The EFORT Strategy 2026-2030

From crisis to IMPACT

EFORT HO | September 2026

EFORT – JOINT EFFORTS

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Acknowledgements

President's Foreword – the future is bright!

Dear colleague,

Over the past few years, EFORT went through challenging times. The latter led to a rigorous reorganisation of the association's financial business model, sadly resulting in a cut-down in personnel. However, on the positive side, it also led to a better focus on strategic pillars of EFORT.

Changes implemented by the Board since Fall 2023, led to successful congresses in Lyon 2025 and Malaga 2026, but also resulted in a more favourable financial outlook as shown during the last General Assembly!

Teamwork of Board and CEO is essential, as elaborated in this vision on the strategic plan 2026-2030, guiding the association towards an impactful future.

Since we foster transparency to all EFORT member societies we share our Strategy plan 2026-2030 with you!

It is our ambition that this strategy will position the association as THE European association representing Orthopaedic and Traumatology Surgeons.

We thank you for your support and commitment to EFORT.

Warmest regards

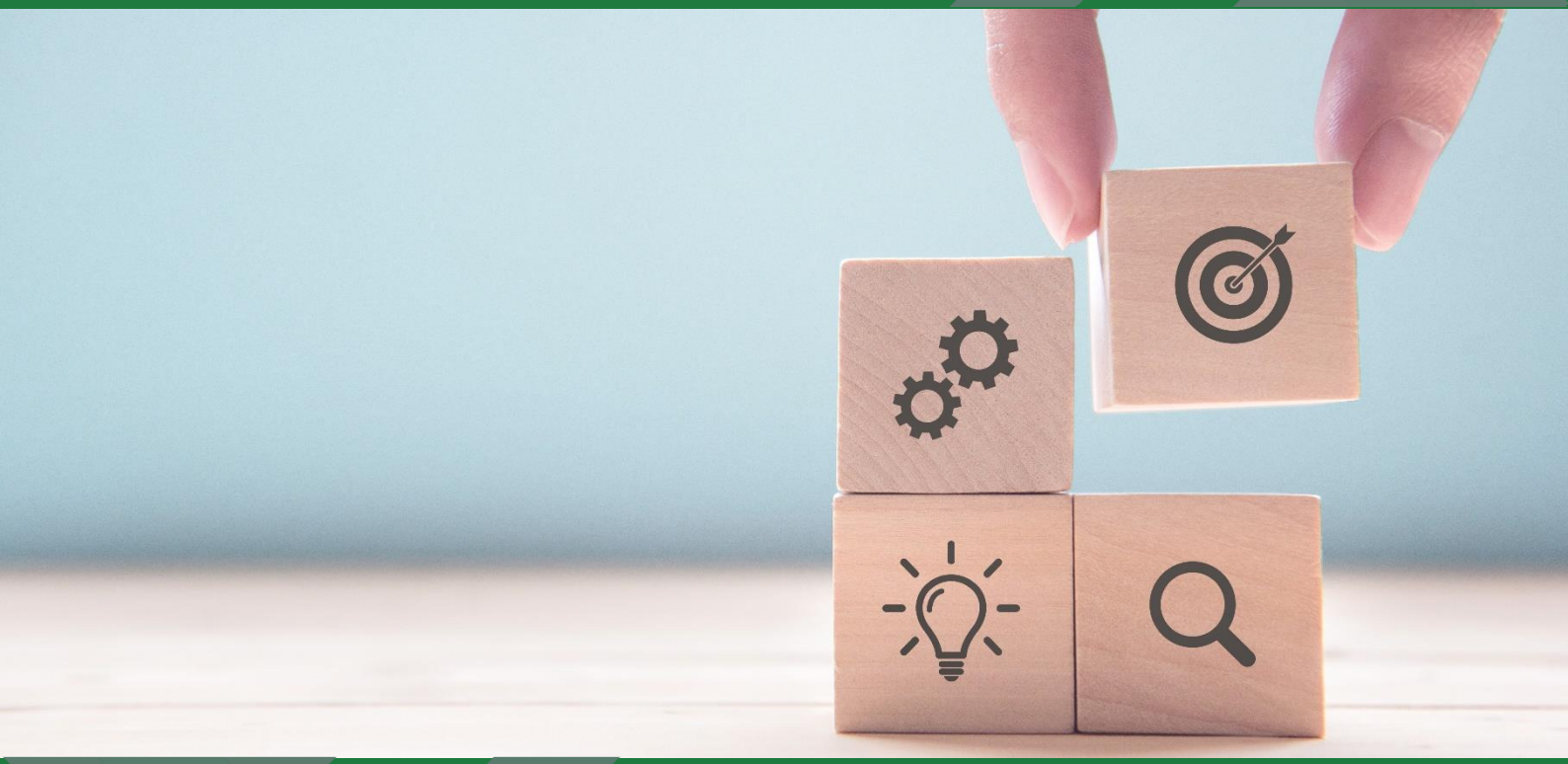
Prof. Rob Nelissen

EFORT President2026-2027

01

Introduction

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030



European Federation of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology
EFORT
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1. Introduction

The European Federation of national associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology (EFORT) represents 27000+ Orthopaedic and Traumatology Surgeons in Europe. Its aims reflect the will to promote the exchange of scientific knowledge and experience in the field of prevention as well as conservative and surgical treatment of diseases and injuries of the musculoskeletal system.

