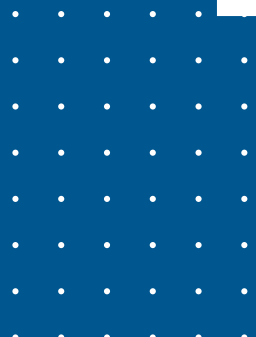


# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Year of the Nurse



# Who we are

EASL is a medical association dedicated to pursuing excellence in liver research, clinical practice of liver disorders, and in the provision of best-in-class education for all those interested in hepatology.

While the roots of the association were established in Europe in 1966, EASL now actively engages with all global stakeholders with an interest in the liver to facilitate the spread of knowledge and expertise in hepatology.

# Our mission

The mission of the European Association for the Study of the Liver is to be the Home of Hepatology so that everyone involved in treating patients with liver disease can realise their full potential to cure and prevent it.

# Our purpose

We promote communication among all professionals, in Europe and beyond, interested in the liver and its disorders, particularly by:

- promoting liver research and facilitating scientific exchange
- fostering research interactions across Europe and beyond
- supporting the next generation of researchers, including Young Investigators, as they develop through involvement in EASL activities
- promoting education of physicians, scientists, allied health professionals, other medical professionals, and patients
- promoting public awareness of liver diseases and their management
- acting as an advisor to European and national health authorities concerning liver diseases, the provision of clinical services, and the need for research funding
- working with patient groups to ensure their perspectives and views are represented in our work

# About this Annual Report

The year 2020 was an extraordinary one, causing major disruption to medical associations and society all around the world. Consequently, this report simply cannot be presented in the usual way. We need to tell the story of how EASL and our members coped with the setbacks of the COVID-19 pandemic and what they did. This Annual Report is about the people we are and the people we serve. As reflected by the front cover of this report, we honour those who served on the frontlines, all the healthcare professionals, during this traumatic year.

Cover art credit: With many thanks to Banksy for offering images for public use:  
<https://pestcontroloffice.com/use.asp>

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# MESSAGE FROM OUR SECRETARY GENERAL AND VICE-SECRETARY

## Parting words from our Secretary General

2020 was a year like no other and caused unprecedented disruption to society at all levels. Yet “Necessity is the mother of invention”, and EASL rose to the challenge, rolling out complex changes in just days or

weeks, including a fully Digital ILC 2020.

As Secretary General of EASL, I could not have imagined that the final ILC of my leadership term in 2021, would also be held entirely online. Even though we miss the face-to-face interactions, ILC 2021 will

allow the scientific community to present new research and interact, and moreover it has opened up access to participants who might previously not have been able to engage.

## Rolling out multiple solutions in 2020, with agility

Becoming increasingly adaptable, EASL orchestrated its digital adjustments with our Geneva-based staff working predominantly from home, as advised by prevailing health guidelines. It was fascinating and inspiring to see how rapidly the hepatology community reacted and found solutions for our members and patients. We stayed fully connected to our sister societies, national associations, and were supported throughout by our valued industry sponsors. While the whole world celebrated the Year of the Nurse, we were proud to interview and showcase liver nurses working in such challenging circumstances.

Digital ILC 2020, our 55th annual meeting, was an exciting and fully immersive three-day event with live broadcasts from the EASL Studio and ample opportunities for delegates to network and connect.

The congress convened almost 7,400 delegates from 114 countries and drew upon 315 faculty from 23 countries. We offered our sought-after “Best of” Slide Decks and launched a brand-new product, “EASL Takeaways”. Our first-ever fully digital press conference generated coverage, reaching 245 million readers from 68 countries.

Other activities we are proud of include: collaborating with the World Health Organization; holding our governance and membership meetings online; rolling out our new educational platform, EASL Campus; launching Ask EASL podcasts drawing on patient engagement; and much more.

We have grown in strength in our policy and public health goals, too, founding our Patient Synergies network with its dedicated web presence, and we also held our first-ever online patient forum. We developed and formalised new ways to work with patient organisations, using patient-centred web resources, for example, and have started preparations to publish our first patient guidelines on NAFLD, which are due out in 2021.

## Staying aligned with our sister societies

We stayed in touch with our sister societies, exploring how best to serve the global liver community through these tumultuous times. At Digital ILC 2020, we shared outlooks in panel interviews with the Latin American Association for the Study of the Liver (ALEH), the Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL), and the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD).

## Resilience and solidarity in science, in the face of adversity

Although COVID-19 was a cruel turn of events, with many aftershocks, surviving it has shown us how incredibly strong our community network is, and how resilient and constructive our scientific bonds are. In the face of adversity, we have seen the true colours of our community.

We are thus very grateful to our members and many partners, for their ongoing engagement as we strove to keep engaged and provide topical and supportive services, such as evolving educational content.

## Digitalisation catalysing democracy

An unforeseen advantage of digitalisation was the spirit of democracy it triggered. At Digital ILC 2020, and beyond, a democratic, worldwide movement thrived. From the extraordinary buzz on social media, to chats, Q&A, webinars, and opportunities to share, exchange, and learn from one another. Globally, we will carry this democratic ethos forward, into the future. We will hold on to the many positive attributes gained through 2020, yet we also look forward to meeting again in person.

## Hepatology-focused progress against the COVID-19 backdrop

EASL responded quickly and thoroughly to how the pandemic affected hepatology and its community of patients, scientists, and healthcare professionals. We explored the impact of COVID-19 on patients with liver conditions, published two Position Papers months apart in *JHEP Reports*, and held accessible podcasts for patients with their involvement. EASL formally endorsed the COVID-Hep Registry, generating the largest-to-date database of the impact of the virus on liver diseases. Resulting recommendations from these many efforts have led to tangible results: the prioritisation of liver patients for vaccination in certain countries.

## Rising prestige of EASL's journals

In June 2020, our *Journal of Hepatology* received its highest-ever impact factor of 20.582 for 2019. In line with EASL, the journal reacted very rapidly and published articles describing the effect of SARS-CoV-2 on the liver and how liver pathologies influenced the course of the disease, including one manuscript from the COVID-Hep Registry. With a decade left to hit the WHO goal of eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030, the journal also published a much-awaited update on the Clinical Practice Guidelines, *EASL recommendations on treatment of hepatitis C*. EASL's open-access *JHEP Reports* journal is growing in repute, too.

## The Nobel Prize 2020, a model for forward-thinking collaboration

A truly exciting event in the year was the news that the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2020 was awarded jointly to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton, and Charles M. Rice for their discovery of the hepatitis C virus. The award to this triumvirate is a perfect example of the potential of collaboration and a model for the future: clinicians, basic scientists, and industry – joining forces. EASL intends to draw inspiration from this model going forward.

## Honouring the many we lost

Since the arrival of COVID-19, we have suffered many losses. The numbers of infections rocketed as one wave followed the next. We have been saddened by the deaths of countless patients and many of our colleagues on the frontline of healthcare.

Prof. Roger Williams, whose life was devoted to hepatology and was a founding member of EASL, passed away just weeks before he was to receive an EASL Recognition Award at Digital ILC 2020. We will not forget those we lost in 2020, nor their contributions.

## Thanking the nimble and hands-on EASL Office team

The many achievements of EASL could not have been carried out without the EASL Office, an agile, dedicated, and skilled team, under the leadership of Ben Hainsworth who joined as Managing Director in 2019. The staff showed amazing adaptability to a new working environment – the home office – and to the numerous twists and turns that the months brought, remaining responsive and engaged throughout. The staff were a major driver of the success of EASL, during this singular time.

Caroline Muller adeptly guided the finance team, Cyriac Couvas was hired to set up and run our IT systems department, Joel Walicki managed the progress of the two journals, Mounia Heddad-Masson steered the education and science department into new digital arenas, Patricia Pochelon managed our complex scientific programmes, Stéphane Dazet led our business developments, Claire Chombeau our events, Wouter Kruijs our evolving relations with members, and our marketing and communications team performed admirably.

Our Governing Board adapted to governance meetings held online, often over several days, showing dedication and diligence throughout. You can read more about their roles and committee contributions in this report.

## Forging positive change in policy and public health

On the policy and public health front, we supported the European Beating Cancer Plan launched in early 2021 with key pillars – prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life – aligning with EASL’s goals. Yet we strive to keep an increasing strong focus on liver cancer, at the EU level. Tackling liver cancer must remain a key goal, worldwide.

## Next steps for ILC 2021 and beyond

The evolution of COVID-19 still poses many unresolved questions. EASL aims to move forward, building on lessons learned so far, drawing the best from what we have proven we are capable of. We remain dedicated to our membership and rely on their feedback and guidance, as we foster new bonds, explore new fields, and forge dynamic transitions in our events. As we are holding ILC 2021 fully digitally, implementing these best practices, we will set a new benchmark for quality in international digital events.

We’re offering you the best possible interaction to mitigate what we miss so much – being together in person. We are building on the spirit and strength of democratisation, and leveraging all the best of this digital era, offering a broader global outreach.

While ILC maintains its established, dedicated topic tracks, we are delighted to be adding a dedicated Basic Science track to ILC 2021, intended to attract basic scientists to our congress to showcase and share research. Multidisciplinarity will be a major theme of ILC 2021. Our Basic Science Seminar and Postgraduate Course, respectively, offer delegates updates on

artificial intelligence, “omics”, and big data in liver research; and on lifestyle and the liver.

At ILC 2021, you can enjoy superb digital enhancements pre-, during, and post-congress – a new platform, live broadcasts from the EASL Studio, matchmaking, an appointment-booking tool, a business cards exchange, microsites, and much more.

## Looking forward to 2022

While 2021 has brought increased access to vaccination and a better understanding about COVID-19, the pandemic is not yet over. We will continue to thrive, not just survive, through and out of the other side. We will boost our digital

networks, our educational offers, building stronger connections with our members, national and sister societies, and our peers. EASL was founded as a European association and the pandemic has shown the extraordinary solidarity within the science community of Europe. But we are diverse, we value diversity, and we seek to grow in our reach and impact – to grow beyond Europe, to our liver colleagues worldwide.

With these illuminating, challenging, sometimes painful months behind us, having gained much insight, we move towards 2022. We look forward to savouring science together with you at ILC 2022, in person, in London. Like in the good old days.



**SECRETARY GENERAL**  
**Prof. Philip NEWSOME**

Director of the Centre for Liver and Gastrointestinal Research  
Professor of Hepatology, University of Birmingham  
Hon. Consultant Hepatologist at the Liver Unit Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, UK



**VICE-SECRETARY**  
**Prof. Thomas BERG**

Head of the Division of Hepatology,  
Department of Medicine II, Leipzig University Medical Center, Germany



# EASL OFFICE

EASL's headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland. The EASL staff of 29 experts in various fields are led by our Managing Director, Ben Hainsworth.

For most of the year, the office has been operating in a work-from-home configuration, and work practices and output have undergone a radical digital transformation. Governance, administration, education, science, events, publishing, and advocacy have all moved online.

Determined reskilling and deliberate shifting of resources have been necessary at every step of the way. As we move into a yet uncertain 2021, our key priorities have remained constant: focus on our constituent bodies and members, operational excellence, diligent

business management, and strategic growth.

Our staff come from 17 different nationalities, speak 16 different languages, seven of them with scientific doctorates.





# EASL Office, June 2021

## Management & Administration

Managing Director



Ben  
HAINSWORTH

HR



Sophie  
FUX

Finance



Caroline  
MULLER



Jeremy  
MARRO



Özcan  
SAHIN



Cyriac  
COUVAS

IT

## Journal of Hepatology



Joel  
WALICKI



Duncan  
ANDERSON



Pablo  
ECHEVERRIA



Jiyeong  
ADAMS



Kristina  
JAJCEVIC

## Education & Science



Mounia  
HEDDAD-  
MASSON



Laurent  
PERRIN



Elinam  
GAYI

## Scientific Programmes



Patricia  
POCHELON



Céline  
SANTO



Rocío Daviña  
NÚÑEZ

## Policy & Public Health



Yoanna  
NEDELICHEVA



Morgane  
GUEX

## Business Development & Events



Stéphane  
DAZET



Claire  
CHOMBEAU



Laudina  
ASOMANING



Alexis  
SCHWERY



Montse  
VALLS

## Association & Community Services



Wouter  
KRUIJS



Johnny  
AINSWORTH



Adonia  
DHANJAL



Géraldine  
FANKHAUSER



Estelle  
JOBSON



Andrei  
ȘTEFĂNESCU

# BOOSTING KNOWLEDGE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

## JANUARY

- › The World Health Organization (WHO) designated 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. EASL set out to feature our liver nurses in 2020, especially our **Nurses and Allied Health Professionals Task Force**. We could not have anticipated how much nursing would be in the spotlight, with the COVID-19 pandemic rapidly evolving.



## FEBRUARY

- › The WHO headquarters began holding daily media briefings on the novel coronavirus, the first time that daily briefings have been held by the Director-General or Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme.



## MARCH

- › The WHO declared the COVID-19 crisis a pandemic.

