity of representation on a Working Group, it is stipulated that there can only be one person from any single country who is either a Full or Corresponding Member. It means that if someone from your country is already in one of these roles, then nominating another individual would require the existing person to forfeit their position on the Group should your new nomination be successful. Per the EFLM Transparency Policy, all received nominations and reasons for the successful one will be made available to all those National Societies who submitted a nomination specifying also the criteria used during the evaluation process.

An EFLM quantitative rating scale (1-5) per criterion based on the EFLM measurable criteria for the evaluation process will be applied to each applicant to weigh the qualifications and eligibility for the full and young scientist member positions. Rating scale: 1= Poor (no evidence) 2= Fair (below expectations) 3=Good (adequate and meets expectations) 4= Very good (exceeds expectations) and 5=Excellent (strong evidence for contribution).

Nominations have to be electronically submitted to the EFLM Office: Silvia Cattaneo  
e-mail: [silvia.cattaneo@eflm.eu](mailto:silvia.cattaneo@eflm.eu) within the deadline of **15 June 2021**.

## UPCOMING EFLM EVENTS

### EFLM postgraduate courses

EFLM Working Group on Congresses and Postgraduate Education (WG-CPE) organizes two online EFLM Postgraduate Courses. The aim of the courses is to focus on attractive topics for young trainees and specialists.



1<sup>st</sup> EFLM online  
Postgraduate course

### BIostatISTICS IN LABORATORY MEDICINE

1 September - 3 November 2021

Statistics plays a crucial role in many areas of Laboratory Medicine. The knowledge and the correct use of the statistical methods allows us to deal with data variation, to organize and summarize information, to make inference and communicate meaningful experimental results. Moreover, specific statistical methods are frequently applied to routine results and experimental data from validation study designs or verification protocols. In this virtual course, basic statistical concepts, including descriptive and inferential statistics, will be reviewed and applied to real scenarios using a statistical software. Recorded sessions for self-paced learning (theory and practice) will be followed by interactive live sessions with open discussion and case simulation.

**FURTHER INFORMATION  
WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE.  
STAY TUNED! [www.eflm.eu](http://www.eflm.eu)**

#### Outcome of the Course

To learn basic methods of descriptive and inferential statistics and apply them to real scenarios. The knowledge and the correct use of the statistical methods will allow you to deal with data variation, to organize and summarize information, to make inference and communicate meaningful experimental results.

#### Target Audience

Specialists/trainees, Residency students, PhD students, Specialist of LM, Lab. Directors

#### Course Organizing Committee

Eser Sozmen, Zsuzsa Bagoly, Daria Pašalić, Silvia Cattaneo

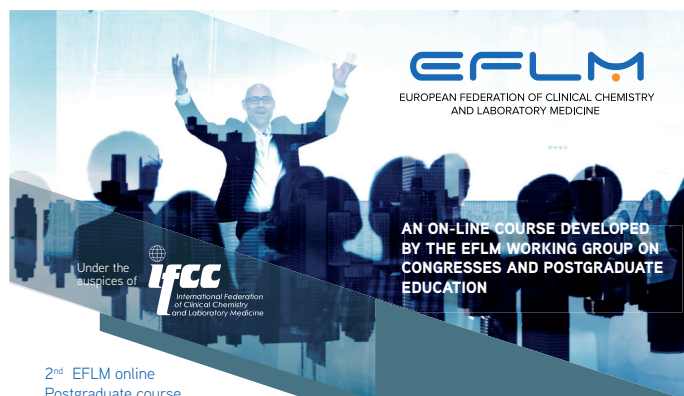
#### Course Scientific Committee

Matteo Vidali, Andrea Padoan

Organising  
secretariat



MZ Virtual  
T. +390266802323  
[nicholas.vergani@mzcongressi.com](mailto:nicholas.vergani@mzcongressi.com)



2<sup>nd</sup> EFLM online  
Postgraduate course

### LEADERSHIP SKILLS

13-23 September 2021

The ability to lead effectively a group of people relies on a number of key skills which varies in styles but with a common feature: the flexibility and ability to adapt to circumstances. Leadership skills are highly important to motivate, enthuse and build trust and respect in the work place. Nine experts from different professional fields (including the Presidents of EFLM and IFCC) will be delighted to illustrate the key aspects to be a good leader. In this virtual course, participants will have the opportunity to learn about identification and definition of the of leadership skills such as: rethinking education to shape the future, basic communication skills, how to understand and manage conflicts, change management and insight into different leadership styles. This course will also introduce to the TEST values which provide organizational harmony: Trust, Empathy, Sustainability and Transparency. The original, scientific theory of emotional intelligence will close the course. The course is structured on nine live sessions of one hour each scheduled on 9 days at h. 17.00 CET

**FURTHER INFORMATION  
WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE.  
STAY TUNED! [www.eflm.eu](http://www.eflm.eu)**

#### Outcome of the Course

To improve leadership skills by discussing the characteristics of charismatic leaders and the qualities required to be effective leader. During the course, strategic leadership in organizations, challenges and problem-solved skills, key points to motivate, mobilize team members to get positive results will be presented.

#### Target Audience

Specialists/trainees, Residency students, PhD students, Specialist of LM, Lab. Directors

#### Course Organizing Committee

Eser Sozmen, Zsuzsa Bagoly, Daria Pašalić, Silvia Cattaneo

#### Course Scientific Committee

Ana-Maria Simundić, Eser Sozmen

Organising  
secretariat



MZ Virtual  
T. +39 0266802323  
[nicholas.vergani@mzcongressi.com](mailto:nicholas.vergani@mzcongressi.com)

## UPCOMING EFLM EVENTS

# EFLM Academy Webinar: Myths and facts about vitamin D

**Speaker:** Dr. Ali Unlu (TR)

**Moderator:** Dr. Sedat Abusoglu (TR)

**Webinar manager:** Dr. Oguzhan Zengi (TR)

**Date:** 15 June 2021 at 18:00 CET

The health effects of vitamin D were determined on bone health and calcium-phosphate metabolism. The association of vitamin D with many diseases caused a serious increase in scientific articles as well as an increase in analysis in routine laboratory practice. Vitamin D analysis, which is increasingly emphasized with both scientific and media approaches, seriously occupies routine biochemistry laboratories. The efficacy of vitamin D in various diseases is observed in the lower steps of the evidence-based medicine pyramid such as animal and laboratory studies. However, vitamin D cannot find a place for itself in cohort studies, meta-analyses, and clinical practice treatment guidelines, which are the higher steps of the pyramid. This presentation will address the myths and facts about vitamin D from the perspective of evidence-based medicine. This presentation will also examine vitamin D from a laboratory

point of view, such as reference intervals, analytical techniques...

**About the speaker:** Dr. Unlu completed his medical school education from 19 Mayıs University Faculty of Medicine in 1991. In 1998, he received his Ph.D. degree in Biochemistry from Glasgow University Faculty of Medicine. Currently, he is the Head of Medical Biochemistry Department at the Medical School in Selçuk University (Konya, Turkey). He is also on the executive board of the Turkish Biochemical Association. His main research activities focus on the use of mass spectrometric analysis in the clinical chemistry department. In addition to his responsibilities in patient care and research, he gives lectures in Clinical Chemistry. He has written 4 book chapters and more than 90 articles in scientific journals with H-index of 20.



Register for this webinar at the [EFLM e-learning platform](#).

