

EVRS is a teaching society with the main objective of knowledge sharing. It is not only, like other European societies, a “one-congress-per-year-society” with the sole goal of giving a large audience to invited guests in order to promote them. This is why EVRS developed on its website a large part (Share your Experience) dedicated to knowledge sharing.

The aim of EVRS congresses is to gather together a large number of specialists in order to raise and discuss, on one specific subject each year, the different therapeutic concepts existing in Europe as this is the richness of Europe. Each team will have the time to explain their *modus operandi* and, above all, the philosophical and the practical reason of their choices.

In this way, each participant will have the chance to access the options and point out the technique that he judges to be the best one or the most adapted to his practice.

The objective of congresses is then not to reproduce what is already available but to fulfil a lack of real teaching. This is the reason why the EVRS congresses have to be different in the form and content, particularly with:

1. A real teaching of concepts, philosophies and indications. What is real teaching? Real teaching is a teaching of your own reflection, experience and way of practicing. It is not a presentation (based on statistical findings more or less honest) to prove how much you are skilful. Beginners in any technique learn more by listening to the how and why rather than listening to some results. This means that someone should not present one technique or one choice if this person is not able to explain the reasons of his/her choice with the support of pathological studies, physical explanations, statistical analysis, experimental studies... This is essential for two reasons:
 - When one makes a presentation, it is most of the time because he/she has experienced or because he/she has had a deep reflection on the subject. Explaining his/her way and the reasons of his/her choice, he/she will allow the assistance to gain the time of his/her evolution and will bring them to his/her level.
 - This way of practicing allows discussions and then an evolution. In fact if I tell you that I drink a Bordeaux wine because it's the best in the world but you prefer the Burgundy, you will immediately be fighting with me and nothing will come out of this discussion. If I tell you that I prefer the Bordeaux because of its richer tannin, more adapted to veal and more regular in terms of quality, you can reply that the Burgundy tastes for you stronger and is more suitable for red meat and more uncertain in its quality which makes it more interesting. We will be able to discuss about that and make the one progress in our direction.
2. One sole and main subject: in teaching, it remains impossible to go deeply into details if the discussion is interrupted because of the lack of time. Most of the time, discussions are stopped when they are coming to the most interesting moment. This is the reason why there is only one main topic.
3. A reasonable presentation duration: A philosophy or a concept cannot be presented in 7 or 10 minutes, like tricks could be.
4. A particular effort is made on video quality. Retinal surgery is very demanding in terms of video quality as surgeons work in a low brightness environment. Priority is given to Betacam and DVcam; furthermore, video projectors have to be of good quality (10 000 lumens if possible)
5. A certain interactivity is obviously necessary in any real teaching. Experience shows it is difficult to have a large audience to participate and get them to ask questions because of natural shyness. A particular effort should be made to moderate the sessions. The moderator should have prepared the discussion with the panel before the meeting, chosen clinical cases or practical questions that the audience would have like to ask.
6. A friendly atmosphere: in order to encourage exchanges, neither hierarchy will exist (a famous instructor will not be more entitled to speak more than any other member), nor separation between speakers and the audience will exist. While round tables will happen, speakers will not be seated on a podium.
7. A club atmosphere: When possible, in order to encourage exchanges outside work, a main congress venue regrouping accommodation and congress centre will be chosen.
8. A festive atmosphere: a festive atmosphere in a previous congress partly encourages people to come back the following year. The gala dinner, orchestra and entertainments must leave happy memories

All these concepts are different from most European congresses; they are summarised in the European Vitreo Retinal Society's subtitle: « *a certain philosophy* ».