

Report from the European Board of Medical Genetics

September, 2015

Activities of the EBMG

- There has been consolidation of the registration activities for the Clinical Laboratory Geneticist and Genetic Nurse and Counsellor branches, with satisfactory levels of applications again this year.
- We continue to develop the registration systems for Clinical Laboratory Geneticists and Genetic Nurses and Counsellors. This year, **online** systems for applications have been developed in conjunction with the ESHG to facilitate the application process for both the applicants and the EBMG assessors.
- We are aware of the possibilities for using the European Professional Qualifications Directive to support professionalization of genetics healthcare in Europe. However, at present we do not have sufficient countries with formal systems in place to support recognition of the Clinical Laboratory Geneticist, Genetic Counsellor or Genetic Nurse as an EU designated specialist profession.
- At the ESHG meeting in Glasgow we ran a workshop to disseminate information about the branches and registration systems.
- We have formed a Complaints Panel, with one member from each professional branch, to deal with any complaints that a registered ErCLG or ERGC/ERGN is not working according to EBMG professional standards. The Complaints process is published on the EBMG website.

a) Clinical Laboratory Geneticist Professional Branch Board

Chair: Thomas Liehr (Germany); Co-Chair: Isabel Carreira (Portugal)

Members: Dilek Aktas (Turkey), Egbert Bakker (The Netherlands), Marta Rodríguez de Alba (Spain), Domenico Coviello (Italy), Lina Florentin (Greece), Martina Rincic (Croatia), Hans Scheffer (The Netherlands).

It is well-known that there is a need for a European recognition of laboratory specialization in our field. The goal of the European Board of Medical Genetics (EBMG), Professional Branch Board for Clinical Laboratory Geneticists (ErCLG) is to provide a system for registration of professionals working in different countries and certifying those being at the same level of education and competences in human genetics laboratory diagnostics. Our efforts are in connection with the implementation of the so-called “green paper“, i.e. Professional Qualifications Directive (EU Directive 2013/55/EU) in January 2016 by the European parliament.

To the best of our knowledge we will be able to get the ErCLG certificate recognized only after national CLG titles are recognized in 9 member states of the EU by the corresponding national parliaments; at present this is only the case for Hungary.

Nonetheless we are proud to announce that in 2016 we anticipate there will be >300 ErCLGs recognized by the EBMG Professional Branch Board. The first round of application was possible 2014/2015 and 247 applicants were awarded the registration. In the actual 2015/2016 round there are 60 applicants. These applications are presently under evaluation.

Some statistics can be provided as follows. Successful applicants came in 2014/15 from Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, and Switzerland. In 2015/16 applications were received additionally from Cyprus, France, Greece, Latvia, Spain, United Kingdom and even Saudi Arabia. Among applicants the female to male ratio is ~2:1, PhD to MSc ratio 4:1, average age of the applicants in 2014/15 was 57 years with a range from 30 to 70 years of age.

It is possible to apply for 5 types of ErCLG:

1. ErCLG - general (172 approved in 2014/15 round),
2. ErCLG - focus on Clinical Genetics (15 approved in 2014/15 round),
3. ErCLG - focus on Molecular Genetics (50 approved in 2014/15 round),
4. ErCLG - focus on Biochemical Genetics (4 approved in 2014/15 round), and
5. ErCLG focus on Tumorgenetics (6 approved in 2014/15 round).

The next round of applications will close 15 September 2016. The prerequisites for application and how to apply can be found on <https://www.eshg.org/clg.0.html>; please read especially <https://www.eshg.org/587.0.html> and check under which of three categories falls the country you apply from (<https://www.eshg.org/666.0.html>). Overall, if you find yourself eligible we cordially invite you to apply for ErCLG registration in September 2016.

b) Genetic Nurse and Counsellor Professional Branch Board

Chairs: Milena Paneque (Portugal) and Ramona Moldovan (Romania)

Members: Inga Bjornevoll (Norway), Christophe Cordier (France), Irene Feroce (Italy), Debby Lambert (Ireland), Clara Serra (Spain), Heather Skirton (UK).

In June 2015 Milena Paneque and Ramona Moldovan became co-chairs of the branch board.

The activities of the past six months have been:

1. An online application system has been designed and will be operational for the full applications to be submitted January 2016.
2. National registration systems offered in Canada, South Africa and Australasia have been assessed and approved. This means applicants working in Europe with registration from US, UK, Canada, South Africa or Australasia can be registered with the EBMG.
3. Requirements and forms for the assessment of new courses that could be used by applicants under the grandfather B clause have been developed.
4. A letter to the editor outlining the development of the European registration system has been accepted by EJHG.
5. We have had a further 21 applications for registration this year and these are being assessed for eligibility.

c) Medical Geneticist Professional Branch Board

Chair: Ulf Kristoffersson (Sweden)

Members: Beata Lipska (Poland) , Béla Melegh (Hungary), Feliciano Ramos (Spain), Alessandra Renieri (Italy), Peter Turnpenny (UK).

A memorandum of understanding detailing the relationship between the UEMS and the EBMG branch has been written and agreed by the EBMG, UEMS section and the ESHG. Bela Melegh has agreed to lead the UEMS section, while Ulf Kristoffersson leads the EBMG Medical section.

Further work has been undertaken to consolidate the curriculum for medical specialists in genetics and obtain approval from relevant parties.

Finally, our thanks to Jerome del Picchia and the staff of the VMA for their support of the administrative work.

Heather Skirton

Chair, EBMG