Its mission is to work on behalf of the European Orthopaedics and Traumatology Community as well as collaborate with patient organisations in evidence-based prevention, diagnostics and treatment (conservative and surgical) of musculoskeletal (MSK) complaints and diseases.

EFORT's ambition is to promote awareness of the burden of musculoskeletal disease in Europe not only to healthcare professionals, but also policymakers for the European agenda. Thus, striving for increased prominence in research and public health activities, for the ultimate benefit of our patients, as well as its societal impact of reducing MSK problems.

In the recent past, EFORT went through challenging times which led the association to initiate a major shift in priorities, with a focus on key objectives which are very interlinked. The latter also underscores the importance of a more effective and efficient way of functioning.

This strategy document 2026-2030 aims to set the pathway towards full financial recovery, as well as underscoring the importance of the association as the voice of European Orthopaedics and Traumatology (i.e. UEMS curriculum, EBOT exam, EOR journal, Expert Panels under MDR, congress and education).

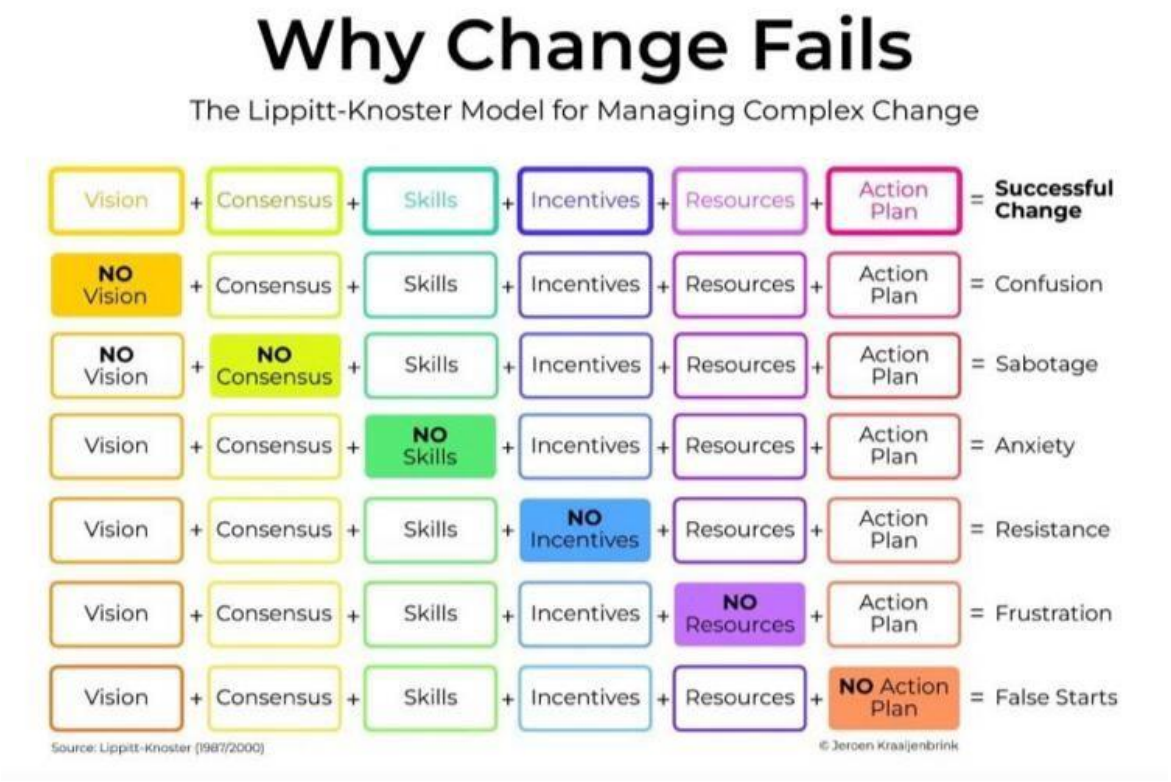
Complex changes can be guided by models, like the Lippitt-Knoster model, giving structured guidance on vision, consensus, skills, incentives, resources, and action plans to enable successful change. Furthermore, it helps in identifying problems, preventing ad hoc decisions with long-term negative impact. It therefore lists priorities with clear indicators to measure successful outcomes. An action plan is part of this document as guidance and as a measurable set of actions against which board members as well as member societies can check the progress made.

The elaboration of this document followed an iterative process. A first version of this document was prepared by the CEO and the EFORT President, who defined 4 new pillars (Science – congress, guidelines, grants-; Education; Patient engagement – ethics-; Advocacy O&T) with horizontal connections between these pillars.

Process strategy plan 2026-2030

First presentation to EFORT Board meeting 1st June 2026. On 3rd June 2026, key objectives within these new EFORT pillars were presented to the member societies during the call with national and specialty societies. Following input received, a second version was drafted and presented to the EFORT Board & ExCom on 13th July 2026. The third version including input from the Board and ExCom members was elaborated and presented again to the Board on 7th September 2026 for

