

History of ESTI

In 1990, at the Fleischner Society meeting in Bern, Christopher Flower and Philippe Grenier had lunch together and dreamt up the idea of a European Society of Thoracic Imaging. They were aware of the other European Societies of subspecialty in radiology, namely paediatrics (ESPR), cardiovascular and interventional radiology (CIRSE) and gastrointestinal radiology (ESGAR) and believed that there should be a thoracic equivalent.

In March 1991 at the first European Congress of Radiology (ECR) in its new version in Vienna, Philippe Grenier, as the chairman of the Refresher Course Programme in Chest Radiology, invited all the European speakers involved in this programme to a meeting in order to share with all of them, this vision of creating a European Society of Thoracic Imaging. During this meeting, the members embraced the idea and it was decided to organise a brainstorming meeting the next year to concrete this idea. This was achieved by a 2-day-seminar during the spring of 1992 in Grenoble organised by Max Coulomb. There, the objectives and the bases of the statutes were established. The concept of a 3-day annual meeting held over the first week-end of June organized by the President of the Society was approved. Every year a new Vice-President is elected. The following year, he or she becomes President-Elect and the year after President of the Society. The continuity of the Society is ensured by a General Secretary and a Treasurer, both elected for 4 years, with maximum two successive terms. On this basis, ESTI was officially created in June 1993 during the inaugural meeting in Luxembourg organised by Robert Dondelinger. Since then and so far, annual meetings were organised without any interruption. The locations and the Presidents of these meetings are reported in the table 1. The table 2 reports the names and years of terms of the General Secretaries and Treasurers.

The number of active members of the Society has varied from X to Y (See Denis Tack and Cornelia Schaefer-Prokop).

The figure 1 is a photograph of eminent ESTI members taken at the 6th Annual Meeting in Bologna. Since 2003, some distinguished chest radiologists have received Presidential Award and title of Honorary Fellow of the Society according to their achievements in promoting education and science in the field of thoracic imaging and their involvement in the development of ESTI (Table 3).



Figure 1: Photograph representing ESTI Founders Members and/or Past-Presidents (Bologna, 1998)

From the left to the right:

Robert Dondelinger, François Laurent, José Caceres, n/a, Peter Armstrong, Gianpaolo Gavelli, Christopher Flower, David Hansell, Philippe Grenier, Dietbert Hahn, José Vilar and Johnny Verschakelen

Table 1: Years, Venues and Presidents' names of ESTI annual meetings

Year	Conference	Venue	President
1993	1st Annual and Inaugural Meeting	Luxembourg, LU	Robert Dondelinger
1994	2nd Annual Meeting	Paris, FR	Jacques Rémy
1995	3rd Annual Meeting	Würzburg, DE	Dietbert Hahn
1996	4th Annual Meeting	London, UK	Peter Armstrong
1997	5th Annual Meeting	Brussels, BE	Robert Dondelinger
1998	6th Annual Meeting	Bologna, IT	Gianpaolo Gavelli
1999	7th Annual Meeting	Barcelona, ES	José Caceres
2000	8th Annual Meeting	Salzburg, AT	Christian Herold
2001	9th Annual Meeting	Rome, IT	Lorenzo Bonomo
2002	10th Annual Meeting with the Fleischner Society	Brugge, BE	Johny Verschakelen
2003	11th Annual Meeting	Lausanne, CH	Pierre Schnyder
2004	12th Annual Meeting	Bordeaux, FR	Francois Laurent
2005	13th Annual Meeting included in the 1st World Congress of Thoracic Imaging	Florence, IT	David Hansell
2006	14th Annual Meeting	Prague, CZ	Jiri Neuwirth
2007	15th Annual Meeting with the Fleischner Society	Athens, GR	Katerina Malagari
2008	16th Annual Meeting	Nice, FR	Philippe Grenier
2009	17th Annual Meeting included in the 2nd World Congress of Thoracic Imaging	Valencia, ES	José Vilar
2010	18th Annual Meeting	Bern, CH	Peter Vock
2011	19th Annual Meeting with the Fleischner Society	Heidelberg, DE	Hans-Ulrich Kauczor

Table 2: Years, terms and names of General Secretaries and Treasurers of the Society

General Secretaries

Philippe Grenier	1993 – 2000
Cornelia Schaefer-Prokop	2001 – 2004
Denis Tack	2005 – 2011
Nicola Sverzelatti	2011-present

Treasurers

Pierre Schnyder	1993 - 2000
Peter Vock	2001 - 2004
Nigel Howarth	2005 - present

Table 3: Honorary ESTI Fellows

Christopher Flower	2003
Jacques Rémy	2004
Lorenzo Bonomo	2006
Peter Armstrong	2007
Pierre Schnyder	2008
José Caceres	2009
José Vilar	2010
Philippe Grenier	2011

Aims

The main activities of the Society have been concentrated on the annual meeting. The attendance at the annual meeting of the Society has varied between 140 and 500 participants. This attendance increased to 1500 and 1000 for the 1st and 2nd World Congresses of Thoracic Imaging in Florence and Valencia, respectively. The scientific programmes of such meetings have included most advances in imaging techniques and scientific knowledge for chest diseases.

The number of scientific papers and exhibits presented at the annual meetings varied from 40 and 300. CME programmes have been delivered by the best European Faculty in thoracic imaging. Beyond the annual meeting the aims of ESTI include to provide recommendations and guidelines for appropriate practice in chest imaging, and to establish long-term relationships with the industry partners in order to convert technologic innovations in new clinical applications.

Topics and fields of interest

The fields of interest of the Society members have evolved over years with the development of different imaging techniques. High-resolution CT, then helical CT, and more recently thin-collimation MDCT providing the assessment of the entire chest during a single breath hold with a volumetric high-resolution data set for better understanding and clinical assessment of focal or diffuse airway and infiltrative lung diseases. The following modalities were also important pieces of interest for the Society:

- Helical, then MDCT angiography of the pulmonary arteries that became the primary clinical diagnostic tool for the depiction and management of thromboembolic diseases.
- PET-CT that has taken a major place for the diagnosis, staging and follow-up of thoracic malignancies.

More recently, emerging interests of the members have been focused on two new topics: functional imaging of the lung and cardiac imaging.

- Double source MDCT and MRI may be used to assess regionally lung perfusion. Helium 3 MRI has proved to be used as a research tool for regional evaluation of normal and diseased lung ventilation. New postprocessing techniques after volumetric high-resolution MDCT acquisitions provide quantitative assessment of lung volume and airway dimensions.

They permit also mapping and quantitative assessment of extent of emphysema and small airway diseases.

- Cardiac imaging has induced a new interest of chest radiologists for the heart. Some non specific

respiratory symptoms such as dyspnea at exertion, hemoptysis or atypical chest pain may have an important underlying cardiac cause or association that is not clinically obvious. The detection of interstitial edema can lead to the discovery of previously unsuspected cardiomyopathies affecting the left ventricle. The chest radiologists need to know cardiac consequences of respiratory diseases and understand lung and heart co-morbidity. ECG-gated MDCT and MR may be used to assess the cardiac structures in patients with extensive parenchymal lung abnormalities and can estimate right ventricle function and pulmonary artery pressure.

Relationships with other societies

Since the beginning, like the other European subspecialty societies in radiology, ESTI has been a member of the European Society of Radiology (ESR) and has had links with the European Congress of Radiology (ECR) through the Subspecialty Committee of Chest Imaging. Since 2003, the official journal of ESTI has been European Radiology. Since 2007, the management of the society has been made by the ESR Office in Vienna.

Several years ago, ESTI started to cooperate with the Fleischner Society (FS), an international fellowship of physicians and scientists dedicated to advancing knowledge of the normal and diseased chest. ESTI and FS had two joint meetings in 2002 and 2007.

ESTI has also been involved in the World Congress of Thoracic Imaging. Five societies (Korean and Japanese Societies of Thoracic Imaging, Society of Thoracic Radiology, FS and ESTI) held together the first world congress in thoracic imaging in Florence in 2005. According to the exceptional success of this meeting, the experience was repeated with a similar success in 2009 in Valencia.

In the future, because of the arising interest of chest radiologists in understanding and assessing the heart, ESTI should move closer to the European Society of Cardiac Radiology (ESCR).