



**General Assembly 2019**  
**during ESVCN Congress in Torino, Italy**  
**September 19<sup>th</sup> 2019**

Attending diplomats: (see attachment)

**President Cecilia Villaverde presents work of ECVCN during last year**

- Overview 2017-2018
  - board update
  - financial report
  - committees
- **Welcome to our new diplomates, Drs. Saara Sander and Veerle Vandendriessche**
- Thanks to all people who worked for the ECVCN during last year

Cred.Comm	Ed. Comm.	Ex Comm + ad hoc	Nom. Comm	Cred. Comm	Board
S. Handl	L. Colliard	M. Hervera	J. Zentek	S. Handl	C. Villaverde
Verbrugghe	N. Priymenko	E. Hagen-Plantinga	E. Kienzle	A. Verbrugghe	A. Liesegang
J. Fritz	R. Ricci	L. Prola	C. Iben	J. Fritz	A. Mösseler
M. Clauss	C. Bjornvad	M. Diez		M. Clauss	M. Hesta
	P. Wolf				R. Corbee

- Exam questions review ad hoc committee
- Speakers @ Residency class
- All Dips

#### Board of ECVCN

- President: C. Villaverde (2016-2019)
- Past President: M. Hesta (2016-2019)
- Vice President: A. Liesegang (2016-2019)
- Secretary: A. Mösseler (2013-2019)
- Treasurer: R. Corbee (2016-2019)

Board meetings (remote): 3 (December, April, July)

Meeting with com chairs: 2 (July + ESVCN meeting).

#### Board from 2020 onwards:

- President: A. Liesegang (2020-2022)
- Past President: C. Villaverde (2020-2022)
- Vice President: (2020-2022)
- Secretary: (2020-2022) – needs to be voted on
- Treasurer: (2020-2022) – needs to be voted on
- Myriam leaves the board after 15 years (6 as secretary, 3 as vice president, 3 as president, 3 as past president)

#### Elections 2019

- Vice president, Secretary, Treasurer

#### Nominations:

- Vice president: A. Mösseler
- Treasurer: R. Corbee (renewal)
- Secretary: A. Lourenço
- Nominations from the floor – no nominations from the floor

All candidates were elected.

#### Further information from the board:

- Provided 5 year report to EBVS November 2018
- Feedback provided January 2019 and returned February 2019

- Will be voted on November 2020 (Villaverde representing college) – could not attend EBVS meeting in April

Comments on 5-year report that requires voting:

- Some comments were related to changes required by EBVS that we had done in the past but the P and P document on the website was not the latest version: currently we have current version, including a track changed one
- Comment from EBVS: **The Presidential term is 9 year (Elect, President and Past). The college could consider reducing this to 6 years to reduce the burden of holding office.**

**Answer from ECVCN: Thank you for the comment. We had been considering this for a while, also in order to encourage people to take a position within the board and to relieve the burden once you are in. On the other hand, having a continuation can have its advantages regarding transition from vice president to president. We will include this as a point of discussion at the next AGM**

#### **Voting:**

Majority was in favor of keeping the 3-year period (23 of 26 votes)

- ***Comment from EBVS: The college must promptly report to candidates details concerning any deficiencies in credentials or examination results that prevent their certification by the College. But the college allows itself up to 3 months for reporting. Consider reducing this to less than one month – this would be “more prompt”.***

**Answer from ECVCN: Thank you for this comment. We usually do provide the results within one month, but wanted to give us some more margin in case we had unforeseen problems. We will make a proposal to the membership and vote on it at the AGM this year.**

#### **Voting:**

All agreed that communication of exam results should be done within one month after the exam

Comments not requiring voting but worth mentioning

- ***Comment from EBVS: The college must establish the required procedures to assure the quality of its Diplomates across all European countries at the highest possible***

*level so as to ensure that optimal veterinary services will be provided to the public.*

Evidence of this over all countries was not shown. How would the College do this? (Providing evidence to support this requirement is recognised as a challenge for other colleges.)

