

ESTRO

Yavuz Anacak

Professor of Radiation Oncology

Department of Radiation Oncology

Ege University Faculty of Medicine & Hospital

Izmir, Turkey

ESTRO background

My first experience with ESTRO was participation in one of the earliest ESTRO courses in September 1991, as a first-year radiation oncology resident. I appreciated getting a generous travel grant from ESTRO to join Physics for Modern Radiotherapy course in Leuven, and since then I always kept close connections with ESTRO, believing that “if I get something from someone, I should give more in return”, to enrich it and create a butterfly effect. Throughout my career spanning over 30 years, I participated in many ESTRO activities including annual congresses, GEC-ESTRO meetings, teaching courses, policy meetings and National Societies days. I am the ESTRO representative of the Turkish Society for Radiation Oncology since 2012, abstract reviewer for ESTRO congresses since 2015 and local organiser of ESTRO courses in Turkey.

Experience

I am a Professor of Radiation Oncology at the Ege University Faculty of Medicine in Izmir, where I was the Chair of the Radiation Oncology department for seven years until the role was handed over to one of my colleagues. Currently, I am chief of the paediatrics, CNS and sarcoma section in the department, and teach radiation oncology residents, medical physics students; supervising IAEA fellows; organising and participating in local, national and international courses and meetings; contributing to developing national and international guidelines for paediatric cancers. I am a member of the PROS and SIOP-PODC Radiotherapy group.

In 2017, I was elected to the position of President-Elect and in 2019-2020 became the President of the Turkish Society for Radiation Oncology - TROD, one of the largest radiation oncology societies in Europe. During my tenure, I pushed TROD for more collaboration with ESTRO, encouraged youngsters by providing grants for ESTRO courses, participated in National Societies meetings and policy forums at the EU, and endorsed the core curriculum. My presidency coincided with COVID-19 pandemic, which forced us to cancel all onsite activities and switch to online platforms instead. However, we responded quickly and provided guidelines for radiotherapy centres and patients at the beginning of the pandemic. I believe that under my guidance we managed to turn this unfavourable situation into opportunity by expanding the TROD educational activities to reach all radiation oncologists and medical physicists in Turkey, even beyond the national borders. We organised numerous online educational meetings including 14 weeks long education

programme on radiation physics, international meetings, and courses with radiation oncology societies of Greece, Pakistan and Nigeria, and an online annual congress which attracted 600 radiation oncologists from Turkey and abroad.

I was employed at the IAEA for some part of my career, a period that gave me a global perspective to radiation oncology. Since then, I always collaborated and engaged in various IAEA projects aiming to enhance radiation oncology capacity at national, regional and global level. These include numerous training activities, onsite and online missions in Eastern Europe, Asia, Middle East and Africa, and preparing reports for the IAEA and national authorities to develop strategies in planning radiation oncology infrastructure. My perspective is consistent with the ESTRO vision to expand its activities beyond Europe.

Education and qualifications

I am a graduate of Ege University, Faculty of Medicine, in Izmir, Turkey. I obtained the diploma of radiation oncology from the Department of Radiation Oncology in 1995. I received the title of assistant professor in 1999 and associate professor in the field of radiation oncology in 2003. I was promoted to full professor in 2010 and this is my current position at Ege University. During my career I was research & visiting fellow at Pitie Salpetriere Hospital in Paris; Rambam Hospital of Technion University in Haifa, and Duke University Medical School in Durham for a total duration of one and half years.

Personal

I am married to Gunay, a lovely lady who is a Professor of Pharmacology. We have two sons aged 14 and 16. I consider myself as an advanced amateur photographer focusing on nature and daily life photography plus participating in photography exhibitions. Collecting old maps and engravings on specific subjects is also my area of interest.

Candidate statement

Europe is the birthplace of radiation medicine where X-rays and radioisotopes were invented and were first used to treat cancer. The giants of the 20th century radiation science Roentgen, Curie, Becquerel, Regaud all lived and worked in this continent and developed the fundamentals of radiation physics and radiation biology here. ESTRO, a relatively young Society, inherited this very rich and honourable past, and has always been the driving force of oncology in Europe since its foundation in 1981.

ESTRO's new vision statement for 2030 "Radiation Oncology. Optimal Health for All, Together" reflects the global vision of a European society, a motto described by ESTRO as "ambitious, expansive, inclusive and open to the future". ESTRO's vision for the next decade matches exactly the universal values of the 2030 agenda of the United Nations: "Leave No One Behind". We should find ways to provide optimal care for all cancer patients globally, and ESTRO should be among the flag carriers of this journey. Partnership and collaboration with the UN institutions, WHO, PAHO and IAEA; continental radiation oncology societies of ALATRO, ASTRO, AORTIC and FARO; national radiation

oncology societies of Europe; other regional-continental oncology societies of various disciplines; EU policy makers and national health authorities; and patient support groups will solidify the leadership role of ESTRO. The goal of “Optimal Health for All, Together” can only be achieved through multidisciplinary collaboration and global partnership.

Over the years, the science of oncology evolved with an unprecedented pace. Take a look at the last two years, when COVID-19 caught our blue planet unguarded, many technologies and methods while waiting their turn on the shelves since years, such as telemedicine, online learning and hypofractionation, became our daily routine overnight. ESTRO should be flexible to adapt to new conditions during and after the pandemic and additionally use all possible tools to disseminate radiation oncology.

Over three decades, I have acted as a radiation oncologist, teacher, expert and manager at the national and international level. I believe that I have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, to qualify and serve as the honourable President of ESTRO and achieve its targets.