

## EYFDM Conference Exchange of 13th TAHEK & EUROPREV Forum 2024: From the Perspective of Young Family Doctors

### 13. TAHEK & EUROPREV Forum 2024 EYFDM Konferans Değişimi: Genç Aile Hekimlerinin Gözünden

Ekin Dikmen<sup>ORCID</sup>, Şeyma Handan Akyon<sup>ORCID</sup>, Gülşah Onur<sup>ORCID</sup>, Hande Büyükdağ<sup>ORCID</sup>, İkbal Hümay Arman<sup>ORCID</sup>, Mehmet Kocabaş<sup>ORCID</sup>, Fatma Avcı<sup>ORCID</sup>, Emel Aygün<sup>ORCID</sup>

**Atf/Cite as:** Dikmen E, Akyon ŞH, Onur G, et al. EYFDM Conference Exchange of 13th TAHEK & EUROPREV Forum 2024: From the Perspective of Young Family Doctors. Turkish Journal of Family Practice. 2024;28(4):165-171.

The European Young Family Doctors Movement (EYFDM), formerly known as the Vasco da Gama Movement, was founded by Dr. Fons Sips at the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) Europe Conference in the Netherlands in 2004 and officially launched in WONCA Europe Conference in Kos, Greece in 2006.<sup>[1]</sup> EYFDM targets young family doctors in specialization training or within their first five years of practice, promoting professional solidarity and cultural exchange across Europe.<sup>[2]</sup>

Türkiye has actively participated in EYFDM since its inception, hosting international events and exchange programs with support from the Turkish Association of Family Physicians (TAHUD). Recently, the EYFDM Türkiye team organized a successful exchange program for the 13th International Trakya Family Medicine Congress (TAHEK) and the EUROPREV 2024 Forum in Edirne. This program involved four young family physicians: Dr. Tadas Saulenas (Lithuania), Dr. Angelica Dentizzi (Italy), and Dr. Laura Lapa and Dr. Marta Cardoso (Portugal). The week-long program included visits to family health centers, Trakya University, and historical sites in Edirne, fostering collaboration and learning among participants.

#### Within The Program

#### 22 April 2024, Monday

On the first day of the program, a visit to Trakya University Faculty of Medicine's Department of Family Medicine and its polyclinics was organized. Dr. Tadas Saulenas, who arrived in Edirne, met with the department's academics and residents. They discussed the family medicine residency programs and systems in Lithuania and Türkiye interactively. Participants observed an outpatient clinic visit and exchanged ideas on electronic health management systems. The day concluded with a visit to Trakya University Balkan Campus (Photograph 1).

**Received/Geliş:** 21.11.2024  
**Accepted/Kabul:** 02.12.2024  
**Publication date:** 27.12.2024

**Corresponding Author:**  
**E. Dikmen**

**ORCID:** 0000-0002-0563-6265  
Department of Family Medicine,  
Trakya University, Edirne, Türkiye  
✉ dikmenekin@gmail.com

**Ş. H. Akyon**

**ORCID:** 0000-0002-2288-8915  
Family Medicine, Gölpaşarı State  
Hospital, Bilecik, Türkiye

**G. Onur**

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-1024-5258  
Department of Family Medicine,  
Hacettepe University,  
Ankara, Türkiye

**H. Büyükdağ**

**ORCID:** 0009-0007-4217-9693  
Department of Family Medicine,  
University of Health Sciences İzmir  
Tepecik Training and Research  
Hospital, İzmir, Türkiye

**İ. H. Arman**

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-1492-6763  
Department of Family Medicine,  
İstanbul Medipol University,  
İstanbul, Türkiye

**M. Kocabaş**

**ORCID:** 0000-0002-8704-8271  
Department of Family Medicine,  
Trabzon Kanuni Training and  
Research Hospital, Trabzon, Türkiye

**F. Avcı**

**ORCID:** 0009-0007-1967-6296  
Department of Family Medicine,  
Trakya University, Edirne, Türkiye

**E. Aygün**

**ORCID:** 0000-0002-2489-4251  
Lalapaşa Community Health Center,  
Edirne, Türkiye



**Photograph 1. Trakya University Family Medicine Department Polyclinic**

**23 April 2024, Tuesday**

The second day of the exchange program was full of social activities. We met our guests from Portugal, Lithuania and Italy and started the day with a nice breakfast.

