A brighter future ahead

As summer draws to a close, I hope you all had the time to wind-down a bit and relax in order to recharge the batteries. Although summer for most should be one of the least busy periods of the year, EAACI has been hard at work with a number of activities.

As you are all aware, the EAACI Annual Congress that took place in Vienna was a huge success and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all involved. Nearly 8000 delegates participated in a very exciting exchange of the latest scientific findings. All the sessions were crowded for all of the days of the Congress and many were packed full, despite the nice weather drawing us to Vienna sightseeing. The Women in Science Symposium on severe asthma, featuring three outstanding female scientists, had a huge attendance, as did the Hot Topic session presenting the EAACI User’s Guide to Molecular Allergology and the PRACTALL session with AAAAI.

The 2016 PRACTALL session focused on the EAACI AAAAI PRACTALL collaboration on Precision Medicine, the first part of which tackles the recently published article on respiratory allergy and atopic dermatitis. The publication is hugely pioneering and it is hoped it will progress allergology overall, resulting in better cures for our patients. The second part of the PRACTALL on Precision Medicine will be devoted to food allergy, drug allergy and anaphylaxis, and is intended to be published in Allergy by the autumn.

The main distinguishing trait of the EAACI Annual Congresses has always been the combination of science, education and a very friendly context in which people enjoy themselves. At the Welcome Reception, EAACI’s 60th anniversary “birthday cake” was distributed to delegates, whilst at the Beat Allergy Run & Walk 225 participants showed their joy of life, and Junior Members celebrated in the wonderful setting of the Palais Ferstel.

Continuing with the air of celebration, EAACI’s 60th Anniversary will peak with the Allergen Immunotherapy Summit when the Academy will be returning to its roots in the historic city of Florence, where it was established in 1956. The Allergen Immunotherapy Guidelines for Clinical Practice will be the main focus of this initiative. The draft recommendations will be submitted to the first round of public comment involving almost 100 stakeholder participants. This comes off the back of a two-day face-to-face meeting which took place at Villa Condulmer from 29–30 June in Italy. That meeting was attended by more than 60 experts from all over the world, some travelling from as far as Central America and Japan. The meeting was the second time that the Taskforce members had met face-to-face and it was the perfect occasion for them to commence analysing the systematic reviews and moulding the first recommendations. Now it’s full steam ahead for all the Taskforces but I have full confidence in their expertise and professionalism that we will make it!

Other initiatives in the pipeline are represented by the implementation of the previously published “Guidelines for clinical practice for food allergy and anaphylaxis”. Dealing with anaphylaxis in primary care is one area being addressed and includes the development of tools to facilitate awareness and education on anaphylaxis management for general practitioners. The material will be ready for presentation and distribution at the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis meeting (FAAM 2016 in Rome, 13–15 October). In this context, a round table will be organised with the participation of representatives from the European Union of General Practitioners (UEMO), endorsed and hosted by the Italian Federation of Physicians (FNOMCeO). Preparation is well under way for FAAM 2016, which we hope will surpass previous participation records. Comparing numbers with the same number of weeks to go in 2014, FAAM 2016 currently has more than double the number of registered participants. This is a great harbinger for what should be a unique opportunity to share advancements in food allergy and anaphylaxis across the globe: it promises to be a very productive meeting.

The International Severe Asthma Forum (ISAF 2016) to be held in Manchester, UK (17–19 November) is already receiving a lot of interest from scientists and industry, joining forces for a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying severe asthma exacerbations and the options for their control. At the EU level, EAACI has continued to lobby for the allergy specialty and for a better management of allergic diseases. In this regard a new Taskforce has been established with the aim to deliver recommendations from the clinicians’ side for clinical trials in children suffering from allergic diseases. The Pediatric Committee of the European Medicine Agency (EMA) has been invited to take part in this activity as an observer in order to create synergies and maximise efforts for the benefit of our patients.

Last but not least, many changes have occurred at EAACI Headquarters. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the new Executive Director, Sue Paredi. Sue joined EAACI at the beginning of July and has a well-rounded leadership profile with an extensive track record in project and general management roles. She is an excellent analytical and conceptual thinker with a clear focus on practical solutions. We are delighted to welcome Sue on board and look forward to fruitful collaborations together in order to drive EAACI forward into a bigger and brighter future.

Antonella Muraro
EAACI President
Dear Readers,

I hope you have enjoyed the summer holidays and had a relaxing time. It may be that some of you are still on vacation and have just returned home to find the third issue of the Newsletter waiting for you.

The cover of this issue reminds us that this year EAACI is celebrating 60 years of excellence in research and education in allergy prevention and healthy living. Since the beginning of 2016 the Academy has been conducting an information campaign to all members, National Societies, national and international health stakeholders and policymakers with the aim of raising awareness of the epidemiological weight of allergies and asthma and the chances for prevention and control of the diseases. All these aspects were also analysed during the second EAACI high-level EU stakeholders luncheon held in June in Vienna, where the need for continuous collaborations in EU actions at policy level was stressed. The EAACI campaign will end in November with an official celebration presided over by our President, Antonella Muraro, at the Allergy Immunotherapy Meeting in Florence.

But this issue is particularly dedicated to the great success of the Annual Congress in Vienna, entitled “Waltzing with allergens”. Thanks to the Academy, the Scientific Programme Coordinator, the Local Organising Committee and Headquarters, the scientific level as well as the general atmosphere at the Annual Congress were really great. The total number of attendees was nearly 8000, with people coming from all over the world, presenting more than 1000 posters. Many topics were discussed from basic research to clinical practice. Also in Vienna, the “EAACI Molecular Allergology User’s Guide” was launched, the realisation of which 65 authors contributed towards. This book, as well as the EAACI Global Atlases distributed at the Annual Congress, were already sold out at the end of the first day of the meeting, underlying the success of all EAACI educational materials. For this reason, I would like to remind you of the open access journal Pediatric Allergy and Immunology (PAI)’s supplement on molecular allergology (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/pai.12563/epdf) and the pdf E-Book which can be found on the EAACI website (http://www.eaaci.org/documents/Molecular_Allergology-web.pdf).

Staying in the field of education, the success of the Clinical Village continues, thanks this year to our Austrian colleagues. Each station provided written information on diagnostic and therapeutic products as well as practical demonstrations in the different fields of allergy, and was very well attended. In this context the first Postgraduate Course for Primary Care Doctors was organised and developed using an innovative and interactive format based on different clinical case scenarios. The use of both English and German languages resulted in a wide participation. The objective of the “Applying 21st Century leadership skills in your daily practice” Postgraduate Course was to improve leadership skills and to develop empathic communication and a problem solving attitude in young and senior physicians, in favour of our patients and daily work.

The National Societies Forum met for a second time, and gave participants the opportunity to share current issues coming from local situations in Europe, such as in Austria, Sweden and The Netherlands. The National Societies Committee’s Business Meeting addressed many topics like the European registry of allergy care and guidelines.

In terms of collaboration with non-European Societies, Vienna was the occasion to discuss the PRACTALL program with the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, and specifically the new PRACTALL on Precision Medicine in Allergy and Asthma, with particular regard to atopic dermatitis and allergic asthma.

Vienna was also the occasion in which the incoming President, Ioana Agache, was elected. Many congratulations to the second woman to be President of the Academy! Considering the long way that women are walking for equal opportunities, I wish to thank all women scientists for their efforts in our field.

Before the next Annual Congress in Helsinki in 2017, please don’t miss EAACI’s next Focused Meetings as well as Allergy Schools and Master Classes.

Last, a message both to those who attended the 2016 Annual Congress as well as those who were not able to: please do visit the renewed EAACI website where you can find details of all the Academy’s activities, including of Vienna’s success.

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Message from the President Elect, Ioana Agache: the goal is to go further and do better

My vision for my Presidency is for EAACI to inspire the way towards sustainable health policies for allergy and asthma, ensuring higher quality care at affordable cost.

EAACI’s outstanding achievements in the last decade position the Academy at the forefront of translating bench-to-bedside innovations and offering the best education and advocacy platform for our specialty worldwide.

In a more complex and demanding way than ever before, the modern research environment, new models of patient care, the need for an efficient pipeline of clinical and academic workforces, maintaining journals with top impact factors, and our international recognition through increased membership and collaborations are all “key-shapers” of the changing landscape that challenge EAACI. Our target is to make its resources relevant and practical for all stakeholders while ensuring stable, sustainable growth in the long-term perspective.

The overarching theme, “Everyone will know the essential role and value of the specialty of Allergy and Clinical Immunology”, is a big and audacious goal that, if achieved, would mean that we have truly advanced our specialty. All strategic goals should serve to achieve this vision for the future decade.

I intend to focus especially on connecting science with the transformation of care based on a solid infrastructure to deliver EAACI resources by strengthening research, training and innovation. Clinicians, researchers and educators should choose EAACI as their professional home. We must continue to train, mentor and enroll the next generation of leaders by demonstrating the value of membership. Meeting the changing educational needs of our members and stakeholders, and delivering purposeful education while engaging and expanding the community of learners whilst increasing the effectiveness of each member is required. Our organisation’s health ensures that value is created and maintained for members and stakeholders and that there are sufficient resources to execute the Academy’s mission.

