

Letter from the President



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Dear EAHIL colleagues,

With this first issue for 2021, I send you wishes for a new year hopefully with the return to a more normal life, with the help of vaccines. Many of you have worked hard, and are still working hard, to support the work of health care professionals and of researchers to fight the virus. Some of you have probably also contributed to the incomparably speedy development of several efficient vaccines currently being distributed.

For the Association, as for all of us, the pandemic has changed many aspects of how we usually work. In early March 2020, the EAHIL Executive Board held its winter meeting in Stockholm, only two weeks before most of Europe closed down. We've all increased our skills in different online tools during the year and in having Board meetings online. A recurring topic for discussion in past years has been the future of our annual events, both in terms of finding locations and organisers who are willing to take on the task of organising an event on top of their day job, but also about the financial difficulties making it increasingly difficult for some members to travel to an EAHIL event. We've talked about the possibility of streaming the event, and about what that would involve in terms of technology, expertise and costs, but we've never really got around to try any of the ideas. And then the brave team in Łódź, Poland, suddenly didn't have a choice if there was going to be an event at all. And what an event they managed to organise, in what must be considered a very short time to do a 180° turn on all their plans! Not only did the scientific content match our expectations, but they had also come up with ways of making us feel the same EAHIL spirit as we usually do when meeting in person. An awe-inspiring accomplishment indeed.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 uncertainties, the EAHIL 2021 Workshop team in Istanbul, Turkey has now decided to change the planned hybrid workshop in July to an online-only event and drawing on the experiences from Łódź. I'm sure the Local Organising Committee, chaired by Güssün Güneş, will make the workshop as inviting and engaging as last year's event. The theme of the Istanbul workshop is *Crossing the bridge: new challenges, new opportunities*, with sub-themes: Physical and virtual, Education and literacy, Communication and publication, Data and research, Evidence and resources, Innovation and services. The call for abstracts was extended an additional three weeks, which means that the International Programme Committee will be hard at work selecting the most interesting abstracts when you read this. Follow EAHIL in social media for updates on the event.

In my new role as EAHIL President, I am looking forward to collaborating with all the Board colleagues, and at the time of writing this Letter, we're planning the Executive Board's winter meeting. I wish to welcome our new Board members: Alicia Fatima Gomez Sanchez (Spain), Aoife Lawton (Ireland), Petra Wallgren Björk (Sweden) and Astrid Kilvik (Norway). I'm also delighted that Marion Heymans from the Netherlands has agreed to act as the liaison with the Dutch authorities and the bank on behalf of EAHIL.

To make the transition of the work on the Board more manageable, we've made Board officers' election by email. For the 2021-2022 term, the Executive Board will be as follows: Maurella Della Seta will be the Past

President and Tiina Heino our new Vice President; Witold Kozakiewicz, who has been Deputy Treasurer for the past years, will now take up Treasurer's role and Aoife Lawton the Deputy Treasurer; the Honorary Secretary will be Astrid Kilvik, and Petra Wallgren Björk will handle the EAHIL website and social media as Communications Officer. A focus area for the Board during 2021 will be updating our different systems, e.g. membership database and file storage, and Francesca Gualtieri has agreed to act as our Systems Administrator, with the help of Tiina Heino. To arrange events and support the *Journal of EAHIL*, close contact with sponsors are needed, and this will be the task of Alicia Fatima Gomez Sanchez. As the Editor in Chief of the *Journal of EAHIL* Federica Napolitani participates in Board meetings, in her advisory role to the Board.

I am sure that the year ahead will be very busy for all of us and for our Association as well, but we also have to plan for the future. I'm happy to remind you that we have secured locations for EAHIL events in the next two years, the EAHIL Conference 2022 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands and the EAHIL Workshop 2023 in Trondheim, Norway. Events from 2024 onward are still to be decided, and I invite all of you to send expressions of interest or proposals to EAHIL-SECR@LIST.ECOMPASS.NL.

Please refer to <http://eahil.eu/events/arrange-conference/> for event guidelines and feel free to contact me or other Board members for discussion and support.

Looking forward to hearing from you with proposals and suggestions,

Lotta

The photograph of the Author is by Louise Ekström