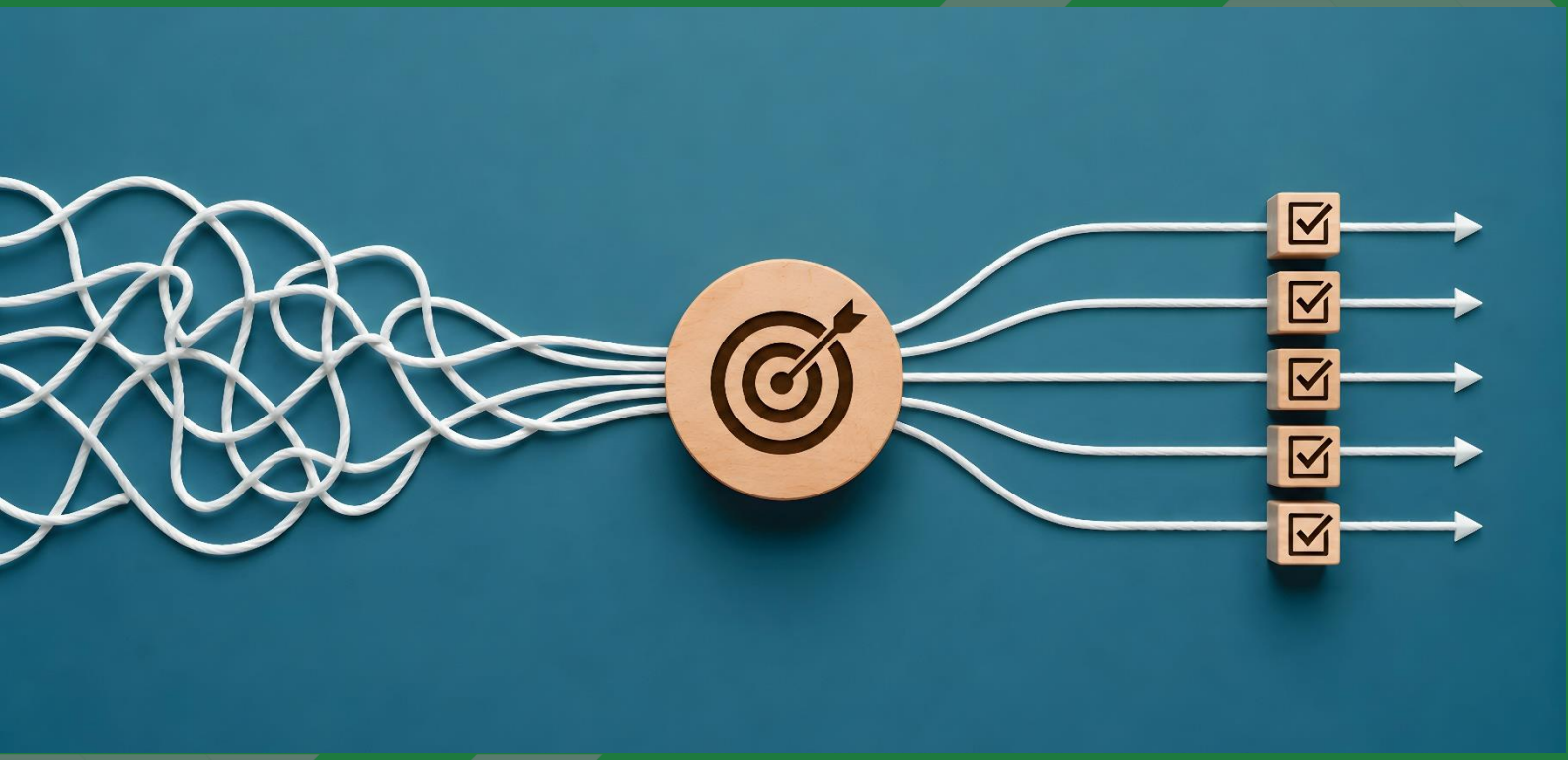
approval. If approved, it will be shared with EFORT members during the call with national and specialty societies on 12 October 2026. Monitoring will be done by the EFORT Board; progress and amendments will be reported to the General Assembly each year.



02

Aim of strategy

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030



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2. Aim of strategy

This strategy was developed to have a long-term vision and ambition (2026-2030) on where EFORT as an association should go. Thus, creating more lasting impact and avoiding annual ad hoc decisions and ideas, which may cause distraction from the overall long-term mission. Long-term strategy planning necessitates also a better financial plan for this period. Following the post-covid financial crisis, as of fall 2023 extensive actions were taken by the EFORT board (e.g. reduction of personnel, stop renting a head-office, stop non-sustainable activities) as well as acquiring financial support through subordinate loans from MCI and EFORT foundation. During this crisis it was even more evident that although ambitions are important, any activity developed by EFORT must be financially sustainable (i.e. at least budget neutral). The latter implies that an alignment of aims of the association and financial resources for achieving them are key in establishing a viable and strong organisation. Thus, EFORT's strategy plan must include governance and human resource planning as well.

2.1 EFORT's 4 interconnected pillars

SCIENCE	Create and promote scientific knowledge
EDUCATION	Develop high-quality educational programme
PATIENT ENGAGEMENT	Engage with patients and promote Ethics in O&T
ADVOCACY	Advocate on behalf of the O&T community

2.2 Key objectives of the federation 2026-2030

In line with the four pillars of EFORT, the key objectives of the federation are:

1	**Position EFORT as THE voice of Orthopaedic and Traumatology Surgeons in Europe**
2	**Engage with National and European member societies to involve them in the activities of the association**
3	**Develop Scientific Leadership of EFORT**
4	**Foster constructive dialogue with industry stakeholders**
5	**Engage with patients & promote Ethics in O&T**
6	**Restore EFORT Financial situation**

These six objectives will guide the federation throughout the strategy's lifespan. The action plan aligns with these objectives and contributes to ensuring their achievement.