## BREAKING CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

#COVID19 #Coronavirus



- › EASL postponed **ILC 2020**, scheduled originally as 15–19 April, to 25–28 August 2020, still planning to hold it in London; and the *Journal of Hepatology* called for papers on COVID-19.



- › EASL announced the newly launched **EASL-supported COVID-Hep Registry**, intending to capture how pre-existing liver disease or liver transplantation affects the course of COVID-19.



## APRIL

- › EASL and the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) published “**EASL–ESCMID Position Paper: Patients with advanced liver disease and transplant recipients require specific care during COVID-19**”: recommendations for clinicians caring for patients with liver diseases during the pandemic.



**EASL-ESCMID Position Paper: Patients with advanced liver disease and transplant recipients require specific care during COVID-19**

- › EASL launched **Viewpoints**, a series of testimonies from members of our community the frontline, interviewing nurses, doctors, and researchers.

## EASL Viewpoints



### EASL Viewpoint

Increased recognition worldwide for our multidimensional and complex roles as nurses will help us preserve our passion for delivering high-quality, person-centred care to people with or at risk of liver disease.

Michelle Clayton, UK Liver nurse educator



## MAY

- › EASL announced the transition to our first-ever fully online event, **Digital ILC 2020: 27–29 August 2020**
- › EASL and the WHO held a joint webinar, followed by a press release, on “**COVID-19 & the liver: Reports from the frontline**”, in which virology and hepatology experts compared strategies for coping during the pandemic.



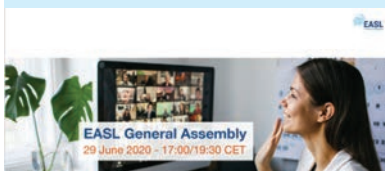
› EASL Campus launched **COVID-19 and the liver webcasts**, a series of webcasts and webinars on:

- Viral markers and the diagnosis of COVID-19
- EASL–WHO COVID-19 and the liver
- Virological aspects of COVID-19
- Viral testing and the immune response to COVID-19



## JUNE

› EASL held its first-ever online General Assembly, enabling members to convene to discuss the challenges and accomplishments of our association.



## JULY

› First-ever **Ask EASL podcast** was held: Patient-oriented webcast on COVID-19 and the liver, addressing the symptoms, outcomes, risk factors, and treatments of COVID-19 in relation to liver disease.

## AUGUST



› Dedicated session on COVID-19 and the Liver, together with 14 webcasts on COVID-19, 7 ePosters, 5 web broadcasts, and a key publication.

› Press release: *“During COVID-19, patients with liver conditions and facing liver transplantation require targeted and sustained support”*, generating global media coverage: 8 media editorials with potential readership of 5,856,247.

› Six months into the pandemic, we jointly published the **EASL–ESCMID Position Paper**, *“Impact of COVID-19 on the care of patients with liver disease: EASL–ESCMID position paper after 6 months of the pandemic”*, providing guidance for physicians treating patients with chronic liver disease.



**EASL–ESCMID Position Paper: a review, six months into the pandemic**

# BOOSTING KNOWLEDGE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

## SEPTEMBER

› In a **multi-society initiative**, EASL, the European Society for Organ Transplantation (ESOT) with the European Liver and Intestine Transplantation Association (ELITA), and the International Liver Transplantation Society (ILTS), launched a survey sent to 470 transplant centres worldwide to explore how transplant centres and services are affected by the pandemic.



## OCTOBER

› News published in the *Journal of Hepatology*: an international study led by researchers at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust showed that patients with cirrhosis were at increased risk of dying, as a result of COVID-19.



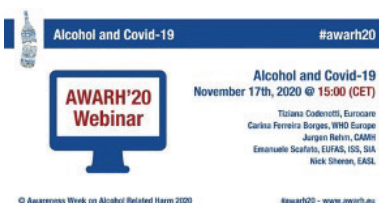
Patients with cirrhosis at increased risk of death from COVID-19, study finds

## NOVEMBER

› As the pandemic persisted, limiting in-person contact, EASL continued to stay in touch with all our stakeholders. We leveraged our first-ever online **EASL Patient Forum**, to stay connected with the patient community.



› As lockdown continued, many remained confined to their homes and the societal impact of the pandemic became increasingly apparent. EASL kept engaged during **Awareness Week on Alcohol-Related Harm (AWARH) 2020**, which served to raise awareness among EU policymakers of the types of harm caused by alcohol. EASL expert, Prof. Nick Sheron contributed to a webinar on Alcohol and COVID-19.



## DECEMBER

› To stay engaged with our community right to the end of such a particular year, we held an Extraordinary General Assembly online, on 10 December 2020.



› As 2020 ended, we were looking forward to brighter prospects in 2021, not least developments on protecting and prioritising patients with liver conditions, such as a worldwide rollout of COVID-19 vaccination.





# ADVOCACY

together

Please visit  
[www.east-ill.org](http://www.east-ill.org)

# EASL EVENTS 2020

## Monothematic meeting, 23–25 January 2020, in Athens, Greece

- the first face-to-face EASL event of 2020
- 89 participants from 21 countries



**Translational research  
in viral hepatitis:  
Addressing the gaps for cure**

23-25 January 2020  
Athens, Greece

Scientific Organising Committee  
Prof. Darius Moradpour, Switzerland  
Prof. Robert Thimme, Germany  
Prof. Fabien Zoulim, France



## Liver Cancer Summit 2020, 6–8 February 2020, in Prague, Czech Republic

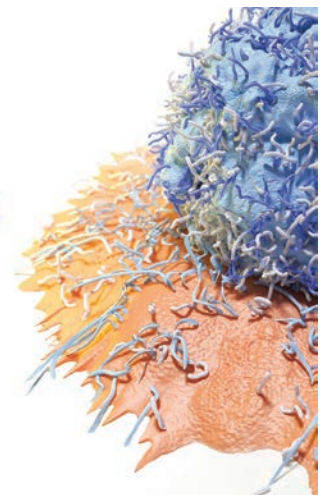
- last major face-to-face EASL event of 2020
- 600+ delegates from 44 countries
- covering multidisciplinary management of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma and cholangiocarcinoma



## LIVER CANCER SUMMIT 2020

06-08 February  
Prague, Czech Republic

Scientific Organising Committee  
Dr. Jesus Banales, *Spain*  
Dr. Valerie Paradis, *France*  
Dr. Lorenza Rimassa, *Italy*



[www.easl.eu](http://www.easl.eu)

## Digital ILC 2020 27-29 August 2020

- originally planned for London in April, the event was pivoted with pandemic-catalysed agility to a digital only offering in late August 2020
- a ground-breaking event for the global hepatology community
- 7,400 delegates from 114 countries

All other EASL events in 2020 were either postponed to 2021 or cancelled.

## POSTPONED AND CANCELLED EVENTS

The following events were postponed: three monothematic meetings, four summer Schools, and one Masterclass.

Two Endpoint meetings co-organised with the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) were cancelled, as was the NAFLD Summit 2020.



# EASL LEADERSHIP

## EASL Governing Board

Our Governing Board meeting in London in March 2020 was to be our last in-person leadership meeting. All further meetings of the Governing Board, Executive Board, and the Scientific, Education, and Policy and Public Health Committees were subsequently held online.

Leadership and office management met more frequently and assured a remarkable degree of diligent governance, business continuity, and service provision to the community. Notable online governance achievements include a General Assembly, an Extraordinary General Assembly, nominations, and elections.

## Executive Committee

### Secretary General



Prof. Philip  
NEWSOME  
UK

### Vice-Secretary



Prof. Thomas  
BERG  
Germany

### Scientific Committee



Prof. Pierre-Emmanuel  
RAUTOU  
France

### Treasurer



Prof. Francesco  
NEGRO  
Switzerland

### Educational Councillor



Prof. Ulrich  
BEUERS  
The Netherlands

### EU Policy Councillor



Prof. Maria  
BUTI  
Spain



## Scientific Committee



Prof. Pierre-  
Emmanuel  
RAUTOU  
France



Dr Tobias  
BÖTTLER  
Germany



Prof. Saskia  
VAN MIL  
The Netherlands



Prof. Maria  
REIG  
Spain



Prof. Emmanuel  
TSOCHATZIS  
UK



Prof. Luca  
VALENTI  
Italy

- nominations and appointments of two new members: Saskia Van Mil and Tobias Böttler
- transformation of ILC 2020 to Digital ILC 2020
- reviewing, commenting on, and developing programmes for conferences and summits
- coordinating the development of Clinical Practice Guidelines
- providing input on the allocations of fellowships and grants

## Educational Committee



Prof. Ulrich  
BEUERS  
The Netherlands



Prof. Andres  
CARDENAS  
Spain



Prof. Rui  
CASTRO  
Portugal



Prof. Karine  
LACOMBE  
France



Prof. Manuela  
MERLI  
Italy



Prof. Helen  
REEVES  
UK



Prof. Ulrich  
SPENGLER  
Germany

- a digital leap triggered massive growth in the use of EASL Campus
- up to 13,111 registered users and 133,082 web visitors
- launch of Digital ILC 2020 Takeaways, event Slide Decks, the EASL Quiz series, and multiple webinars and webcasts

## Policy and Public Health Committee



Prof. Maria  
BUTI  
Spain



Prof. Antonio  
CRAÏI  
Italy



Prof. Jeffrey  
LAZARUS  
Spain



Prof. Mojca  
MATIČIČ  
Slovenia



Prof. Nick  
SHERON  
UK



Ms Martine  
WALMSLEY  
UK



Prof. Shira  
ZELBER-SAGI  
Israel

- Joint Statement: prevention at the heart of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan
- two new **EASL Policy Statements** (coexistence of NAFLD and ARLD; drug use and hepatitis C elimination)
- launch of **EASL Patient Synergies**
- collaboration during Awareness Week on Alcohol Related Harm (AWARH)

## EASL Patient Synergies

- at the January 2020 EASL Governing Board: launch of **EASL Patient Synergies** a network for European umbrella patient organisations engaged in liver diseases
- nine members, as of June 2021
- first online **EASL Patient Forum** held in November 2020 on **EASL's evidence-based Policy Statements**
- patient engagement in all levels of EASL activity



## EU-funded projects



EASL remains the communications and dissemination arm for five major EU-funded projects for diagnosing and combatting liver disease:

- ALIVER
- DECISION
- LITMUS
- LiverScreen
- MICROB-PREDICT

## Ethics Committee



Prof. Christian  
TRAUTWEIN  
Germany



Prof. Jaime  
BOSCH  
Spain



Prof. Markus  
HEIM  
Switzerland



Prof. Ariane  
MALLAT  
France



Dr Guido Heinrich  
GERKEN  
Germany

- Chair, Prof. Christian Trautwein, re-elected for another three-year term
- yearlong monitoring and management of interests at EASL leadership level
- regular review of [Clinical Practice Guidelines](#) panels
- engagement in BioMed Alliance Europe's Code of Conduct Working Group

## EASL's prestigious journals

### JOURNAL OF HEPATOLOGY



Prof. Paolo  
ANGELI  
Italy  
Editor-in-Chief



Prof. Patrizia  
BURRA  
Italy  
Deputy Editor



Prof. Vlad  
RATZIU  
France  
Co-editor



Prof. Bruno  
SANGRO  
Spain  
Co-editor



Prof. Frank  
TACKE  
Germany  
Co-editor



Prof. Stefan  
ZEUZEM  
Germany  
Co-editor

- EASL's *Journal of Hepatology* – in June 2020, announcement of our impact factor of 20.582 for 2019

### JHEP REPORTS



Prof. Jessica  
ZUCMAN-  
ROSSI  
France  
Editor-in-Chief



Prof. Marina  
BERENQUER  
Spain  
Editor



Prof. Sven  
FRANCKUE  
Belgium  
Editor



Prof. Thierry  
GUSTOT  
Belgium  
Editor



Dr Sophie  
LOTERSZTAJN  
France  
Editor

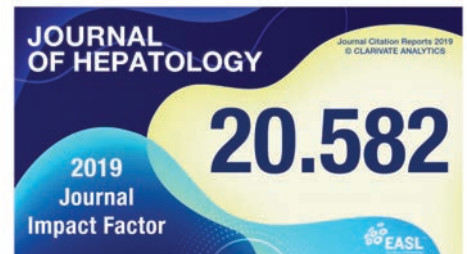
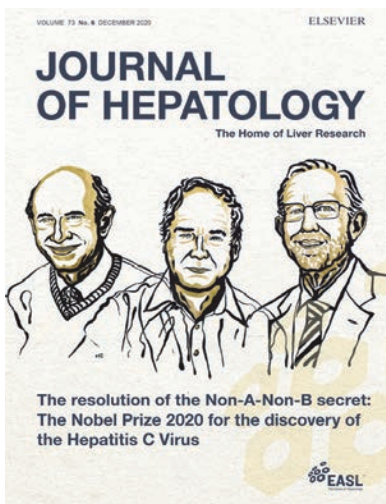


Prof. Robert  
SCHWABE  
USA  
Editor



Prof. Morris  
SHERMAN  
Canada  
Editor

- EASL's *JHEP Reports* – celebrated its 2nd birthday and being accepted for indexing by PubMed Central and Scopus



