



*Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Handchirurgie SGH  
Société Suisse de Chirurgie de la Main SSCM  
Società Svizzera di Chirurgia della Mano SSCM*

## **SWISS SOCIETY OF HAND SURGERY**

(As of November 2023)

### **THE FIRST 57 YEARS OF HAND SURGERY**

12th OF NOVEMBER 1966

Foundation of the "Swiss Study Group for Surgery of the Hand ("Groupe Suisse d'Etude de Chirurgie de la Main", "Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft for Handchirurgie", "Gruppo Svizzero di Studio per la Chirurgia della Mano") by Prof. Claude E. VERDAN, approved by 50 general surgeons in the Lecture Room of the Surgical Policlinic of the University of Lausanne which was located at that time at the Clinique Longeraie in Lausanne. There was only one officer: the Secretary General.

7th OF SEPTEMBER 1972

The first by-laws are approved by the General Assembly in Bern.

19th OF NOVEMBER 1983

Under the impulsion of its president K. M. PFEIFFER, the Study Group becomes the Swiss Society for Surgery of the Hand. New by-laws are accepted by the General Assembly: the first Executive Committee is created, as well as the first IFSSH Delegate, as the Swiss Society becomes an IFSSH member.

11th OF MAY 1988

Hand surgery is recognized as a sub-title by the Swiss Federation of Doctors (Federatio Medicorum Helveticorum = FMH, which represents the Swiss Medical Chamber). A specific curriculum is established, honored by a diploma of "Hand surgery", which is similar to the certificate for added competence in Hand surgery in the United States. The curriculum requires at least 2 years of special training in Hand surgery. One of the four main Specialty Boards - General Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery or Pediatric Surgery - must be acquired before this training program in Hand surgery can be entered.

1st OF JULY 2002

Recognition of Hand Surgery as a focus title of the Swiss Medical Association (FMH).

1st OF JANUARY 2007

A recognition as a specialty on its own (as a private by law title) was given by the Federal Council in 2007. Another 6 years of certification process and political struggle passed until the accreditation as an acknowledged specialty by the Swiss Medical Association (FMH) was completed (1st of July 2013). Trainees who completed a structured und verified postgraduate training may then use the title "Hand Chirurgie FMH" - a title which is recognized in most European countries.

### **FROM THE RECOGNITION OF THE OWN HAND SURGERY SPECIALITY**

1st OF JANUARY 2015

Full acknowledgement of the Title "Hand Surgery FMH" like General Surgery by the Swiss Medical Association.

19th OF MAY 2016

Second Revision of Educational Program has been accredited for the second time by the Federal Office of Public Health.

24th / 25th of NOVEMBER 2016

The Society celebrates its 50th annual congress in Geneva.

### **PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY**

1966 – 1972 Professor Claude E. VERDAN, Lausanne

1st Secretary General

1973 – 1976 Professor Henry NIGST, Basel

1977 – 1982 Professor Algimantas O. NARAKAS, Lausanne



1983 – 1986 Professor Karl M. PFEIFFER, Basel

1986 – 1987 Privat-Dozent Andre CHAMAY, Geneva

1988 – 1989 Professor Viktor E. MEYER, Zurich



1989 – 1991 Privat-Dozent Daniel V. EGLOFF, Lausanne

1991 – 1993 Professor Algimantas O. NARAKAS, Lausanne

1994 – 1995 Professor Ueli BÜCHLER, Bern



1996 – 1997 Docent Dominique R. DELLA SANTA, Geneva

1998 – 1999 Privat-Dozent Beat René SIMMEN, Zürich

2000 – 2001 Dr. med. Chantal BONNARD, Lausanne

2002 – 2003 Dr. med. Michael STURZENEGGER, Lausanne

2004 – 2005 Dr. med. Walter KÜNZI, Zürich

2006 – 2007 Dr. med. Urs VON WARTBURG, Luzern

2008 – 2010 Dr. med. Daniel HERREN, Zürich

2011 – 2012 Professor Dr. med. Esther VÖGELIN, Bern

2013 – 2014 Professor Dr. med. Claudia MEULI, Aarau

2015 – 2016 Dr. med. Michaël PAPALOÏZOS, Geneva

2017 – 2018 Dr. Mario BONACCIO, Frauenfeld

2019 – 2021 Dr. med. Urs HUG, Luzern

2022 – 2023 Professor Dr. med. Maurizio CALCAGNI, Zürich

2024 – 2025 Dr. med. Ivan Tami, Lugano (President elect)

## MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Since the original 50 founders in 1966, the members of the Society continuously increased in number. At the end of 2022, the Swiss Society for Surgery of the Hand counts 212 members, including 184 active members 28 junior members as well as honorary and corresponding members.

**THE SWISS SOCIETY FOR SURGERY OF THE HAND** is the association of professional, active Hand Surgeons in the country. A council of 9 members (Fotos 2023) including an administration office ([www.swisshandsurgery.ch](http://www.swisshandsurgery.ch)) is in charge to take care of the daily business of the society as well as to take positions in the political processes concerning the medical care in Switzerland.



