

ILAE – President 2022 Annual Report

As we look back over 2022, it was certainly a year of achievements, despite parts of the world still being restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the unrest in Eastern Europe.

On 27 May 2022, Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) approved the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and other Neurological Disorders (IGAP) at the 75th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. This was the culmination of many years of collaborative working toward this point. ILAE alongside the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE), the International Child Neurology Association (ICNA) and the World Federation of Neurology (WFN) hosted a ‘what’s next?’ webinar addressing our collaborative work to achieve all ten of the IGAP targets, which is available to view on demand.



J. Helen Cross, ILAE president

In December, the WHO launched the ‘Improving the lives of people with epilepsy: a technical brief’ that presents key information on epilepsy and recommends actions to policy makers and other stakeholders regarding the IGAP global targets. Within ILAE, a series of Townhall meetings with Chapter leaders is presently taking place to provide more detailed information about IGAP and to collectively develop a comprehensive, whole organization implementation plan. As we move forward into 2023, we shall be working jointly with our partner organizations to raise awareness of targets of IGAP, and with our regions and members toward accumulating data required to move forward.

Education is of course has been a major focus. In 2022, over 600 professionals from 88 countries were provided access on the ILAE Academy learning platform to more than 10,000 learning sessions addressing Level 1 Entry and Level 2 Proficiency epileptology competencies. Across the globe our six ILAE Regions held over 40 courses during the year focusing on different regional needs and covered topics ranging from EEGs for neonates to managing co-morbidities in older people. ILAE – Eastern Mediterranean and ILAE – Africa held 24 webinars throughout the year, 12 in English and 12 in French with 3,232 attendees from all six ILAE regions. Six residential specialist ILAE Schools took place which were open to students from around the world. A new initiative was launched, the e-fora, free webinars involving case-based discussion – three were held in 2022 with open-access pre-reading materials and complementary post-session virtual cases studies – a fourth was held in early 2023 with a further four planned in 2023. We continue to offer numerous opportunities for leadership training, fellowships, visiting teacher exchanges and mentorship programmes.

I am eternally grateful to all our volunteers who are leading and are members of our commissions and task forces. Over 2022 they conducted 364 virtual meetings. The Nosology and Definitions Task Force published 4 position papers on the classification and definition of epilepsy syndromes,

as well as an introductory and methodology paper on this work. The ILAE Chapters and College of Translators translated the list of epilepsy syndromes and abbreviations into 9 languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, and Ukrainian. The COVID-19 Task Force concluded its work by providing guidance on vaccines in 14 languages and frequently asked questions for people with epilepsy and their families in 12 languages.

Recognizing the impact on people with epilepsy during emergencies, we formed the Emergency Response (Ukraine) Task Force and latterly the Crisis Response Task Force, both of which have contributed practical resources to the new Crisis Response webpage. The Research and Innovation Task Force was formed to explore the organization's role and potential contribution to increasing much needed research in epilepsy. With the success of the Young Epilepsy Section (YES), welcoming a further 393 new members for a total of 1,685 members across all six ILAE regions, we have developed sections in Pharmacy and Nursing. The Nursing Section welcomed 550 members from 59 countries in the first six months, holding their first symposium by and for nurses at the 14th European Epilepsy Congress in Geneva.



ILAE Management Committee at the American Epilepsy Society meeting, December 2022. From left: Edward Bertram, III, Eugen Trinkka, J. Helen Cross, Samuel Wiebe, Alla Guekht. Missing: Roberto Horacio Caraballo

Our journals continue to show growth; *Epilepsia* achieved an Impact Factor of 6.740 *Epilepsia Open* an Impact Factor of 4.026 (a fantastic achievement as the opening Impact Factor) and that of *Epileptic Disorders*, our educational journal, increased 28% from 1.819 to 2.333. The Sharp Waves podcast was launched and released 21 episodes in 2022; it was in the top 15% most shared globally on Spotify. Epigraph published 23 articles, including many translations into French and Spanish.

With continued concerns about COVID-19 in some areas, the 2nd North American Epilepsy Congress was held online, focusing on bridging gaps in services in small islands and remote areas. This was attended by 138 delegates from 48 countries with 28 speakers. Our first face to face congress since the pandemic was the 14th European Epilepsy Congress in Geneva, Switzerland, attended by 2,062 delegates from 87 countries participating in 166 sessions with 317 speakers. It was fantastic to see so many in person once again. Subsequently 689 delegates participated in 46 sessions with 101 speakers at the 12th Latin American Epilepsy Congress in Medellin, Colombia. The 14th Asian and Oceanian Epilepsy Congress was however held online with 515 delegates including 171 for the IBE day. More than 6,800 delegates – including 187 face-to-face participants – from 75 countries attended the 6th East Mediterranean Epilepsy Congress, hosted by the Saudi Epilepsy Society in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, with a virtual option that provided complimentary registration for ILAE chapter members.

As we move into 2023, and to the start of implementation of the IGAP, I look forward to working with you all in the different activities in which we are now involved. And thank you for your continued work and participation.

J. Helen Cross
ILAE President