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## Greetings from the IALM President

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the first issue of the renewed *Bulletin of the International Academy of Legal Medicine*.

In accordance with the aims of the 2013 - 2016 *Presidential Action Plan*, which, *inter alia*, envisions the fostering of *cross-cultural communication* and *sharing of information, knowledge and projects*, as well as providing *notification* of Meetings and Conferences in the Member Countries, you are now reading the first of a series of regular Bulletins, to be circulated via email and published on the IALM Website.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our *Treasurer Tony Fracasso* for his valuable work in coordinating the collection of some of the information displayed in the IALM Bulletin.

Further thanks go to the *Editorial Committee*, namely, *Dr. Thomas Dewis* and *Dr. Alessandro Amagliani*, for their efforts in putting together this renewed *IALM Bulletin*.

Therefore, in addition to the regular *IALM Newsletter*, Members of the Academy will be able to keep up with the new developments and initiatives regarding IALM.

S.Davide Ferrara

*IALM President*

## Countdown to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the International Academy of Legal Medicine in Dubai, January 2015

Less than 6 months separate us from the next IALM Congress, the main Scientific event of our Academy, to be held in Dubai, in January 2015.

This important event, supported by both the *Government of Dubai* and the *Dubai Police*, boasts a rich Congressional Scientific Programme, which can be downloaded by [clicking on this link](#), with a broad range of topics of current interest to the world of Bio-Medicolegal and Forensic Sciences, presented by experts in the field and accomplished in a spirit of collegiality and with an ethos which encourages the transcultural dissemination of knowledge and the State of the Art.

The venue of the Congress, the Dubai World Trade Center, is the most prominent in the region for Conferences, Exhibitions and Events, and is therefore an ideal place to host our main Triennial Congress.



We hope that you will be able join us to participate in this event, which will be a key occasion for all those involved in the field of Legal Medicine and the Forensic Sciences.

All of the relevant information pertaining to the registration to the Congress, submission of Abstracts, discounts on air fares, hospitality and the related social programme, can be found on the Congressional Website at the following address:

**<http://www.ialmdubai.ae>**



## Present your Legal Medicine & Forensic Sciences Institute

With the first issue of the renewed IALM Bulletin we plan to share information regarding the various Institutions of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences around the globe.

We will start with an overview regarding the Estonian Forensic Science Institute, prepared by our Colleague Marika Vali.

Any IALM Member who would be interested in sharing information regarding their own Institution, including details about the expertise / services they provide and photos, or the Forensic System operating in their Country, is more than welcome to do so by contacting the Editorial Committee ([ialm@ialm.info](mailto:ialm@ialm.info)).

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### The Estonian Forensic Science Institute



The *Estonian Forensic Science Institute (EFSI)* is a State Agency established on 1 January 2008 that is administered by the *Ministry of Justice*. The principal objectives of the institute are the provision of Forensic Science *expertise* in criminal and civil cases, the development of the fields of Forensic Science, the forensic training of police agencies and consultation on matters related to the duties of the Institute, and the administration of National databases and registers.

#### Education & Training

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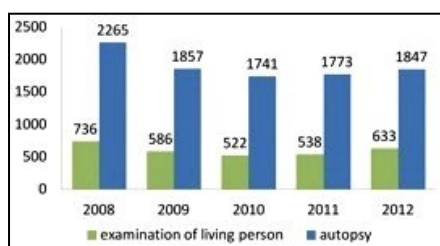
In 2007, the implementation of a system of professional qualification standards was launched.

A forensic pathologist's qualification will be reviewed once every five years. In addition to work experience, self-education, continuous training and participation in the development of the speciality are taken into account upon determining the professional ranking. The competence of forensic experts is regulated by the professional standards approved by the Law and National Defence Council on 12 May 2009.

