

STROKE ALLIANCE FOR EUROPE (SAFE)

General Assembly 2024

Minutes

Monday 17 June 2024 @ 10.00 CET

Virtual Meeting

AGENDA ITEMS and DECISIONS

1. Welcome and Apologies

The President Hariklia Proios (HP) welcomed the members to the General Assembly.

Those present were:

Association for Stroke and Aphasia	Bulgaria
Heart to Heart Foundation	Bulgaria
Fundacio Ictus	Catalonia
Croatian Stroke Society	Croatia
Cyprus Stroke Association	Cyprus
Cerebrum	Czech Republic
Hjernesagen	Denmark
Estonian Stroke Patients Society	Estonia
Aivoliitto ry	Finland
Stiftung Deutsche Schlaganfall-Hilfe	Germany
Hellenic Action / Alliance for Stroke	Greece
Heilaheil	Iceland
Irish Heart Foundation	Ireland
Neeman Association for Stroke survivors	Israel
Associazione Lotta Ictus Cerebrale (ALICE)	Italy
BLETZ Asbl	Luxembourg
Hersenletsel.nl	Netherlands

Association for a fight against stroke, STROKE Ohrid	North Macedonia
Norsk forening for slagrammede	Norway
Portugal AVC	Portugal
ALIA – The Association for a Fight Against Stroke	Romania
Serbian Stroke Association	Serbia
Združenje bolnikov s cerebrovaskularno boleznijo	Slovenia
Frenco al Ictus Fundacion	Spain
STROKE-Riksförbundet	Sweden
Turkish Cerebrovascular Society	Turkey
Chest Heart Stroke NI	United Kingdom
Stroke Association	United Kingdom
Different Strokes	United Kingdom

Associate member attending without voting rights

Medical Foundation “Mkurnali”	Georgia
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Apologies for non-attendance were received from:

Sdruzeni CMP	Czech Republic
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Not attending without apology

Belgian Stroke Council	Belgium
Federacio Ictus de Catalunya	Catalonia
Mozdani Val	Croatia
Vaincre l'AVC	France
Nemzeti Stroke Liga	Hungary
Stroke Fundation	Poland

For resolutions to be passed, the following rules apply per the SAFE Articles of Association:

Quorate is at least half the members attending or have submitted proxy votes.

Resolutions are passed on a simple majority vote.

For this General Assembly, 18 voting members were required with more than 10 voting for the approval of the resolution.

The number of voting member organisations present was 29. This was sufficient for the GA to be quorate.

The votes were collected electronically and counted, with the votes being verified by the tech company (Open Audience) being an independent vote checker, in addition to the SAFE Secretariat.

2. Approval of previous minutes and matters arising

There were no matters arising from the June 2023 GA minutes.

Resolution: *The minutes of the GA held in June 2023 were approved as a true and accurate representation of the General Assembly as follows:*

Approved 23

Not approved 0

Abstained 0

Did not vote 6

3. Review of the year 2023 and plans for 2024

AW opened by welcoming our two new members – the Estonian Patient Society (Estonia) and Heart to Heart (Bulgaria). This brings our membership to 36 organisations from across Europe.

We were delighted to be able to bring together our members together in Rome in 2023 and in Dublin in 2024. These meetings are vital for networking, sharing experiences and developing new ideas and initiatives. We are looking forward to bringing members together again in Prague next year.

A key project that we launched at the beginning of 2024 was our new strategy ‘United Together’ which sets out our vision and goals for the next

five years (<https://www.safestroke.eu/our-strategy-the-need-our-vision-for-change-and-how-well-get-there>).

AW then updated the members on life after stroke activities:

We held our first European Life After Stroke Forum in 2023 in Barcelona where we were joined by 175 people from all over Europe. We held our second in 2024 in Dublin where we were joined by 316 people. Both conferences were really well received. And we are now planning for our third event in Prague next year (<https://www.elasf.org/>)

We continued our partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim to provide ‘Surviving Stroke’ materials which is an evidence-based information pack for families and patients when they are admitted to an Angels-supported stroke unit. These leaflets are translated by SAFE, approved by our members and are available on their websites. The leaflets are available in Bulgarian, Catalan, Croatian, Czech, Cypriot, Georgian, Greek, Macedonian, Polish, Romanian, Serbian and Turkish. AW thanked the Stroke Association for providing us with the original brochures in English. We will work on updating the leaflets again in 2024 (<https://www.safestroke.eu/safe-angels-initiative/>)

We launched our latest report ‘A life saved is a life worth living’ which outlines the current knowledge and understanding of stroke survivors’ and carers’ needs and demands after a stroke (<https://www.safestroke.eu/life-saved-is-a-life-worth-living/>).

