Editorial

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Dear readers of EOTR, dear EFORT members,
One of the duties of a European scientific federation like EFORT is to work for the realization of Europe as a really functioning unity.

A prerequisite is the harmonization of Europe's very different countries, and in medicine this only can be achieved by education.

To do this, an official journal of EFORT is one necessary instrument. EOTR, in this sense, is essential, as are the different scientific educational events and education by use of the Internet.

All of those activities are only thinkable as interactions with the EU in political unity.

Interaction between both will not only work for harmonization, but also has to identify the most important topics for research to optimize patient care and minimize the burden of diseases.

It was possible to position musculoskeletal conditions and trauma within Horizon 2020, the European Union's new research and innovation programme.

Soon European elections will take place, which will see 751 Members of the European Parliament (MEP) (re)elected, who will for the first time weigh in on the nomination process of the President of the European Commission.

Patient Safety, the prevention of chronic diseases, sustainability of health care systems, and the potential of new technologies in health care are amongst the topics which the new Commission will inherit to address. But most importantly, the idea that health should be tackled through all policy areas will guide future EU action.

What the EU will need from the European O+T community, from EFORT, and from us in the scientific member societies is our continued expertise in musculoskeletal health and in promoting and preserving the mobility of people by sharing best practice, comparable and evidence-based data which can help shape robust future health policies. It will be crucial to continue working with the newly elected MEPs and appointed Commissioner to ensure musculoskeletal conditions are not forgotten from the agenda of policy-makers and specific action is taken to reduce their burden.

EFORT will hold its 15th Congress in June and has put patient safety as a central theme of conference sessions, with the aim to deliver the highest level of medical education to orthopaedic surgeons and trauma surgeons. A Symposium on Patient Safety before the opening ceremony will give the participants a platform in which to discuss their role in ensuring the safety and quality of care for patients across Europe and in setting excellence in patient safety. This dialogue will take place with the participation of the European Commission and WHO, both invited to share their views on this important topic. I hope you will join us in what promises to be a fruitful session.

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