The EFSI has the competence to perform 45 *different types and sub-types of forensic analysis*. The Institute also administers the *National List of Officially Certified Experts*, which includes 60 experts in 12 areas of forensic expertise. The Institute comprises its Forensic Science Departments: the DNA, Document, IT, Chemistry, Fingerprint, Traffic, Technical, and Forensic Psychiatry Divisions, and four Forensic Medicine Departments. The quality system of the Estonian Forensic Science Institute is based on two internationally recognised standards: *EVS-EN ISO/IEC 17025:2006 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025:2005)* and *EVS-EN ISO 9001:2008 Standard for Quality Management Systems (ISO 9001:2008)*. The Estonian Forensic Institute has the competence according to *EN ISO/IEC 17025:2005* to conduct tests in the field of toxicology analyses of human biological materials. The accreditation scope of *ISO17020* covers



## Forensic Expertises from 2008 to 2012



## Research & Development

In accordance with the statutes of the institute a research and development committee has been formed, comprised of employees and specialists, who meet four times a year and advise management on the directions the institute should take in terms of new methods and technologies to adopt. The main research topics of forensic doctors are the following:

- Alcohol-related molecular and pathomorphological damage
- Forensic medical differentiation of injuries caused by different pistols
- Clinical findings and significant biochemical tests of acute ethyl alcohol intoxication in different age groups of children
- The possibilities of using biochemical and virological investigations in post-mortem diagnostics

During the past few years, two doctoral theses have been defended at the University of Tartu's Institute of Pathological Anatomy and Forensic Medicine and three doctoral theses are in progress. Every year 2-3 international articles are published and 2-3 doctors take part in the international conference. Forensic doctors in collaboration with the University of Tartu's faculty have published five forensic medical books.

activities in the fields of forensic medical examinations of living persons and corpses.

The Departments of Forensic Medicine are located in four regions of Estonia. All departments perform forensic examinations upon living and deceased persons. The department in Tallinn also specialises in forensic radiology and forensic anthropology and the department in Tartu specialises in medical toxicology. As of 1 January 2013, there are 16 forensic pathologists (including one forensic histologist), 1 forensic toxicologist, 2 experts of forensic anthropology and 2 residents.

Expert analysis on living persons is performed to determine the existence of damage to health (injuries), how it was caused, its duration and time of generation, state of health, medical malpractice, sex offence crimes, general permanent disability, and other medicine-related issues. Forensic pathologists identify physical and sexual violence. Forensic medical expert analysis is appointed in order to determine the state of health, when it is necessary to identify whether the person's physical (non-psychological) illness precludes the person from participating in procedures of the investigation, appearing in court, suffering the consequences, etc.

In Estonia, all cases of death caused by mechanical, physical, chemical, biological or other external factors (asphyxia, immersion deaths, falls, electrical fatalities, poisoning, transportation injuries, hypothermia, hyperthermia, etc.) are subject to forensic medical autopsy. Forensic medical expert analysis of a corpse is appointed when there is evidence of a crime on the body or when there is a suspicion of a crime. A forensic medical autopsy is also appointed if no crime is suspected and the death is caused by external factors, or if there is a suspicion of crime, or in case of late post-mortem alterations, or if the identity of the deceased is unknown. Additionally, forensic anthropological expert analyses are performed in the Estonian Forensic Science Institute to determine the cause of death and the mechanism of trauma on human skeletons or on parts of the skeleton. For that reason trassologic, ballistic, person identification, micrologic and event reconstruction analyses are performed. Medical toxicology expert analyses and examinations are also performed, and as of October 2010, there will be a possibility to perform forensic radiology expert analyses and examinations.

## About the Author



*Marika Vali* is Professor at the Tartu University in Estonia and Deputy Director of the Estonian Forensic Science Institute.

Forensic medical doctors can order examinations from different laboratories of the Institute on the basis of their referrals. The number of forensic medical expert analyses, as well as the number of expertise reports and examinations of forensic chemistry and biology, depends very much on the current law in force in the country. In addition to the above, examinations for the assessment of injuries outside legislative proceedings have been able to be ordered from the departments of forensic medicine since 2010.

*Prof. Marika Vali*

## Upcoming Scientific Events



### 54th International Congress of the Federation of South African Societies of Pathology

September 19–21, 2014

Pretoria, South Africa



### World Forensic Festival 2014

20th World Meeting of the International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS)

6th Asian Forensic Sciences Network Annual Meeting & Symposium (AFSN)

5th Meeting of Asia Pacific Medico - Legal Association (APMLA)

10th World Police Medical Officers (WPMO)

October 12–18, 2014

Seoul, Korea