After 16 years of continuous dedication and service to EAACI I am enthusiastic and proud about this new challenge. I look with great confidence to consensus, teamwork, transparency, accountability and efficient resource management as the most significant requirements needed for completing the tasks. When decisions need to be made, the membership’s trust in your leadership gives you the spirit and latitude to make them.

Ioana Agache
EAACI President-Elect
EAACI Vice-President Communications and Membership

EAACI EVENTS

October 2016
1 October – Clinical/Research Fellowships 2017 application submission period opens
12 October – European Consortium on Application of Flow Cytometry in Allergy (EuroBAT), Rome, Italy
13 – 15 October – EAACI Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Meeting (FAAM), Rome, Italy
21 – 22 October – Master Class on Translational Immunology, Zurich, Switzerland

November 2016
10 November – EAACI’s 60 years Anniversary Summit: On the road to prevention and healthy living, Florence, Italy

December 2016
31 December – Clinical/Research Fellowships 2017 application submission period closes

January 2017
11 – 12 November – EAACI Executive Committee Meeting, Florence, Italy
17 – 19 November – International Severe Asthma Forum (ISAF), Manchester, UK
EAACI Newsletter

March/April 2017
30 March – 1 April 2017 – Symposium on Experimental Rhinology and Immunology of the Nose (SERIN 2017), Düsseldorf, Germany
27 – 29 April 2017 – Skin Allergy Meeting, Joint meeting with ESCD (SAM 2017), Zurich, Switzerland

June 2017
17 – 21 June 2017 – EAACI Congress 2017, Helsinki, Finland

This calendar is intended to inform EAACI members about the Academy’s most important dates. Note that some final dates may vary slightly as a number of planned EAACI events are not confirmed at the time of printing.
Tell us about yourself, please
I was born, raised and educated in Switzerland. I have also lived and worked in Boston and New York. During my working career I have been involved in different industries from audit and compliance, to retail, finance and Information Technology. On the education side, I have achieved various degrees in business administration with special focus on new business development and strategic marketing, computer science, coaching and change management. In my last role before joining EAACI, I was an Industry Market Development Manager for Healthcare Switzerland at Microsoft and worked closely with hospitals, clinicians, pharmacists and GPs. In my private time I enjoy meeting friends, playing golf, biking, reading books and travelling.

What are your responsibilities as new Executive Director?
My official start at EAACI was 1 July 2016. I see my responsibilities as implementing the vision and strategy of EAACI and running the business with the HQ team. It is also important to manage Governance and make the organisation ready for the digital age to attract more Juniors. Another responsibility of my role is to support the HQ team to deliver excellent service as well as to work closely and cooperatively with our ExCom, BoO and members.

What do you find most rewarding about your job?
I love to work with people and to create a high performing team. Furthermore, it is rewarding for me to learn and collaborate with different cultures and nationalities on every level. It is very satisfying to see everybody delivering their best work to generate value for our members and sponsors.

And the challenges?
EAACI is well positioned in the market and a challenge will be to keep this high-level and grow and improve it even further. To do this I need to ensure that all activities are successfully delivered within the resources that are available.
How important is clinical immunology for an allergist?

Clinical immunology is an important medical subspecialty, though in some countries it is formally combined with allergy. This is due to a recognition of the central role of fundamental immunology in our understanding of the pathogenesis of all immune-mediated diseases, including allergies. Recent molecular and genetic discoveries have strongly affected current and future diagnostics as well as therapies for allergic and immunologic diseases. The growing role of molecular and genetic diagnosis as well as the wider use of biologics and biosimilars unites all practitioners in allergy and clinical immunology, both in the context of clinical interest as well as career opportunities.

Is there an active role for basic scientists in EAACI?

The understanding that allergic symptoms may develop far beyond the IgE-mediated mechanisms which often utilise common pathways with other immune-mediated disorders, including autoimmunity, is of great importance. The characterisation of these pathways, and the design of novel therapeutics or the providing of a rationale for the use of existing ones – especially rapidly developing biologicals – is a very exciting novel perspective. A strong input from basic and translational scientists within our organisation is necessary to allow us to keep up with the challenges of modern medicine which emphasises the role of a precision approach and the concept that “one size does not fit all”.

How can EAACI meet these challenges?

EAACI is the most suitable platform for the exchange of ideas between health care professionals primarily dealing with allergic patients, or with autoimmune diseases and immune deficiencies which are associated with increased allergy incidence, and the strong basic and translational research community within EAACI who provide a scientific rationale to clinicians. Thus common education, certification and career pathways with other clinical immunologists is the major priority. The structures currently directly involved in the field include the EAACI Immunology Section, the Interest Group (IG) on Biologics and the IG on Immune Deficiencies. EAACI’s President and ExCom are currently working on a new governance scheme to strengthen and encourage the efforts of all the Sections and IGs to contribute to these tasks. In addition, a strong priority has been given to attract key opinion leaders to contribute to EAACI educational and scientific activities. Along these lines, the Immunology Section has organised the first Master Class on Translational Immunology, which will take place in Zurich in October. The next Master Class, on immune deficiencies, will be organised in 2017.

What is your view of the future?

I strongly believe that allergy and clinical immunology will be united under the auspices of EAACI as the strongest professional organisation in the field which will provide a common ground for scientific discussion, integrated postgraduate education, training programmes and certification. All of these will enhance the image of both allergists and clinical immunologists and provide better patient care and career opportunities for health care professionals.

Marek Jutel
EAACI Treasurer
The new AIT Guidelines are well underway. All of the systematic review protocols have been published and the first systematic reviews have been submitted and will be available for consultation in *Allergy* and *Pediatric Allergy and Immunology*.

However, due to the sheer volume of literature in relation to the Rhinoconjunctivis and Asthma systematic reviews, these final systematic reviews will be submitted to *Allergy* only at the end of October. That said, and although the project is on track, there is still a long road before the Guidelines are complete and it is in the light of this that a two-day meeting took place in June at the historical location of Villa Condulmer near Venice, Italy. The meeting was aimed to evaluate the status of the project to start the process of drafting the Guidelines recommendations. This face-to-face meeting was the first get-together of the group since the kick-off meeting in Zurich in early 2015 and it was well attended by more than 60 experts from all over the world, some travelling from as far as Central America and Japan. There was a palpable air of enthusiasm with everyone eager to commence the next steps of the guidelines, resulting in the final recommendations.

The panoramic and inspiring location was perfect to encourage an atmosphere of debate, discussion and interaction, which is essential for such an intense project and undertaking. The first day of the meeting was spent within the main Task Forces groups and the attendees ploughed through the literature and, through fervent discussion, started to mould the outline of their guideline chapters as well as the very first recommendations. These were then shared with the larger group in the afternoon, where feedback was given and troubleshooting of potential problematic areas was undertaken.

After a very intense first day, the groups came together once again later in the evening and, over a glass of wonderful Italian wine, they continued working, exchanging ideas and giving additional feedback. Relaxation was short lived as the next morning the groups met once again to continue to feedback from the Task Force discussions and refine the initial recommendations. Fervent discussion ensued. In the afternoon of the second day the meeting concluded on a high note with an AIT group photograph taken with the spectacularly historic building of Villa Condulmer as the backdrop.

Notwithstanding the positive outcome of the meeting, it is only the start of a very intense period ahead for the Task Forces and the AIT guideline project. With all hands on deck, the Task Forces have been given very strict timelines, with a number of teleconferences scheduled over the coming weeks, in order to facilitate that each Task Force hits the goal of producing the first draft of guidelines by the end of October. This date coincides with the AIT Guideline summit meeting which will take place on 10 November 2016 in Florence. This last face-to-face meeting is being organised as an initial part of the public comment process, where the first draft of recommendations will be presented to the EAACI ExCom and to industry representatives.

On a final note, the dedication that the Task Force members have committed to this project, not only in attending the meetings but also in the hours spent back and forth on e-mails, teleconferences etc., is a great demonstration of the EAACI spirit, of which we are proud. It shows the EAACI family is dedicated to improving therapeutic care for allergic patients. They are a true inspiration and with such an arduous few months ahead we wish all our colleagues involved the best of energy, and thank them for all their precious time dedicated to such a challenging task.

Antonella Muraro  
EAACI President  
Chair of the AIT Guidelines Project
The Bulgarian Society of Allergology (BSA) was founded back in 1973 with the aim of being a legal partner for allergy practitioners in the country. The Society’s structure originated from the Medical University of Sofia Allergy Clinic and the National Centre of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases’ Allergy Laboratory.

The first President of the Society was Petar Kirchev, followed by George Kosturkov and Jeny Mileva. The current President is Vasil Dimitrov.

In 1990 ‘Clinical Allergology’ was fully-recognised as a separate medical specialty in Bulgaria which contributed to the better qualification of allergy specialists. BSA has around 150 members, 115 of which are certified specialists in Clinical Allergology. Since 1991, BSA has been part of the EAACI family. The Society is also a member of the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and has been a collective member of the World Allergy Organization (WAO) since 2001.

BSA has its own website (www.allergysociety.com) organised in sections for medical specialists, patients and with links to medical standards, as well as to the Society’s scientific journal, international guidelines, practitioners’ contacts, etc.

The Society’s first scientific journal, “Allergy and Asthma”, was founded in 1996; its successor, “Allergy, Hypersensitivity and Asthma” has been published twice per year in the Bulgarian language since 2003. From 2003–2005 an English version of “Allergy, Hypersensitivity and Asthma” was published in partnership with EAACI, highlighting research from Eastern Europe, Greece, Turkey and the Baltic states.

BSA’s most recent activities are related to:
• the latest revision of the Allergology Medical Standard in Bulgaria;
• the current medical training program in Clinical Allergology;
• a system of continuing education for allergy practitioners and young specialists (8–10 regular seminars per year);
• direct and indirect support for allergy practitioners and young specialists to be active with their research at the EAACI Annual Congress;
• collaboration with patient organisations in the allergy field;
• regular awareness initiatives, e.g. the National Allergy Awareness Program, “Do you have allergies?” (2016), “Allergy Week” (Sofia, 2014), “World Asthma Day”, etc.

Vasil Dimitrov
Bulgarian Society of Allergology President

A few words from the Website Editor

Welcome back after the summer holidays! The EAACI Annual Congress 2016 is now behind us and I hope all participants had a great time and found the Congress scientifically invigorating. During the Congress, there were many opportunities to meet people involved in the creation and maintenance of the EAACI website. Thanks to all the members of the Website Committee and Communication Council for coming to meetings and sharing your thoughts with me. In my opinion the meetings were very fruitful and we discussed problems that are already being solved. The minutes from the 13th Web Com Business Meeting 2016 as well as my slides (which show what we have accomplished in the last months together with ongoing issues and some important web statistics) can be found in the Website Committee resources area on the EAACI website http://www.eaaci.org/organisation/committees/web/resources.html.

Since June, you’ve been able to enjoy surfing around our new EAACI website. The homepage has been completely changed and the menu has been reorganised. I hope you like it. But that’s not the last of our surprises: we are still working on other updates which will be visible very soon, so please keep an eye out for them! The EAACI platform contains many webpages and its structure is complicated. Every day we are updating and upgrading information and associated technical aspects. The integration process is still ongoing but all EAACI Focused Meetings in 2017 and the EAACI Annual Congress 2017 will be integrated into the EAACI platform very soon.

I encourage users to visit the website as often as possible. Remember:
• you can find fresh news on the homepage every week;
• article highlights from EAACI Journals (Allergy, Clinical and Translational Allergy, Pediatric Allergy and Immunology) are updated every month;
• use the JOB CENTER to find interesting job offers or to advertise new vacant positions;
• check the website for new position papers and other educational tools;
• latest news from me about the website can always be found here: http://www.eaaci.org/organisation/committees/web/activities.html.

Sylwia Smolinska
EAACI Website Editor

www.eaaci.org
Subcutaneous AIT
Allergopharma - the specialist in diagnosis and therapy of allergic diseases
Vienna: after the meeting ended

The EAACI Congress 2016 took place in Vienna from 11–15 June 2016. Quite fitting for Vienna, this year’s Congress motto was “Waltzing with allergens”, which referred not only to the well-known Viennese tradition but also to the wish of the Local Organising Committee to bring together all partners involved in our specialty to interact, mingle and inspire each other. The EAACI Congress offered a splendid dance floor for such interactions.

Nearly 8000 delegates from more than 100 countries joined us for the waltz. A faculty of 435 speakers provided a broad range of up-to-date information covering basic research and clinical work. The first Plenary Symposium in particular was designed to combine both areas and to set the scene for the coming days with its theme of: 25 years of recombinant allergens: Pitfalls and benefits. Three excellent speakers discussed what recombinant allergens have taught us since their introduction and critically reflected on their advantages over extracts or purified allergens and, in particular, whether they indeed have revolutionised allergy diagnosis and treatment.

The following Congress days were characterised by a large variety of up to 15 parallel sessions. In its state-of-the-art Symposia, EAACI offers a diverse mix of session types: Hot Topics focusing on latest news and Year in Review sessions intended to recap recent developments. The popular Pro & Con Sessions were well-integrated in the daily programme. Following their successful first introduction in 2015, a full stream of Interactive Workshops was offered that included audience involvement and new teaching methods. These sessions proved to be very popular, often to the point where the capacity of this type of session was reached; however, a large number of observers were admitted to allow more attendees to benefit from the experience.

As always, the abstract sessions were a crucial part of the Congress Programme. The presentations of Congress attendees from all over the world reflected the enormous effort that goes into allergy research and were a powerful way to showcase the diversity of our specialty. For presenters, the abstract sessions provide an excellent chance to network and get valuable feedback; many fruitful collaborations have started during an informal discussion at a poster session. In addition to Oral Abstract Sessions, the smaller Poster Discussion Sessions with e-Posters were hugely popular, as were the Thematic Poster Sessions exhibiting over 1000 posters on three consecutive days.

This year’s Congress was specifically marked by the celebration of EAACI’s 60th anniversary. In this context, many activities have already been conducted in 2016 to raise awareness of the disease burden of allergy at a European level and to highlighted EAACI’s role as a major advocate for allergy research and improved patient care. The Congress in Vienna paid tribute to this on various occasions including with a special exhibition showcasing the history of allergy and EAACI, and by the EU stakeholders’ business lunch.

Many months of preparations and much thought went into the development of Vienna’s scientific programme and the prime goal – of attracting delegates from all over Europe and beyond to be a part of it – was reached. We received very positive feedback from the faculty and delegate survey, not only regarding the scientific programme and the general relaxing atmosphere, but also the Congress venue which was very well received. In addition to the excellent location of the convention centre, the friendly atmosphere of the city of Vienna was much appreciated. Of course the more critical comments will be taken in account in future Congresses. For instance, the Congress next year will offer larger conference rooms to avoid rooms overflowing, as much as possible, and the city of Helsinki will offer free public transportation to all delegates during next year’s Congress.

The EAACI Congress 2016 ended more than a month ago. In retrospect, we are very happy with and proud of the great success of the Congress. The extraordinary commitment of a great team of many individual contributors paid off. We would like to especially thank Karin Hoffmann-Sommergruber, Zsolt Szépfalusi and all the members of the Local Organising Committee and of the Scientific Programme Committee who worked very hard to make this Congress a great success.

We are thankful for the outstanding help of EAACI headquarters, led by Viviane Knerr and Alexandra von Rekowski and by Felicitas Siebert from KIT in the meeting organisation. Our thanks also go to the EAACI Executive Committee and in particular to Lars K. Poulsen, the Vice-President for Congresses, and to the EAACI President, Antonella Muraro.

After this successful waltz with allergens we are already looking forward to the EAACI Congress 2017 in Helsinki, Finland, where the Congress Chair Antti Lauerma will welcome us with the theme “On the road to prevention and healthy living”. Susanne Halken from Denmark has now fully taken over as new SPC Coordinator and we wish her and her team all the best for the further development of the scientific programme for the upcoming EAACI Annual Congress 2017!!

Barbara Bohle
EAACI 2016 Congress Chair

Edward Knol
EAACI SPC Coordinator Vienna 2016
There are many important determinants to whether a woman goes into science, such as educational background, support from family or partners, marriage, having children, religious and cultural conditions and financial reasons. Except in some unique situations, developments in this area have moved in parallel with the achievement of women’s rights, the acceptance of women in the decisive community outside of the home, as well as with changes in the financial independence of women.

During the middle ages, convents were an important place of education for women, and women were given an opportunity to contribute to scholarly research in some of these communities. Although the emergence of the first universities started in the 11th Century, women were almost fully excluded from a university education. The first known woman to earn a university chair in a scientific field of studies was the 18th-century Italian scientist, Laura Bassi, who became Professor of Anatomy at the University of Bologna in 1732 at the age of 21; additionally, she was elected to the Academy of the Institute of Sciences, and subsequently received the chair of philosophy. The defence of her degree and her first lecture, as well as her award ceremony, all took place in the Palazzo Pubblico (Palazzo d’Accursio) in Bologna, an important government building.

Gender equality in science in Europe has come a long way during the last few decades and we should thank women scientists for their efforts during these years. Progress is still slow and providing equal opportunities for women in science requires change at every level. Science has no gender and when women have equal opportunities they can produce good science.