## PAST EFLM EVENTS

# EFLM Academy webinar: Haemostatic disorders in COVID-19 patients



On April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 18:00 CET Dr. Tatiana Vavilova (RU) presented interesting topic on hemostatic disorders in COVID-19 patients. Moderator of the webinar was Dr. Ksenia Zagorodnikova (RU). Dr. Vavilova discussed the pathogenesis of COVID-19-related haemostatic disorders, the development of hypercoagulability with clinical manifestations and differences between DIC and sepsis. The mechanisms of haemostatic disorders in COVID-19, laboratory diagnostic methods, principles of anticoagulation and its monitoring, as well as international recommendation for the diagnosis were elaborated. The webinar has attracted high interest of professionals in laboratory medicine and was appraised as very successful.

More information can be found in [EFLM eLearning platform](#) (accessible for EFLM Academy members only).

## NEWS FROM EFLM NATIONAL SOCIETIES

# SEQC<sup>ML</sup> participates in the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Multidisciplinary COVID-19 Congress of Scientific Societies in Spain



The [Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine](#) (SEQC<sup>ML</sup>) organized the panel discussion "Contribution of laboratory medicine in the COVID-19 pandemic" as

part of the [2<sup>nd</sup> National Multidisciplinary COVID-19 Congress of Scientific Societies in Spain](#), held in virtual format.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, laboratory medicine has played an essential role, being key in the risk stratification and monitoring of COVID-19 patients, thus contributing to their management. Dr. Luis García de Gadiana Romualdo, president of the Commission of Biological Magnitudes related to Medical Emergencies of the Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEQC<sup>ML</sup>), insisted that laboratory tests, in combination with other clinical data, contribute to the identification of low-risk patients and also those who have a high risk of progression to the most serious forms of the disease. These tests are very useful for the establishment of outpatient treatment strategies, thus reducing patient care load in hospitals and monitoring of the course of the disease.

Along the same lines, Dr. Antonio Buño, vice president of the

Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine, stressed that from the first moment the clinical laboratory has been a key element in the correct organization of care. Starting with the diagnosis of the infection by detecting the virus in respiratory tract samples to the tests needed for correct follow-up, prognosis and help in making therapeutic decisions, the clinical laboratory is an absolutely fundamental piece in the complicated puzzle of this new situation.

Both experts, together with Dr. Daniel Morell García, member of the Evidence-Based Laboratory Medicine Commission of the SEQC<sup>ML</sup>, participated in the panel organized by the Society titled "Contribution of laboratory medicine in the COVID-19 pandemic" at the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Multidisciplinary COVID-19 Congress of Scientific Societies in Spain that was held between April 12 and 16.

The BIOCOVID registry is an example of the work and involvement of laboratory professionals in Spain during the pandemic. As explained by Dr. Morell García, this registry is an initiative of the laboratory medicine professionals in our country which arose



from the idea of identifying which of the numerous laboratory tests that were included from the beginning of the pandemic in analytical patient profiles were really useful in the early identification of patients at higher risk. In addition, a second objective was also proposed: to convey to physicians the importance of knowing the analytical methods used to measure these tests, given the variability that can occur depending on the test used to measure a given analytical parameter.

The BIOCOVID study has yielded important results for the management of COVID-19. Thus, it has established as useful 4 common laboratory parameters (creatinine, troponin, C-reactive protein, and platelet count) to establish the prognosis of COVID-19 patients. Likewise, a sub-study has made it possible to demonstrate the possible utility of the use of cut-off points, stratified by sex, for troponin, in order to increase the ability to detect myocardial damage associated with a worse prognosis. In addition, a final objective was to obtain a classification using machine-learning techniques, combining laboratory tests and other variables, in order to establish a prognosis for the COVID-19 patient admitted to the Emergency Service.

