

The German Orthodontic Society was founded in 1908 as „German Society for Orthodontics“ (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Orthodontie, DGO*). The Society had its origins in Cologne when twenty members of the “Central Association of German Dentists” (*Centralverein Deutscher Zahnärzte*) with special interest in orthodontics established this new scientific society during a meeting in Cologne. It was conceived as an academic organisation. At its first scientific meeting, the pathology and therapy of oral breathing were discussed. The first presidents were Prof. Heydenhauß (1908-1911) and Prof. Pfaff (1911-1920). In 1920, the Society was renamed „German Society for Dental Orthodontics“ (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für zahnärztliche Orthodontie, DGfzO*). Its presidents were Prof. Simon (1920-1927) and Prof. Winkler (1929-1937).

During the presidency of Prof. Korkhaus (1937-1966), the Society was re-established in 1949 as a non-profit corporation, registered in Bonn and called German Orthodontic Society (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Kieferorthopädie, DGKFO*). The presidents were Prof. Hausser (1966-1981), Prof. Schmuth (1981-1987), Prof. Witt (1987-1993), Prof. Komposch (1993-1999) and Prof. Schopf (1999-2005). After an amendment of the Society’s by-laws by the General Assembly in 2004, Prof. Kahl-Nieke was elected president-elect with a subsequent presidential term of office of four years. In 2008, the Society had more than 2600 members.

The German Orthodontic Society is the scientific association of dental specialists dedicated to the prevention and correction of dental and skeletal irregularities. Its aims are

a) to encourage and support basic and clinical research in the field of orthodontics as well as in related clinical and scientific disciplines;

b) to promote high standards of science and practice in graduate, postgraduate and continuing orthodontic education and

c) to pursue and advance the national and international scientific exchange. The Society publishes the bilingual „Journal of Orofacial Orthopedics / *Fortschritte der Kieferorthopädie*“.

The German Orthodontic Society is a member of the World Federation of Orthodontics (WFO) and the European Federation of Orthodontics (FEO).

In order to promote a well-founded continuous education of its members and to enhance the close ties between research activities and clinical practice, the German Orthodontic Society organizes annual scientific meetings. On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Orthodontic Society (EOS) in 2007, the DGKFO held its annual meeting in Berlin

as a joined meeting together with the EOS. There were more than 3.000 delegates from 71 countries. Thus, it was one of the biggest congresses in the history of European orthodontics.

In 2008, the DGKFO celebrated its Centennial Meeting with over 2.200 colleagues from more than 20 countries in Cologne, the city where the Society was founded in 1908. The main topics of this meeting “Dysfunction and dysgnathia” and “The interdisciplinary treatment of severe skeletal dysgnathias / malocclusion” encouraged an interesting exchange of ideas and information. For the first time during an annual scientific meeting of the DGKFO, courses for orthodontist’s laboratory technicians and orthodontic assistants were offered and they were fully booked. A charity action for the establishment of a patient history database of the German Cleft Palat Craniofacial Association (GCPA) was performed and it was a great success as well.

At the DGKFO meetings, prestigious awards are presented, among them the Arnold Biber Award for outstanding research and awards for best publications in the “Journal of Orofacial Orthopedics / *Fortschritte der Kieferorthopädie*”. Furthermore, there are three awards for excellent poster presentations at each annual meeting.

In 2008, the following two publications were awarded:

- Jensen U, Ruf S: Longitudinal changes in temporomandibular disorders in young adults: Indication for systematic temporomandibular joint screening. J Orofac Orthop 2007;68:501
- Zimmer B, SeifiShirvandeh N: Changes in gingival recession related to orthodontic treatment of traumatic deep bites in adults. J Orofac Orthop 2007;68:232

Moreover, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Society in 2008, the DGKFO awarded for the first time two additional awards related to the two specific research subjects “CMD Diagnostics and Treatment” and “Adult Orthodontics”:

- Hirsch C: No increased risk of temporomandibular disorders and bruxism in children and adolescents during orthodontic therapy. J Orofac Orthop 2009;70:39
- Kinzinger G, Frye L, Diedrich P: Class II treatment in adults: Comparing camouflage orthodontics, dentofacial orthopedics and orthognathic surgery – A cephalometric study to evaluate various therapeutic effects. J Orofac Orthop 2009;70:63

Since the year 2000, more than 50 orthodontic research projects have been supported with grants from the DGKFO Research Fund. The projects are listed on the Society’s website [www.dgkfo.de](http://www.dgkfo.de). One aspect of selecting research projects for funding is the promotion of evidence-based orthodontics. Thus, projects on “Determination of the position of the maxillary cuspid germ using digital volume tomography with regard to preventive deciduous tooth extraction and the potential risk of retention” and “Oral health-related quality of life in

children and adults: the development and evaluation of German-language MLQ-instruments” were included recently.

For the purpose of evidence-based orthodontics, the DGKFO provides recommendations on special questions of orthodontic treatment such as “Three-dimensional radiological diagnostics in orthodontics”, “Orthodontic treatment of patients with high cardiologic risk”, “Treatment of adult patients with obstructive sleep apnea using mandibular advancement devices”, “Diagnostics and treatment of orofacial dysfunctions” and “Orthodontic anchorage using bicortical screws and palatal implants”.

The DGKFO represents the German orthodontists as an appropriate body to consult on all matters and political issues relating to orthodontics. It is actively involved in the establishment of a modular system of postgraduate orthodontic training in Germany.

Moreover, almost all chairpersons of the orthodontic departments at German universities are members of the Network of Erasmus based Programmes NEBEOP founded by the European Orthodontic Teachers Forum in June 2008 to strengthen the level of postgraduate training in orthodontics in Europe.

The 82<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting of the German Orthodontic Society will be held in Mainz from 16 to 19 September 2009. The main topics “Biology and technology in orthodontic treatment” and “Orthodontics for adults” will give the opportunity to discuss questions of oral health-related quality of life ([www.dgkfo2009.medizin.uni-mainz.de](http://www.dgkfo2009.medizin.uni-mainz.de)).

In 2010, the annual meeting of the DGKFO will take place in the framework of a joined meeting of all scientific societies unified in the German Society for Dental and Oral Medicine (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zahn-, Mund- und Kieferheilkunde, DGZMK*) in November from 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> in Frankfurt.