President:  
Maurizio Calcagni



Vice-President:  
Ivan Tami



Past-President:  
Urs Hug



Tariff Committee:  
Torsten Franz



Education Committee:  
Philipp Honigmann



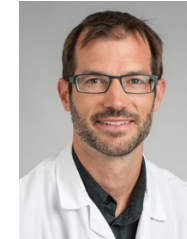
Young Hand Surgeons:  
Saskia Kamphuis



Administrator:  
Silvia Schibli



Teaching Committee:  
Stephan Schindele



Quality Committee:  
Laurent Wehrli



Tariff Committee:  
Michaela Winkler

An annual congress is organized by the actual president, who changes every two years. This congress is a joint venture with the hand therapists. The Society supports and develops the specialty, as well as defending professional interests of its members.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY



[www.handfacts.ch](http://www.handfacts.ch)

In 2020, this website “handfacts” was founded and the goal was to inform stakeholders of the national health system and the public about the value of a specialization in Hand Surgery in Switzerland. Our specialty got due to this campaign more recognition and estimation in public, politics and from insurance companies. The lack of awareness could be diminished but does not yet reflect in better tariffs for many of the outpatient surgeries. We continue with it.

The Swiss Society of Hand surgery is a member of the European (FESSH) and International Federations (IFSSH) of Hand Surgery. It represents the hand surgery specialty within its borders and abroad.

#### **FIRST DELEGATES TO THE IFSSH:**

1983 – 1986 Professor H. NIGST

1987 – 1991 Professor A. NARAKAS

1991 Professor V. E. MEYER

#### **GIANTS OF HAND SURGERY HONOURED AT IFSSH**

20th Century Fritz de Quervain, Bern Switzerland

#### **PIONIEERS IN HAND SURGERY**

1986 Tokyo, Japan, Claude Verdan

2010 Seoul, Korea, Viktor E. Meyer and André Chamay

2016 Buenos Aires, Argentina, Ueli Büchler

2019 Berlin, Germany, Diego Fernandez

2022 London, UK, Beat Simmen

#### **FIRST DELEGATE TO THE FESSH (FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR SURGERY OF THE HAND)**

1990 Privat-Docent D.V. EGLOFF

#### **SECRETARY GENERAL, FESSH**

2020-2023 Daniel Herren, Switzerland

2017-2020 Maurizio Calcagni, Switzerland

#### **HAND TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND**

Trainees who complete the structured und verified postgraduate training may carry the title “Handchirurgie FMH” - a title which is recognized in most European countries. The council in accordance with the FMH has the responsibility to support all training centers to adapt to the new training program and its regulations. The official training starts with a common trunk of two years of general surgery completed by an examination of surgical basics. After passing this exam, the trainee can enter the specialized training in hand surgery and in surgery of peripheral nerves. This training takes 4 years in at least 2 different institutions. There are different training centers in 3 categories

5 University hospitals: Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Geneva, Zurich;

3 Center hospitals: Aarau, St. Gallen, Luzern;

11 smaller hospitals or Clinics: Geneva, Sierre, Chur, Bruderholz/Liestal, Münsterlingen/Frauenfeld, Solothurn/Olten, Schulthess Klinik Zürich, Balgrist University Zürich, Winterthur, Fribourg, Geneva-Meyrin.

Since 2016, the new program includes the written and oral examination by the European Board of Hand Surgery with the FESSH obtaining the European FESSH Diploma as the “Swiss Hand Diploma”. Passing this exam and fulfilling a defined logbook, the trainee receives the Swiss Hand Diploma (FMH certificate) at the end of 6 years training.

- 22 hand training centers in Switzerland (8.927.007 M inhabitants /41'285 km<sup>2</sup>/4 speech communities), from which 7 are at a university level.
- 10 accredited FESSH Hand Trauma and Replantation Centers (Aarau, Bellinzona, Bern, Bruderholz/Liestal, Chur, Lausanne, Sierre, St. Gallen, Winterthur, Zurich)
- Annual Research Fund to support clinical or experimental research for junior members.
- The Claude Verdan Fund supports a travelling young member each year.

#### REFERENCES:

- [www.swisshandsurgery.ch](http://www.swisshandsurgery.ch)
- Charta, signed 13th of January 1993 (Viktor E. Meyer)
- History of the Swiss Society of Surgery of the Hand (1966-96), D.R. Della Santa
- Hand Surgery Worldwide (ed J.R. Urbaniak) 2011 by Konstantaras Med Publ., ISBN:978-960- 6802-27-0, Swiss history, p 189-92
- Hand Surgery in Switzerland. J Hand Surg (European Volume)2019;44(9):996-9

Submitted on November 2023 by Esther Vögelin, IFSSH Delegate, Stephan Schindele, Council member.