03

Finances

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030

European Federation of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology

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3. Finances

3.1 A decade of financial results: Congress results drive EFORT operating results.

The congress remains EFORT's main source of annual income, which had a major impact on financial stability over the last 10 years. The operating result was driven by congress results. When Congress results were good, operating results were good, but when it decreased, the operating result decreased.

Finances spend on activities were budgeted on presumed revenues from congresses. The Covid period (2 virtual congresses in 2020 and 2021) was a major turning point for the Congress and structural changes in attendance and sponsors' strategy had substantial impact on the financial sustainability of EFORT.

Following the covid crisis, the EFORT Board took several decisions to reduce operational costs such as staff reduction, change in Congress fees or involvement in European projects.

EFORT adjusted its strategy to the financial context and set the financial trajectory accordingly.

The multiannual budget planning 2026-2030 shows the implementation of these assumptions.

Figure 2: EFORT projected operational results 2026-2030

KEY ACTIONS

Until 2030, the EFORT Board with the support of the Finance Committee will:

- Monitor the progress of the multiannual budget.
- Monitor financial sustainability of EFORT activities.
- Pay Subordinate Loans and debts
- Create financial reserve.

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Human Resources

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030

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4. Human Resources

In 2024 and 2025, the number of staff was reduced by 70% to address the cashflow shortage. While being very resolute, current Head Office cannot support all activities and face heavy workload. There is need to carefully plan the rebuilding of Head Office compatible with EFORT Finances.

In line with the multiannual budget presented in part 2, the HR strategy forecasts a consolidation of the number of staff at the Head Office on a project-based approach. Under the responsibilities of the EFORT CEO and in direct relation to the EFORT Presidential Line, this HR strategy will contribute to the recovery of the association while ensuring that activities are supported in a sustainable way.

KEY ACTIONS

Until 2030, the EFORT Board will:

- Implement the Human Resource Strategy and monitor its financial performance.
- Propose new staff only if activity covers the costs and the subordinate loan to MCI is paid back.

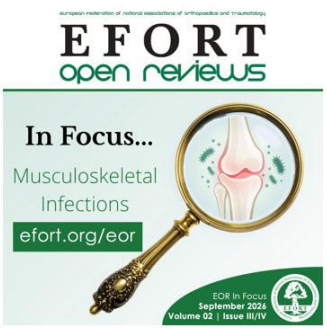
05

Activities

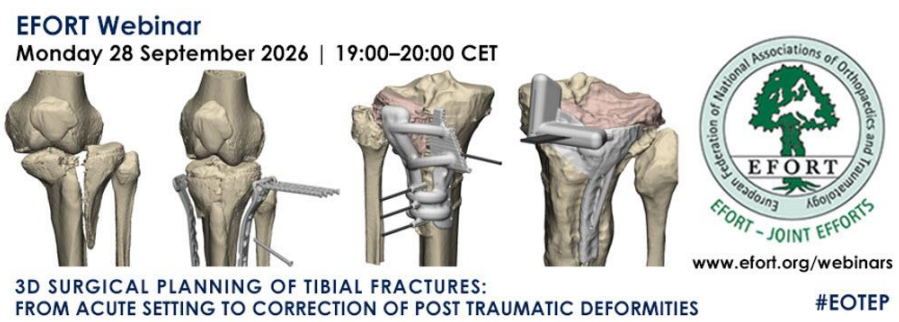
EFORT Strategy 2026-2030

EFORT Congress Málaga 2026

EBOT Examiners | 19-20 Sep 2026 | Madrid



European Projects



5. Activities

EFORT activities are highly visible and contribute to the dynamics of the association. They consist of:

- The Annual Congress.
- The Scientific Journal.
- The Webinar series.
- The EBOT Exam.
- European Research projects.
- European Advocacy.

5.1 The Annual Congress

In 2025, the EFORT Board launched a taskforce aiming at designing the future congress. Under the aegis of the first Vice President, the Taskforce followed a step-by-step approach from December 2025 until March 2026.

Several recommendations have already been implemented during the Malaga Congress (4-6 May 2026), namely Debate forum with international Scientific Societies, Industry Collaborative Sessions in Main room, breakfast with industries, Workshop on medical device regulation, paying fee for speakers, moderators and reviewers or reduced benefits for Specialty societies. The EFORT Board will ensure that recommendations of the Taskforce are implemented, and continuous improvement of the annual Congress is being initiated.

The Taskforce recommendations are divided into 4 specific objectives (SO) and subdivided into action points.

SO1	**Improve and diversify the type of scientific sessions.** Offer new sessions. Design interactive sessions.
SO2	**Reinforce industry's involvement.** Propose attractive activities in exhibition hall. Diversify sponsorship opportunities.
SO3	**Create expectations from delegates.** Offer social events. Personalise the communication on social media. Use EOR to incentivise participation.
SO4	**Involve member societies.** Dedicate sessions proposed by National Societies. Involve National Societies members in the SciCom.

Figure 3: Taskforce recommendations

Being the main source of income to EFORT, it is foreseen that one of the key objectives within the strategy is to organise successful annual congresses, in terms of both appealing scientific educational content as well as finances for the association.

As outlined in the action plan, EFORT aims to make this event the Scientific event of the European Orthopaedic and Traumatology community with close working relationships with International Orthopaedic and Traumatology associations.

