Significant progress has been made in terms of proving immunotherapy’s (AIT’s) efficacy and safety both for respiratory allergy and for venom hypersensitivity, and recent data look promising also for AIT as a disease-modifying treatment for food allergy and atopic dermatitis. The International consensus (ICON) statement on AIT is the most recent document prepared by a multinational group of experts reviewing the available literature and formulating the key statements for AIT.

The current board of iCAALL and the participating organisations (i.e. EAACI, AAAAI, ACAAI and WAO) formed a working committee on the basis of regional representation, expertise in the field, and previous participation in the AIT guidelines. The current group is comprised of experts from all continents and regions. Members of the committee proposed the most relevant areas for study and selected the documents for critical review.

Many Task Force reports and consensus documents from the EAACI AIT Interest Group as well as other key scientific papers were considered. Each member was responsible for the preparation of texts to be included in the ICON document. The governing boards of the participating organisations endorsed the final document which, due to its substantial content, was divided into two parts. Part One, which contains chapters on the current status of AIT, AIT methods, specific clinical indications for AIT, AIT safety and un-met needs has recently been accepted for publication in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology. Part Two will contain views on AIT mechanisms, the standardisation of allergen extracts, pharmaco-economics and cost-effectiveness, regulatory issues, and the future of AIT.

The ICON brings digested views, which combine scientific evidence with expert opinion. It is aimed to provide a benchmark for all health care professionals. The authors believe that the document provides a basis for harmonisation and wider application of AIT in view of public health and the pharmaco-economical rationale provided – especially useful for policymakers. The methodology used makes AIT recommendations adaptable for countries worldwide, assuming the necessary modifications based on the regional differences of health care systems and reimbursement policies. The current underuse of AIT requires quick and effective actions to solve a number of problems, including lack of agreement on documented efficacy, insufficient data on its cost-effectiveness, differing numbers and educational level of physicians taking care of allergic subjects, the lack of awareness of AIT in the general population and within non-allergy/immunology trained medical professionals, scattered availability of regimens and/or products for application as well as varying criteria for selection of patients that can benefit from AIT.

Assessment of the cost-effectiveness of AIT has been difficult, mainly because of problems in assessing its efficacy. It is essential to precisely define what clinical benefit can be achieved and, to that end, we need better systems for defining benefit, not just in statistical terms, but in terms of what is relevant to individual patients. Harmonisation of validation in terms of patient-relevant outcomes is the key to promoting AIT. Recently, an EAACI Task Force recommended a homogeneous combined symptom and medication score (CSMS) as the primary outcome for AIT effectiveness, which provides a simple and standardised method that balances both symptoms and the need for anti-allergic medication in an equally weighted manner. Equally, reliable systems of allergen exposure are needed to assess AIT induced allergen-specific tolerance. In this context, environmental exposure chambers provide a very promising approach.

The ICON provides a very clear key message describing the current benefits for patients and problems for clinicians. Moreover, unmet needs are identified, including, among other things, better allergen standardisation and definition of homologous groups of allergens, the defining of biomarkers to select responders and objectively evaluate their efficacy, the shorter duration of AIT, the need for large multicentre studies with novel products, studies within the paediatric investigation program, or harmonisation and validation of clinical outcomes or guidelines that consider the socio-economical differences and health policies between regions and countries. The new ICON on AIT is the most complete document to consider the current facts and problems of AIT.

Marek Jutel
EAACI Treasurer
Taking over my Presidential term, I would like first to acknowledge the extraordinary achievements of the EAACI leadership and membership over the past 60 years. The recent Annual Congress with a compelling audience of over 7,000 participants and 9,000 members worldwide provide evidence for the exciting evolution that the Academy has made. This strong presence indicates that, all over the world, clinicians and scientists in the field of allergy are reaching out to EAACI to communicate their science and best clinical practice, to be inspired, and to gain the finest education.

But can EAACI advance to an even higher level?

In the next two years, innovation and integration will be the key words, with focus on the EAACI core values such as development and research, improved patient care at the global level, and increased public awareness.

There is the urgent need that allergic diseases be recognised as a growing health problem, and that high standards of care for allergic diseases be achieved and sustained across Europe and internationally.

The crucial external challenge is to fill the knowledge gap at the political and community level. Strategic alliances with National Allergy Societies, patient organisations, community pharmacists and policy makers will be accomplished through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform. This platform will be instrumental in implementing large-scale initiatives such as public campaigns, multi-disciplinary and multi-professional programs, as well as for promoting joint actions at a national, European and worldwide level.

Representatives from the National Allergy Societies will be involved in guideline development, in the Specialty Committee and EU lobbying initiatives, as well as in the Health Economics Task Force. Data on the health economics of allergic diseases from national countries will support the framing of the EAACI Policy and Advocacy Work Plan. A comprehensive communication plan for several of the initiatives will directly benefit our members, patients and carers, and our partners.

The Clinical Practice Guidelines for Allergen Immunotherapy, prepared to suit the requirements of public health bodies, will serve to harmonise the overall management of allergic diseases, as well as establishing collaborations with regulators and policy makers at EU and national level. The implementation plan for the EAACI Anaphylaxis Guidelines, just launched, includes a strong focus on the primary care setting, aiming to develop best management pathways and to strengthen the links between primary and secondary care. An improvement in the visibility and the role of the allergy and clinical immunology discipline should ultimately result.

This vision demands the allocation of further resources into growing and innovative trends of research, such as personalised medicine. Facilitating networks of centres with standards of excellence for clinical practice and research will be pursued, while also maintaining strong positions in critical fields of interest to achieve sustainable results. We will capitalise on the excellent network of EAACI Interest Groups, Sections, Task forces as well as Committees in order to create a high-performance culture within the organisation, where every member takes ownership and accountability. Dealing with generational differences, and nurturing high-level talent whilst ensuring diversity and inclusivity, will provide the Academy with the boost and engagement needed in order to continue to excel.

Each and every member is invited to shape with enthusiasm and pride the thrilling future of the Academy.

Antonella Muraro
EAACI President
Dear Reader,

First I would like to thank all those of you who took part in the Annual Meeting in Barcelona and made the Congress a great success! The total number of attendees was over 7,800, with people coming from all over the world. Many of them were young men and women; but this is not a surprise since the Junior Members represent the largest EAACI Section, made up of about 4,000 young doctors.

My thanks also go to the Local Organising Committee (especially Victoria Cardona and Tomás Chivato), the Executive Committee, the Vice-President of Congresses, the Scientific Programme Coordinator, as well as the Headquarters team, for their great work, dedication, collegiality and cooperation.

Many things contributed to making the Congress a success. Not only the high scientific level of the programme, but also several innovations presented during the Congress, such as the Congress App, the electronic poster discussion sessions, the interactive workshops, and the virtual hub. The overwhelming enthusiasm and energy of the Junior Member sessions deserves a special mention, since investment in young researchers is a top priority of EAACI.

Among the many high-scientific level sessions, the ‘Women in science’ session was very successful, thanks to the presence of and lectures by three women scientists in the field of upper and lower airways research. Concerning the education of students, resident doctors and (why not!) seniors, we have to mention the launch of the Global Atlas of Allergic Rhinitis and Chronic Rhinosinusitis, which reached 1,000 downloads after the first week of its launch and is currently leading the way in the resources accessed on our website.

Finally, out of many meetings held during the Congress, one of the most important was the National Societies Forum, whose purpose was to allow National Societies to present and share current issues coming from local situations in Europe, improving the relationship and cooperation between them and the Academy.

Barcelona was also the place where former President Nikos Papadopoulos gave way to the new one, Antonella Muraro. This is the first time that a woman has become President of EAACI, an honour for all the women involved in this area. The Presidential Plan 2015–2017 aims to further strengthen the core values of our Academy, delivering the best science and education for our members and promoting the best health care for the allergic patient. In order to achieve these goals, future efforts should be directed towards overcoming a number of obstacles, both economic and cultural, and increasing public awareness of allergic diseases by all means possible. The creation of stakeholder platforms at European and national level, the establishment of strategic collaborations with patient organisations and other politically active organisations, and the recognition and harmonisation of allergology as a specialty at the EU and national levels are just some examples. This ambitious program will only be achieved through much hard work by the President and the Executive Committee, as well as with the collaboration of all those who love our specialty.

Therefore, I would like to close this editorial by wishing the new President and all those involved in this process of growth and renewal all the very best for the work ahead.