Realising the importance of gender balance in science, EAACI has organised a “Women in Science Symposium” during each of its Annual Congresses over the last three years. This year’s Symposium, “The intrigues of the asthmatic lung”, had three distinguished women scientists: Elisabeth Bell (The Netherlands), Catherine Hewrylowicz (UK) and Sally Wenzel (US). Sally Wenzel’s talk was mainly focused on endotypes and phenotypes of asthma. She subgrouped asthma to two major clusters, namely type 2 asthma and neutrophilic asthma. Type 2 asthma is comprised of early and late onset eosinophilic asthma, exercise-induced bronchoconstriction and aspirin exacerbated respiratory disease. Her classification of non-type 2 asthma included obesity-associated asthma, smooth muscle-mediated paucigranulocytic asthma and smoking-associated neutrophilic asthma. Catherine Hewrylowicz’s talk was focused on immune tolerance to allergens and its link to the roles of interleukin-10 and vitamin D. She proposed that there is sufficient evidence from molecular studies on molecular mechanisms that suggest the importance of further immunological studies on vitamin D in controlling over-reactivity to allergens in asthma. Elisabeth Bell mainly focused on how to handle severe asthma patients in daily settings; the talk was particularly focused on problems in daily practice. The session was chaired by Antonella Muraro (President of EAACI) and by Mübeccel Akdis, from the Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma Research (SIAF), Davos.
Working together to progress EU policies for the benefit of allergic patients in Europe

The ‘High-Level EU Stakeholders Lunch’ held on 13 June 2016 at the EAACI Annual Congress brought together representatives from EU Institutions, patient advocates, Allergy National Societies, industry and the EAACI leadership to jointly reflect on collaborations to advance EU policies for the benefit of allergic patients.

In her opening speech, Antonella Muraro, President of EAACI, reiterated that success in tackling the allergy crisis in Europe requires partnerships between all interested stakeholders and continuous collaborations in EU actions at policy level.

MEP Sirpa Pietikaïnen, who chairs the European Parliament Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma, particularly highlighted the need for comprehensive EU-wide programmes on allergy and asthma to build on existing national and regional best practices.

Stefan Schreck, who heads the European Commission’s Chronic Diseases Unit, reminded us that the Commission sees a clear added-value in having all Member States working together on chronic diseases at EU level, and hence will continue to support such policy dialogue in which allergy and asthma should naturally be included.

Sergio Bonini (past President of EAACI), speaking on the future of allergy treatment and diagnosis in Europe as a representative of the European Medicines Agency (EMA), stressed the importance of developing facilitated pathways for marketing authorisations of allergen products and to distinguish between allergen products used for in vivo diagnostics or allergen immunotherapy.

Finally, Michele Antonelli, addressing the audience on behalf of European Biopharmaceutical Enterprises (EBE), confirmed the industry’s support to the development of precision medicine (PM) in allergy, underlining the importance of allergy immunotherapy as a patient-centric therapy meeting the definition of PM.

A moderated discussion was then the occasion for participants to hold fruitful discussions, with contributions from patient representatives – from the EAACI Patient Organisations Committee (Frans Timmermans) and EFA (Mikaela Odemyr). Stefan Schreck (European Commission) further informed participants about the upcoming launch of EU activities aimed at examining ways to implement best practices in chronic diseases to further assist national and regional health authorities in EU Member States.

The 2016 high-level event was a successful step in the further engagement of the EAACI network in a dialogue to foster partnerships and collaboration between EU policy-making bodies and interested stakeholders, to address allergy and asthma as part of the EU health policy agenda.

A third EAACI high-level EU stakeholders lunch will take place next year in Helsinki.

Antonella Muraro
EAACI President

The clinical village in Vienna

Visiting the clinical village at the annual EAACI Congress is always a great way to improve your skills in allergic disease diagnostics and treatment. At EAACI 2016 in Vienna, visitors of the clinical village could catch up with the most recent EAACI guideline recommendations on various topics related to diagnostics and treatment of allergic diseases. The individual stations provided information on available products and companies providing these materials, as well as hands-on demonstrations of how to use different techniques in clinical practice, e.g. lung function measurements, upper airway functional assessment, skin prick testing, intradermal testing, insect sting challenges, food challenge protocols, anaphylaxis management with different adrenalin devices, drug allergy skin testing, allergen exposure testing in provocation chambers, and IgE-measurement. The proper use of immunotherapy products as the treatment of choice in many inhalant allergies was demonstrated and discussed with experts in the field. In addition, the clinical village provided detailed information on the nature of allergens, allergen sources, natural cross-reactivities and important dissimilarities of allergens, defining their unique importance for patients.

The clinical village represented a great opportunity to gather hands-on skills in the diagnosis and treatment of allergic diseases, enabling students, trainees, doctors, experts and professors to improve their specific knowledge. We are very grateful to Zsolt Szépfalusi and the “Austrian Village people” who made the clinical village such a great success!

Barbara Bohle
EAACI 2016 Congress Chair
The main goal of the National Societies Committee (NASC), which was founded in 2015, is to increase interaction and trust between EAACI and the National Societies (NAS). Collaboration between the NAS and EAACI includes educational and scientific aspects, speaker support programs at NAS meetings and other joint meetings, lobbying, campaigns and press releases. The desired outcome is the increasing visibility and raised profile of allergy, whilst the ultimate goal is improving patient care.

In the current year, the NASC helped ensure the presence of representatives at the EU lobbying event that took place in April 2016 at the European Parliament and joined forces to help the French society get a full specialty in allergology. Moreover, we have collected information for allergy care and guideline registries from 31 out of 35 NASC and 8 ISC countries, and we will continue with this activity.

In June 2016, at the NASC Business Meeting in Vienna (which was well attended by 38 delegates), we learned more about the goals of NAS. The European registries of allergy care and guidelines were discussed in detail and a roadmap for further activities was decided. As anticipated, the standards of allergy care vary across the different countries of the EAACI member societies: whereas in a number of countries access to allergy diagnosis and therapy is covered by insurances, there are countries where there is still no public access to an allergy doctor, and this should be raised into a statement from EAACI in the form of a NAS document. The registers will be published on the EAACI website, as well as in EAACI journals Allergy, CTA or PAI.

The room for improvement of patient organisations’ engagement in NAS activities was also discussed in Vienna. It is likely that many patient organisations are not aware of the EAACI umbrella organisation and how they could be linked with one another. Moreover, NAS could link with patient organisations and learn from others who have already established similar connections. However, language barriers might be an obstacle for networking among patient organisations and, from a patient point of view, the most important issue is to find someone who can treat you. Any requests sent to the NASC Chair or Secretary from patient organisations for networking within the NASC are highly welcome.

Désirée Larenas Linnemann, the Chair of the International Societies Council (ISC) – which is the umbrella group for Non-European members of the EAACI – also attended the Business Meeting and reported about three conference calls with International Societies during 2015–16. ISC members have participated in the NAS registries project. Moreover, the ISC Chair coordinates the “Review of the quality of worldwide available AIT guidelines” project and ISC members also participate in that. Currently, members of the ISC include: Mexico, South Africa, Jordan, Algeria, Kazakhstan, India, Brazil, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Korea, APAPARI (Asia-Pacific), Australasia, Israel and Mongolia. A close collaboration between the NASC and the ISC will guarantee an efficient platform of representation of society members within EAACI.

The NAS Forum 2016 was held as a public symposium before the NASC Business Meeting. Speakers from Austria, the host country of this year’s EAACI Annual Congress, The Netherlands and Sweden contributed to the session with talks on national activity in allergy care which were interesting for delegates from other countries. In 2017 a public session with three speakers from three countries is planned again. It was also suggested that one of the ISC countries should also participate with a presentation. Suggestions for speakers from member societies should be sent to the authors.

Thomas Werfel
EAACI NAS Committee Chair

Nanna Fyherquist
EAACI NAS Committee Secretary
Another successful EAACI meeting came to its end in the beautiful city of Vienna! I enjoyed attending as many sessions as possible but I must say it was an enormous pleasure to see that all sessions dedicated to Juniors were so well-attended! From the first day of the Congress and right after the impressive opening ceremony, juniors had the opportunity to discuss the findings of their studies in a relaxed atmosphere at the JM Poster Session. The next day, at the JM Scientific Symposium, I (on behalf of EAACI) joined Juniors representing other societies in the field (AAAAI, WAO, ERS) to present on research projects and undertakings led by us. Juniors from the audience raised questions to the speakers and very nice discussions took place!

Equally vivid was the atmosphere at the JM Educational Session with four Seniors giving inspiring presentations addressing the needs of young physicians and researchers taking their first career steps. Jan Lotvall shared his experience on how the internet has been helping him conduct research, while Nikolaos G. Papadopoulos, the leading person in many international collaborations, elucidated how important they are for progress in the allergy field. Following his tips on how to write and/or review a paper, Cristoforo Incorvaia gave his personal email address for Juniors to contact him whenever they might feel uncertain on these aspects. Last but not least, Tomas Chiqvato illustrated in the most colourful way how to make an optimal presentation, emphasising that Juniors need not be anxious when presenting their abstracts to EAACI since everything takes place in a ‘family atmosphere’.