### **New markers for the prognosis of the COVID-19 patient**

There are numerous studies that have tried to find new useful biomarkers for risk stratification in patients infected with SARS-CoV-2. Initial data from the second wave have shown that some markers that proved useful in the first wave, such as D-dimer or interleukin 6 (IL-6), did not behave in the same way in the second wave, and it is probably necessary, in the opinion of Dr. García de Guadiana, to have available new markers that precede inflammation and thrombosis, characteristics of the most serious forms of the disease. He believes that markers such as MR-proADM or suPAR, related to endothelial damage, a characteristic finding in severe COVID-19, may be useful in establishing the prognosis of these patients; their measurement has been recommended in a recent document by the Spanish Society of Urgent and Emergency Medicine (SEMES), although the initial data will probably have to be confirmed in larger cohorts. In addition, he believes that laboratory medicine must be able to offer tools that allow for the assessment of the evolution of COVID-19 patients once the acute phase has passed. In this sense, markers such as KL-6 (Krebs von den Lugen), with known prognostic value in interstitial lung disease, may be useful in detecting pulmonary fibrosis, a possible consequence of the disease.

### **Laboratory Service in "field hospitals"**

The organization and adaptation in record time, and with enormous difficulties, of "field hospitals" that have been created to support existing ones is another clear example of the involvement of clinical laboratory professionals in this health crisis.

This is the case of the IFEMA hospital, created as an emergency service in the third week of March 2020 to address a pressing situation in the first wave, which was affecting the Community of Madrid. Dr. Buño explained that the coronavirus epidemic had exploded in a very short period of time and the capacity to attend patients in the emergency services was overwhelmed, despite the fact that most of the centers had already taken all the measures that were within their reach. At that time, they were at their limit with more than 2,500 patients pending admission.

It was possible, in record time, to put the COVID-19 IFEMA Hospital, with 1,300 beds, into service. To meet the needs of laboratory tests and for the sake of the urgency with which everything had to be organized, it was decided to have an on-site infrastructure that would allow the samples to be organized, receive the requests, and send them to the La Paz University Hospital laboratory, located about 8 km away. An agile and secure transport of samples was organized and it was possible to guarantee a response time of less than 2 hours for scheduled requests and less than one hour for urgent requests. Likewise, 9 multiparameter blood gas analyzers were installed, whose determinations were made as point-of-care-testing connected to the POCT network of Hospital La Paz.

During the entire period that the COVID-19 IFEMA Hospital was open, a total of 4,933 analyses were performed on 1,985 patients with a total of 88,022 tests in addition to 1,151 POCT blood gas tests.

There are many similarities with the IFEMA field hospital in the organizational model of the Nurse Isabel Zandal Emergency and Pandemic Hospital, which has treated more than 4,000 patients, although there are also many differences. Dr. Buño stated that with regard to the laboratory, the organizational model is the same-- that is, the samples once extracted are received in a preanalytical area and are prepared to be sent to the Hospital La Paz laboratories. Through scheduled shipments they are transported, analyzed, and the results are entered into hospital information systems. In addition, there were blood gas analyzers connected to the POCT network of Hospital La Paz, where they were monitored and tasks related to quality assurance could be carried out.

These are two examples of hospitals that have supported the rest of the health centers of the Community of Madrid in different scenarios of this pandemic. In both cases, the laboratory has had to organize and adapt quickly to cover the needs of patients, emphasized the vice president of the Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine.

In fact, according to Dr. Buño, laboratory medicine has suffered a major impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, having to face important challenges such as readjusting circuits, protocols and templates, while also dealing with a staff reduction due to the infection of many colleagues. It was also necessary to review safety procedures in the laboratory and in some cases learn to use specific personal protective equipment; increase training in this new nosological entity; help interpret lab test results and expand lab areas to service increased demand; or actively participate in bringing the laboratory closer to the patient's bedside, known as point-of-care-testing, especially with the deployment of gasometers in different hospital units.

**Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEQC<sup>ML</sup>)**-founded in 1976- is an active member of the international and European Federations of Clinical Laboratory, IFCC and EFLM. It currently encompasses almost 3,000 professionals and its main objective is to bring together all interested scientists in the Clinical Laboratory field, promote the dissemination of scientific and technical publications, organize national and international meetings, courses and congresses, and cooperate with other scientific societies. Likewise, the Society wishes to contribute to studying and recommending standardized methods and establishing guidelines and recommendations for training in the field of Laboratory Medicine. For more information: [www.seqc.es](http://www.seqc.es)

@SEQC\_ML

Clinical Laboratory Residents – SEQC

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/seqc-ml/>

seqcresidents

For more information: BERBÉS T. 91 563 23 00 / María Gallardo: 678 546 179 / [marigallardo@berbes.com](mailto:marigallardo@berbes.com)



### IFCC President's Message

My sincere greetings to you all during these challenging times around the world. Despite the pandemic, we remain positive about the eventual return to normalcy, thanks to the rapid global vaccination efforts.

In waiting for a return to normalcy, the IFCC Executive Board has taken the opportunity to revise its conference schedule. Going forward, the IFCC will have one main international conference each year, alternating between the IFCC EuroMedLab in Europe and the IFCC WorldLab in another region. This new schedule offers consistency, prevents overlap, and ultimately will make it easier for all IFCC members to regularly attend and participate in these important scientific events. The EB has also

decided to include all regional federations as conference partners. Now we are working towards creating new guideline documents for all future conferences to aid in the planning, organization, and execution of these events, thus enhancing the conference experience for all attendees.

The new IFCC Task Forces also continue to make progress on a number of fronts. [Read more.](#)

While the pandemic lingers on, there is optimism that life may return to some normalcy in some parts of the world later this summer or fall. I hope we can all focus on the positive and get excited for the future yearly IFCC conferences, startup of the new IFCC programs, and much more. Should you have any feedback, questions, or concerns, please feel free to email me at [president@ifcc.org](mailto:president@ifcc.org). Till next time Khosrow

### The new IFCC initiative to strengthen lab quality globally: a challenging goal with rewarding promises for member states

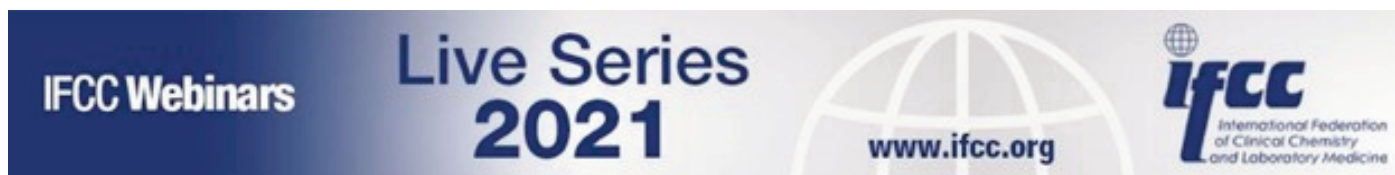
With the beginning of the year 2021, the IFCC EB has established the new Task Force on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ). This international TF that comprises 15 members and eight corresponding members has started its operative work.

**What is the rationale for this new global initiative?** High standards of laboratory quality are not met in all countries. The ultimate goal of the TF's work is to implement an international IQC and EQA program to improve the overall quality of laboratory practices on a global scale.

Two initiatives are currently being pursued:

- A survey was conducted in which member states answered questions on their countries' actual situation concerning IQC and EQA programs and on their willingness to participate in a pilot project.
- An initial request for proposals was circulated to vendors of IQC materials and EQA programs and interest to provide such materials was expressed by a number of commercial and not-for-profit vendors.

Click [here](#) to read the full article.



### IFCC Live Webinar

**Clinical Applications of Thrombosis and Hemostasis - 血栓与止血的临床应用 Simultaneous translation in Chinese**

It is on 6<sup>th</sup> June, don't miss it, register at: <https://www.workcast.com/register?cpak=6876560247232785>

### Laboratory Medicine and Healthcare Excellence; the quest for value-based health care

Success requires insights and committed partnerships. Join us in this pledge for healthcare excellence: From this day forward, for better (and not worse), in sickness and in health, for patients and the community, for unborn babies to the elderly, to save and to heal, I commit to healthcare excellence all the days of my life. To be inclusive and innovative and being open and strategic; all while maximizing the value of laboratory medicine until death do us part.

