A SWOT Analysis of the IMIA Educational Accreditation Process

John Mantas
University of Athens, Greece
Past President EFMI, IMIA VP
Sites visits

- **Finland**, University of Eastern Finland, Master’s in Health Informatics
- **Chile**, DuoC, Diploma (Vocational program) implemented in 3 cities (Santiago, Valparaiso, Concepcion)
- **Germany**, University of Göttingen, Bachelor and Master’s Programs in Medical Informatics
- Planned visits in Taiwan, S. Arabia, Egypt
SWOT ANALYSIS

Primary factors

S - Strengths
W - Weaknesses
O - Opportunities
T - Threats
Strengths

• IMIA has the highest **reputation** in the scientific field of biomedical informatics.

• IMIA’s **Medinfo** Conferences gathers the highest quality of papers and participants in biomedical informatics.

• The IMIA **Educational Recommendations** are a document that has been used on all continents to improve existing courses and to assist in establishing new programs.

• There are **adequate academic personnel** within IMIA and its member organizations that have huge experience in national and international educational accreditation processes.
Weaknesses

• Shortage of *logistical and secretarial support* for the site visit committees.

• IMIA’s *internal procedure* led to delays in taking up the final decisions.

• *Transparency is required* at all phases including the necessary financial coverage of the expenses of the site visit committees.
Opportunities

• There is a **large number of institutions and universities** across the world looking for an IMIA accreditation.

• There are countries where the **culture of national evaluation is rather weak** or still developing, providing an opportunity for international organizations such as IMIA to play an important role.

• **Policy in healthcare systems** requires well organized programs in biomedical informatics that will provide, at an appropriate level that is recognized internationally, education for their healthcare professionals.
Threats

• The accreditation process, now approved by IMIA’s General Assembly, now needs to be implemented and institutionalized as quickly as possible following a rigorous business process and avoiding the trap of internal bureaucracy.

• IMIA as an international organization has moved first to provide a formal biomedical informatics accreditation process. There is always the danger, however, that if the program is not supported from within the IMIA community, there will be space for other organizations to fill the gap.
Conclusions -1

- IMIA has a long and successful tradition in Education with its successful meetings of the WG1 (Health and Medical Informatics Education)
- IMIA developed and updated Educational Recommendations well accepted by the International Community. The document can be downloaded from IMIA website and it is freely available.
Conclusions - 2

• IMIA initiated an Accreditation process that will be equally successful and accepted by the Academic Community, if IMIA develops an appropriate business plan for implementation in the coming years following the trial period that finishes at the end of 2013.
Thank you very much for your attention!