The JM Business Meeting took place on Tuesday 14 June, when we all had the pleasure of listening to Chrysanthi Skevaki, former JM Chair and current Allergy Diagnosis IG member, elaborating on crowdfunding in research and what it takes to have a successful outcome from it. It was a great pleasure to have the EAACI President, Antonella Muraro, the Secretary General, Peter Hellings, and the Vice-President of Education & Specialty, Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier, award the 100 EAACI scholarships and the three JM Case Report Session winners their certificates during the Business Meeting! Afterwards, we all headed to the JM Event which again took place in a truly unique venue.

Thank you to all who attended the JM activities in Vienna. I am looking forward to meeting you in Helsinki! ●

Olympia Tsilochristou
EAACI JM Chairperson

In the spotlight

EAACI/UEMS Knowledge Exam 2016

The 9th EAACI/UEMS Knowledge Exam for Allergology and Clinical Immunology took place on 11 June during the EAACI Congress 2016 in Vienna. A total of 51 candidates from all over the world took the exam, representing 21 countries and with some participants from as far away as Japan, South Africa and Mexico. In total 41 participants passed and received a valued EAACI/UEMS certificate as well as a detailed summary of their tests.

In this year’s exam, each candidate had to answer 120 multiple choice questions covering a wide range of allergology (about two-thirds of the questions), as well as basic and clinical immunology, within three hours. Candidates are allowed to use a dictionary during the exam but to facilitate things further a small glossary of difficult or unusual terms was included in the European languages that were represented.

The EAACI/UEMS Knowledge Examination in Allergology and Clinical Immunology takes place every year during the EAACI Congress. It does not replace or provide a substitute for existing national examinations held regularly by national bodies, although we expect it to help raise the standard of allergology and clinical immunology in Europe. The exam is formatted according to latest knowledge in test methods and recent UEMS standards, and is analysed by the Institute for Medical Education (IML), Switzerland. Anyone wishing to contribute to the examination in any way is welcome to contact the Exam Committee (education@eaaci.org).

In 2016 and for the second time, UEMS kindly supported 15 participants financially. The UEMS support is linked to a set of criteria to be fulfilled and subject to UEMS’ decision, and is highly appreciated.

This year, for the first time, responsibility for the exam lay in the hands of Professor Carsten Schmidt-Weber from Germany. He and his team, with excellent support from EAACI HQ, managed the whole exam in a perfect manner.

A primer based on the EAACI Allergy Atlas is planned to facilitate preparations for future exams.

The next exam is scheduled to take place during the Annual Congress EAACI 2017 in Helsinki on Saturday, 11 June 2017. ●

Carsten Schmidt-Weber
EAACI/UEMS Exam Committee Chair

Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier
EAACI Vice-President Education & Specialty

A glance back at the JM activities in Vienna!

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In the spotlight

Patient Organisations Committee activities

The 2016 EAACI Congress set some great attendance records for Patient Organisations Committee (POC) activities. The Clinical Village sessions, where every picture told a story, was very well attended. Visitors choose from a selection of celebrity photos before being asked to play the role of a general physician, seeing a patient and being challenged to perform the correct diagnosis in a supervised pre-defined case; by questions and interpretation of presented analytical results the ‘doctor’ had to make their final decision on what allergic disease the patient had. During the two-day Clinical Village activity, some 75 visitors earned a certificate of excellent diagnostic performance.

As always on the Monday of the Congress, the POC organised a Practical Allergy Management Workshop, where the audience learned (from Antonella Muraro, Torsten Zurbertier and James Baker) about the need for harmonised guidelines for diagnosis of allergic diseases and how GA2LEN could be an example for setting up a pan-European network for this and how we could learn from the pitfalls encountered by our American colleagues in their endeavour to set up a clinical network in the USA. After the break, insights were given by Andrew Clark, Wayne Schrefler and André Knulst, in what could be learned from clinical advances in the treatment of food allergy. Novel development in treatments like peanut immunotherapy and peanut patch testing raised questions that could be answered by the presenters, although we were asked to wait for some of the answers as the studies were still ongoing and results were not allowed to be revealed.

During the business meeting of the POC, which was open to the public, we also welcomed visitors who were eager to hear George du Toit educate us about remaining questions after the prevention of food allergy through early weaning. We also learned of some promising side effects of this therapy which could be used to raise acceptance – if you want to learn more about that, join us at FAAM in Rome or in Helsinki at EAACI’s next Annual Congress, where we might shed some more light on this possibility.

Frans Timmermans
EAACI Patient Organisations Committee

Ethics and fresh air: you are what you breathe

These were the words which introduced the exciting ethics session held in Vienna on 13 June. The session was chaired by Glenis Scadding (UK) and Jose Rosado Pinto (P). We had the great opportunity of listening to F. Kelly (UK) about outdoor pollution and I. Annesi-Maesano (F) about indoor pollution with ethical comments from P. Poulain (F). About 50 people attended the session.

On outdoor pollution, F. Kelly taught us that diesel particles, NO₂, O₃, SO₂ metals, salts and Sahara dusts are now everywhere and especially in mega cities. Their sources are power generation, road traffic, shipping, metal industries, wild fires and desert dust episodes, etc. They cause short-term side effects due to acute exposure, as well as long-term ones. The hypothesis of “oxidative stress” explains how pollution induces inflammation, allergy and infections.

This is an ethical problem as it concerns 30–50% of the population, and it has been demonstrated that pollution enhances allergies when co-morbidities (sedentarity, obesity) are also increasing. P. Poulain introduced the ethical dilemmas: Which population should be protected? Which public health initiative should be taken? The example of the Hygiene hypothesis is useful: “Being too clean primes us for allergy, but being too dirty also causes allergy”.

Ethical principles vary according to time, place and culture but we can underline what is good for humans (anthropocentric ethics), what is good for nature (biocentric ethics) or what is good for both (anthropogenic ethics). Pollution due to human activity may be influenced by political decisions. We have to make the balance between individual freedom and collective requirements. Trustworthy information and open education should improve our collective responsibility.

On indoor pollution, I. Annesi-Maesano reminded us that, in Europe, 95 million pupils spend 70% of their time indoors. In schools, pollution is linked to the quality of furniture, pupils’ activity, to combustion and bio effluents (NO – CO₂ – SO₂ – VOC, moulds, allergens, viruses and bacteria…). In the Simphonie survey of 5175 pupils in 23 countries, 60% of the children were exposed to formaldehyde (>10µg/m³). Concerning dust mites, the sensitisation threshold was 1 to 2 ng/g dust, and 10ng/g will induce an asthma exacerbation: the mean concentration in the classrooms is 4.9 ng/g. In the poorest places, Sick School Syndrome has been described, mixing symptoms of both allergy and infection.

How can we ethically improve the quality of air? A combined natural and mechanical ventilation system seems to be the answer. With Maw Weber, P. Poulain introduced the “ethics of conviction”: (act according to the high principles in which you believe) and the “ethics of responsibility” (act according to concrete effects which you can reasonably envisage). In this way, Hans Jonas (1979) affirmed that technologies should only be used if they do not harm humanity. So, should products emitting aldehydes and other VOCs be avoided or not?

First, we should evaluate the risk and, as a priority, the risk linked to vulnerable people, and then (if necessary) treat the environment concerned: public as well as private. This means reducing tobacco smoking, improving ventilation and avoiding VOC emissions. These dynamics suggest the need for warnings and education. Promoting respect and individual autonomy is better than legal constraint, even though the latter seems to be often necessary.

Anthony Frew
EAACI Ethics Committee Chairperson

Jacques Gayraud
EAACI Ethics Committee Secretary
One of EAACI’s main goals is to reach out to Primary Care physicians, facilitating the diagnosis and management of allergic diseases and fostering collaboration between first, second and third line care to achieve quality care as efficiently as possible. In order to achieve this goal, the EAACI Primary Care Interest Group organised a Postgraduate Course for Primary Care clinicians, held for the first time at the EAACI Congress 2016 in Vienna. This Postgraduate Course was structured to mimic the real-life consultations of Primary Care physicians. Different clinical case scenarios were developed to allow the exploration of various decision points during a consultation in a virtual and safe medical setting. GPs and specialists worked together on these challenging cases, mirroring the diagnostic process and ultimately improving the diagnosis and treatment of allergic diseases.

A significant part of the course programme was reserved for an interactive discussion with the panel and facilitators, allowing for an intense exchange between participants and the faculty on the three cases and beyond. This highly innovative and interactive format enhanced the learning experience and allowed the teaching and development of a diagnostic and therapeutic pathway in a relaxed environment. In addition, participants really enjoyed the straightforward exchange and case-focussed discussions among colleagues, providing a meeting of the minds for experts in Primary Care and allergy.

This new course format will be further developed and will hopefully find many other occasions to help spread knowledge of allergy into the Primary Care environment.

Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier
EAACI Vice-President Education & Specialty

Dermot Ryan
Primary Care Interest Group Chairperson
Precision medicine: Towards precision health? A strategy for a sustainable system

A t the EAACI Annual Congress in Vienna, one session was devoted to highlighting the recent EAACI–AAAAI collaboration on the PRACTALL initiative on precision medicine in allergic diseases. Precision medicine marks what is reported to be the fourth revolution in medicine, following communicable diseases (attack-defence medicine), non-communicable diseases (prevention-lifestyles) and public health and wellness.