Answer from ECVCN: At this point, the college trusts that our diplomates are following the ECVCN procedures and are up to date on the specialty using the re-credentialling process. During the re-certification procedure we ask that diplomates provide written documentations (receipts) of all those activities (copy of papers, certificates of attendance and provision of talks, etc). I am not sure the college possesses the authority or the means to further police its members or increase those requirements to prove continuing competency in Europe. We would welcome discussion within EBVS to see how other colleges implement a quality control not based on the honor system, trust in colleagues, and documentation backing up the re-credentialing document statements.

- **Comment from EBVS:** This College has a very low examination pass rate. Residents do not appear to be able to keep to the time requirements.
- **Answer from ECVCN:** We are aware of low pass rate and are actively working to improve this. We have created an ad hoc committee of mentors to review the exam questions and procedure to ensure what mentors teach aligns with exam.
- The credentialing process can be a problem in some residents, and the main issue is having the papers accepted in time, which is why recently we moved that date (of paper acceptance) to June 1st instead of March 1st to facilitate this (see updated P and P, Section 3, point 3.1 ). This is stressed every year in the interviews and at the AGM so mentors are also aware, but getting 2 papers accepted in 3 years, considering the other requirements, can be challenging.

Further comments from EBVS:

- EBVS requires of us a 10 year strategic planning. Currently working on it, plan to have it ready by the November review.
- Request help of membership to do this on a timely manner

#### **ECVCN strategic plan (2020-2030):**

- Assessment:

Strengths

Strong research

Wide knowledge span

High interest in area (high number of residents)

Weaknesses

Heterogeneous training

Complex communication

Low number of diplomates in some areas of Europe

Opportunities

New job opportunities

Threats

Low pass rate exam

Low growth of college – economic sustainability

Specialty status in individual countries

- Main goal and strategic objectives
- Implementation plan

Measure of success

Comments from the floor:

- Ellen Kienzle and Charlotte Bjørnvaerd are willing to help in writing the strategic plan; an email shall be send to the members to ask, who is willing to help as well
- Lobby work needed to be better recognised by the public (website etc.); we should increase the awareness what nutritionists can do for the public
- Perhaps a workshop should be performed (in Guelph ?) to work on that

- **SOPs of different committees and tasks:**

Exam procedure: done – yearly update

Residency class: done – yearly update

Credentials com: under review

Education com: under review

- **Meeting ECVN and ESVN board for common goals**

Common communications committee for awareness of ESVN and ECVN

→ Veerle Vandendriesche, Kerstin Gerstner and Cecilia Viallaverde will represent ECVN

Other areas of collaboration (website, exam organization)

Suggestion: add points for recertification for peer-review

Secretary will look into guidelines for recertification and will send a proposal

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- **Grant for Externship**

500 -1000 euro help for a resident to visit a different institution

No applications

Will keep program open, send out reminders at beginning of year

→ a template should be created to make it easier for candidates to apply

→ perhaps wider formulation (lab costs etc. ?)

→ if justified more money can be given

- **Request to endorse symposium from private company**

Refused request

Future requests?

**Annette Liesegang gives short overview about residency class in 2019**

**Overview residency class:**

- Thanks to sponsors !

Gold sponsor : Nestle Purina

Silver sponsor: Royal Canin

Bronze sponsor: Hill's

and ESVCN + Local organizing committee

**Residency class:**

- Organized by Prof. Dr. Liesegang
- Topic: Energy and feed additives
- Residents: 20
- Guests: 6
- Guest speakers: Prof Kamphues, Dr. Mammi
- Best case and best review awards (Purina Sponsorship)

Best case will present at ESVCN meeting: M. Isidori

Best review: visit to Purina Research Center: S. Dodd

- Residents dinner, sponsored by Royal Canin, with residents, residency class speakers and ESVCN and ECVCN board members
- 2020: include Monday afternoon

#### EBVS:

- EBVS created working group to address the problem of the deficit of veterinary specialists. Middle Tier and/or modular approach to training could potentially solve this problem.
- Website initiative to streamline processes. E.g. yearly reports would be automatic
- Exam initiative (exam com will present)
- C. Villaverde now a member of the communication committee of EBVS
- a number of documents were developed:

GDPR best practice

College Legal Registration: considering consolidating (right now 10 different countries, most colleges in UK, Netherlands, Germany)

Communication Strategy

#### Overview board future:

- Finish 10 year strategic plan, defend 5 year report to EBVS
- Day to day: annual report to EBVS, review committee's decisions
- Separate & Modernize website than ESVCN: R. Corbee

Not done yet due to 5 year report, ensure EBVS has access to all documents.

common website under EBVS?

Budget right now out of reach, still under discussion

- Exam:

Work with EBVS and exam committee on exam software & best time and location of exam

Continue work with mentors to improve questions and increase database

- Include a resident rep in remote meetings: at least part, to hear residents input
- Consult with other colleges on what they include in their residency weeks

**Report from Financial committee (R J Corbee):**

According to our statutes year runs from January to January

- Report per year
- Send out invoice for membership in January
- We need to vote on membership fee each year
- We need to have 2 independent auditors to check the finances (last auditors: Geert Janssens, Ana Lourenço)

**Paypal:**

Ended in 2018 because we were not allowed to have a Belgian PayPal account for an Austrian association with a Dutch treasurer.

Money transferred to bank account

**Bank account:**

Looking for a different bank, as making transfers to countries outside the EU is very difficult

**Numbers of ECVCN members:**

	2017	2018
Active	33	34
Inactive	2	2
Retired	14	14
Associate	2	2
Total Dipl.	51	52

**ECVCN income in 2018 (€)**

Membership	34x95	3230
Sponsorship		15000
Exam fees	13x300	3900
<b>Total in</b>		<b>22130</b>



ECVCN expenses in 2018 (€)

EBVS	2094
Bank costs	29,36
EBVS meetings	970,04
Board meetings	1835,73
Insurance	1609,50
Exam	371
Residency class	300
<b>Total out</b>	<b>7262,78</b>

Balance

Total in		22130
Total out		7262,78
Result		14867,22
Bank account		
1-1-2018		28773,70
31-12-2018		43174,07



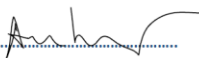
## Statement of approval of financial administration 2018

To whom it might concern:

We, Ana Lourenço and Geert Janssens, hereby declare

that we have checked the financial administration of EVCN over the year 2018, and have discovered no abnormal transactions or other signs of misconduct. We therefore recommend the AGM to approve discharge of the Treasurer and the Executive committee for the financial administration for the year 2018

Name: Ana Lourenço Date and place: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2019, Portugal

Signature: 

Name: Geert Janssens Date and place: Ghent, Aug. 13, 2019

Signature: 

Budget plan for 2019:

In			Out		
Membership 36x95		3410	EBVS		2094
Sponsorship		15000	Bank costs		60
Exam fees 10x300		3000	Insurance		1609,50
			Board meetings		2750
			EBVS meetings		1500
			Exam costs		1500
			Website		2500
			Travel grants		2000
			Residency class		2500
Total in		21410	Total out		16700,50

#### Considerations for 2020:

- Exam independent of congress (extra costs); a calculation was done; with 5 candidates there should be a breakeven
  - pro:
    - extended deadline for having paper accepted
    - less stress during conference
  - contra:
    - exam during autumn allows better preparation for candidates as there are no students courses at University; this might be much more challenging if the exam takes place in winter
- Use of exam software by EBVS
- Probably investments for website starting in 2020, as current website has to be online until December 2019

#### Voting:

- Remain membership fee at €95,= per year (all agreed)
- **Vote for 2 independent auditors (Geert Janssens and Wendy Wambacq)**

#### Yearly report from ECVCN Education and Residency Committee

#### Members:

- Laurence Colliard (Chair)
- Charlotte Bjørnvad
- Nathalie Priymenko
- Rebecca Ricci
- Petra Wolf
- Ask for a new one: volunteer?