KEY ACTIONS

Until 2030, the EFORT Annual Congress will:

- Propose advanced interactive sessions on latest scientific challenges in O&T.
- Increase the number of participants to the Congress.
- Develop long-term partnerships with Industries to present innovative products.
- Offer networking opportunities to Orthopaedic and Traumatology Surgeons.
- Engagement with various stakeholders, including patients, with dedicated sessions.

5.2 The Scientific Journal

EFORT Open Reviews (EOR) is the Scientific Journal of the association. It contributes to sharing scientific knowledge and latest updates in Orthopaedics and Traumatology.

EOR has received a 2025 JIF of 4.6 – a great increase on the 2024 IF of 4.0! EOR is now ranked 15/147 journals in the Web of Science Orthopaedics category – an equal ranking for where we were last year (15/139). EOR remains firmly a Q1 journal in Web of Science.

Table 1: JIFs of some of EOR's main competitor journals in the Orthopaedics category.

Journal	2021 IF	2022 IF	2023 IF	2024 IF	2025 IF
EFORT Open Reviews	**4.775**	**3.4**	**4.3**	**4.0**	**4.6**
Bone & Joint Journal	5.385	4.6	4.9	4.6	4.8
Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons	4	3.2	2.6	2.8	2.9
Knee Surgery, Sports Traumatology, Arthroscopy	4.114	3.8	3.3	5.0	5.5
International Orthopaedics	3.479	2.7	2.0	2.6	2.4
Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Global Research and Reviews	(ESCI)	1.5 (ESCI)	2.6	2.1	1.5
Journal of Arthroplasty	4.435	3.5	3.4	3.8	4.4
Current Reviews in Musculoskeletal Medicine	3.740	4.1	2.9	3.9	5.0

KEY ACTIONS

Within the framework of this strategy, the objective of EOR will be to:

- Increase awareness on EOR publications.
- Diversify the services proposed.
- Reinforce Impact Factor.
- Ensure that this activity is sustainable.

5.3 The webinar series & educational materials

EFORT organises monthly webinars under the aegis of the Education Committee.

Since 2017, over 42K users have watched the EFORT Webinar series, demonstrating their attractiveness.

EFORT Webinars are offered for free to the Orthopaedics and Traumatology Community around the world. They are the most visible part of the EFORT Education objectives.

The Education Committee is working on a strategy to exploit the webcasts and other educational materials available to rebuild an educational platform that will serve the O&T community.

KEY ACTIONS

The activities 2030 objectives are to:

- Jointly create webinars with specialty societies.
- Explore possible accreditation for EFORT webinars by EACCME.
- Propose new themes in line with the theme of the Congress.
- Explore sponsoring of EFORT webinars by industry.

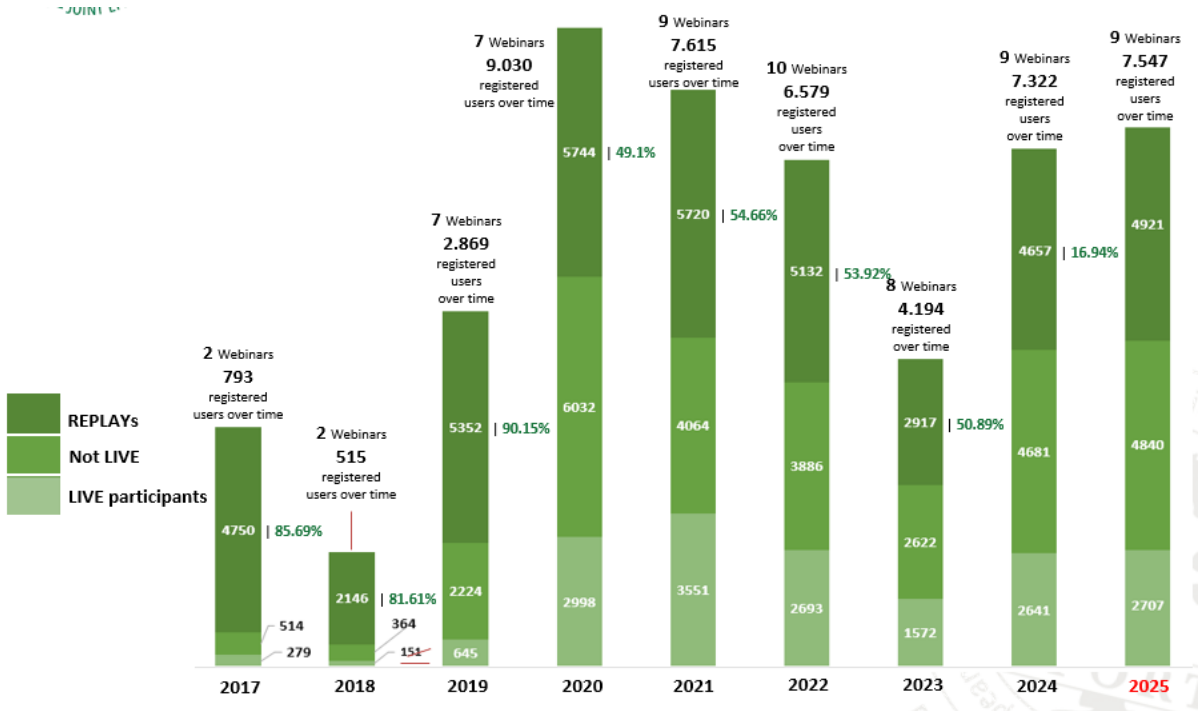


Table 2: EFORT Webinars

5.4 The EBOT Exam

The EBOT exam is a joint venture between the UEMS and EFORT to propose a European Examination in Orthopaedics and Traumatology. It consists of a written exam and an oral exam. Since 2011, an interim exam is proposed for free to European candidates willing to test their skills prior to the written exam. Thanks to a wide network of hospitals, this interim exam attracts over 1200 candidates.