In the rest of the program, we visited the important points of the city to discover the historical and cultural heritage of Edirne (Photograph 2). As we saw important places such as the Great Synagogue, Edirne Historical Train Station, Lausanne Monument, Natural History Museum and Old Mosque, we had the chance to better understand the rich cultural texture and historical depth of the city (Photograph 3, 4, and 5).

The most impressive visit of the day was to the 2nd Bayezid Health Complex in Edirne, a significant



**Photograph 2. Trakya University Fine Arts Campus**

Ottoman health facility built in the 15th century. This complex, which served as a center for health services and medical research, includes a hospital, madrasah, library, bathhouse, and dârüşşifa. It offered advanced health services for its time and was a pioneer in modern medical care and education.<sup>[3]</sup>



**Photograph 3. Lausanne Monument**



**Photograph 4. Historical Train Station**



**Photograph 5. Great Synagogue**



The complex is notable for its architecture and functioned as a modern health center. The museum, now owned by Trakya University, showcases the original Ottoman dârûşşifa, where treatment methods involved music and water sounds, reflecting the medical knowledge of that era. The madrasa trained physicians and was a key medical school of its time.<sup>[3]</sup> This visit allowed participants to explore the historical and architectural richness of this 400-year-old center, providing valuable insights into medical education and health services for the Family Medicine residents involved in the exchange (Photograph 6).



**Photograph 6. 2nd Sultan Bayezid Health Complex**

At the end of the day, we successfully completed the day by tasting the unique flavors of Edirne. These events not only enriched us culturally, but also created a spirit of EYFDM that increased the energy and motivation within the group.

#### **24 April 2024, Wednesday**

On the third day of the EYFDM Conference Exchange program, our colleagues from various European countries visited Trakya University Ayşekadın Education Family Health Center (Photograph 7). They observed Türkiye's primary health care services and patient interviews. Resident doctors introduced vaccination, child follow-up, pregnancy care, reproductive health, and medical intervention rooms. We discussed the Trakya University Active Ageing Centre, which promotes healthy aging and social participation for the elderly. The EYFDM Türkiye team then presented on Türkiye's primary health care system, chronic disease management, and the appointment and prescription



**Photograph 7. Trakya University Ayşekadın Education Family Health Centre**

process. This interactive session allowed us to compare the primary health care systems of Türkiye, Portugal, Lithuania, and Italy, discussing their pros and cons and brainstorming on advancing family medicine in our countries.

Our program continued at Edirne Hekim Şifai Healthy Life Centre (Photograph 8). The physicians and other health professionals working there gave information about cancer early detection, screening and education, tuberculosis control services, nutrition counseling, chronic diseases and physical activity counseling, tobacco and substance abuse counseling, dental health, women and reproductive health counseling and explained the functioning of each unit. Then they answered the questions of our colleagues participating in the exchange program. In this part of our program, the participants had the opportunity to learn about preventive health services in primary health care in Türkiye and to observe the cooperation between different disciplines.



**Photograph 8. Edirne Hekim Şifai Healthy Life Center Visit**



**Photograph 9. Edirne Havsa Family Health Centers No. 1 and No. 2**

After a pleasant lunch, our guests spent the day at Edirne Havsa Family Health Centres No. 1 and No. 2 with Family Medicine Specialists Dr. Emre Sarı and Dr. Esra Arın Bal (Photograph 9). They observed patient follow-ups, treatment management, counseling, health screenings, and communication in rural family medicine. They were particularly interested in Türkiye's nationwide electronic health record system (e-nabız), which allows doctors to access patient information like diagnoses and lab results.<sup>[4]</sup> Additionally, they observed personalized risk assessments, lifestyle recommendations, preventive medicine, and chronic disease management through a disease management platform.