M. Beatrice Biloc

Newsletter Editor
SUMMARY

President’s Desk

3 Opening new doors

Opinion Leaders Corner

6 Allergies and asthma still rising: Actions needed and the role of EAACI

News

7 EAACI Executive Committee 2015-2017
8 The Junior Members Working Group 2015–2017
9 EAACI AIT Guidelines in Zurich

In the Spotlight: EAACI Congress 2015

11 After the meeting ended
11 Global Atlas of Allergic Rhinitis and Chronic Rhinosinusitis
12 Women in Science Symposium
12 EU meeting
13 First National Societies Forum
13 Patient Organisations Committee activities report
14 Clinical Village
15 Anaphylaxis Training Station
17 EAACI Awards 2015

Agenda

21 Allergy School on Molecular and Laboratory Asthma
21 Food Allergy Training Course - El Escorial
22 PAAM 2015
22 ISMA 2015

09 EAACI AIT Guidelines in Zurich
11 After the meeting ended
14 Clinical Village in Barcelona
16 Anaphylaxis Training Station in Barcelona
Allergies and asthma still rising: Actions needed and the role of EAACI

After an astonishing rise over the last 60 years, allergic diseases today affect the lives of more than one billion people worldwide, and are expected to affect up to 4 billion in 2050. The prevalence of allergic diseases and their socio-economic impacts are particularly on the rise in urbanised regions and in our globalised world, in association with environmental and lifestyle changes. Apart from the individual suffering of patients, allergic diseases present a very high socio-economic burden to health care systems and families. Effective policies and a strategy development are needed to fight with this burden at the global, regional, national level. A worldwide strategy to fight and manage allergic diseases should be developed. All stakeholders including specialists, primary care physicians, nurses, dieticians, psychologists, pharmacists, patient organisations, educators, industry, and policy makers should be involved.

Efforts to overcome the high numbers of unmet needs can be grouped into three broad areas:

1. **Research and development** should be synergised and prioritised in order to achieve sustainable results in prevention, biomarkers, curative treatment, anti-viral vaccines and novel drug development. There are a number of barriers and obstacles in grant giving bodies to be solved, particularly to ensure support of human immunology and allergy research. The main points to be improved in research can be summarised as: improving on the current lack of political awareness and understanding, and on priority setting for allergy epidemics; prioritising curative approaches and research for prevention; organising and financing large-scale, non-hypothesis based, in-depth research, which is now possible with the novel developments in next generation DNA and RNA sequencing, exposome and epigenetic analysis and biomarkers; and prioritising human research.

2. **Improved patient care at the global level** requires a worldwide approach to identify barriers for prevention and cure, develop patient registries and next generation guidelines, to improve access to diagnosis and essential drugs in low income countries, implement full environment control, provide psychological help directly and routinely without any need for consultation, and to implement every aspect of the education of patients, primary care physicians and allied health employees. The new generation EAACI guidelines for Food Allergy and Allergen Immunotherapy should provide structured, multidisciplinary, regional, environment-oriented and individual patient-focused solutions, with full consideration of potential differences across cultures.

3. **Increased public awareness** is now essential, and allergic diseases and asthma must be publicly positioned amongst the most important causes of chronic morbidity and as a health care burden. Allergy and asthma focused patient organisations should be immediately established in all countries. A significant number of international alliances, societies, networks and academies are working on this. Intensive efforts should be undertaken at the level of National governments, United Nations, WHO, EU etc. There are a number of established strategies and associations with substantial experience in this area, and we should avoid reinventing the wheel, using and implementing the existing know how. For example, one of the most valuable experiences in our fight against allergies is the success of the Finnish Allergy and Asthma Programmes. It is now fundamentally important to disseminate the Finnish experience to the whole world, to collect feedback and make further improvements.

In summary, a multidisciplinary and scientific approach is essential to improve science, education and the state of our patients.

**Further reading**


**Cezmi Akdis**
EAACI Past President
**EAACI Executive Committee 2015-2017**

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  - Executive Director, Switzerland
The Junior Members Working Group 2015–2017

The Junior Members (JMs), formerly named Junior Members and Affiliates (JMAs), represent the largest EAACI Section consisting of nearly 4,000 clinicians and scientists under the age of 35 years.

Over the years, EAACI has developed specific activities to support and increase the influence of the younger members within the Academy. Therefore, JMs now enjoy a large number of benefits, such as free online access to the Academy’s educational resources and journals at eaaci.org, and have the possibility of applying for clinical or research fellowships and for the Mentorship Program, as well as for scholarships to attend the Annual Congress, and for travel grants to participate in Focused Meetings and Allergy Schools.