Wendy Wambacq volunteer to be part of our committee.

Activity of committee in 2019

**Standard program reapproval :**

Berlin

Hanover : pending

**Standard program approval :**

Padua

**New residents:** 3 Standard, 1 Alternate

**Pending:** 1 Alternate, 2 Standard

Approval of residencies and residents

**4 residencies accepted**

- Toulouse: Marco Fantinati
- Ghent: Camila Baptista da Silva
- Padua: Giada Morelli
- Ghent: Diana Brozic (Alternate)

**3 residencies pending**

- Padua: Gerardo Siani (Alternate)
- Hanover: Julia Hankel
- Zürich: Han Opsomer

**Credentials Committee - Annual Update**

**Members:**

A. Verbrugghe

J. Fritz

M. Clauss

S. Handl (Chair)

Internships acknowledgement

- 8 Applications received

6 approved, 2 still under review

5 applied for residency

#### **Exam applications**

- Re-take: received 6  
→ all approved (3rd attempt, 5 2nd attempts)
- New applications: received 6 (1 not approved last year)  
→ Approved 4  
→ Not approved 2 → publications missing

#### **Diplomats recertification:**

##### **1 Re-certification of a diplomate in 2019**

- → recertified
- 1 Diplomate due for evaluation in 2020

Credential committee should be enlarged to 5 people (as it was before) – Kerstin Gerstner will be part of credential committee as well

Membership has electronically voted on how the procedure of evaluation of case reports should be in future.

Majority voted for following option:

(A) Case reports that are accepted or published in ISI-listed journals are submitted in the format they are published in. The ECVCN Credentials Committee will reviews those and decide if they contain enough information and discussion on the nutritional part of the case. If the published case report is not accepted, the candidate may submit the same case in more detail for review.

(B) Case reports not published in ISI-listed journals or that are published but not accepted by the ECVCN Credentials Committee (see A) need to meet the format guidelines established by the ECVCN. After review, the ECVCN Credentials Committee can recommend acceptance, rejection or require revisions.

**Ad hoc exam exam question committee**

Ellen Kienzle presents work of Ad hoc exam question committee and future plan

The ad hoc committee  
for exam questions

Ronald Corbee, Esther Hage-Platinga, Myriam Hesta, Josef Kamphues, Ellen Kienzle, Annette Liesegang, Anne Mößeler, Patrick Nguyen, Emanuela Valle, Wendy Wambaccq, Jürgen Zentek

Thank you, you were a great committee to work with

Candidates failing the exam, diplomats fighting at the general assembly



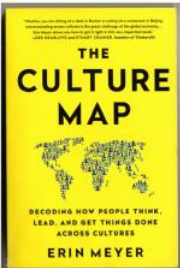
st question: Why?

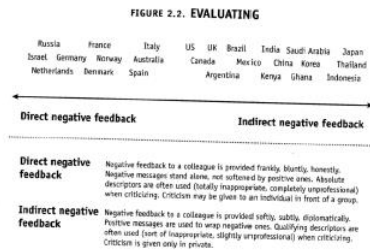
ereotype reaction of German diplomats: „We want transparency!“  
„We want to see for ourselves what is going on!“

:ross Culture problems?

FIGURE 2.1. ANGLO-DUTCH TRANSLATION GUIDE

What the British say	What the British mean	What the Dutch understand
With all due respect...	I think you are wrong.	He is listening to me.
Perhaps you would think about...I would suggest...	This is an order. Do it or be prepared to justify yourself.	Think about this idea and do it if you like.
Oh, by the way...	The following criticism is the purpose of this discussion.	This is not very important.
I was a bit disappointed that...	I am very upset and angry that...	It doesn't really matter.
Very interesting...	I don't like it.	He is impressed.
Could you consider some other options?	Your idea is not a good one.	He has not yet decided.
Please think about that some more.	It's a bad idea. Don't do it.	It's a good idea. Keep developing it.
I'm sure it's my fault.	It's not my fault.	It's his fault.
That is an original point of view.	Your idea is stupid.	He likes my idea!