Watch this [webinar](#) to learn more

## Calendar of EFLM events and events under EFLM auspices

Do not miss the opportunity to have your event listed here.

Apply for EFLM auspices! For more information [visit here](#) or email [eflm@eflm.eu](mailto:eflm@eflm.eu)

**Due to COVID-19 alert throughout the world, some upcoming events could have been cancelled or postponed, please direct check with the organizers if the date is confirmed.**

29 May - 4 June 2021

**XIII Jornada Ibérica Virtual AEFA-OF**

on-line

[Click here for information](#)

14-18 June 2021

**UKMEDLAB21 – Annual Meeting of the ACB**

on-line

[Click here for information](#)

10-11 June 2021

**8<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Critical Care Testing and Blood Gases**

Biarritz (FR)

[Click here for information](#)

15 June 2021

**EFLM Young Scientist Task Group (TG-YS) Kickoff meeting**

on-line

[Click here for information](#)

[Click here to registration](#)





12 July 2021  
**Masterclass "POCT: quality specifications in medical laboratory diagnostics"**  
on-line [Click here for information](#)

10-12 October 2021  
**XIV Congress of Slovak Society of Clinical Biochemistry**  
High Tatras (SK) [Click here for information](#)

1 September - 3 November 2021  
**1<sup>st</sup> EFLM online Postgraduate course: Biostatistics in Laboratory Medicine**  
EFLM Course, on-line [Click here for information](#)



26-28 November 2021  
**XV<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Paediatric Laboratory Medicine**  
Munich (DE) [Click here for information](#)

8-11 September 2021  
**XXVIII Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation Meeting and XIII National Conference of Clinical Laboratory**  
Sofia (BU) [Click here for information](#)

EuroMedLab 2021  
28 November - 2 December 2021  
**24<sup>th</sup> IFCC-EFLM European Congress of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine"**  
Munich (DE) [Click here for information](#)



13-23 September  
**2<sup>nd</sup> EFLM online Postgraduate course: Leadership skills in Laboratory Medicine alliance"**  
EFLM Course, on-line [Click here for information](#)



Date to be announced  
**XXII Serbian Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine and 16<sup>th</sup> Belgrade Symposium for Balkan Region**  
Belgrade (SRB) [Click here for information](#)

23 September 2021  
**International Conference on Laboratory Medicine "The ethics of quality and artificial intelligence in laboratory medicine"**  
Padova (IT) [Click here for information](#)

10-11 February 2022  
**International Congress on Quality in Laboratory Medicine 2021**  
Helsinki (F) [Click here for information](#)

5-10 October 2021  
**FEBS Advanced Course: 360-degree Lysosome; from structure to genomics, from function to disease-update**  
Izmir (TR) [Click here for information](#)

March 2022  
**6<sup>th</sup> EFLM Conference on Preanalytical Phase Biannual Conference organized by the EFLM Working Group on "Preanalytical Phase"**  
on-line [Click here for information](#)



7-10 October 2021  
**46<sup>th</sup> ISOBM Congress**  
Bled (SL) [Click here for information](#)

23-26 May 2022  
**The 10<sup>th</sup> Santorini Conference "Systems medicine and personalised health & therapy" - The odyssey from hope to practice: Patient first - Keeps Ithaca always in your mind**  
Santorini (GR) [Click here for information](#)

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**EuroLabNews** is the digital bi-monthly newsletter of EFLM targeting more than 8,500 laboratory medicine professionals and is also published on the EFLM website.

The EFLM IVD partners are offered the possibility to advertise on EuroLabNews.

Those interested in this opportunity can contact the EFLM Office at [silvia.cattaneo@eflm.eu](mailto:silvia.cattaneo@eflm.eu)