

Dear All,

Last weekend we had a wonderful EPU Conference and AGM in Copenhagen and Malmö! For all those who were with us, I hope your journey back home was as smooth as possible. For those who could not attend, we hope to see you in London next year.

I am sure I speak on behalf of everyone when I say that the organising team deserves our warmest thanks and congratulations. Gurli Nielsen, Vice-Chair of PolioForeningen Denmark, together with Fredrik Canerstam, Head of Office Personskadeförbundet RTP Sweden, did an amazing job with their teams.

We will circulate the presentations to our members as soon as we receive them. But in order to share our enthusiasm quickly with those who could not be with us, I would like to pass on some of the immediate feedback I heard during these two days.

The bus that picked us up at the hotel on Friday was a true surprise for most of us. Equipped with a platform deployed from its side, it lifted those of us who needed it from the pavement, one by one, almost one metre into the air, and brought us safely to the bus level, where our wheelchairs, scooters or simply ourselves and our walking sticks were then calmly and comfortably installed.

The "POLIO" sign at the entrance of the specialised hospital we visited in Copenhagen created a very positive feeling of recognition for many of us. The facilities we were introduced to showed a very high standard of rehabilitation know-how and equipment. Furthermore, an atmosphere of kindness, care and expertise was immediately obvious throughout the hospital.

We had outstanding presentations by medical experts: Dr Majbritt Almer spoke about the specific characteristics of fatigue in polio survivors; Dr Natallia Suhak presented recent research on neurophysiological dysfunctions related to PPS; Kari Lofthus, physiotherapist, shared her experience in treating polio survivors; the Danish Healthcare System was presented by Nana Rømer Jørgensen, Head of Occupational Therapy; Professor Kristian Borg gave a presentation on immunoglobulin treatment in PPS; and Dr Eva Melin completed this overview with a presentation on polio care capabilities in Sweden for post-polio patients. Many thanks to all of them for their time and efforts.

Meghala Karlsson, Board member of Personskadeförbundet RTP concluded the day.

On Saturday, we then held the traditional General Assembly of the European Polio Union. This was an opportunity to refresh our ideas for the future of our association. We all face the same challenges linked to ageing and to insufficient resources to meet the increasing needs of polio survivors. Our EPU statutes set out very clear missions: to encourage medical experts to share their expertise at European level, to help establish the prevalence of post-polio in Europe, to actively share information among ourselves, and to support polio vaccination. Fulfilling these missions effectively in the future will certainly require new resources. This will be our target.

June, 17 2026

We also decided that in 2028, after the 2027 AGM in London, we will hold our AGM in Brussels. The purpose will be to take this opportunity to engage with our national MEPs and promote the need for appropriate medical expertise and services in each country for the treatment of polio sequelae and PPS. We should be in a position both to acknowledge the excellent services available in Denmark, Belgium, the UK and other countries, and to draw attention to the serious gaps that still exist in some European countries.

This was my first AGM as President of EPU. I am still learning the role, but I was efficiently helped and guided by Macrina Clancy, our Vice-President, and by the Board of Directors: Frances Quinn, Daniel Koller, Michal Haindl and Concepcion Garcia-Anton. Caroline Gordon-Wilson, who is now our administration volunteer, did a huge amount of work in preparing this whole event and also guided me throughout the process. My deepest thanks to her.

To conclude, I was amazed by the energy and shared commitment we all have to build a better future for EPU, for our member associations, and above all, for polio survivors across Europe. This is very encouraging.

The minutes of the meeting and the presentations will be shared later in dedicated documents and newsletters.

Take care, and I look forward to seeing, reading and writing to you soon.

Pierre Parrot

EPU President

