

Questions for interview

1. What have been your involvements within ESTRO?

I joined ESTRO as active member in 1990, mainly for a sense of proudness to become part of our European society. I had the privilege to be elected as Board member for the period 2004-2006. I was then nominated from the Board as Executive Administrator (2006-2011), being the last one to cover such a position. I became Chair of the National Societies Standing Committee in 2013, and I am currently serving ESTRO with this function.

Apart from my contributions to ESTRO conferences, I actively contribute to ESTRO School since 2009, as co-director of the Pediatric Radiation Oncology course, and as Faculty member of the following: CNS Tumors, Hematological Malignancies, Combined Drug-Radiation Treatments.

Having the great pleasure to work as co-chair of the Local Organizing Committee for ESTRO35, I am looking forward to welcoming all of you in my town for our forthcoming annual meeting!

2. Why accepting the proposal from the Nominating Committee to run the elections for ESTRO President-elect?

I am certainly very grateful for all I have received from ESTRO during my career. My active long-lasting involvement within ESTRO has significantly broadened my knowledge and vision, giving me also the possibility to meet a lot of colleagues and friends from many different countries.

Of course, I do consider the proposal from the Nominating Committee to run the elections for the President-elect as a great privilege and honor, and as a sort of lifetime achievement award. I finally and enthusiastically decided to accept such an outstanding proposal mainly for my significant ESTRO background and for my strong commitment toward our beloved society.

I consider myself as a person with strong interests, acquired over the years, in clinical research, education and health management. These items, together with networking capacity, are also top priorities within ESTRO. Thus, I think that my candidacy as ESTRO President may be a fruitful bridge with respect to these instances.

3. According to you, how important is the multidisciplinary component in the ESTRO activities? What initiatives would you foster if you were President-elect?

As a clinician working within the oncological arena, I do certainly consider crucial and strategic the concept of multidisciplinary; multidisciplinary care is a cornerstone of modern cancer treatment and should be provided to all cancer patients in Europe. A continuous dialogue with our oncology partners (medical oncologists, surgeons, organ specialists, hematologists) is essential for mutual understanding; nevertheless, the central role of radiation oncologist has to be

emphasized, as a person able to take full clinical responsibility of the patients receiving combined-modality treatments, and to deal with a leadership position in many different cancer sites.

We also have multidisciplinary within radiation oncology itself, with different professionals working together under the same roof (radiation oncologists/clinical oncologists; medical physicists; dosimetrists; RTT; radiobiologists; nurses). For the multidisciplinary nature of radiotherapy, every single patient may potentially benefit from the additional expert input coming from all members of this multidisciplinary team.

I do consider this multidisciplinary, which makes ESTRO different from other European oncological societies, an important strength and peculiarity. I would certainly foster the need for an interdisciplinary team, to be centrally involved in the delivery of all clinical, physical, technical and biological aspects of radiation therapy according to ESTRO Vision. At the same time, identity and prerogatives of different professionals have to be protected. Taking also into account changes we had relative to our traditional ESTRO conferences, I guess that new formats, like for example events such as Think Tank meetings, could be regularly imagined as a valuable scenario for those purposes.

For all these aspects, input coming to the Board from all different Standing Committees is essential.

4. The ESTRO 2020 vision is at the core of every action undertaken by the Society. What would be your priorities in order to reach the goals set by the Vision?

According to the ESTRO Vision statement, in 4 years every cancer patient in Europe will have access to state of the art radiation therapy, as part of multidisciplinary approach where treatment is individualized for the specific patient's cancer. Time is running, and there are not too many years left!!!

Although radiation oncology is a key component of curative and palliative cancer care, in many European countries (I am speaking also as Chair of NS Committee) it still receives relatively few attention by policymakers; access to radiation oncology services is highly variable across Europe, with many patients not receiving the treatment they need, and with significant inequalities between countries in patient's access to state of the art radiotherapy.

It will be therefore mandatory, in order to pursue the goals set by the Vision, to increase awareness of radiation oncology among policymakers and to support an optimal evidence-based positioning of radiation oncology throughout the oncology community. These specific advocacy programs have to be brought both at European and national levels.

The necessity to have highly trained and skilled professionals in our multidisciplinary teams is logically essential to achieve Vision goals; ESTRO has certainly to continue to facilitate and enhance the dissemination of science through an expanded portfolio of meetings and educational courses.

Of course, I fully support all other ESTRO priorities listed in the Vision paper as strategic for the development of Radiation Oncology.

5. Is there a specific project that you would like to initiate during your presidency, still with the Vision in mind?

Not specific project at the moment, but just two considerations:

- ESTRO is a growing society, with a recent significant increase of its members, but there is still room for improvement. New models of membership that further strengthen the range of education and professional services have to be examined, in order to give even more benefits to our members and national societies, and to become more attractive.
- On another side, I strongly encourage the necessity to increase awareness and understanding of radiation oncology as a safe and curative clinical discipline among patients and patient organizations, making them more confident about the importance of radiation oncology as an effective actor of cancer cure.

Word limit: 1000 words

Deadline: 6 January