The EBOT Oral exam can be taken in various national languages, due to the support of EFORT National societies. As of 2026, the EBOT Oral exam is next to English language also available in French for Belgian candidates (EBOT-BE), Turkish (EBOT-TK), Spanish (EBOT-ES) and Greek (EBOT-GR).

Several changes have been made within this activity under the aegis of the chair of the EBOT Examination Board. As of 2025, the following changes were implemented:

- Enlarge the written part to non-European candidates.
- Increase the fee for the written and the oral exam.
- Reduce operational costs of the oral exam.
- Increase communication on EBOT (EBOT newsletter)
- Reinforcement of EBOT administration

As of 2026, further changes have been made such as:

- Change provider for the online written examination (cheaper provider).
- Test the second chance written exam.

These cumulative changes have led the EBOT exam to become more visible but also financially profitable in 2026.

EBOT
European Board of Orthopaedics & Traumatology

KEY ACTIONS

Until 2030, the objectives of the EFORT involvement in the EBOT exam are:

- Improve the promotion of EBOT through EFORT communication tools.
- Increase the number of candidates to the written and oral exam.
- Develop partnerships with national societies to offer EBOT oral exam in national language.
- Ensure financial sustainability of the EBOT exam.

5.5 European projects

As part of its European affairs activities, EFORT has been highly active in applying for European grants. Back in 2021, it was co-leading the EU Horizon2020 project CORE-MD with the European Society of Cardiology. Due to involvement in this EU-funded project, EFORT gained significant knowledge, expertise, and visibility within the EU community, to apply for other European project funding.

EFORT was greatly active in preparing applications for European funding as seen in the list of applications below. Each application requires a heavy workload by expert volunteers and strong coordination with other partners.

- **CORE-MD** - April 2021 – March 2024 (199k €).
- **MUSE** - 2024: Not granted.
- **PHF** (Proximal Humeral Fractures) - 2024: Not granted.
- **ASCEND** 2025: Not granted.
- **MedTech Digital Labelling** - 2026: (200k €, start-up April 1, 2026).
- **ORBIT** Submitted April 16, 2026, on reserve list.
- **COMPASS4MD** Submitted April 16, 2026, (250k €, start 2027).
- **BIORAISE** Submitted April 16, 2026, not granted.
- **ECLIPSE PJI** Submitted April 16, 2026, not granted.

Due to high competition, the success rate seems low but is above average. In 2026 EFORT was successful in the application for Medtech Label and COMPASS4MD.

KEY ACTIONS

2030 Objectives

- Join partners in applications for European grants.
- Involve more experts and member societies in the grant application process.

5.6 European Advocacy

At the European level, EFORT is the platform that allows all of European orthopaedics and traumatology to be represented. European institutions work with European stakeholders to get input and expertise from them.

Under the aegis of the EU Advocacy Committee, EFORT was actively involved at the European level on several areas.

Education: CME related discussions have been held with UEMS-EACCME, especially as regards the provider accreditation system currently under consideration.

Regulatory Affairs and Medical Device Committee & Medical Device Task Force: Two annual physical meetings in Brussels and monthly virtual meetings are organised by the Biomedical Alliance to discuss all aspects of Medical Devices. The Biomedical Alliance Monthly Newsletters are forwarded to Committee members and included in the EFORT Today newsletter. EFORT regularly attends the Policy Officer Monthly Meetings: Jean-Baptiste Rouffet and Per Kjaersgaard-Andersen.

EFORT Experts are also involved in the European Medicines Agency Expert panels (Screenings and Thematic panels) as well as the European Commission's Medical Device Coordination Group that provides guidance documents on medical devices.

In 2026, EFORT also supported the Biomed Alliance's advocacy on Medical Device regulation and elaborated an EFORT position paper.

KEY ACTIONS

The 2030 objectives are:

- Involve more experts in European Groups.
- Create a network of EFORT experts.
- Use Biomed Alliance to voice O&T issues.
- Ensure EU issues are discussed and disseminated to EFORT membership.

06

Governance

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030

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6. Governance

6.1 Improving Board's work

According to the Statutes, the EFORT Board has the responsibility to lead the association on a daily basis, with the support of EFORT Head office.

While statutory roles are clearly defined, it appeared that governance meetings and Board members' involvement in the functioning of the association needed improvement.

In September 2025, it was decided to assign the responsibility of a key activity to each Board member. Thus, sharing responsibilities and stimulating a proactive team.

After the Malaga Congress, further work was done to streamline the governance meetings and ensure efficiency and transparency within the board and member societies.

As a matter of fact, the current organisation is as follows:

- CEO-Presidential line calls – Weekly
- Board (with ExCom) – Monthly.
- CEO-treasurer-accountant – Monthly.
- Calls with Member societies – Quarterly.
- Calls with Industry – individual calls.
- Committee Meetings – 3 to 4 meetings per year.
- General Assembly – annually.

6.2 Streamlining the functioning of EFORT Committees

The EFORT organisational structure has been developed over the years. Given the financial challenge, many activities were stopped or became inactive. The current structure of Committees and working groups appeared to be inconsistent within the current context.

As of November 2025, the EFORT Board mandated the past President (Prof. Karachalios) to lead the restructuration of EFORT Committees. For that matter, in March 2026, new chairs and vice chairs of the EFORT Committees were appointed for a two-year mandate renewable once.

For some committees, vice-chair positions have been created in order to ensure greater involvement of experts in EFORT Structure. All were appointed with a clear mandate to reactivate the work of their committee and report back to EFORT Board and General Assembly.

Committee name	Chair	Vice-Chair
Education Committee	Dieter Wirtz	Andrea Angelini Catharina Chiari
Science Committee	Luigi Zagra	Nils Hailer Frank Schildberg
European Advocacy	Per Kjaersgaard-Andersen	Pietro Ruggieri
European Specialty Societies Committee	Don McBride	To be determined by members
EOR Editorial Board	Pierre Hoffmeyer	
Ethics Committee	Heiner Fangerau	To be determined by members
Nominating Committee	EFORT President	
Finance Committee	Anant Madapatra	
FORA	Jose Hernandez Hermoso	
NORE	Maziar Mohaddes	
Fellowships	Vacant (part of EduCom)	
Foundation	Karl-Goren Thorngren	

KEY ACTIONS

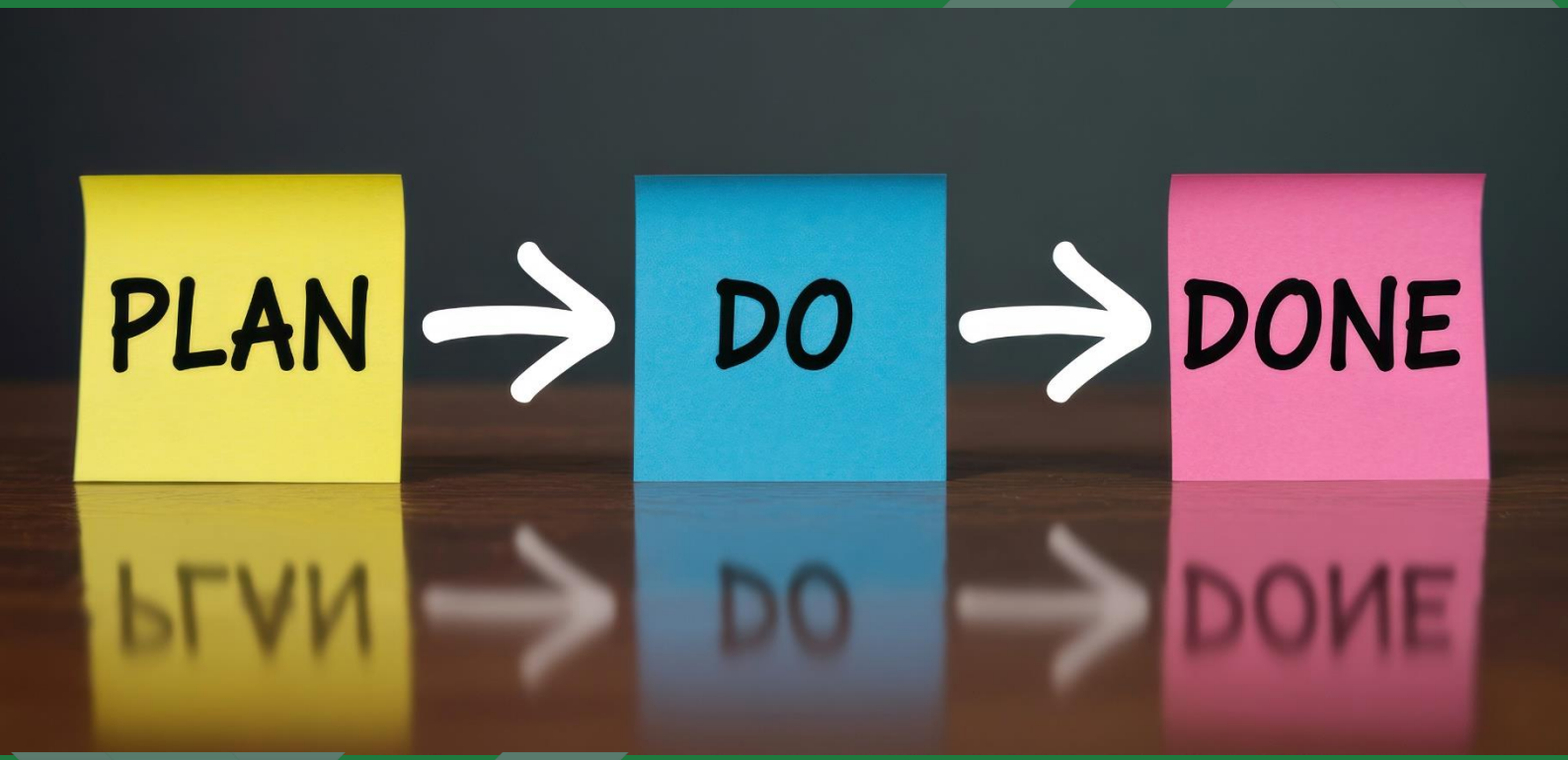
The 2026 objectives are:

- Ensure active participation of all Board members in the activities of the association.
- Renew membership of all Committees.
- Involve more experts in EFORT Committees.
- Report all activities during the General Assembly.