Precision medicine is becoming an integral part of the R&D process allowing us to prevent, diagnose and treat diseases more effectively, reducing costs by mitigating ineffective treatments and side effects, and coupling established clinical–pathological indexes with state-of-the-art molecular profiling to create diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic strategies precisely tailored to each patient’s requirements: hence the term “precision medicine”.

The PRACTALL Session (chaired by EAACI President Antonella Muraro and Past-President Cezmi Akdis) was based on the article recently published in JACI. Robert Lemanske provided an update on the options for precision medicine in allergic respiratory diseases (asthma and allergic rhinitis), while Thomas Bieber brilliantly illustrated the opportunities for atopic dermatitis.

The principles of precision medicine for allergic disorders are summarised as:

1. **Characterise the disease**: Identify the disease and, if applicable, the subtype of the disorder.
2. **Profile the patient**: Characterise the patient’s genotype and phenotype (and in some cases microbiomes); assess the patient’s likelihood to respond to pharmacologic or biological agents, SIT or other forms of management.
3. **Monitor disease and response to management**: Perform appropriate biometric monitoring during treatment (e.g., with pharmacologic or biological agents or with SIT) to assess, e.g., favourable or adverse effects of the intervention and duration of favourable effects.
4. **Develop algorithms to select the most cost-effective management approach for that patient**: Based on the characteristics of the patient and his/her test results and the evidence-based assessment of the clinical utility of the treatment options and the type of health care system in which that patient receives his/her care.
5. **Improve the effectiveness of communication**: Between patients and caregivers to increase understanding of the disease prevention process and the rationale behind complying with preventative measures or interventions.

Precision medicine uses a massive data network that aggregates and analyses information from huge patient cohorts, and that reaches toward disease mechanism and precision diagnosis and treatment. Sergio Pecorelli (University of Brescia, Italy) outlined the challenges and the coming transition from precision medicine to **precision health**.

A number of challenges must be tackled in order to move precision medicine forward:

1. **Technology**: Efficient ways must be found to manage the large amounts of patient data in databases.
2. **Ethical, social and legal issues**: Participants’ privacy and the confidentiality of their health information must be protected; the risks and benefits of participating in research need to be understood; a rigorous process of informed consent needs to be developed.
3. **Costs**: Technologies are still expensive; drugs developed to target a person’s genetic or molecular characteristics are also likely to be expensive; reimbursement for these targeted drugs is likely to become an issue; healthcare providers will increasingly find themselves needing to interpret the results of genetic tests and convey this knowledge to patients. Once started, the precision medicine approach will lead to an implemented strategy of precision health. This is an innovative paradigm based on the transition from diagnosis and treatment toward prediction and prevention, bridging new scientific advances into medical practice and transforming clinical care to emphasise compassion and quality.

**Precision Health means**:

1. **Turning patients into partners**: Including the need for policy changes for people who donate their data, or finding ways to allow patients themselves to generate innovations making patients partners in research.
2. **The power of Biobanks**: Developing a biobanks database containing both specimens and associated self-reports from hundreds of thousands of individuals.
3. **Big data as foundation**: The movement to revolutionise health care and promote population-wide wellness will depend on melding diverse kinds of data from people in every corner of the globe. Finally, we must acknowledge the fact that we are watching an institutional dichotomy of wellness: social/mental/physical wellness versus economic wellness.

We have to understand that prevention of diseases through correct lifestyle (nutrition, physical activity, etc.) starting even from pre-conception represents the most cost-effective intervention of public health: focusing individuals for a system change.

**Sergio Pecorelli**
University of Brescia, Italy
The 2016 EAACI General Assembly took place on Monday 13 June at the EAACI Annual Congress in Vienna, with the lively participation of a large number of EAACI members. The reports of the President, Secretary General and Board of Officers gave the membership an overview of EAACI activities in the past year and perspectives on ongoing and future initiatives.

President Antonella Muraro illustrated the different presidential projects and the progress made in each of them. The Allergen Immunotherapy Guidelines for clinical practice aim to generate evidence-based guidance for allergen immunotherapy and are foreseen for launch in June 2017. Practall reports on Precision Medicine in Allergic Diseases are being elaborated. The Governance structure of the Academy is under revision with timelines for discussion by the Board, the Executive Committee and proposal to the General Assembly in 2017. Several EAACI initiatives at the European political level have been undertaken in 2016, including the Interest Group in Allergy and Asthma for Members of the European Parliament, led by EAACI and the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Disease Patients.

Secretary General Peter Hellings reported on the appointment of a new Executive Director, Sue Paredi, and the new position of Manager, Publications, Relations & Public Affairs taken by Lena Geltenbort. Voting on the additional ‘A’ for ‘asthma’ in EAACI’s name did not yield the required two-thirds majority for a change of name, with more than 1000 EAACI members voting electronically. The General Assembly approved the ExCom nomination of Vice-President Communications & Membership Ioana Agache as President-Elect, with handover of the Presidency to be at the Annual Congress in Helsinki in June 2017.

Vice-President Congresses Lars Poulsen provided an overview of the meetings of the Academy, including past and future Annual Congresses and Focused Meetings. The Vice-President Education & Specialty Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier commented on the participation and outcomes of the EAACI Knowledge Exam, the EAACI research and clinical fellowships, Task Forces and Position Papers, and Allergy Schools and Master Class. Vice-President Communications & Membership Ioana Agache highlighted the 60 years’ of EAACI campaign and communication strategy for the forthcoming term. Treasurer Marek Jutel presented the current financial state of the Academy, with the External Audit Report of May 2016 showing that the financial statement complies with Swiss law. Voting members of the General Assembly almost unanimously approved the Board Member reports.

To conclude, President Antonella Muraro expressed her feelings of gratitude to the whole Executive Committee and General Assembly for their contribution to the success of the Annual Congress and for their efforts in guaranteeing the sustainable growth of the Academy.

Peter Hellings
EAACI Secretary General

Follow its success at previous Annual Congresses, a Beat Allergy Run & Walk was also organised in Vienna this year to raise awareness about allergies. This sporting event took place in the Prater Park, the green lung of Vienna, the city’s largest recreation area and one of the ten best city parks in the world.

More than 225 EAACI Congress participants from 34 different countries took active part in either a 5 km run or a 2.5 km Nordic walk. Participation fees were donated to the Clemens von Pirquet Foundation for the promotion of research and education in pediatric allergology and immunology – very fitting given the recognition this year of “110 years of allergy” since the Austrian paediatrician Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet coined the term “allergy” in 1906.

The winners of the 5 km run were Julia Esservon Bieren and Tristan Leaomd, whilst the winners of the 2.5 km Nordic Walking competition were Renata Buranowska and Jens Baron. We once again thank all participants and congratulate the winners!

Barbara Bohle
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Mens sana in corpore sano! Beat Allergy Run & Walk a great success!

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General Assembly Report 2016

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Peter Hellings
EAACI Secretary General
Cezmi Akdis is the winner of the Paul Ehrlich Award 2016 for Improving Experimental Research. He is a highly respected authority worldwide and has a long track record in allergy and immunology research, as proven by more than 450 papers. His research has focused on immune tolerance mechanisms in humans, developing novel vaccines and treatment modalities, regulation and the role of tissue cells, the epithelial barrier in asthma and allergies, and disease endotypes. His life-long belief in the greatness of science and in mentoring is inspiring. Cezmi Akdis served our community meritoriously as EAACI President, Vice-President Congresses, SPC Coordinator, Chair of iCAALL and the Immunology Section, and is a founder and organiser of the World Immune Regulation Meetings.

In addition to EAACI’s well-established awards, the audience at the Opening Ceremony also applauded this year’s winner of the PhARF Award as well as the EAACI-Allergopharma Award.

The Phadia Allergy Research Forum (PhARF) rewards a young scientist who has made an outstanding contribution in the field of IgE associated diseases. The award has a value of USD 50,000 and is granted by Thermo Fisher Scientific. With this year’s PhARF Award, Verena Niederberger’s research in recombinant allergens was recognised for continuously developing new diagnostic and therapeutic strategies for allergy. She applied the use of recombinant molecules to clinical application with a first world-wide immunotherapy trial published in 2004. The Scientific Committee of PhARF also gave an honourable mention to Carina Venter for her research in food allergy and eosinophilic esophagitis.

The EAACI-Allergopharma Award was established in 2000 and is intended to recognise the scientific work and achievements of young scientists working in the field of allergy and to encourage their further engagement in the field. This year, the award, which has a value of EUR 10,000, was presented to Irisz Karolina Levai from the UK.

In the spotlight

From left to right: Cezmi Akdis, Barbara Bohle, Verena Niederberger, Erkka Valovirta, Antonella Muraro, Carina Venter, Irisz Karolina Levai and Jan de Monchy
 Helsinki Awaits!