On prevention, AW informed the GA that we had received funding to update the strokeprevention.info website in 2024. This will include new sections on both non-modified risk factors and a greater focus on secondary prevention. It will also include examples of best practice from across Europe.

On research, we continue to spread awareness about the EU funded stroke research projects that SAFE is involved in (<https://www.safestroke.eu/research/>). We used Brain Awareness Week as

an opportunity to raise awareness of the projects in collaboration with our members. In 2023 and in 2024 we have focus on:

1. ANGIE - MAgnetically steerable wireless Nanodevices for the tarGeted delivery of therapeutic agents in any vascular rEgion of the body
2. RESQ+ - Comprehensive solution of healthcare improvement based on the global Registry of Stroke Care Quality
3. Validate - Using Artificial Intelligence to improve outcomes for stroke patients
4. PRESTIGE-AF – Prevention of Stroke in intracerebral hemorrhage survivor with Atrial Fibrillation
5. TENSION – Efficacy and safety of ThrombEctomy iN Stroke with extended leSION and extended time window: a randomized, controlled trial

AW then updated the GA on stroke advocacy work. At the EU level we have worked in partnership with the European Alliance for Cardiovascular Health whose main goal is a EU Commission supported cardiovascular health plan for Europe. Along with the European Stroke Organisation, six SAFE members travelled to the EU parliament in Strasbourg to a cardiovascular disease summit to raise the profile of stroke. In total we spoke to 35 MEPs about stroke issues in their country. We then developed our 'Manifesto for stroke survivors' which sets out our stroke priorities (based on the Stroke Action Plan for Europe) for the build up to the members of the European Parliament (MEPs) elections. 18 members took part in this campaign to encourage MEPs to support prioritising stroke at the EU and the national level. Our next key activity with MEPs will be a meeting in Brussels to launch the new Stroke Action Plan for Europe. AW briefly mentioned the Stroke Action Plan for Europe stroke services tracker data and encouraged all members to review the data that has been released for their country:

<https://actionplan.eso-stroke.org/national-stroke-data>.

4. Approval of the 2022 Annual Accounts

SAFE Treasurer Chris Macey (CM) presented the final accounts to December 2023 for approval.

In 2023, income was €648,117 (€394,298 in 2022):

- Sponsorship of €441,226 (€316,760 in 2022) was received from Bayer, BMS-Pfizer Alliance, Boehringer Ingelheim, Ipsen, Medtronic, Merz Therapeutics, Pfizer, Novartis, Novo Nordisk and Nutricia
- Membership income increased slightly to €54,940 (€50,617 in 2022) due to new organisations joining SAFE and a 2% increase in membership fees in 2022.
- €139,804 (€22,504 in 2022) was received from partnerships with European research consortia - from the new Validate, RESQ+ and TruStroke projects and continued involvement with the Proof and Prestige-AF projects.
- €10,432 was received European Life After Stroke Forum 2023 and 2024 delegate fees
- SAFE received donations of €1,715 (€3,811 in 2022):
 - €112 donations from the SAFE website
 - The balance was from Ipsen and Novartis for Honorary Member Jon Barrick's participation on their patient advisory boards.

In addition, we carried forward €789,194 from 2022 (€977,452 from 2021)

Our thanks go to all our supporters in 2023 for their continued support and recognition of the importance of the work SAFE does on behalf of its members and its partners, for stroke survivors in Europe.

In 2023, our expenditure was €564,953 (€582,552 in 2022):

- €343,599 (€303,277 in 2022) – for projects such the European Life After Stroke Forum, Stroke Action Plan for Europe advocacy work, the Surviving Stroke leaflets with the Angels Initiative and the unmet needs of stroke survivors in Europe report.
- €175,337 (€206,029 in 2022) – contracted staff costs
- €17,373 (€16,794 in 2022) – EU research dissemination work

- €28,643 (€56,452 in 2022) – core costs
- All expenditure was as budgeted for and approved by the SAFE board.

As a result, we had a surplus of €872,358 (€789,194 in 2022) and the planned expenditure for these funds in 2024 and beyond is:

- €276,852 for projects such as the European Life After Stroke Forum in Dublin, our increased work in the EU space with the Stroke Action Plan for Europe and the revamp of our Prevention website.
- €238,921 for EU research project dissemination over the next five years.
- €356,585 surplus of which €250,000 is reserves.