07

Action Plan

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030



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7. Action Plan

The action plan below lists the foreseen actions to be implemented and monitored during the 2026-2030 strategy plan. Actions are aligned with EFORT 2030 objectives. Targets to be achieved by 2030 and indicators are being listed to ensure adequate monitoring of progress.

Activity	Action	Pilot	2030 target	Indicator
1. Position EFORT as THE voice of Orthopaedic and Traumatology Surgeons in Europe				
EOR	Diversify the services proposed	Board Chair EOR	At least 1 new article type targeting young professionals, with [x] articles per year	number of articles in the new category
EOR	Reinforce Impact Factor	Chair EOR	IF at 5	annual report on IF
EU Projects	Join partners in applying for European grants	Chair EU Advocacy Vice Chair Scientific Network	1 application per year	number of applications per year in EU Advocacy Committee report
EU Projects	Involve more experts and member societies in the grant application process	Chair EU Advocacy Vice Chair Scientific Network	3 applications involving at least 1 or more member societies	number of grant applications involving at least 1 member society
EU Advocacy	Involve more experts from member societies in European Groups	Board CEO		number of experts involved in European groups
EU Advocacy	Create a network of EFORT experts in European groups	Board CEO	1 meeting per year at EFORT Congress	number of meetings at EFORT Congress
EU Advocacy	Use Biomed Alliance to voice O&T issues	Chair EU Advocacy		

2. Engage with National and European member societies to involve them in the activities of the association				
Webinars	Jointly create webinars with specialty societies	Chair & Vice Chairs Education Committee	2 webinars per year jointly organised	number of joint webinars in the annual report
Webinars	Explore possible accreditation for EFORT webinars by EACCME	Chair & Vice Chairs Education Committee CEO	offer CME accredited activities other than Congress	number of accredited activities proposed
Webinars	Propose new themes in line with the theme of the Congress	Chair & Vice Chairs Education Committee	1 webinar series per year	
EU Advocacy	Ensure EU issues are discussed and disseminated to EFORT membership	Chair EU Advocacy		EU affairs item during calls with member societies
EBOT	Improve the promotion of EBOT through EFORT communication tools	Chair EBOT CEO	3 newsletters per year + increased number of recipients	
EBOT	Increase the number of candidates to the written and oral exam	Chair EBOT CEO	400 candidates at the written exam	number of participants to the exam
EBOT	Develop partnerships with national societies to offer EBOT oral exam in national language	Chair EBOT CEO	EBOT Oral in 6 national languages	number of EBOT orals organised by National societies
Governance	Renew membership of all committees	Board CEO	renew at least 50% of membership in each committee	proportion of new members in each committee
Governance	Involve more experts in EFORT Committees	Board CEO		
Governance	Report all activities during the General Assembly	Board CEO	At least 5 Activity-based chapters in Annual Report	

3. Develop Scientific Leadership of EFORT				
Congress	Propose advanced interactive sessions on latest scientific challenges in O&T	Chair & Vice Chair Science Committee	Propose at least 30% of interactive sessions	proportion of interactive sessions in the Scientific Programme
Congress	Increase the number of participants to the Congress	Board Chair and Vice-Chair Science Committee	5000+ participants	number of participants to the Congress
Congress	Offer networking opportunities to Orthopaedic and Traumatology Surgeons	Board Chair and Vice-Chair Science Committee	Offer each year networking events	number of events organised during EFORT Congress
EOR	Increase awareness on EOR publications.	Chair EOR Board	130 accepted publications	number of publications accepted
4. Foster constructive dialogue with industry stakeholders				
Webinars	Explore sponsoring of EFORT webinars by industry	Board CEO		
Congress	Develop long-term partnerships with Industries to present innovative products	Board CEO	Big 5 industry at EFORT Congress	number of Big 5 companies sponsoring the Congress number of sponsors at Congress

5. Engage with patients & promote Ethics in O&T				
Congress	Engagement with various stakeholders, including patients, with dedicated sessions	Board CEO	Patient sessions at each EFORT Congress	number of sessions involving patients in the Scientific Programme
6. Restore EFORT Financial situation				
Finance	Monitor the progress of the multi-annual budget	Finance Committee Treasurer	annual result within ±5% of budget or better	variation of the statement of annual accounts toward the annual budget and the multiannual budget
Finance	Monitor financial sustainability of EFORT activities	Finance Committee Treasurer	100% activities sustainable	Balance of each activity in annual accounts
Finance	Pay Subordinate Loans and debts	Treasurer CEO Accountant	100% debt paid	% of debt paid in Statement of annual accounts
Finance	Create financial reserve	Treasurer CEO Accountant	CHF 500K reserve	level of the financial reserve (equity) in statement of annual accounts
Human Resources	Implement the Human Resource Strategy and monitor its financial performance	Finance Committee Treasurer CEO		level of personnel costs in the annual accounts

08

Conclusion

EFORT Strategy 2026-2030

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8. Conclusion

This strategic plan 2026-2030 aims to give guidance on EFORT's vision and key objectives within its four interconnected pillars: Science, Education, Patient Engagement, Advocacy O&T. It also gives guidance to this vision; however, it is not chiselled in stone.

Rather, it is meant to provoke discussion, which may lead to adaptations based on consensus and guided by available or planned resources. This will lead to a successful change for the association: **EFORT is IMPACT: I**nnovation **M**usculoskeletal **P**ractice, **A**dvancing **C**linical ou**T**come.

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