At the end of the day, we met with the participants of the exchange, EYFDM Türkiye team and resident doctors from Trakya University Department of Family Medicine for dinner as part of the social program. This event, where we had the chance to get to know each other more closely, enabled us to interact between cultures. Thus, a day full of scientific, social and cultural activities were completed.

### **25 April 2024, Thursday**

The first day of EUROPREV Forum 2024 started with a pleasant opening session with the participation of national and international participants as well as the rectorate of Trakya University, the dean of the Faculty of Medicine and the valuable members of the EUROPREV board of directors. After the opening speech and introduction of EUROPREV by Prof. Dr. Serdar Öztora, who is a member of the board of directors of EUROPREV and the chairman of this congress, as well as representing our country in this network, the participants had the opportunity to listen to the seminal lecture of Prof. Dr. John Brandt Brodersen, who works



**Photograph 10. First Day of EUROPREV Forum**

in Denmark and is the president of EUROPREV, entitled 'Benefits and harms of screening' on the profit / loss relationship of screening, one of the cornerstones of preventive health services (Photographs 10).<sup>[5]</sup>

Afterwards, Dr. Ahmeda Ali, who works in the field of Family Medicine specialty education in Ireland, presented different perspectives to the participants with her speech titled 'Doctors' Awareness and Management of Screening Harms' and then included examples presented by participants from other countries in an interactive session (Photograph 10). During the lunch break, a poster walk was organized, and Dr. Şeyma Handan Akyön and Dr. Gülşah Onur presented their posters.<sup>[5]</sup>

The afternoon panel started with the song 'People Are Strange' by Dr. Ekin Dikmen and Dr. Mustafa Özdemir accompanied by Prof. Dr. Serdar Öztora with guitar recital (Photograph 10). Dr. İkbâl Hümay Arman from the EYFDM Türkiye team addressed a current issue with the presentation titled 'Achieving the Balance: Primum Non Nocere in the Era of Overdiagnosis', while Dr. Gülşah Onur presented 'Frugal Innovations: Cost-Effective Approaches to Primary Health Care', Dr. Gülşah Onur provided insights for the future. In this panel, new perspectives on issues that have recently started to be discussed in the literature were presented by Dr. Şeyma Handan Akyön also touched upon a topic of interest to the audience with her presentation titled 'Digital Minimalism: Using Technology for Efficient Primary Care', which attracted the attention of the



audience. The panel was enriched with questions from the participants, including the President of EUROPREV, and answers from the EYFDM Türkiye team (Photograph 11).<sup>[5]</sup>

This was followed by the EUROPREV Forum oral presentation session, where qualitative and quantitative research from the perspective of preventive health services was presented on a variety of topics ranging from obesity management in primary care to tobacco control, from preventive strategies for non-communicable diseases to mammography screening refusal.<sup>[5]</sup>



**Photograph 11. EYFDM Türkiye Coordinators Speeches and Workshops of EUROPREV Forum**

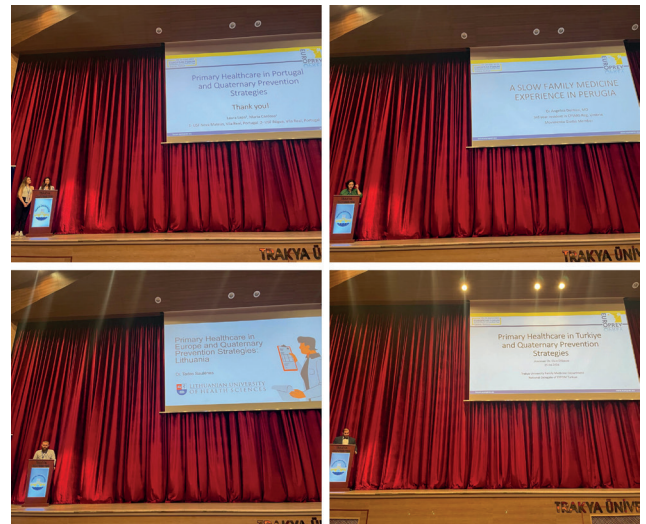
In the last session, two parallel workshops were held and participants participated in these interactive sessions according to their interests. In one hall, a lively discussion was held on what the research priorities for preventive health services might be, while in the other hall, an informative discussion was held on whether preventive health services need a new approach in primary care. EYFDM Türkiye coordinators actively participated in both workshops. While Dr. Ekin Dikmen took part in the research priorities workshop as a moderator, Dr. İkbâl Hümay Arman was also the moderator of the new approaches workshop (Photographs 11).<sup>[5]</sup>

The first day was completed with a full day of scientific activities and a Gala Dinner was organized in the garden of a historical mansion, which allowed national and international participants to experience Turkish

cuisine together and have pleasant conversations. At the end of the night, the participants had fun with local music and mingled even more.

## 26 April 2024, Friday

On the second day of the EUROPREV Forum, the EYFDM Türkiye team participated in a joint scientific program with TAHEK. The forum began with Prof. Dr. John Brandt Brodersen's presentation on "Overdiagnosis," which discussed the negative impacts of unnecessary tests and procedures, including anxiety and medication side effects.<sup>[5]</sup> The EYFDM Türkiye team also organized a session on "Primary Healthcare in Europe and Quaternary Prevention Strategies," where young family doctors from Türkiye, Portugal, Italy, and Lithuania presented their country's strategies (Photograph 12).<sup>[5]</sup>



**Photograph 12. EYFDM Panel of Quaternary Prevention**

In Türkiye, a new policy on omeprazole aims to prevent multiple prescriptions of proton pump inhibitors, reducing medication overuse. Portugal's strategies include the 'S Clinico' system, which tracks patient history to avoid unnecessary tests, and the 'Norms of Clinical Orientation (NOC)' for appropriate medication use. Italy focuses on individualized patient care, patient education, and careful assessment of over-prescribed medications. Lithuania emphasizes reducing unnecessary medication use and promoting healthy lifestyles through patient education programs.

On the same day, during the first day of TAHEK, the EYFDM Türkiye team organized an 'Introduction to EYFDM' session to spark interest among young Turkish family doctors and encourage participation. Dr. Ekin Dikmen, Dr. İkbâl Hümay Arman, and Dr. Mehmet Kocabaş explained the international exchange



Photograph 13. TAHEK's EYFDM Türkiye Session



Photograph 14. EYFDM Exchangers on Balkan Congress Center

programs, conference opportunities, scholarships, and training initiatives offered by EYFDM to support young family doctors.<sup>[6]</sup> They also shared experiences from these exchange programs, with Dr. Mehmet Kocabaş discussing his time in the Hippocrates exchange program in Italy, while Dr. Hande Büyükdag and Dr. Gülşah Onur shared insights from the LOVAH Conference Exchange Program in the Netherlands (Photograph 13).<sup>[6]</sup>

### 27 April 2024, Saturday

One of the key highlights of the exchange program was the bowling tournament, where participants divided into two teams and competed fiercely. A trophy was awarded to the most successful player, making this event a tradition for TAHEK, held for the second time this year (Photograph 15).<sup>[7]</sup>

The most emotional moment of the program came on departure day, as participants were reluctant to



Photograph 15. 2nd Traditional Bowling Tournament of TAHEK

say goodbye after their wonderful experiences. They strengthened their connections through social media and ensured their guests reached the bus station safely, maintaining contact until they arrived in Istanbul. The program fostered new friendships and connections between countries. As EYFDM Türkiye, we hope to meet again in other programs that we will carry out in our country and open to distant horizons together.

### 28 April 2024, Sunday

At the end of a full week, on the last day of saying goodbye to our colleagues who completed the exchange program, as the EYFDM Türkiye team, we received feedback and suggestions from each of them about their experience. As a common conclusion of us, the hosts and the colleagues we hosted, we have observed how valuable the EYFDM movement is for us young family doctors. With these new connections we established professionally and individually, we completed our program by agreeing to meet again in congresses and exchange programs with the desire to share this experience, which opened new doors for us in the future of family medicine, with all our colleagues (Photograph 16).