The JM Working Group (WG) is the representative body of EAACI JMs, and is composed of a chairperson, a webmaster and one representative from each of the EAACI Sections and Interest Groups. The Past JM Chairperson has an advisory role in the JM WG for the first year of its mandate. It is my great honour to be working with and coordinating the JM WG from the position of JM Chairperson for the next two years. During this period, the JM WG will work to support the continuous educational needs of the younger members’ of the Academy and will enhance the communication platform amongst JMs, as well as between JMs and Seniors.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues and friends in the JM WG 2013–2015 for their collaboration, team spirit and support, and to warmly welcome my new colleagues to the JM WG 2015–2017. All of us are very enthusiastic and we are determined to devote our time and efforts to ensure that Juniors are always at the centre of all EAACI activities. Follow our updates on the JM pages at eaaci.org as well as on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and stay tuned!

Olympia Tsilochristou
EAACI Junior Members Chairperson
The AIT guidelines will be a major task for our Academy, with the aim of remedying the lack of high-quality comprehensive guidelines for clinical practice in AIT. The success of this project will ultimately facilitate the implementation of AIT across health professionals and will highlight its benefits at both the public and policymaker levels.

In addition, the project will help to further consolidate the EAACI guidelines platform, as developed with the previous EAACI Guidelines on Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis. The platform consists of a “guidelines” methodology working model, which helps to educate members on a shared process for the development of guidelines, and initiates a core group responsible for their creation, updating, implementation and dissemination.

The launch meeting of the AIT Guidelines project took place in Zurich on 30 April 2015. The one-day event was attended by around 60 participants, representative of the over 100 well-known experts in the field around the world who have committed to take part in the project.

It is internationally acknowledged that guidelines should be based on the best available evidence, that the development of recommendations needs to be transparent and that adequate processes should be followed. In this regard, in the morning plenary session, the overall structure of the project was highlighted. The AIT Guidelines will be developed according to the Institute of Medicine/GIN Frame, and to the AGREE II methodology. The group will be made-up of seven Task Forces, tackling the various clinical manifestations that can benefit from immunotherapy, as well as other relevant topics: AIT in rhinoconjunctivitis; AIT in asthma; AIT in venom allergy; AIT in food allergy; AIT for the prevention of allergic diseases; AIT in primary care and community, including socio-economic costs; and a Task Force on allergen manufacturing and regulatory body issues. In each Task Force, besides clinicians and basic researchers, relevant stakeholders will be participating, including representatives from patient organisations, regulatory bodies and pharmacists. The distinguished experts in the field, present at the meeting, represented each Task Force.

Aziz Sheikh, chief methodologist of the project, introduced the planned methodological approach to gather the scientific evidence that will be used to underpin the Guidelines’ recommendations. He summarised the internationally recognised AGREE II approach, and asked the Task Force members to funnel the scope of the literature research into main overarching questions, according to the PICO frame. Following this step, the methodological team will develop and publish the protocol for the literature search and will lay the foundations of the Guidelines development. Break-out sessions in the afternoon were designed in this regard in order to let each Task Force put the proposed format in practice, mainly focusing on directions for the literature search. The positive atmosphere allowed for some lively debate. All of the groups returned to plenary rooms where their initial outcomes were discussed in the context of the overall Guidelines project.

The event received a lot of positive feedback and was a very successful start to the Guidelines process, and the individual Task Forces have been enthusiastically working behind the scenes to make further progress. The next phase in the project management envisage the finalisation of the overarching question by the end of June, in order for the methodologists to start the literature search. The delivery of the first drafts of the recommendations are expected by January 2016 and April 2016, depending on the timeframe of each Task Force. A meeting is planned in Autumn 2016 for all groups in order to finalise the recommendations, followed by a one-month public comment process.

Publication of the Guidelines chapters and final book is expected by June 2017 and will be presented at the Annual Congress in Helsinki.