## Nurses and AHPs Task Force



Michelle  
CLAYTON  
UK



Dr Palle  
BAGER  
Denmark



Kathryn  
JACK  
UK



Dr Patrizia  
KÜNZLER-HEULE  
Switzerland



Neus  
LLARCH  
Spain



Dr Eva  
ROMÁN  
Spain



Felicity  
WILLIAMS  
UK

- two new Task Force members: Kathryn Jack and Eva Román
- dedicated sessions, abstracts and an [EASL Takeaways](#)
- a webinar on sarcopenia on EASL Campus
- participation in [EASL Viewpoints](#)

## Young Investigators Task Force



Dr Marta  
AFONSO  
Portugal



Dr Sabela  
LENS  
Spain



Dr Epsen  
MELUM  
Norway



Dr Salvatore  
PIANO  
Italy




Dr Anna  
SABOROWSKI  
Germany

- EASL provided ongoing support to the YIs Task Force, to sustain efforts through the pandemic
- dedicated YI Forum at Digital ILC 2020
- two new members added to the Task Force: Dr Anna Saborowski and Dr Marta Afonso
- selection of two recipients of the [Emerging Leader Award](#): Dr Prakash Ramachandran and Prof. Thomas Reiberger


# COMMUNITY AND MEMBERSHIP

The pandemic dramatically reduced face-to-face meetings for everybody. It also placed a heavier than usual burden on all healthcare professionals. Taking these factors into consideration, at EASL, we doubled our efforts to maintain engagement with our community. Our membership remains solid, despite the difficult circumstances, and we thank our members for their loyalty and trust.

 **EASL INSIGHT SURVEY**

**1,400+**  
**RESPONSES**

From both members and the wider community



MyEASL was launched, a new feature on the EASL website, helping us collect valuable data from our users to serve them better:

**OCT TO DEC 2020**

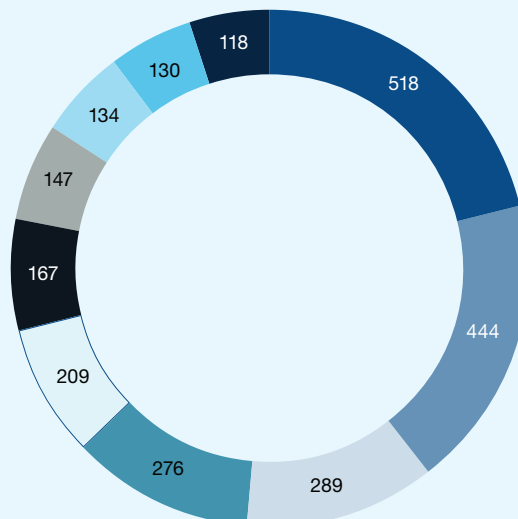
**5,000+**  
**MYEASL ACCOUNTS WERE CREATED**

 **ONGOING COLLABORATION WITH**

**39**  
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

**Top 10 countries of membership**

- US
- UK
- Germany
- Italy
- Spain
- France
- Netherlands
- Belgium
- Switzerland
- Egypt



EASL 2019  
EASL 2019  
EASL COMMUNITY HUB  
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The home of respiratory

Let's talk SCIENCE  
but first, COFFEE

SOCIAL MEDIA  
COFFEE



Catering area

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

# FELLOWSHIPS AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

COVID-19 as a global health crisis highlighted the need for continued research in all areas. Through the year, EASL remained steadfast to the research community. In 2020, €630,000 was awarded in fellowships and grants. In cases where research projects were delayed by the pandemic, we also extended research grants.

## Fellowships and research grants

- providing scientists with opportunities through their careers
- fostering the next generation of excellence in hepatology
- for young talent, opportunities to excel, advance, network, and become a key member of the vibrant global hepatology community
- fellowships are for PhD or post-doctoral qualifications, short-term or longer-term goals
- EASL Emerging Leader Award dedicated to young fellows, up to 40

### EASL Daniel ALAGILLE Award

The Daniel ALAGILLE Award provides research support for Young Investigators active in the field of paediatric and adult genetic cholestatic disease-causing mechanisms. The Daniel Alagille Award is generously supported by unrestricted grants from Cell Therapies Research & Services (CTRS).



Dr Marion BOUCHECAREILH,  
France

### PhD Studentship Juan Rodés

This competitive, doctoral fellowship programme is directed at young graduates who want to achieve a PhD degree in the field of basic, translational, or clinical hepatology. The programme is open to candidates living anywhere in the world, wishing to conduct a PhD thesis at a European centre, in a country different to that of their home institution.



Eline Kirsten GEERVLIET,  
PhD candidate, The Netherlands

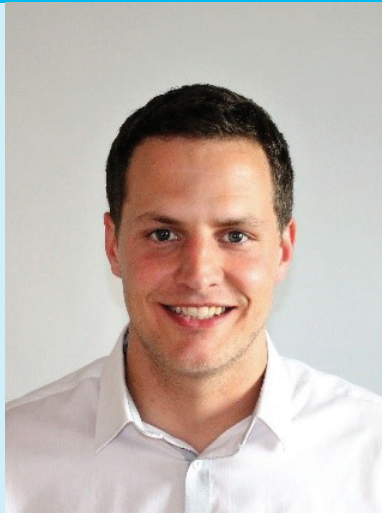


Dr Vincenzo RONCA, Italy



## Postgraduate Fellowship Sheila SHERLOCK

This competitive, postgraduate fellowship programme targets the most promising newly qualified postgraduate researchers who wish to expand research fields and start developing their independent research careers.



Dr Manuel JOHANNIS, France



Dr Philipp SCHWABL, Austria

## Short-term Training Fellowship Andrew K. BURROUGHS

This programme is directed at postgraduate investigators (basic and clinical investigators) who intend to spend a limited amount of time (three to six months) at a foreign institution to accomplish a very focussed research project. It can be to learn an experimental procedure or methodology or to get in-depth knowledge on a sophisticated, clinical diagnostic procedure not available at the home institution. It is open to candidates from anywhere in the world, planning to do post-doctoral work at a European centre, different to their home institution.



Dr Theresa WIRTZ, Germany



Dr Claudia FUCHS, Austria

## EASL Emerging Leader Award

The EASL Emerging Leader Award is a yearly award specifically dedicated to young fellows, up to 40 years of age, who are active members of EASL. Every year, two Young Investigator Awardees are selected, based on their international liver research achievements to date.



Dr Thomas REIBERGER, Austria



Dr Prakash RAMACHANDRAN, UK

### Registry grants for scientific research

As a major European association dedicated to pursuing excellence in liver research and to providing education to all those interested in hepatology, EASL promotes research and education through the sharing of research findings in hepatology.

