

Stephan Gordts (1947-2026)



With deep respect and sadness, we bid farewell to Dr. Stephan Gordts, honorary member of the European Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy (ESGE), who passed away on May 22, 2026.

Dr. Gordts was a pioneer in reproductive medicine and surgery, and one of the founders of modern fertility care in Belgium. He played a key role in the birth of the first *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) baby in Belgium in 1983 and founded the Leuven Institute for Fertility & Embryology (LIFE) in 1984, where he remained Scientific Director until his death.

Throughout his impressive career, he combined medical excellence with innovation and humanity. He gained international recognition for his work in minimally invasive fertility surgery and for the development of transvaginal hydrolaparoscopy—a technique that was applied and studied worldwide. With this technique, he was the first one to visualise and record the beauty of the normal ovulatory process.

In addition to being a physician, he was also a mentor, researcher, and inspirator. The courses in microsurgery he organised at the Centre of Surgical Technology in Leuven, Belgium, in the late seventies were legendary. Afterwards, Stephan opened a private IVF centre under the umbrella of the LIFE institution. Science and innovation have always guided him to push the boundaries and improve his clinical practice and patient care. Training and education, transferring his knowledge without any hesitation and with patience and kindness, were the engines for the numerous courses and congresses he organised in the field of reproductive medicine and minimal invasive surgery. He was given the most prestigious Honorary Membership of the ESGE in 2024.

With more than one hundred scientific publications and decades of dedication within international associations, he left a lasting impact on generations of doctors and on thousands of families who were able to experience hope and happiness thanks to his work.

Those who knew him remember him not only for his exceptional expertise but also for his drive, vision, and warm commitment to patients and colleagues.

His legacy lives on in the science he helped shape, in the lives he helped create, and in the people he inspired. Our community has lost its Gentleman and a Gentle Man.

Stephan will be missed, and his passing affects us deeply, but the richness and value we gained from those intense moments shared with Stephan will remain priceless.

With love, Rudi

Dr. Rudi Campo

Member of the Board of Directors, European Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy