

## European summit on age-related diseases and the 'Wrocław' European Silver paper initiative

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A. Franco. *European summit on age-related disease. Gerontechnology 2008; 7(4):340-341; doi: 10.4017/gt.2008.07.04.002.00.* In a European summit of geriatricians and medical gerontologists, a 'European Silver Paper' has been finalized sketching the future of health promotion, preventive actions, basic research, and clinical aspects of age-related disease. This highly political paper has been endorsed by professionals from 15 European countries under auspices of the European Commission represented by DG SANCO, and is supposed to form a basis for future developments in clinic and research as well as in the engineering of useful technologies.

**Keywords: aging, disease, prevention, health promotion, European**

Professor Andrzej Milewicz, Chair of Endocrinology of Wrocław University, initiated a European Summit on 'Age-related diseases' held in Wrocław, Poland, September 11-13, 2008. In the beautiful Aula Leopoldinum of Wrocław University he welcomed the participants and announced the draft of a 'European Silver Paper' coordinated by Prof. Dr. Alfonso Cruz-Jentoft from Madrid. The summit was held under patronage of the European Union Geriatric Medicine Society (EUGMS), and with support of the International Association of Geriatrics and Gerontology – European Region (IAGGER), the European Association of Geriatric Psychiatry (EAGP), the International Society for Gerontechnology (ISG), and the International Society for the Study of the Aging Male (ISSAM). Aim of the summit was to obtain a clear picture of current understanding of age-related disease ("We know") and to arrive at guidelines for required developments towards a sustainable aging society ("We recommend").

The scientific preparation of the summit was in the hands of professionals from France, Spain, Israel, and Poland, as well as the European Commission Director-General SANCO. Invited speakers originated also from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

In the audience were present Dr. Ewa Kopacz, Polish Minister of Health, Gilles de Robien, Former Minister and French Itinerant Ambassador for Social Affairs representing the EU Presidency, Klaus Theo Schröder, German Minister of Health, Barbara Kudricka, Polish Minister of Science and High Education, Prof. Andrzej Ryś, Director-General DG-SANCO representing the European Commission, and many other distinguished persons.

On the first day plenary sessions were held discussing aims and methods, as well as basic facts of societal aging and care, and the prevention of disabilities. Alois Alzheimer's activities in Wrocław (1912-1915) were also described. The second day saw a number of round tables and other simultaneous sessions on comprehensive geriatric assessment, nutrition, early detection of disease, injury prevention, active aging, social activity, family support, early biomarkers, gender issues, accumulated damage, tissue repair, models of care, and clinical practice. By the end of the day the results were collated by the chair persons of the round tables (Alfonso J. Cruz-Jentoft, Alain Franco, Adriana Maggi, Piotr Ponikowski, Andrzej Ryś, Pascal Sommer) into a draft 'European Silver Paper' that was further discussed on the third day with the Ministries of Health of the European Union and some members of the

European Parliament, to arrive at the final 'European Silver Paper'<sup>1-3</sup>.

Although the forum was not the platform to discuss technological innovations for older people, the gerontechnology dimension can be further promoted by fulfilling the goals formulated in the silver

paper. This is in line with the ISG mission<sup>4</sup> to encourage and promote technological and service innovations that address older peoples' ambitions and needs on the basis of scientific knowledge about aging processes including cultural and individual differences. It was useful that the ISG was represented by its president.

## References

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## DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR GERONTECHNOLOGY (ISG)

At board meetings during ISG08 in Pisa this year, the need was felt to state more clearly mission, vision, values, and strategies of ISG. Following several rounds of discussion, the ISG Council has agreed on the following declaration.

### Mission

ISG encourages and promotes technological innovations in products and services that address older peoples' ambitions and needs on the basis of scientific knowledge about ageing processes including cultural and individual differences.

### Vision

ISG works toward the realization of a society fully served by technology that is as accessible to ageing people as it is to people in younger generations.

### Values

Innovative technology that serves an enabling role for ageing people by:

- (i) Maintaining their independence and equality including considerations of residence, mobility, safety, security, communication, activities, and quality of life;
- (ii) Supporting their well-being and health as defined by the WHO;
- (iii) Realising their individual and collec-

- tive/social ambitions and needs;
- (iv) Keeping them embedded in their changing socio-cultural environment;
- (v) Enhancing their dignity;
- (vi) Supporting their caregivers.

### Strategies

- (i) Advancing world-wide communication between scientific, technological, and social disciplines relevant to human ageing in a sustainable society, through a variety of means including international and regional conferences, an international peer-reviewed journal, and an Internet forum;
- (ii) Establishing and improving university and professional education in gerontechnology by textbook and Internet-based educational material, curricula, courses, and master classes;
- (iii) Supporting the introduction of gerontechnology into a wide range of disciplines and professions that impact on the well-being and quality of life of ageing people;
- (iv) Advancing learning opportunities for ageing people to use new technology;
- (v) Applying insights from ageing processes to technological innovations;
- (vi) Encouraging technological innovations that meet ambitions and needs of ageing people.

*ISG Council*

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