

# WOMEN FOR ONCOLOGY

An ESMO Initiative

## ESMO Women for Oncology (W4O) monitoring study

### Executive Summary

The main objective of the ESMO Women for Oncology (W4O) study is to monitor the representation of women at national/international oncology congresses and societies, in order to raise awareness and promote equal access to career-development opportunities for female oncologists. For 2016 and 2017, data are reported on 34 congresses with 6739 speakers and 36 congresses with 8112 speakers respectively. The current analysis also includes information for 2017 on 51 oncology societies with 663 board members. To make the comparison more informative, we have referred to previous congress results for 2015 (with a few cases from 2014) and previous society board results for 2016.

The **representation of women** oncologists as speakers at major **international oncology congresses**, significantly **increased** from 31.1% in 2014/2015, to 32.8% in 2016 and **34.6% in 2017**, with higher female participation at congresses in the US than in Europe. For the year 2017, female representation at US-based congresses (AACR, ASCO, ASTRO) was 36.5% versus 32% at Europe-based congresses (ECCO, ESMO, ESTRO)<sup>1</sup>.

For **national congresses**, female representation did **not change** significantly (28.9% in 2014/2015, 31.5% in 2016 and **29.2% in 2017**), but a **significant regional effect** was observed. The percentage of female speakers at national congresses in Asia/Oceania was consistently and significantly lower than at national congresses in Europe or South America. For example, in 2017, 23.3% of speakers at 12 Asian/Oceanian congresses were women versus 34.2% in 13 European and 32% at 5 South American congresses).

The **representation of women** oncologists in leadership positions as **board members of oncology societies** for the year **2017 was 30.5%** (27.8% in 10 international and 31.2% in 41 national societies), while **15.7% of presidents of oncology societies were women**. There were no real changes compared to 2016.

A positive association between the percentage of female speakers at a congress with the percentage of female board members in the corresponding society was detected.

Last but not least, the representation of women oncologists as ESMO members significantly increased from 40.5% in 2015 to 44.5% in 2017. **More than 50% of young ESMO members are now female**. In 2017, 53.7% of members under 40 years were women, compared to 36.1% of those over 40 years.

---

<sup>1</sup> AACR = American Association for Cancer Research; ASCO = American Society of Clinical Oncology; ECCO = European CanCer Organisation; ESTRO = European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology