

Interview with Prof. Gilbert Massard: multifarious ways to elevate thoracic surgery education

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On May 31, 2017, the 25th Meeting of the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ESTS) successfully ended, after a dense 4-day agenda blending a superb scientific and educational program. The event took place in Innsbruck, a historical town located at the heart of the Austrian Alps, and the capital of Tyrol, Austria. With a history of 25-year growth, the ESTS conference has developed into the largest international event in the field of thoracic surgery, with a solid reputation of scientific and educational excellence.

This year, the meeting gathered more than one and half a thousand of delegates worldwide. It provided participants with scientific sessions composed of carefully selected abstracts, working group meetings, special lectures delivered by renowned experts, and joint sessions, which produced an excellent opportunity for trainees, young colleagues as well as experienced experts to discuss new trends in thoracic surgery and the problems in everyday work.

Among these sessions, the section “Training of European Thoracic Surgeons in the 21st Century” invited eminent experts in field of thoracic surgical education. Presentations gave an overview on thoracic surgical training in Europe, learning resources and ways to teach technical skills, and last but not least, explained the HERMES syllabus for thoracic surgery. The latter is the first initiative led by two leading European societies, ESTS and ERS (European Respiratory Society), to set up a syllabus on a consensual basis with the Delphi methodology.

After the educational session, we were honored to conduct an interview to its co-chairman, Prof. Gilbert Massard (*Figure 1*), head of the Department of Thoracic Surgery at the University Hospital of Strasbourg, France, and concurrently director of Lung Transplantation. Prof. Massard gave an excellent presentation on the topic “HERMES task force on thoracic surgery: where do we stand?” during the session (*Figure 2*).

During the interview, Prof. Massard firstly introduced to us the large spectrum of ESTS’ educational offer in thoracic surgical education. As the outgoing ESTS director

of education (now president elect), he regarded it as an important and priority mission for ESTS to promote and constantly improve education, be it for trainees or for continuous professional development, and to improve care for patients in Europe and beyond.

“*To achieve this goal, there are several actions*”, Prof. Massard shared, “*The first one was to restructure the ESTS School to provide high-quality educational opportunities for thoracic surgeons an increase their visibility. The core of the system is the ESTS campus, which delivers face-to-face courses with an outstanding teacher/student ratio. Students and faculty live together a couple of days, and discussions may go on outside of the teaching rooms, such as during the coffee break, meals and evening happenings. The campus atmosphere promotes and optimizes interaction between trainees and early career surgeons on the one side, and experienced senior surgeons and key opinion leaders on the other side.*”

ESTS campus encompasses three well-defined educational tracks: knowledge, skills and academic competence. The knowledge track is primarily designed to help trainees to prepare their national specialty exams, and beyond the prestigious European Board examination is for younger colleagues to prepare for the national specialty examination. The skills track is technique-oriented, and strives to develop trainee’s skills through lectures, tips and tricks, and simulation training. The academic competence track develops non-technical skills such as medical writing, communication, methodology, and team management. As a matter of fact, ESTS estimates that it is capital to prepare tomorrow’s leadership in our specialty.

Prof. Massard further considers that the thoracic surgical community needs to open its mind outside the strict field of thoracic surgery, and develop interest for the incoming worldwide sanitary problems, where thoracic surgeons have a part to play. For examples, in 2016 ESTS launched a course on tuberculosis and surgical lung diseases in migrants in cooperation with WHO, in order to prepare Western European colleagues to unknown pathologies. Similarly,



Figure 1 Prof. Gilbert Massard and Prof. Dirk Van Raemdonck as the co-chairmen of the session “Training of European Thoracic Surgeons in the 21st Century” for ESTS.



Figure 2 Snapshot of Prof. Massard's presentation.



Figure 3 Meeting at the booth. Editor Jessie, Prof. Massard and Editor Grace.

ESTS is proud to offer a course on terrorism and disaster management at the Council of Europe, with patronage of the secretary general of council of Europe.

Last but not least, ESTS is hard working to set up a multifaceted E-learning platform. There is a dedicated ESTS-Utube channel with surgical videos selected for



Figure 4 Interview with Prof. Gilbert Massard: multifarious ways to elevate thoracic surgery education (1).

Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/articles/1787>

educational value; ESTS webinars will be launched soon, with a first event on 9th of November dedicated to enhanced recovery after surgery.

In addition, Prof. Massard was also the captain of the French team in the Postgraduate Symposium-Master Cup of ESTS. This year, teams representing 16 different countries took part in this interesting competition and Canadian team won the championship in the end. Although French team didn't enter the finals, French colleagues remember the Olympic philosophy promoted by Pierre de Coubertin, who stated that “*The important thing in competition is to participate, to learn and to enjoy, but not necessary to win*”. Experienced national key opinion leaders conducted the teams, while the competitors were thoracic surgical trainees.

International academic meetings are always good opportunities for catching up with old friends, and meet with news friends in a vivid international exchange (Figure 3). The authors appreciate every moment they've generous shared and the nice communication each time.

Let's enjoyed the interview video (Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdNIPpcmwZg&feature=youtu.be>) (Figure 4) (1)!

Interview questions

- (I) As we know, you are the captain of the French team. Would you like to share your comments on the whole competition, and the performance of your team or other teams?
- (II) As the director for the Educational Course of ESTS, would you like to share your experience in education for young doctors? Any advices you would like to give to them?

Expert introduction

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Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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1. Hu S, Zhong J. Interview with Prof. Gilbert Massard: multifarious ways to elevate thoracic surgery education. *Asvide* 2017;4:470. Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/articles/1787>

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