

My dear colleagues,

I remember it was **2008** during my first **EAES Congress**, held in Stockholm. I just became specialist in general surgery having the plan of specializing me in laparoscopy. In order to do that I attended a session on surgical education, but I was surprised that in practice there were not too many options offered by EAES that would have helped me, as a young surgeon coming from an east European country.

Now, in 2019, is it any better, have the things changed? What does **EAES** stand for? Is it worth being **EAES** member? The answer you should decide at the end of this short text.

The European Association for Endoscopic Surgery is the biggest surgical society in Europe, comprising surgeons not only from our continent but all over the world, no wonder that we are driving ourselves by the slogan: **EAES Goes Global**. Currently the educational opportunities offered by **EAES** are based on **four** different pillars:

1. **The fellowship program:** three months surgical training financed entirely by **EAES** in some of the most important clinics across Europe. We are offering nine positions every year and the winners are publicly announced during the EAES Congress. The age limit is 40.
2. **The clinical visits program:** one-week surgical training arranged by **EAES** dedicated to more experienced surgeons interested in making international connections and check what happens in other surgical departments. No age limit for this program.
3. **MIS diploma:** minimally invasive surgery diploma, organized by **UEMS** with **EAES**. The diploma is offered after passing an exam, consisting in both theoretical questions but also hands-on aspects. The first best five scoring candidates are being offered also travel grants by **EAES**.
4. **The endorsed workshops:** state of the art surgical courses across Europe, recognized by the **EAES**, in which our members have always discounts. Those are carefully picked in the way that a homogeneous distribution inside Europe is assured.

So, in my opinion, in 2019, **EAES** stands mainly for promoting **surgical education**, being oriented mostly towards young surgeons. Why is that? The answer is simple: because they are our future.

My best wishes,

Dorin Popa

Chair of the Education and Training Committee