Considering the difficulties faced by researchers in our field, the EASL Governing Board has decided to create the EASL Registry Data Collection Grant to provide funding in support of consortia groups dedicated to data gathering with a specific focus on liver disease.

### EASL Registry Grants

**Dr Palak TRIVEDI,** Checkpoint-inhibitor induced liver injury: The CHILI registry, United Kingdom

**Prof. Juan Carlos GARCIA PAGAN,** EUROTIPS project: the European Registry of patients treated with TIPS following a standardized, state of the art, pre, peri and post procedural approach, Spain

# EASL INTERNATIONAL LIVER FOUNDATION

## Placing NAFLD on the public health agenda

In 2020, the EASL International Liver Foundation (EILF) expanded its non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) programme, strengthening existing collaborations and establishing new ones.

In December, EILF and Wilton Park, a leading global think tank – held a three-day dialogue addressing NAFLD from a public health perspective. The event brought together over 50 thought leaders from all over the globe to start the process of developing a NAFLD public health roadmap.

EILF and the Economist Intelligence Unit held a series of 12 workshops, “NAFLD: Sounding the alarm on a global public health challenge”, engaging over 50 regional experts to explore the opportunities and challenges for addressing NAFLD in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

EILF expanded the earlier European policy review study globally, collecting data from 102 countries in all regions. The findings, to be published in 2021, will provide critical information that will inform national and global policy responses to NAFLD.

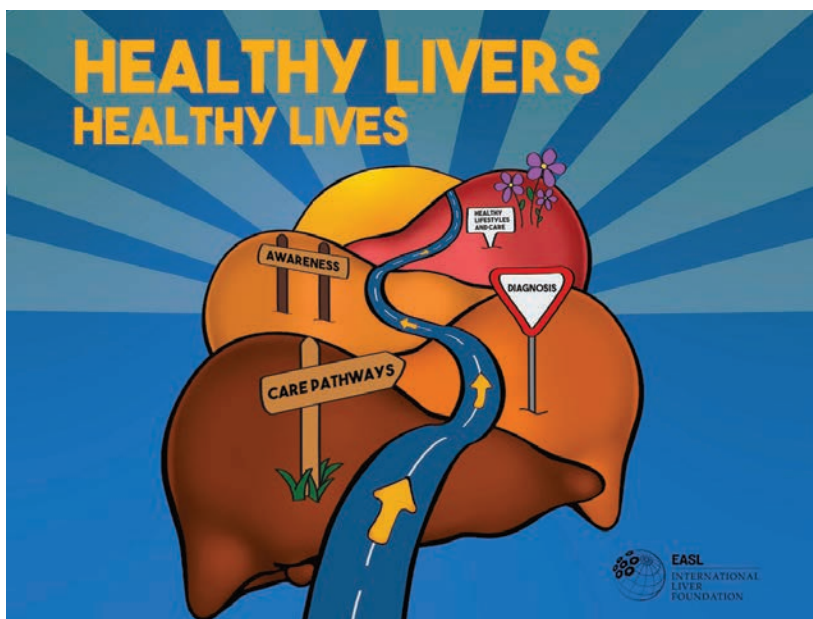
## Supporting the Georgia Centre of Excellence in viral hepatitis elimination

In what was a challenging year for healthcare systems, including viral hepatitis services, EILF continued to support the Georgia Centre of Excellence in viral hepatitis elimination working with our partners to support the national programme. We also launched a dedicated website for the Centre of Excellence programme.

## Forging a vision for the years ahead: working in tandem with EASL

In 2020, EILF outlined several strategic priorities for the future. The EILF–EASL Fellowships programme now sits at the centre of the Foundation’s plans with EILF taking over management of the programme in January 2021.

The Foundation also updated its governance structure with the formation of a Fundraising Committee. The Committee will support EILF to grow and expand as it strives to fulfil the mission of *improving lives by improving liver health*.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## Treasurer's Report

Dear members,

It is my honour to provide you with the Treasurer's Report for the 2020 financial accounts.

That 2020 has been an extraordinary year is a known fact. The disruption of our core business activities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic has been tremendous and unforeseen, requiring swift adaptations and momentous decisions.

I must introduce this report by acknowledging our Managing Director Ben Hainsworth and the whole EASL Office for their professionalism in providing winning solutions to this unprecedented challenge. Without their unfailing commitment and generous efforts to contain our losses, via both operational savings and prudent use of our reserves, the financial results of the year could have been catastrophic.

Thus, although the 2019 result was positive, 2020 ended with a net operational loss (before exceptional income and expenditure) of €2,625,000. The International Liver Congress™, traditionally the leading financial source of income of our association, had to be converted to a digital event.

This led to a major downturn in terms of revenue, although the final result was better than our initial, cautious expectations. In addition, significant provisions were made for upcoming, IT-related projects in 2021. The current crisis radically accelerated our ongoing digital transformation, and our multiple systems and platforms require further integration.

To absorb the losses, we resorted to both one-off and strategic cuts in our expenses. Significant savings were derived from either cancelling or postponing several face-to-face events to 2021, and by reducing the overall office personnel and consultant costs. Despite the setbacks, we were able to increase our support of the community, and loyal partnerships with healthcare industry held true, allowing us to make significant contributions to research and policy and public health initiatives.

Funding of our non-event-related online educational portfolio remains solid, although less than expected, since sponsors had little time to switch their commitments from physical to online learning.

As was the case in 2019, EASL's 2020 financial accounts were audited by an external audit firm, A. Gautier Société Fiduciaire. Auditors confirmed that EASL's accounts were in good order and properly reflected the financial status of the association.

We adjusted our budget for the coming year 2021, which for the first time in EASL's history was presented for approval to EASL members at an Extraordinary General Assembly in December 2020, i.e. before the year started. For 2021, we foresee partial consolidation of our largely digital operations and plan to break even financially. We are fully confident that the income from online educational activities will grow further in 2021. Revenues from the *Journal of Hepatology* will also increase and ongoing IT improvements will largely be absorbed by provisions from 2020.

All in all, the 2021 budget is a balanced one, which represents a significant achievement. My sincere thanks go again to Ben Hainsworth, Caroline Muller, and the heads of the different office departments for their efforts.



**TREASURER**  
Prof. Francesco NEGRO

## Auditor's Report



Report of the statutory auditors  
on the limited statutory examination  
to the general meeting of

### European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL), Geneva

As statutory auditors, we have examined the financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes) of European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL), Geneva for the year ended 31 December 2020.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the Board. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination on these financial statements. We confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law.

