

Report about the 2. EAACI/UEMS Examination in Allergology/Clinical Immunology, 7 June 2009, Warsaw, Poland

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On 7 June 2009, the 2nd European Examination in Allergology and Clinical Immunology took place in Warsaw. 15 candidates took the examination, 8 from Switzerland and 7 from other countries (2 Greece, 1 Slovenia, 1 Spain, 1 Austria, 1 Italy, 1 Belgium). All applicants entered the examination via the EAACI path, none via UEMS path. Participation from Switzerland was high, as 5 candidates from Switzerland took this examination as the written part of their national examination, and 3 used it for self-evaluation. 13 of the 15 candidates passed the examination.

The examination was based on revised questions from the question pool and on many new questions prepared by the task force members and from different centres. The questions were evaluated by the task force chairman (WJP) and the IML (Institute for Medical Teaching, Bern), and 117 questions were finally selected for this examination.

The selection process followed the blueprint, indicating the required knowledge for the examination: It comprised some questions about basic immunology and some questions about clinical immunology (autoimmunity and immune deficiency). The majority of questions (ca. 70%) covered all topics of allergology (allergens, dermatological and respiratory allergy, anaphylaxis and venom hypersensitivity, drug hypersensitivity, food hypersensitivity, pediatric allergology, issues like pregnancy and allergology, professional allergies, eosinophilic disorders, mastocytosis, CI-INH deficiency, etc.). The examination consisted of type A questions (one answer of 5 is correct), and type Kprime questions (4 answers of which each one might be correct or false). As revealed by the report of IML, the examination itself had a high standard.

The participation was disappointingly low, and the Swiss participants asked, why it was not done in Switzerland, as the majority of participants came from there. The EAACI examination is obviously not yet accepted by the different national societies, even if they have a full allergy-specialty in their own country. Astonishingly, there was also no active support of the examination by the junior members or their network, although it was originally very much supported and actually created to improve their situation in Europe. This was also realised by the participants of the examination: They wondered about the low participation and indicated that it was not sufficiently announced (e.g. in the congress-programme).

We performed two rather successful examinations – and thus have partly achieved our goal, at least regarding the quality of the examination. The opportunities for a successful examination are intact:

- The crucial aspect for a successful examination is a pool of good questions, and EAACI can now build on over 500 questions, of which over 100 questions were even already evaluated in exams !
- We have found a reliable and professional partner in IML.
- Many colleagues have learned how to formulate questions, and it is to hope that the new task force will be successful in motivating these colleagues to revise old and create new questions.
- A closer collaboration with national societies and acceptance of this examination in English language is needed.