Our Local Organising Committee is very much looking forward to hosting you in Helsinki at the 2017 EAACI Annual Congress, from 17–21 June 2017, next summer! We wish you a very warm welcome to Finland and the beautiful city of Helsinki!

The theme for Helsinki is “On the road to prevention and healthy living”. As a unifying theme for EAACI, it is the next step in making our patients’ life healthy despite having allergies. Given that more than half of Europeans will soon suffer from allergy, this is an obvious goal to keep our patients having a good quality of life, despite the allergy epidemic. The cutting edge science program for the EAACI 2017 Helsinki Congress will provide us with the means to reach this goal. The Congress website registered nearly 40,000 page views from over 7000 users during the event, with the top countries visiting the website being Austria, Germany, UK, USA and Spain. Most of the press coverage was presented as online articles, highlighting a wide range of topics, from study results to general developments and future challenges in the field of allergy. Both scientific news and awareness creating articles appeared. EAACI’s Facebook pages, one for patients, one for professionals, reached 9760 people with live posting from the Congress. The EAACI Twitter community was very busy at Vienna with more than 2800 posts using #EAACI2016 and with the majority of posts made by Congress participants.

Welcome to Helsinki!

Antti Lauerma
EAACI Congress 2017 Chair

Growing importance of new media in Vienna

As in previous years, the EAACI Congress 2016 created an impressive interest in the media. In Vienna, 70 journalists from 15 countries attended EAACI’s annual event. This year, EAACI provided a media interview room reserved for press members. This opportunity led to more than 20 scheduled interviews with key opinion leaders and experts around the world, sharing their knowledge and scientific news with journalists.

The trend towards new media is continuing. The Congress website registered nearly 40,000 page views from over 7000 users during the event, with the top countries visiting the website being Austria, Germany, UK, USA and Spain. Most of the press coverage was presented as online articles, highlighting a wide range of topics, from study results to general developments and future challenges in the field of allergy. Both scientific news and awareness creating articles appeared. EAACI’s Facebook pages, one for patients, one for professionals, reached 9760 people with live posting from the Congress. The EAACI Twitter community was very busy at Vienna with more than 2800 posts using #EAACI2016 and with the majority of posts made by Congress participants.

Welcome to Helsinki!

Antti Lauerma
EAACI Congress 2017 Chair
UPCOMING EVENTS

EAACI CONGRESS 2017

EAACI Congress 2017
17 - 21 June 2017
Helsinki, Finland
www.eaaci.org

FOCUSED MEETINGS

Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Meeting (FAAM 2016)
13 - 15 October 2016
Rome, Italy
www.eaaci-faam.org

European Consortium on Application of Flow Cytometry in Allergy (EuroBAT 2016)
12 October 2016
Rome, Italy
www.eaaci-eurobat.org

International Severe Asthma Forum (ISAF 2016)
17 – 19 November 2016
Manchester, United Kingdom
www.eaaci-isaf.org

Symposium on Experimental Rhinology and Immunology of the Nose (SERIN 2017)
30 March – 1 April 2017
Düsseldorf, Germany
www.eaaci.org/serin2017

Skin Allergy Meeting
Joint meeting with ESCD (SAM 2017)
27 – 29 April 2017
Zurich, Switzerland
www.eaaci.org/sam2017

ALLERGY SCHOOL

Eosinophilic Esophagitis
16 – 18 March 2017
Rotterdam - Vlaardingen, Netherlands
www.eaaci.org/allergy-schools

WINTER SCHOOL

15th EAACI Immunology Winter School
26 - 29 January 2017
Sierra Nevada, Spain
www.eaaci.org/allergy-schools

MASTER CLASS

Translational Immunology in Allergic Diseases
21 - 22 October 2016
Zurich, Switzerland
www.eaaci.org/master-classes

For more information visit www.eaaci.org or contact events@eaaci.org
The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Meeting (FAAM), which this year will take place in Rome, Italy, from 13–15 October, has become one of the most attractive meetings on the EAACI Calendar. The proof: this year the number of registered attendees is already more than double that compared to the same number of weeks before the meeting in 2014! Nearly all European countries are represented with other delegates travelling great distances to join us from such countries as Korea, Kazakhstan and New Zealand!

In part this is due to the alluring location of the Eternal City, and the conference centre is ideally located between the historic centre and Fiumicino Airport to allow for both the business of the meeting and the pleasure of exploring this magnificent city. The inspiring location is equally matched with a highly interactive multidisciplinary scientific programme.

The multifaceted nature of FAAM’s ambitious programme incorporates symposia, seminars and workshops presenting the cutting edge of science and medicine. The meeting topics have been broken down into three key areas: Clinical highlights; Industry and food technologist highlights; and Consumer highlights, to maximise interaction and discussion.

Clinical highlights include topics such as: Clinical manifestations of food allergy – new aspects including non-IgE mediated food allergies and EoE; Recommendations on formulas for special needs in children with cow’s milk allergy; Microbiome and Nutrition; and Harmful and protective nutritional factors.

For those interested in Industry and food technology, topics include: Current analytical methods and future perspectives; New and old allergens in the light of new production technologies; and Hypoallergenic food.

Translational Immunology Master Class

In 2016, for the first time, EAACI’s Immunology Section and Interest Group on Biologicals are organising a Master Class on Translational Immunology, to take place on 21–22 October in Zurich, Switzerland. State-of-the-art training in novel therapies will be given and current unmet needs in allergic disorders will be addressed. The target audience is clinicians working in the fields of allergy and asthma who want to know more about the link between clinical presentation and treatment options with biologics based on endotyping. Participants will receive the knowledge and training required to effectively use these immunological tools in the clinic.

During the first day, leading experts in the field will provide comprehensive updates on how to identify phenotypes and immunological endotypes in patients suffering from asthma, allergic rhinitis, atopic dermatitis, urticaria, food allergy, eosinophilic esophagitis and in those patients undergoing immunotherapy. The basic immunological mechanisms underpinning these clinical phenotypes and endotypes will also be discussed. On the second day there will be detailed clinical presentations on the use of anti-IgE, anti-IL-5, anti-IL-4 and anti-IL-13 in the clinic. Specifically, participants will learn how and when to use these biologics, how to prevent, recognise and manage side-effects, and how to approach difficult to treat patients. Interactive sessions involving case presentations by faculty and participants will ensure that the new knowledge learnt can be applied in a real world setting. Finally, novel immune and microbiome targets currently in development and clinical trials for allergy and asthma patients will be discussed.

EAACI Master Class session has a workshop character, making them as interactive as possible. The group size is limited to a maximum of 50 attendees to allow for active discussions. These places are filling up very soon under the autumn sun in Rome.

Finally, consumer highlights incorporates topics such as: Consumers and industry perspectives on thresholds; What does “may contain” mean?: Labelling and the latest EFSA recommendation and European regulation; The role of patients in the clinical trials for food allergy immunotherapy.

All stakeholders in the field including allergists, paediatricians, gastroenterologists, food technologists, allied health, policymakers as well as patients’ organisations will be present. This multi-professional approach is crucial to achieve a global and all-embracing approach to the several clinical manifestations of food allergy, embracing the patient, their community and daily life.

With such a diverse programme and with what is expected to be the largest FAAM yet, we are eagerly looking forward to seeing you very soon under the autumn sun in Rome.
As the chairs of the organising committee for the 3rd International Severe Asthma Forum (ISAF) we would like to invite you to join us at the Forum for what promises to be a fascinating meeting, with state of the art lectures, debates and keynote lectures. We have succeeded in bringing together experts from all over the world, covering all aspects of severe asthma. With new biologics just around the corner, we will open with a series of presentations comparing the different mechanistic approaches. Experts in discovery science will tackle the challenges of genetics, immune mechanisms and epidemiology. The developing field of biomarkers and the latest opinions in phenotyping will be discussed, and methods of patient selection for different treatments will be debated. We have sessions on measuring airway function, the role of the environment and severe asthma in children. The aim of the meeting is to facilitate discussion about both emerging concepts and current clinical problems.

Abstract submission closed on 28 August 2016. Time has been reserved in the programme for oral abstract presentations as well as poster sessions, which will give more junior researchers the opportunity to present their work to some of the most influential researchers in the field of asthma.

The meeting will take place from 17–19 November 2016 in Manchester, UK (the European City of Science 2016) and we look forward to welcoming you there!

Angela Simpson
ISAF 2016 Chair
Omer Kalayci
ISAF 2016 Chair

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**Winter School on Basic Immunology Research 2017**

EAACI Immunology Winter Schools, organised by the EAACI Immunology Section, began in 2001 with the aim of gathering together young doctoral and postdoctoral scientists active in allergy and clinical immunology research. These meetings have increased the impact of basic immunology research in the fields of allergy and clinical immunology. All previous Immunology Winter Schools have been very successful in terms of scientific quality and in terms of their interactive character.