We conducted our examination in accordance with the Swiss Standard on the Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of entity's personnel and analytical procedures as well as detailed tests of entity's documents as considered necessary in the circumstances. However, the testing of the operational processes and the internal control system, as well as inquiries and further testing procedures to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements and the proposed appropriation of available earnings do not comply with Swiss law and the entity's articles of incorporation.

A. Gautier, Société Fiduciaire SA  
Antoine Gautier,  
Licensed Audit Expert n° 100651

Geneva, May 12, 2021  
AG/lm 100494ROR-20 – 12 ex.

Enclosures : - Financial statements (balance sheet total EUR 16.447.234, income statement, and notes)

## 2020 financial statements

### Balance Sheet, as of 31<sup>st</sup> December

	2020 EUR	2019 EUR
Cash and cash equivalents	3,540,844	7,576,600
Accounts receivables and other receivables	849,551	656,797
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	1,941,456	1,196,576
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>6,331,851</b>	<b>9,429,973</b>
Financial assets	5,735,300	6,102,694
Tangible fixed assets	4,380,083	4,468,580
Intangible fixed assets	0	1
<b>Total Non-current Assets</b>	<b>10,115,383</b>	<b>10,571,275</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>16,447,234</b>	<b>20,001,248</b>
Accounts payable	338,285	230,787
Other short-term liabilities	333,051	227,195
Deferred income and accrued expenses	1,585,090	3,209,029
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>2,256,426</b>	<b>3,667,011</b>
Mortgage loan	1,988,136	1,989,406
Long-term provisions	850,213	722,631
<b>Total Long-term Liabilities</b>	<b>2,838,349</b>	<b>2,712,037</b>
Unused restricted fund	141,657	183,384
<b>Total Allocated Funds</b>	<b>141,657</b>	<b>183,384</b>
General funds	13,438,817	12,501,285
Net result for the period	(2,228,015)	937,532
<b>Total Reserve Funds</b>	<b>11,210,802</b>	<b>13,438,817</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Reserve Funds</b>	<b>16,447,234</b>	<b>20,001,248</b>

## Income Statement for the year ended

	2020 EUR	2019 EUR
International Liver Congress	2,891,661	9,067,242
Membership	650,278	675,924
Journal of Hepatology	994,110	1,154,548
UEG support	-	97,143
Sponsors – unrestricted funds	466,444	273,486
Sponsors – restricted funds	1,163,547	531,611
Net Building Revenue	36,507	114,214
Small Conferences	576,065	867,204
Other revenues	43,015	16,547
<b>Total Operating income</b>	<b>6,821,627</b>	<b>12,797,919</b>
International Liver Congress	(1,244,093)	(5,110,403)
Fellowships and Registry Grants	(879,549)	(780,956)
Small Conferences (Monothematic/Special conferences)	(1,127,618)	(964,165)
School of Hepatology	-	(104,470)
Journal of Hepatology	(464,646)	(463,635)
Overheads	(223,000)	(192,616)
Legal, Consultancy, and Audit Fees	(684,959)	(405,545)
Marketing and Communication	(215,080)	(117,284)
Booth and Promotion	(24,772)	(59,866)
Sponsored Meetings	(649)	(42,827)
GB Meetings and Honorarium	(224,452)	(131,315)
Clinical Practice Guidelines and Committees	(12,226)	(31,386)
EU Advocacy/Policy and Public Affairs	(273,849)	(157,950)
Education and Scientific Activities	(501,474)	(105,880)
Other expenses	(11,232)	(170,997)
<b>Total Operating expenses before staff cost and depreciation</b>	<b>(5,887,598)</b>	<b>(8,839,295)</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>(3,107,966)</b>	<b>(2,753,537)</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>	<b>(257,453)</b>	<b>(237,452)</b>
<b>Operating result</b>	<b>(2,431,390)</b>	<b>967,635</b>
Financial income	115,052	601
Financial expenses	(110,259)	(176,610)
Unrealised Financial Gain on Bonds	47,928	498,019
Unrealised Financial Loss on Bonds	(115,322)	(36,495)
Foreign Exchange Gain	(131,590)	(174,794)
<b>Financial result</b>	<b>(194,190)</b>	<b>110,721</b>
Exceptional income and expenses	401,944	(121,303)
<b>Net result before changes in funds</b>	<b>(2,223,636)</b>	<b>957,053</b>
<b>Changes in funds</b>	<b>(4,379)</b>	<b>(19,523)</b>
<b>Net result after changes in funds</b>	<b>(2,228,015)</b>	<b>937,530</b>

## Notes to the 2020 financial statements

### General principles

#### Accounting principles applied in the preparation of the financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of commercial accounting as set out in the Swiss Code of Obligations (Art. 957 to 963b CO, effective since 1 January 2013). Significant balance sheet items are accounted for as follows:

#### Accounts receivable

Accounts receivable are amounts due from parties for services performed in the ordinary course of business. If collection is expected in one year or less (or in the normal operating cycle of the business if longer), they are classified as current assets.

These receivables are valued at their nominal values. Credit default risks are accounted for by specific and general allowances. General allowances are recognised for items that have not yet been considered with a specific allowance. The general allowance is based on the assumption that the default risk increases as the debt becomes increasingly overdue.

#### Recognition of revenue

The main revenue stream of the Association are Membership fees and the International Liver Congress (ILC) income.

Membership fees are recognised in the accounting period in which the fees relate to.

ILC revenue is mainly composed of fees received from participants and sponsors and recognised based on the contract specifications when the following conditions are all met:

- the amounts can be measured reliably,
- it is probable that the Association will receive future economic benefits.

#### Non-current assets and leases

Property, plant, and equipment are valued at purchase cost, less any depreciation required by generally accepted accounting principles. Depreciation is charged on a straight line basis over the useful life of the fixed asset.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing the proceeds with the carrying amount and are recognised in the income statement.

#### The useful lives of assets have been determined as follows:

Type of assets	Useful life
Building	30 years
Furniture and Equipment	10 years
Computer & Hardware	3 years
Intangible Assets	3 years

#### Foreign currencies

Items included in the financial statements were measured using the currency of the primary economic environment in which the Association operates ("the functional currency"), which is Euro ("EUR").

Monetary and non-monetary items in Swiss Francs are translated into Euros at the following exchange rates:

Foreign currency		Profit and loss statement	Balance sheet
2020	EUR/CHF	1.0824	1.0816
2019	EUR/CHF	1.1276	1.0870

The exchange rates used for balance sheet items are the rates prevailing on December 31; the exchange rates used for transactions conducted during the course of the year and for items in the profit and loss statement are average rates for the financial year. For reasons of simplification, from 2019 onwards and in accordance with Swiss law, the Financial Statements are reflected in EUR only.



