

*Brief report on AGM 11, October 2003 in Spain*

OI-people, their families, friends and medical professionals from 12 different OI associations worldwide met for a long weekend in the Spanish town of Sigüenza. About 100 members of the Spanish host AHUCE welcomed guests from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Finland, Portugal, the United States of America and Ecuador.



The organising committee of the Spanish OI-Conference had prepared a very special programme for this OI-Conference: apart from lectures and speeches from well-known medical doctors and other OI specialists and several workshops, the 10th anniversaries of both, AHUCE and OIFE, were celebrated in a very Spanish way:



One night a "Tuna-group" with traditional music and songs brought Spaniards and guests of all ages together on the crowded dance-floor and made language-barriers vanish instantly. The second evening a "Cuban night" had the same effect and was an excellent compensation for a long and tiring day with lots of facts and information on OI, discussions and meetings.



On Sunday the participants of the OI Conference had the opportunity to visit the beautiful Sigüenza cathedral and its townhall and were honoured by a presentation of Spanish medieval dances and culinary specialties and were received by the Town Mayor and other political representatives.

The Board of the OIFE had started its Annual General Meeting one day earlier and delegates from 9 OIFE member countries held their 11th AGM parallel to parts of the Spanish Conference.



In addition to the usual business meeting the following new projects and proposals were discussed and adopted:

- OI directories: following the example of the French OIFE member AOI, all national OI associations shall work on national directories with relevant and regularly updated data on OI specialists.
- OIFE project fund: subsidies will be given to projects who bring OI-people from different countries together.
- OIFE newsletter: a regular e-mail-newsletter will be published and sent to all those interested in news from different organisations and recent developments in the OI-community. Subscription will soon be possible via the OIFE website.
- "Contact-Abroad-Project": shall bring OI-people and families from different countries together, encourage personal contacts and visits.
- "Home-exchange-Project": one further step could be the exchange of (accessible or adapted) homes for OI-families for a holiday.
- OI-youth-exchange: young OI-people and their friends get in contact, exchange news, experiences, have fun together.
- support for OI-individuals: more and more OI-families from countries without OI association and special care by specialists look for advice and support - help for them must be carried by more volunteers.
- The navigation on the website has been improved and the new version will be installed soon.
- A new structure of the EMAB (the "European Medical Advisory Board" of the OIFE) will be developed shortly.

The responsible sub-committees or Board members will start these projects during the next months and any news and reports on their progress will be published on this website.

More news from different aspects:

- new OI associations have been started in Slovenia, Georgia, Argentina and Venezuela.
- the Foundation of an Austrian OI association is planned for 2004.
- in Russia a growing OI-group is getting active.
- OIFE and HOI (the "Help-OI-Foundation" in the Netherlands) are cooperating closely - HOI supports OIFE's help for OI-individuals.

- the President of the Ecuadorian OI association presented her activities, a film about OI families in Ecuador and her plans for the near future.



- OIFE is involved in the planning of the next International Scientific OI Conference in 2005 - in Connecticut / US.

In 2004 the OIFE Board will meet in September in Finland.