

## The History of EJBI – Jana’s Legacy

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Crucial for launching the European Journal for Biomedical Informatics (EJBI) was an EU project (1992-1995) to develop and establish the European Centre of Medical Informatics, Statistics and Epidemiology (EuroMISE Center) at the Charles University and the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague in 1992 under the leadership of our unforgettable Jana Zvárová. This endeavor was strongly supported by Rolf Engelbrecht and other EFMI activists. The EuroMISE Center was intended to manage EU and national projects aiming at advancing medicine with medical informatics, statistics and epidemiology, that way promoting the turn from empiric to evidence-based medicine. Another and even more important objective of the EuroMISE Center was training and further education of graduated students, young scientists and practitioners from Central and Eastern Europe by experts from Germany, other Western-European countries, but also from Oversea. Both dedications have been supported by EFMI, especially by Rolf Engelbrecht, George Mihalas, Arie Hasman, and others, later on also encouraging me to join the team. The spectrum I was invited to address in my lectures included EHR systems, security and privacy, systems architecture, modeling and design, interoperability, MI standards, knowledge representation and management, etc., not considered that much so far. The format of EuroMISE activities has been regional, national and international conferences, workshops, courses, and seminars. It especially, but not exclusively, addressed graduated, PhD, and PostDoc students as well as young scientists. In the course of its evolution, Jana and I established in the early 2000 a program for jointly training international PhD students enrolled at EuroMISE and at the German PhD Colleges at the Health Telematics Group in Erlangen and thereafter at the eHealth Competence Center Regensburg. In that context, we discussed the establishment of a journal allowing unexperienced and/or young scientists to publish internationally the results of their projects and studies with special editorial support. Furthermore, we decided to accept papers in English, but (sometimes in parallel) also in the authors’ native languages. Jana should mainly care for Czech volumes, while I promised to edit the majority of the English volumes. In 2005, the European Journal of Biomedical Informatics was born. EFMI endorsed this new “homemade” journal, managed by Jana with a minimal budget, thereby taking the main part of organizational, administrative and regulatory burden. In cases where EJBI published conference proceedings, the production was partially sponsored. After the successful EFMI Special Topic Conference “Data and Knowledge for Medical Decision Support”, which took place 17-19 April 2013 in Prague, chaired by Jana Zvárová, Arie Hasman and myself, we decided to establish another format for training and educating international young scientists

within the EuroMISE Center: the EuroMISE Mentoring Association (EMA). After Jana passed away on 5 July 2017, many of her important achievements could not be maintained anymore, including EMA.

Over its 15 years of existence, EJBI continuously received higher recognition and international acknowledgement. Thereby, Jana and I edited two third of the EJBI volumes published between 2005 and 2020. However, essential accompanying measures such as the inclusion in relevant databases, etc., could not be managed within the given organizational and financial framework. Beginning in 2015 and 2016, I urged Jana in many meetings and conferences presented in EJBI to move the journal to a commercial platform. Without including others in the decision process and just asking me for my readiness to proceed in my special service for the journal, Jana moved EJBI to the Pulsus Group located in Canada, part of the Omics Publishing Group located in India. After the deal, she informed me about the outcome, again securing my strong and continuous support.

When Jana passed away in 2018, Pulsus approached me, referencing Jana's recommendation to make me the EJBI Editor in Chief. Having retired from my job since years, so missing the resources needed for such engagement, I declined the offer, but promised Pulsus to care for an alternative. I approached almost all EJBI Editorial Board Members, but also other EFMI and IMIA activists, who all rejected the challenge for different reasons. Finally, I could convince Mauro Giacomini to act as EJBI Editor in Chief.