It is our pleasure to announce that the 15th EAACI Immunology Winter School, “Basic Immunology Research in Allergy and Clinical Immunology”, will take place in Sierra Nevada, Spain, from 26–29 January 2017.

Keeping to the successful framework of previous Winter Schools, excellent keynote speakers have also been invited this year, including John Bienenstock (Canada), Judith Allen (United Kingdom), Clare Lloyd (United Kingdom), Fergus Shanahan (Ireland), Rudi W. Hendriks (The Netherlands) and Gunnar Nilsson (Sweden).

The goal of the 15th Winter School is to create a stimulating environment to discuss new and old allergy-related immunological concepts. Young scientists will have the opportunity to directly interact with well-known excellent researchers, and to discuss their data with the keynote lecturers, EAACI Immunology board members and with each other. All keynote speakers and the faculty will be present during the entire meeting to provide ample time for discussions, during lunch or dinner and in the evenings at the poster sessions. In addition, the meeting is a great opportunity to make friends with other young scientists from all over the world!

Abstract submission opens on 1 September 2016 and closes on 15 October 2016. Seventy participants will be selected based on the scientific quality of their submitted abstracts. These participants will be invited to register for the Winter School and to present their work either as an oral presentation or as a poster. Registration and accommodation costs will be covered by EAACI.

The organisers are looking forward to welcoming you in Sierra Nevada.

Liam O’Mahony
Winter School 2017 Organising Committee Chair
EAACI Immunology Section Chairperson

Jürgen Schwarze
Winter School 2017 Organising Committee Co-Chair
EAACI Immunology Section Secretary
On behalf of EAACI and the Organising Committee, it is a great pleasure to invite you to the 11th Symposium of Experimental Rhinology and Immunology of the Nose (SERIN), to be held in Düsseldorf, Germany, from 30 March to 1 April 2017.

SERIN 2017 welcomes all specialists in the fields of rhinology, allergy and immunology, and promises a diverse and stimulating scientific programme that incorporates both innovative basic research as well as clinical and translational aspects in a comprehensive, single track meeting.

The main topics of this high-quality event are allergic rhinitis and rhinosinusitis. Clinicians, practitioners and scientists will have the opportunity to gather and discuss topics such as:
- Chronic rhinosinusitis (CRS) with a special focus on nasal polyps;
- The relation between upper and lower airways and the close association between allergic rhinitis (AR), CRS and asthma;
- Treatment options in CRS and AR including intranasal medication, new biologics and specific immunotherapy with allergens.

The focus of the SERIN meetings has always been on intense scientific discussions held in a friendly atmosphere and this is also the major aim for next year’s meeting which will be single track, with ample time for discussion and interaction between all participants. This unique format makes SERIN 2017 in Düsseldorf an ideal opportunity for young scientists to dive into this exciting and active field. Travel grants and poster prizes will be awarded.

Furthermore, SERIN 2017 will exhibit a joint session with the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI). Our Organising Committee looks forward to welcoming peers from all over the world to share the latest findings, discoveries and experiences, and to partake in a truly interactive interdisciplinary dialogue.

Please visit the SERIN 2017 website for more details and latest information: www.eaaci.org/serin2017.

We look forward to welcoming you to Düsseldorf at SERIN 2017.

Martin Wagenmann
SERIN 2017 Chair
Ralph Mösges
SERIN 2017 Chair
EAACI ENT Section Chairperson

Clinical/Research Fellowships 2017: don’t forget to apply!

Applications for the 2017 EAACI Clinical/Research Fellowships will be open to all EAACI Junior Members from 1 October to 31 December 2016. EAACI Clinical and Research Fellowships are intended to help spread the medical specialty of allergy and clinical immunology throughout Europe.

The EAACI Research Fellowship supports research and training of EAACI Junior Members in another European country (not the applicant’s home country), fosters the exchange of knowledge and techniques and the implementation of new techniques throughout European laboratories. The work of Research Fellowship Winners will be highlighted through increased publication activity and a dedicated presentation during the EAACI Annual Congress. The duration of the EAACI Research Fellowship is three, six or twelve months.

The EAACI Clinical Fellowship aims to promote specialised clinical training in allergy and clinical immunology and to support the medical specialty of allergy and clinical immunology throughout Europe. These Fellowships are for EAACI members in training and are not intended for well-established specialists. Clinicians early in their career will be given priority. The duration of the EAACI Clinical Fellowship is three months.

We strongly encourage you to take this great opportunity to further your professional and personal development and apply for the 2017 EAACI Fellowships.

Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier
EAACI Vice-President Education & Specialty
A different approach to asthma phenotypes in children

One of the issues addressed during the recent EAACI Annual Congress in Vienna was a different approach to asthma phenotypes in children. In the first lecture entitled “Clinical phenotypes”, Jocelyne Just (France) began by presenting cross-sectional studies about asthma phenotypes during childhood, mentioning cluster analysis as an interesting unsupervised statistical method and the parameters that should be taken into account when defining phenotypes (gender, body mass index, age of onset, atopic features, airway obstruction, asthmatic treatments and airways inflammation). In an elegant manner, the speaker demonstrated an interesting overlap between the phenotypes observed in the different studies. Regarding the trajectories of asthma phenotypes during childhood and adult life, it has been shown that remission is most frequently observed in children with mild episodic viral wheeze and no remission is observed in atopic multiple-trigger wheeze; rhinitis and sensitisation to house dust mites also predict the persistence of disease. Children with multiple early atopy have diminished lung function throughout childhood and these effects are more marked in boys, and asthma seems to increase the risk of COPD in adult life. The atopic march was revisited in a very interesting perspective as a rare and severe asthma phenotype. Finally, the idea that phenotypes should be assessed separately, especially in terms of targeted treatment, was stressed.

Sven Seys (Belgium) started his presentation, “Molecular and immunological phenotyping”, by explaining the need for such an approach: because treatment is focused on the dampening of airway inflammation, treatment response is variable and it is important to identify the responders, so treatment tailored to the needs of each individual patient is of major importance. The airway inflammation that occurs in children with asthma, either eosinophilic or neutrophilic, was then discussed, as well as the inflammatory phenotypes that differ between those children with stable (mostly paucigranulocytic) and those with acute asthma (mostly eosinophilic). The approach suggested by precision medicine in asthma after diagnosis is to characterise the phenotype and then to characterise the endotype mainly through biomarkers in blood, sputum and exhaled breath, in order to identify if the inflammatory response is mainly Th2 or non-Th2, so that a tailored therapy can be started. However, type 2 cytokines are not exclusively found in atopic asthma and more studies looking at airway cytokine profiles are needed. Regarding exercise-induced asthma, the importance of biomarkers to its identification was discussed, with emphasis on epithelial injury as a stimulus for the occurrence of neutrophilic inflammation in elite athletes. For future research, identifying cut-off values for biomarkers and working on their validation is needed, so that they can be used to predict treatment response and progression of the disease.

During the last presentation, “Phenotype-based treatment of asthma in children: Any light on the horizon?”, Sejal Saglani (UK) stressed the fact that no single factor could by itself predict a phenotype and response to treatment. A lot of factors, such as host factors, environmental exposures, pathophysiology, symptoms pattern and basic management, should be taken into account and used to determine a more individualised treatment. Regarding school-age children with difficult-to-treat asthma, it has been highlighted that sputum eosinophils do not seem to be useful in guiding asthma treatment, and that phenotypes based in sputum inflammation vary through time. Given the complexity and heterogeneity of phenotypes at this age, it is important to take into account different clinical outcomes: lung function, symptoms, inflammation, exacerbations and response to corticosteroids. Regarding this last item, the response to steroids should be assessed in a multi-domain approach, including lung function response, symptoms response, inflammation through sputum eosinophils and through exhaled nitric oxide. It has been highlighted that the majority of children are partial responders, with 72% with response in at least one domain, while only 13% respond in all considered domains. So, there are no predictors of pattern of response: rather, the pattern of steroid response in each child may determine optimal add-on therapy and monitoring. A lung function response should lead us to consider the addition of tiotropium bromide, a nitric oxide response should lead us to consider omalizumab, while a sputum eosinophil response should lead us to consider mepolizumab. Regarding preschool children with wheeze, the question is far more complex. Current guidelines present several limitations, since there is little or no evidence and most guidelines are based on expert opinion and consensus; there is no assessment of airways inflammation, judgment is based on accurate parental reports of symptom patterns, the symptom pattern may itself change, and most of the times the possibility of a bacterial infection is ignored. Also, clinical phenotypes at this age are highly instable, with only 20% of children with multiple-trigger wheeze remaining stable over 2 years. Among pre-schoolers who perform induced sputum (a safe and feasible procedure) 62% matched bacteria and viruses with BAL, but inflammation in induced sputum is not reflective of BAL in preschool children. Such data highlight the need to consider inflammation and infection phenotype-based management at this age.

This Symposium was chaired by Graham Roberts (UK) and Bradley E. Chippes (USA). ●

Mariana Couto
EAACI IG Allergy, Asthma and Sports Secretary
Allergy Unit, Hospital & Instituto CUF Porto