

Committee Report 2025

ESO Stroke Unit Certification Committee

Report of the ESO Committees - Summary

Stroke Unit Certification Committee

- **Apostolos Safouris, Greece (Chair)**
- Aleksandras Vilionskis, Lithuania
- Ana Catarina Fonseca, Portugal
- Vasileios Lioutas, USA (non-voting advisory member)
- Bjorn Thorarinsson, Iceland
- Cristina Hobeau, France
- Marta Nowakowska-Kotas, Poland
- Michael Knoflach, Austria
- Natalia Perez de la Ossa, Spain
- Paolo Candelaresi, Italy
- Volker Putz, Germany

Report of the ESO Stroke Unit Certification Committee

Operational Meetings

- x12: Every first Thursday of the month

Presence

- ESO Booth, May, Helsinki
- EAN, June, Helsinki



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Since ESOC 2025, the committee has met monthly to advance several key initiatives:

- Live Audit Proposal (10% of Applications): Development of a strengthened audit framework to reinforce compliance, transparency, and quality assurance.
- Collaboration with the Angels Initiative: Ongoing coordination to support shared goals in stroke care improvement.
- ESJ Paper Submission: Preparation of a manuscript outlining the updated accreditation criteria.
- European Stroke Accreditation Survey: Joint project with SAP-E to assess accreditation practices across Europe.

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The committee identified several new strategic projects and distributed responsibilities among members. Leveraging their **diverse national expertise**, the group has been able to provide valuable, multi-country insights.

- **AHA–ESO Crosstalk:** Initiating contact with the American Heart Association to gain insights into their audit systems and operational processes.
- **Delphi Manuscript:** Finalising the Delphi Consensus Protocol manuscript on Key Performance Indicators for ESO Stroke Unit Certification.
- **Internal SOP for Auditors:** Developing a formal Standard Operating Procedure for ESO Certification auditors, addressing a current gap.
- **Application Process Streamlining:** Removing outdated documentation requirements and integrating KPI reporting into future applications.
- **Webinar (with SAP-E):** Planning a joint webinar, including definition of the content, objectives, and structure.
- **Website & Portal Redesign:** Assessing requirements for a new certification process and website and exploring potential suppliers to build an improved application portal.

These initiatives are essential to strengthening and modernising the future of ESO Certification.

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In total 273 certifications finalised

127 Stroke Units, 146 Stroke Centres

224 simplified/endorsed certifications
49 international certifications

+ 15 applications in review

20 countries

Alongside these new initiatives, the ESO Committee Members continued their essential work in the background:

- Reviewing and certifying Stroke Units and Centres across Europe
- Maintaining high standards through ongoing re-certification processes

These continuous activities ensure the quality, credibility, and growth of the ESO Certification.