Antonella Muraro
EAACI President
EAACI AIT Guidelines Project Chairperson
In Memoriam: Professor Işil B. Barlan (1958-2015)

We are deeply saddened by the loss of Professor Işil Barlan, who was a former member of the EAACI Executive Committee, as well as Chief of the Pediatric Allergy and Immunology Division and Director of the Jeffrey Modell Center for Primary Immunodeficiency at Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Prof. Barlan worked as a fellow of Prof. Raif Geha at Harvard University and later established her scientific career with several innovative studies on sublingual and subcutaneous immunotherapy and pharmacotherapy in asthma and allergic diseases. In addition to novel studies in allergen-specific immunotherapy, Prof. Barlan showed great strength of leadership, undertook intensive research and significant educational roles in the field of primary immunodeficiencies (PID) and molecular characterisation of additional novel PID diseases. Her commitment to PID diseases included the establishment of the Jeffrey Modell Center in Istanbul and the founding of the Turkish chapter of the International Patient Organisation for Primary Immunodeficiencies. She received the Sedat Simavi Prize, one of the highest medical awards in Turkey.

I would like to express my deep condolences to her friends in EAACI and in the Turkish allergy and immune deficiencies communities, to all her friends and colleagues, and to her family members.

Cezmi Akdis
EAACI Past President
After the meeting ended

The EAACI Congress 2015 took place from 6–10 June in Barcelona in the well-equipped CCIB Convention Center. The total number of attendees was over 7,800, with delegates from more than 100 different countries actively participating in creating a truly international atmosphere in which allergy was discussed. A faculty of 386 speakers and 350 chairpersons helped to populate the program with up to 20 parallel sessions.

Several innovations were introduced during the meeting. The Congress App had more functions: voting was included in many sessions; speakers could be evaluated; and searching and planning within the app was also more sophisticated than before. The electronic poster discussion sessions, introduced at the 2014 Copenhagen Congress, were very successfully further increased in number in Barcelona. One particularly popular innovation was the virtual hub, which allowed participants to watch reruns of sessions they had missed due to other interesting sessions. The newly introduced interactive workshops were very successful and stimulated a lot of discussions within these sessions.

We would like to thank all the people who made this Congress a great success: the local organizing committee, the Executive Committee, Ronald van Ree (Vice-President of Congresses) and EAACI’s outgoing President, Nikos Papadopoulos. A big thank you also to all those at EAACI Headquarters who were responsible for much of the enormous logistic operation behind of our Congress, together with K.I.T, Interplan and Amex-Barceló.

After the very successful meeting in Barcelona, we are now already looking forward to the EAACI Congress 2016 which will be held in Vienna, where you will be ‘waltzing with allergens’.

Tomás Chivato and Victoria Cardona
EAACI Congress 2015 Chairs
Edward Knol
EAACI SPC-Coordinator

EAACI Global Atlas of Allergic Rhinitis and Chronic Rhinosinusitis

EAACI is proud to present the Global Atlas of Allergic Rhinitis and Chronic Rhinosinusitis to our members. Following on the successes of the Global Atlas on Allergy and Global Atlas on Asthma, this third EAACI Global Atlas was launched at the EAACI Annual Congress in Barcelona.

The Global Atlas of Allergic Rhinitis and Chronic Rhinosinusitis contains 154 chapters written by 218 key opinion leaders in the fields of allergology, upper airway immunology and rhinology from all over the world. The editors, Cezmi Akdis, Peter Hellings and Ioana Agache, have combined efforts to deliver a unique EAACI educational tool. Indeed, the Atlas is intended to be a desktop reference for multi-sectoral usage covering all aspects of allergic rhinitis (AR) and chronic rhinosinusitis (CRS) from epidemiology, risk factors and molecular and cellular mechanisms to clinical features and co-morbidities, diagnosis, treatment, prevention and control. In combining all the latest information on AR and CRS, the Atlas is essential reading for medical students, allied health workers, primary care physicians, pharmacists, medical industry, policy makers, patient organizations and specialists alike. The launch of the Atlas was reported by the international press, across Europe and in Argentina, the US, Canada, China and India.

The Atlas is available for free download at http://www.eaaci.org/ar-and-crs-atlas and, just one week after its official launch, it had already been downloaded from the EAACI website more than 1,000 times!

Cezmi Akdis
EAACI Past President
Peter Hellings
EAACI Secretary General
Ioana Agache
EAACI Vice-President Communications and Membership
Women have made significant contributions to science from the earliest times. Interest in gender and science has illuminated the scientific endeavours and accomplishments of women, the barriers they have faced and still have to overcome in order to be acknowledged. The EAACI family has demonstrated itself to be a nurturing environment, facilitating the growth of women within their specialities. The goal of the next two years is to facilitate the access of these women to leadership positions.

