

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FORENSIC GENETICS (ISFG) ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2005 AT 12.00 IN THE CENTRO CULTURAL E DE CONGRESSOS, TEATRO MICAELENSE, PONTA DELGADA, AZORES**

**TOP 1 Welcome by the President**

P. Schneider, President of the ISFG, opens the General Assembly at 12.10 and welcomes the participants.

**TOP 2 To Commemorate the Dead**

The death of the following members since the last General Assembly was brought to the attention of the Executive Committee: H.H. Hoppe (President of the ISFG 1975-1979 and Honorary Member), H. Lattke, P. Raule and F. Schwarzfischer (Honorary Member).

The President asks the Assembly to stand in commemoration of the dead.

**TOP 3 Adoption of the Protocol of the General Assembly in Arcachon, September 11, 2003**

The Executive Committee had not received any comments regarding the minutes of the last General Assembly. Since nobody asked for discussion, the above-mentioned protocol was adopted.

**TOP 4 Report of the Executive Committee and the Auditors of the Account**

*4.1. Report of the President*

P. Schneider reports that the Executive Committee has handled its business since the last Congress in only 3 sessions.

He thanks again all individuals involved in the organization of the 21st International Congress in Ponta Delgada, especially A. Amorim and F. Corte-Real, for their excellent work.

The DNA Commission has prepared an update of the recommendations on the Y-chromosome which has already been published.

Another commission on the biostatistical interpretation of complex profiles has been established and will start with its work on September 18, 2005.

The Paternity Testing Commission will discuss further recommendations on statistical analysis of data.

With regard to the Biennial Scientific Prize, P. Schneider announces that the Executive Committee has selected W. Parson (Innsbruck, Austria) for his work on mitochondrial DNA analysis and its application in forensic genetics.

P. Schneider describes the results obtained by the analysis of the questionnaire which has been sent to the members and mentions that the majority of the members are in favor of the publication of an official ISFG journal. A summary is enclosed with the minutes, and can also be downloaded from the member's area of the ISFG website. He reports that the homepage of the ISFG in the internet (<http://www.isfg.org>) has been further improved. A "member-only" password-protected area contains documents which are relevant for the ISFG members (e.g. the newsletters, and the recommendations of the DNA Commission; for access, click on the ISFG logo in the upper left, then use login name "isfg2001", and password "dna\$4org". The contents of the homepage will be expanded and the Executive Committee hopes that the ISFG website will serve in due future as communication tool between the members of the ISFG.

#### *4.2. Report of the Secretary*

W.R. Mayr reports that the ISFG is a true international society – the members come from 65 countries; the total number of members of the ISFG in July 2005 was 956 (in comparison, the number of members in July 2003 was 864). In spite of this increase, some publicity is needed in order to recruit more members; all members of the ISFG were asked to be active in this respect.

#### *4.3. Report of the Treasurer*

N. Morling reports that the total balance is € 58.826,21; the financial situation of the ISFG can be considered as stable.

#### *4.4. Report of the Representative of the Working Parties*

M. Prinz gives a short review on the increasing activities of the Working Parties, (English-speaking, Spanish-Portuguese, German, Italian, Japanese, French, as well as EDNAP). A new Working Party has been established in China; its foundation is accepted by the members of the ISFG.

#### *4.5. Report of the Auditors of the Account*

A. Alonso and B. Hoste state that they have checked the accounts. The accounts were found to be in order and handled in a perfect way. Therefore, the Treasurer is relieved of his duties by the General Assembly.

#### *4.6. Relief of the Executive Committee*

On a motion by R. Lessig, the Executive Committee is relieved of its duties by the General Assembly.