Photograph 16. Trakya University Family Medicine Department on The Last Day of 13. TAHEK Congress



### Host's Feedback

Fatma Avcı: "I hosted Dr. Angelica from Italy, and it was a joyful learning experience for both of us. It provided an opportunity to explore a new culture and enhance my communication skills while learning about a different healthcare system. Beyond attending the congress, I enjoyed introducing our city to the exchange program friends, sharing our culture, and discussing our day with Angelica at home. Waking her up with a traditional breakfast was especially delightful. I am grateful to the exchange program for the enjoyable experiences and new friendship it offered."

Emel Aygün Bursa: "I am very happy that this year's EUROPREV Forum took place in Edirne. The discussions on health systems in various countries provided us with new perspectives to reflect on our family medicine system. Enjoyable conversations with friends from the exchange program while visiting Edirne's historical sites and trying regional specialties greatly improved my English-speaking skills. I hosted Dr. Laura and Dr. Marta from Portugal, whose kindness and cheerfulness made the visit unforgettable. I hope to meet again and continue our friendship."

Ekin Dikmen: "I am very happy to host Dr. Tadas Saulenas from Lithuania in this exchange program that I worked on every detail with all my dedication for weeks. In this intensive program that I hosted on behalf of my department and my duty as the EYFDM Türkiye National Delegate, Tadas and I returned home at the end of the day to evaluate the day and talk about our family medicine systems in detail. These conversations will always be special to me."

### Acknowledgements

The EYFDM Türkiye team extends its gratitude to Trakya University Family Medicine Department academicians Prof. Dr. Hamdi Nezih Dağdeviren, Prof. Dr. Ayşe Çaylan, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Önder Sezer, and Prof. Dr. Serdar Öztora for pioneering the exchange program. We also thank Dr. Mert Bardakçı, Dr. Halil Volkan Tekayak, and Dr. Ali Öztürk for their guidance in preparing and executing the program. Special thanks to Dr. Esra Arın Bal and Dr. Emre Sarı for sharing their practices during the family health center visits. Lastly, we sincerely appreciate Dr. Emel Aygün Bursa, Dr. Merve Çakmak, Dr. Fatma Avcı, Dr. Fatma Tüzer Eroğlu, Dr. Akif Eroğlu, Dr. Gizem Köz, Dr. Sena Akyar, and Dr. Ahmet Fürkan Kabacık, along with the residents of Trakya University's Department of Family Medicine, for being the true backbone of this exchange program.

### REFERENCES

1. World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA). Dr Fons SIPS: 1940 – 2016 Vasco da Gama Movement founder. 2016. Available at: <https://www.globalfamilydoctor.com/member/Notices/DrFonsSIPSNetherlands.aspx> (Accessed on Jun 10, 2024).
2. European Young Family Doctors Movement (EYFDM). History. 2024. Available at: <https://eyfdm.eu/about/history> (Accessed on Jun 10, 2024).
3. T.C. Trakya Üniversitesi Sultan 2. Bayezid Külliyesi Sağlık Müzesi. Tarihçe. 2013. Available at: <https://saglikmuzesi.trakya.edu.tr/pages/tarihce> (Accessed on Jun 10, 2024).
4. T.C. Sağlık Bakanlığı, E-NABİZ. 2018. Available at: <https://enabiz.gov.tr/Yardim/Index> (Accessed on Jun 10, 2024).
5. European Network on Prevention and Health Promotion in Family Medicine and General Practice (EUROPREV). Program. 2024. Available at: <https://archive.euoprev.eu/2024/foyer/index/bae06333-504f-40d3-bf39-696e5c995a56.html> (Accessed on Jun 10, 2024).
6. Trakya Aile Hekimliği Kongresi (TAHEK). Program. 2024. Available at: <https://tahek.esfam.org/page/program-5> (Accessed on Jun 10, 2024).
7. Bardakçı M, Altınışık T, Öztürk A, ve ark. VdGM 2020 değişim programı Edirne'de yapıldı. Türk Aile Hek Derg. 2020;24:i-viii.