## Details, analyses, and explanations to the financial statements

The European Association for the Study of the Liver ("EASL") is an Association registered in Geneva (2018), previously in Zurich (2017), Switzerland.

The number of full-time equivalents did not exceed 50 on an annual average basis.

### Receivables and liabilities

Receivables and liabilities towards direct or indirect participants and management bodies and entities in which there is a direct or indirect participation must in each case be shown separately on the balance sheet or in the notes to the financial statements (art. 959a para. 4 CO). This only applies if these items are not presented in the balance sheet as suggested.

### Mortgage schedules

Commitments on the building – Rue Daubin 7:

- n° 10527 of 30.09.2008 for CHF 2,100,000 – First Row
- n° 10527 of 30.09.2008 for CHF 1,500,000 – Second Row
- n° 2013-752 of 030.12.2012 for CHF 200,000 – Third Row

### Pension liabilities

On 31 December 2020, it amounted to EUR 134,163 (CHF 145,104)

On 31 December 2019, it amounted to EUR 77,459 (CHF 84,194)

### Collateral for third-party liabilities

	2020 in EUR	2019 in EUR
Guarantee obligations	69,000	79,560

### Total amount resulting from the dissolution of replacement reserves and the material dissolution of excess hidden reserves

No hidden reserves were released in the year under review.

### Significant events occurring after the balance sheet date

None

### Significant events occurring during the reporting year

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the year's result. The main income-generating event had to be converted to a digital event thus resulting in a decreased income of around EUR 6,175K.

Other planned events had to be cancelled or postponed to 2021.

### Fees paid and accrued to the auditor

	2020 in EUR	2019 in EUR
Audit services	23,023	22,533

# THANKING OUR COMMUNITY



# EASL™

## The Home of Hepatology

Our leadership and office staff were working hard for the community through 2020, and we will continue to do so. We acknowledge those who lost their lives during the pandemic and express our sincere condolences to their loved ones and peers.

We thank the hundreds of thousands essential and healthcare workers, who served society worldwide.

We are deeply grateful to, and admiring of you, our community, for your dedication to serving

patients, and your commitment to EASL activities. We miss having face-to-face interaction with you and we look forward to those days returning. We remain here for you and we will always be.



ILC 2019, Vienna

In 2020, our membership consisted of approximately 4,500 members, representing 104 countries, and a broad range of professions, from patients and allied healthcare professionals to regular and emeritus members.

# TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONGER: NUMEROUS COLLABORATIONS THROUGH 2020

This year has shown us at EASL that our strength lies in collaboration, an enduring lesson that the pandemic has taught us. Hence, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the many partners, societies, and organisations with whom we collaborated in 2020. We couldn't have done it without you!



**Our Partners**



**Our Sponsors**



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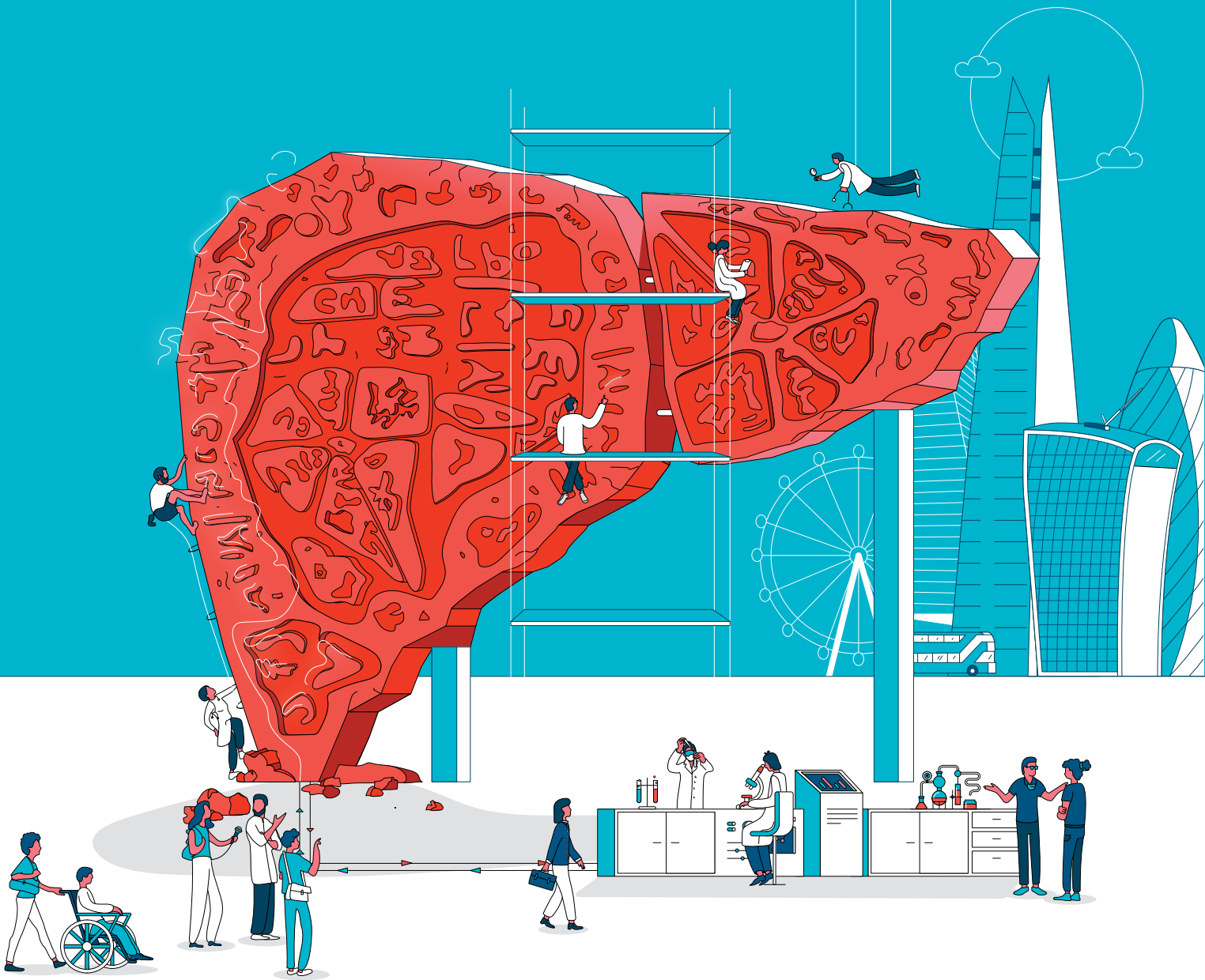
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