## **TOP 5      Membership Fee**

The project to launch a new journal called "FSI – Genetics" with Elsevier Publishers is presented. It will be the official journal of the ISFG, and will cover the area of Forensic Genetics, which was a part of "Forensic Sciences International". The first volume will already be published next year. Elsevier has made an attractive offer for a membership subscription. After a long discussion, the members accept the proposal of an increase of the membership fee by € 20,-- to a total amount of € 60,-- per year, beginning with next year. This increase in the membership fee applies for 2 years and

allows the launch of the new journal in a paper and a web-based version. All ISFG members will receive the printed version and will have online access as well. After 2 years, this topic will be discussed again in the General Assembly 2007 when data on the new journal are available.

(Important announcement added to the minutes: After further discussions with the publisher after the end of the congress, Elsevier announced that it will be impossible for technical reasons to launch the new journal already in 2006. Therefore, the first volume will appear in 2007 which will allow a better preparation period. Of course, the agreed increase of the membership fee will also be postponed to 2007.)

## **TOP 6           Honorary Membership**

P. Schneider proposes on behalf of the Executive Committee that B. Olaisen should be elected as Honorary Members; this outstanding personality in the field of forensic genetics is elected with acclamation.

## **TOP 7           Elections of Members of the Executive Committee**

This business is performed by an Election Committee headed by R. Lessig. 91 members were present (at the beginning).

### *7.1. Election of the President*

The Executive Committee proposed P. Schneider; no alternative candidate was put forward by the General Assembly.

P. Schneider is elected with 88 yes, 2 abstentions and 1 invalid votes

### *7.2. Election of the Secretary*

The Executive Committee proposed W.R. Mayr; no alternative candidate was put forward by the General Assembly.

W.R. Mayr is elected with 87 yes, 2 abstentions and 2 invalid votes

### *7.3. Election of the Representative for all Working Parties*

The Executive Committee proposed M. Prinz; no alternative candidate was put forward by the General Assembly.

M. Prinz was elected with 85 yes and 2 abstentions

### *7.4. Election of two Auditors of the Account*

A. Alonso and B. Hoste, as well as G. de Lange and P. Wiegand (substitutes) are elected with acclamation.

The newly elected members of the Executive Committee accept their election and declare that they will fulfill their duties in the best possible way.

**TOP 8      Place and President of the next International Congress in 2007**

The offer by the Danish team led by N. Morling to organize the 22nd International Congress of the ISFG in the year 2007 is gratefully accepted by the General Assembly. The Meeting will take place in Copenhagen in August/September 2007.

**TOP 9      Miscellaneous**

The General Assembly thanks A. Amorim, F. Corte-Real and their collaborators for the large amount of work done in order to organize the very successful meeting in Ponta Delgada.

Thereafter, P. Schneider thanks all participants and closes the General Assembly at 13.55.

W.R. Mayr  
Secretary

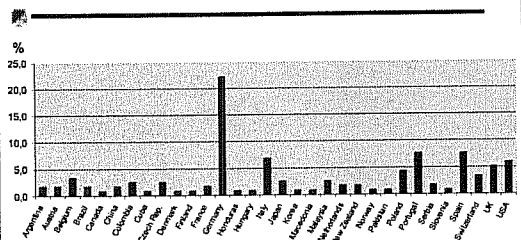
Wien, January 2006

## ISFG 2005 Member Survey

General Assembly  
at the  
21<sup>st</sup> Congress  
Ponta Delgada  
September 15, 2005



## 117 replies from 32 countries



## Who replied?

- How many years of experience in forensic genetics? 13 (1-40)
- Mean age 45 (28-67)
- Males 59.8% (47)
- Females 40.2 % (42)



## Area of Expertise (%)

Paternity testing	76,9
Criminal casework	53,8
Population genetics and statistics	41,9
Human/clinical genetics	29,1
Forensic pathology	10,3
Other	8,5
Anthropology	7,7



## Employment Background (%)

University laboratory	55,6
Private company	21,4
Government agency	20,5
Self employed	2,6
Other	2,6




## What is the most important activity of the ISFG ? (%)

Biannual congress	59,8
Commissions and their recommendations	50,4
Congress proceedings	34,2
Working groups	31,6
Other	0,9




**Should the ISFG offer technical support to the members? (%)**

<b>YES</b>	<b>86,3</b>
List of experts volunteering to be consulted on specific issues	58,4
Online discussion forum for technical questions	47,5
Email list for technical support	40,6
Accreditation mentor programme	35,6
Brochures covering matters of interest	33,7
Laboratory implementation support	14,9

62% of members are willing to have their names listed ! 


**Interest to visit another lab (%)**

<b>YES</b>	<b>78,6</b>
Less than two weeks, just for observation	35,9
Two to four weeks with some practical training	50,0
Two to three months for a research project	34,8
Other	3,3

31% of members are willing to accept a guest in their lab ! 


**Which topics would you like to see covered by the biannual ISFG Congress? (%)**

New technologies & methods	32,9
Standardization and accreditation	15,8
Biostatistics	13,2
Degraded DNA, low copy number PCR, and mixtures	13,2
Haploid markers (Y, mtDNA)	13,2
Casework presentations	5,3




**Interest in training workshops with certification attached to the ISFG Congress? (%)**

<b>YES</b>	<b>54,7</b>
Mathematics & statistics	39,5
Casework, mixtures, and LCN interpretation	19,7
New technologies, SNPs, high throughput	18,4
Haploid markers (Y, mtDNA)	15,8
Anything related to forensic genetics	5,3
Accreditation and quality assurance	3,9




**Which forensic journals do you currently read? (%)**

Forensic Science International	81,2
International Journal of Legal Medicine	68,4
Journal of Forensic Sciences	63,2
Journal of Legal Medicine	27,4
Other (biomedical/genetic) journals:	27,4
Am. J. Hum. Genet.	34,4
(Nature Genet., Hum. Genet., Electrophoresis, Sci. & Just.)	



**Do you see a potential for a new journal of forensic genetics? (%)**

<b>YES</b>	<b>58,1</b>
If yes, is an increase of the membership fee acceptable for a subscription?	
<b>NO</b>	<b>20,6</b>
<b>Yes, both for online access and paper copy</b>	<b>39,7</b>
<b>Yes, but only for online access</b>	<b>23,5</b>
<b>Yes, no preferences</b>	<b>16,2</b>

An increase of € 25 (range € 5 – 60) is suggested! 

### ISFG Working Parties

Do you participate in WP activities? - Yes!	51,3%
GEP-ISFG	23,3
ESWG	15,0
Ge.F.I.	10,0
German WP	16,7
Other non-ISFG groups	36,7



### ISFG Working Parties

Do you participate in WP activities? - No!	48,7%
<i>Why don't you participate?</i>	
No group in region *	22,8
Didn't know about WP / was not invited	12,3
New member / recently started in forensics	8,8

(\* SE Asia, Central/Eastern Europe, USA)



### Which other services should the ISFG offer?

- Accreditation / certification programs
- Education / training programs
- More recommendations & guidelines, better access to ISFG publications
- Publication of employment opportunities
- Expert support (lab visits, online advice)
- Regional / specialized meetings



### Which problems do you associate with the ISFG ?

- "Conference proceedings published too late."
- "Venues of the meetings should be easily reachable."
- "Attendance at ISFG Int.Conf. is hard to justify both in time and expensive. More local meetings would be useful."
- It's "disappointing that the forum isn't more active."
- "to pay membership"



### Further comments ...

- "ISFG holds the very best in forensic genetics conferences."
- "I like the idea of regional branches under the umbrella of the ISFG."
- "I am very glad for membership in ISFG."



### Thank you for your support!





The President

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FORENSIC GENETICS

Internationale Gesellschaft für Forensische Genetik e.V.