## Differing ideas on knowledge in nutrition?

- Clinical nutritionists versus institute based nutritionists?
- Industry, universities, practical nutrition...?
- South-north or national?
- Companion versus food animals?

## Individual evaluation of previous general exam MC questions by each committee member

- If you were solely responsible for the exam what would you do with this question?
  1. I would certainly use this question
  2. I might use this questions
  3. The question needs reformulation (short comment)
  4. I would not use this question (short comment)

**Big surprise: Very strong agreement!**

## Quality of the MC questions

- Ranging from too easy to too specific
- Many formulations misleading, false or equivocal
- I eliminated some of my own questions!
- I had always difficulties to make questions
- Efforts of committee members to make new questions resulted in questions with the same problems!
- >>> maybe we are trying to do this the wrong way?

## Making MC questions

- Lack of experience and knowledge in formulating MC questions
  - (it is possible to look it up, but.....)
- Most people working in their second or third language
- -> Blueprint for disaster!

## Essay questions

- General exam essay questions were sent to the committee members without the key words
- Members were asked to fill in the key words without looking up the answers

No surprise: Very strong agreement!

BUT: Less details in the key words than in the original questions!

## Making essay questions

- New efforts – same problems
- Did many diplomates read up a topic, maybe in a recent review, and then summarize the key words?
- Or did they resort to areas where they have extremely high expertise?
- -> Blueprint for disaster

## Failed questions (no candidate got them right)

- In some questions the reason was obvious
- There were, however, questions which should have been answered correctly
  - Problems with preparation of candidates?
    - Excellent residency classes
    - We made a paper summarizing learning expertise and experience from younger committee members who sat the exam successfully
  - BUT: WE COULD NOT MAKE A READING LIST!
- -> Blueprint for disaster



## Reading list and references for questions

- Textbooks?
  - Few English textbooks
    - Horses Geor et al. 2013 (> 5 years...)
    - Small Animals from various companies (potential bias...)
    - Food animals more from an agricultural view point than for veterinarians
    - Biochemistry (that explains why there are so many questions on this topic)
  - Journals -> likely to lead to too specific questions
- -> Blueprint for disaster

## The easy solution

- Hire a IT-start up for helping with exam questions

Problems:

- Expensive ~ 5000 Euro/year
- Might run out of our control
  - Own our question data base
  - Use it for other purposes
    - Such as to „help“ us make our curricula

## The creative solution

- Diplomates do not make questions alone anymore
- We build small international teams of three and mix languages, age groups and expertise
- We have a permanent questions reviewing team plus an examination committee
- the teams to report to the reviewing committee
- Then we
  - Can allow NATIONAL TEXTBOOKS (but not national journals) as references
  - Do not need references for things generally agreed on (there is sufficient control by the number of people involved to make sure that no one can force his own opinion on the exam, that questions on controversies can be appropriately formulated etc.)

## How to proceed within a team

- Member A has an idea for an essay question
- A sends the question to member B without giving key words
- B responds and gives the key words spontaneously without looking it up
- If A gets the key words she wanted the question is send to member C without key words, who responds spontaneously
- If most key words are given by B and C, the question is ready to go to the reviewing committee
- If A does not get what she wanted from B the question is either reformulated and then goes to C or the question is considered as unusable

## How to make it happen

- We elect the teams from our diplomates right now
- Every diplomate has to be on 2 teams (GA and his Speciality) to be recertified
  - Active cooperation in the team is mandatory
- Each team elects a leader who collects the questions and sends them to the reviewing committee
- Each team has to produce 10 questions for the next exam