

## THE FDI WORLD DENTAL CONGRESS 2023 – LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

A couple of months ago, the FDI World Dental Congress 2023 was making a remarkable return to an in-person event in Sydney, Australia from Sunday 24th to Wednesday 27th September 2023. The congress was a success, with a total of 10,752 in person registrants including exhibition-only delegates and exhibitors from 129 countries. It was staged at the International Convention Centre Sydney in the heart of Australia's harbour city, and hosted by the Australian Dental Association, bringing the global dental community together to share ideas, knowledge, and experiences over a rich scientific program, an extensive exhibition and expansive networking opportunities.

It was also an opportunity for all FDI members to join the FDI WORLD DENTAL PARLIAMENT 2023 (FDI WDP2023), which was held in the same location, before the Congress. The FDI World Dental Federation serves as the principal representative body for over one million dentists worldwide and has a bold vision of a world with optimal oral health. Its membership includes some 200 national dental associations and specialist groups from over 130 countries.

The program of the FDI WDP2023 was very comprehensive. Here are its highlights: NLO Forum, World Oral Health Forum (WOHF), the launch of the World Oral Health Day (WOHD) 2024-2026 campaign, FDI policy statements adopted by the General Assembly and elections for the future President 2025-2027. It was also an opportunity for the European Regional Organization (ERO) of FDI to hold its Plenary Session and to meet their Working Groups.

The NLO Forum 2023 was a four-hour meeting with highlights on Oral cancer, Oral health promotion and disease prevention and Integration of oral health into general health. The NLO Forum gathered all National Liaison Officers and was led by the Chair of the Membership, Liaison and Support Committee, Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea. The main topics were the award of Travel Grands, the "Member Supports Member" project, the NLOs contribution to the organization of WOHD and the support offered by FDI CE Directors for member's scientific events. The "Member Supports Member" Project (MSM) enables Dental Associations to provide support to their fellow members. Three National Dental Associations have provided support by paying their peers' membership fees through MSM 2023 and they received a Certificate of Appreciation from Prof. Dr. Paula Perlea, the Chair of MLSC: Bulgarian Dental Association to Bulgarian Scientific Association of Dental Medicine, Hong Kong Dental Association to Lao Dental Association, Associazione Nazionale Dentisti Italiani to National Dental Association of Somalia and Uzbekistan Dental Association. The 2023 Travel Grant recipients have been also selected by MLSC, from 18 candidates: Bangladesh Dental Society, Ordre Nationale des Chirurgiens-Dentistes de la République Démocratique du Congo, Colegio de Cirujanos Dentistas de Honduras, Kenya Dental Association, Stomatological (Dental) Association of the Kyrgyz Republic, Myanmar Dental Association, Association Rwandaise des Chirurgiens-Dentistes et Stomatologues, Uganda Dental Association.

On the 20 March every year, the World Oral Health Day is celebrated worldwide, being an FDI initiative. The new 3-year campaign started now and it focusses on the link between oral health and general health because: "A HAPPY MOUTH IS... A HAPPY BODY." Every year, FDI gives out the World Oral Health Day Awards to recognize those who organized the most outstanding campaigns. The awards are divided into six categories to reward the work of FDI members, students, and the public.

During the World Oral Health Forum (WOHF) the FDI World Dental Federation also launched a campaign that asks dental associations to make a commitment to delivering sustainable oral healthcare. Several issues were raised to ensure sustainability including the issue of using plastic like in toothpaste, toothbrushes, focusing on oral health education of future dentists.

The Presidency of FDI was handed over from Prof. Ihsane Ben Yahya, the FDI President 2021-2023, to Prof. Dr. Greg Chadwick, the FDI President 2023-2025. The outcome of the FDI WDP2023 elections was great for our European members of FDI and also ERO, as Assist. Prof. Dr. Nikolai Sharkov is the new President Elect 2025-2027. Assist. Prof. Dr. Nikolai Sharkov has always been involved in all activities of the European and Balkan dental associations, but he was also the treasurer of FDI. Very warm congratulations to our dearest friend! Due to vacancies resulted in the FDI Council, Prof. Young Guk Park, Republic of Korea was elected as the new Treasurer and Prof. Dr Hiroshi Ogawa, Japan was elected as Member.

The new Policy Statements approved by the General Assembly 2023 are "Alcohol as a risk for oral health", "Alternative direct restorative materials to dental amalgam", "Collaboration between oral health professionals and other health professionals", "Mental health and well-being for oral health professionals and dental students", "Tooth wear".



Also, an important event was the official handover of the FDI Congress Flag, from the Australian Dental Association (ADA) to the Turkish Dental Association (TDA) for the 2024 FDI World Dental Congress, which will take place in Istanbul, from September 12th to September 15th, 2024. The World Dental Congress is a flagship continuing-education event for FDI, and a unique opportunity for all dentists to strengthen ties and foster collaboration within the global oral health community, a chance to get together and meet leaders within the oral health profession, and beyond, from around the globe. It is a platform where all dentists embrace innovation and engage in effective continuing education (CE).

It is worth mentioning that the inaugural edition of FDI Young Dentists Forum also took place in Sydney, Australia, during the FDI WDC2023, with the participation of international well-known speakers. This first edition was a great success and the 2024 edition is scheduled to take place on September 13th 2024, in Istanbul, Turkey, during the FDI WDC2024.

We are looking forward to meeting in Istanbul for the FDI World Dental Congress 2024, from Thursday, 12th September, to Sunday, 15th September 2024. This event, co-hosted by FDI World Dental Federation and the Turkish Dental Association, will be held at the Istanbul Congress Center (ICC) and the Istanbul Lutfi Kirdar International Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC), and will provide 3 days of Scientific Program, 3 days of Exhibition, 129 hours of Continuing Dental Education (CE) and interactive fora covering the most relevant topics in dentistry. It will also be an opportunity for all FDI members to join the FDI WORLD DENTAL PARLIAMENT 2024, which will be held in the same location, before the Congress. See you all, in Istanbul!

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