<http://www.isfg.org>

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Cologne, December 2005

Dear members of our society,

having returned from the 21<sup>st</sup> ISFG congress in Ponta Delgada, I would like to thank the organizers, Antonio Amorim from Porto and Francisco Corte-Real from Coimbra, for having arranged this highly successful and scientifically excellent meeting. More than 500 participants attended the congress, and a total of 33 oral presentations, three roundtables on mixture interpretation, mass disaster victim identification, and quality control, as well as the impressive number of 313 posters clearly documented the scientific productivity and attraction of our society. Furthermore, I would like to thank the members who have elected me as president of the ISFG for a second term until 2007.

As you may have noticed, the Executive Board has recently performed a survey among the ISFG members to learn more about their opinion regarding a number of important issues. You will find a summary of the results enclosed with this mail. We are very glad that so many of you have shared your views, which will help us to improve the services offered by the ISFG. I would like to mention three results in particular. There was a strong expression of interest both for intensifying the communication between the laboratories by promoting exchange visits for training and research, as well as to organize formal training and education seminars on selected topics (e.g. biostatistics and casework interpretation). In the process of redesigning our website, we will implement a platform to help finding partner labs for exchange visits, and we will try to organize a number of training workshops in connection with the next ISFG congress on relevant issues.

The second topic is related to the activities of the ISFG working parties. As our society grows larger (we are rapidly approaching a membership of 1,000), the Working Parties (WPs) are becoming more and more important, as they should serve as platforms to organize smaller local meetings and help to address topics of regional interest. It became evident that many new members of the ISFG are not aware of these activities, and that more WP's parties are needed to be represented globally. We have just accepted the introduction of a Chinese WP, and the Board would like to encourage colleagues from countries not yet represented to contact us for support in finding partners for an existing or new WP.

Finally, an important decision has been made by the General Assembly in Ponta Delgada which was also addressed in the survey. Together with Elsevier publishers, the ISFG will launch a new scientific journal "FSI: Genetics" which will cover only the field of forensic genetics. The number of publications in this field has increased dramatically in the last 5 years. It can be expected that a journal in this area will be highly successful, both regarding the number as well as the quality of articles leading to an impact factor, which hopefully will exceed that of current journals covering the entire field of forensic medicine. Angel Carracedo was able to negotiate an attractive agreement



with Elsevier publishers. "FSI: Genetics" will be the official journal of the ISFG, and the first volume will be published in 2007 (in contrast to the information given at the general assembly, the launch of the new journal had to be postponed for one year). The ISFG can include information such as newsletters and meeting reports to promote the society. All members will receive both the printed and the online versions for only € 20.-/year. However, to be able to get this extremely low subscription rate, an agreement was required that all ISFG members will subscribe. This means that the annual membership fee will be increased to € 60.-. We felt that for a newly launched journal, it is important that the number of printed copies is sufficiently high to make the product visible and well known to the scientific community. However, we are aware that some of you may be critical about this agreement. Therefore, the General Assembly has decided to accept an increase of the membership fees for only the next two years until 2007 (again, due to the postponement of the launch of the journal, the increased fee will be collected in 2007 only). At the next General Assembly, we will have the first data on the success of this new journal regarding the number of institutional subscriptions, the submitted articles, and their overall quality. We will then have an opportunity to reconsider this decision, if necessary. We are also carefully considering the publication of the conference proceedings (now published separately in the International Congress Series "Progress in Forensic Genetics") in the context of the new journal, which would save a significant part of our budget now spent for printing the proceedings.

You may all be aware that the first three years are of utmost importance for a new journal. The criteria to be listed in Medline/NCBI have to be met, and the calculation of the impact factor relies in the number of citations per published article over a three year period. Therefore, I would like to encourage you to support our new journal from the beginning by submitting your articles to "FSI: Genetics", and by your readiness to serve as peer reviewers for manuscripts when you are invited by the editor. We will keep you informed about further developments such as the launch date and manuscript submission information in our newsletter, as well as the ISFG website.



With kindest regards,

(President of the ISFG)