Our overall position at the end of 2023 looks good. CM endorsed the 2023 accounts presented on page 21 of the annual report and present these to the members for their approval

Resolution: *A vote was taken and the accounts for 2023 were approved as follows:*

Approved 23

Not approved 0

Abstained 1

Did not vote 5

5 Approval of 2024 budget

Based on the outline description of the work SAFE is doing in 2024, CM presented our budget as follows:

Total budgeted Income for 2024 is €547,727

- Membership fees € 56,588 this includes a 3% increase
- Industry €395,300 – a decrease from 2023 as we received a large one-off sponsorship from Pfizer
- ELASF 2024 delegate and members meeting fees € 32,050, an increase from 2023

- Donations €8,000 – an increase from 2023 as we are doing more work on industry projects, which we are remunerated for
- Research income € 52,313 – a decrease as in 2023 we received prefunding for four new EU research projects

Our planned expenditure is €677,910

- Projects €424,308 – up from last year primarily due to the ELASF in Dublin being more expensive than Barcelona
- Core € 42,614 for covers costs such as accountancy fees, web hosting, membership fees, software costs, storage costs. In 2024 we will use core costs to cover the board meeting in September which was covered by members meeting budget in 2023.
- EU research dissemination € 28,800 – an increase on 2023 as more members have taken part in the dissemination work
- Contract costs € 182,189 for two full time and one part time – a slight increase on 2023 as we have period in 2023 when we only had two contractors

Our surplus in 2024 should be € 742,175 and this is allocated in the following ways:

- € 250,000 for our reserves
- € 141,540 for 2025 ELASF in Prague
- € 243,843 for EU research dissemination work over the next five years
- €106,792 is unallocated but it is in reserve should we not receive the sponsorship needed for the ELASF in Prague

Overall, CM advised the GA that he is very happy with our financial progress this year and congratulated Arlene and Sandra for all their hard work. However, it is essential that we expand our funding streams, for example to EU funding, to ensure that we remain in the same strong situation in the coming years.

CMI endorsed the 2024 budget and presented it to the members for their approval

Resolution: A vote was taken and the budget for 2024 was approved as follows:

Approved 23

Not approved 0

Abstained 1

Did not vote 5

6. Election of new board officers

Under Article 20 of our current constitution, officers of SAFE can only be elected from current board members. For this GA, SAFE currently has its full quota of 11 board members and so no new applications were invited from membership. This also meant that no applications for the officer roles were invited from the members

SAFE President

HP had served her first term of three years as SAFE president and applied to serve for a second term. HP was the only applicant for this position from the board.

Resolution: A vote was taken and the election of Hariklia Proios as SAFE President was approved as follows:

Approved 27

Abstained 1

Did not vote 1

SAFE Vice President

The position of Vice President became vacant at the GA in 2023 and there were no applicants for the role at that time. There were two applicants for the role from the board at the 2024 GA:

- Hrvoje Jurlina Croatia
- Dorina Dobрева Bulgaria

The applicants introduced themselves to the membership and a confidential vote was opened. At the end of her introduction, DD withdrew her application.

Note: After the GA, the validity of the voting process was checked with SAFE's legal advisers as the voting had already started to take place before DD's withdrawal. We were advised that the voting process was correct and the result was valid.

Resolution: A vote was taken and the election of Hrvoje Jurlina as SAFE Vice President was approved as follows:

For HJ 23

For DD 4

Abstained 1

Did not vote 1

As a result of the election, this is the new Board:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| • Hariklia Proios, | Greece | President |
| • Hrvoje Jurlina | Croatia | Vice President |
| • Marina Charalambous | Cyprus | Secretary |
| • Chris Macey | Ireland | Treasurer |
| • Dorina Dobрева | Bulgaria | Member at large |
| • Marianne Tangen | Norway | Member at large |
| • Maja Bozinovska | North Macedonia | Member at large |
| • Nenad Nikolic | Serbia | Member at large |
| • Liliana Curea | Romania | Member at large |
| • Sarah Belson | UK | Member at large |
| • Yago Bundgaard | Denmark | Member at large |

6 **Any other business**

There being no further business the meeting was closed.

7 **Date and venue of next General Assembly**

June 2024, Virtual, date to be confirmed.

A special power of attorney is assigned to SBB Accountants en Belastingconsulenten BV (with its registered office in 3000 Leuven, Belgium, Diestsevest 32, letter box 1A and Crossroads Bank for Enterprises no. 0459.609.556) and SBB Bedrijfsdiensten BV (with its registered office in 3000 Leuven, Belgium, Diestsevest 32, letter box 1A and Crossroads Bank for Enterprises no. 420.170.841), hereby represented by its employee Laura Priemen and any other employee/director, each separately and with right of substitution, to fulfil all statutory and other legally required filing and publication obligations in the name and on behalf of the company in accordance with the aforementioned instrument of incorporation. More specifically and without being limited to this, each of the proxy holders are authorised to sign all publication forms and file them with the registry as well as fulfil all administrative formalities with respect to any public service (Crossroads Bank for Enterprises, VAT, etc.).

Signed and ratified by

Marina Charalambous
(Secretary)

Hariklia Proios
(President)