Keeping in mind the 2015 International Women’s Day theme “Make it happen”, EAACI celebrated the scientific achievements of women scientist in their second Women in Science Symposium. The successful meeting format which we organised focused on cutting edge research in asthma: the work of three outstanding women scientists’ endeavours as an exquisite overview of basic, translational and clinical research in asthma and its co-morbidities.

The complex network of effector and regulatory T and B cells, cytokines and chemokines underlying immune tolerance and asthma exacerbations were elegantly described in the first talk by Mubeccel Akdis, an eminent researcher from the Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma in Davos. The asthma journey continued with endotype-driven strategies for asthma management, thoroughly and critically commented on by Monica Kraft, Chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, and one of the pioneers of asthma phenotypes and endotypes research. Wytske Fokkens, Chairman of the Department of Otorhinolaryngology in the Academic Medical Centre Amsterdam and lead in the avant-garde research linking upper and lower airways, detailed the body of knowledge that led to the united airways concept.

The event addressed the needs of women in science, from well-deserved acknowledgement to mentorship and representation on scientific and leadership bodies. By sharing their journey through science, EAACI women can inspire and empower and thus forge a strong community.

We look forward to welcoming you at the third Women in Science Symposium during the EAACI Congress 2016 in Vienna.

Antonella Muraro
EAACI President
Ioana Agache
EAACI Vice-President Communications and Membership

Stronger together: collaboration at policy level to tackle the allergy epidemic in Europe

During the Annual Congress in Barcelona allergy experts and EU policy-makers met to discuss actions to be undertaken in partnership at the EU level to help curb the growing allergy epidemic in Europe.

Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Sirpa Pietikäinen, who chairs the new MEP Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma, said “We need to act now and rally strong political support to take concrete actions.” Pietikäinen further insisted that a strong EU action plan inclusive of both health and environment issues is of paramount importance. The quest speakers Christine Rolland, Marta Munoz Cuesta, Sergio Bonini and Roberto Gradnik (representing, respectively, the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients’ Association (EFA), the European Commission (DG Environment), the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and European Biopharmaceutical Enterprises (EBE)) highlighted the main priorities from patient, policy, scientific and industry perspectives.

All panellists agreed on the importance of improving patients’ accessibility to appropriate care. Two of the key steps in that direction would be to formally recognise the allergology medical specialty and ensure adequate allergy training and education for primary care, to improve early and accurate diagnosis. The necessity of developing a comprehensive EU strategy for chronic diseases and of fostering allergy research in Europe by ensuring the allocation of sufficient funding were also addressed as main priorities.

Antonella Muraro
EAACI President
Nikos Papadopoulos
EAACI Past President
New communication structures in EAACI for the National Allergy Societies

In addition to the Business Meetings held between National Allergy Societies (NAS) and EAACI representatives each year at the EAACI Congresses, the new NAS Forum aims to highlight contributions from NAS with national flavour but of potential interest to other member societies. The first NAS Forum took place at the EAACI Congress in Barcelona on Monday 8 June 2015, and was attended by representatives of 50% of our member societies.

At the Forum, EAACI President Antonella Muraro explained EAACI’s Strategic Plan for 2015–2017, prioritising collaboration between the NAS and EAACI, and aiming for closer cooperation.

The presentations of NAS programs started with a talk from Nanna Fyhrquist on the Finnish Allergy Program, which builds on Finland’s very successful Asthma Program. Harald Renz introduced current projects in the German Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology aimed at improving the management of allergic diseases, among them a project for comprehensive allergy centres at institutions where different disciplines are active in allergy management. Dario Antolin Amérgio introduced the Spanish Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, describing its unique and strong structures including its own ethical committee and an international journal.

Thomas Werfel, Chair of the new NAS Committee, and Ioana Agache, EAACI Vice President Communications and Membership, presented the ideas behind the new structure: the NAS Committee shall be the central group of European NAS. Points of discussion on the NAS Committee include: current issues coming from local situations in Europe or affecting EAACI activities, such as National Allergy Programs or guidelines; public campaigns, lobbying for better recognition and care for allergic diseases at the National and the European level; difficulties and opportunities in implementing guidelines; the status of the allergy speciality; continuous medical education at the national level; and, last but not least, the preparation of the next NAS Forum.

The NAS Committee consists of a representative from each European NAS member of the International Societies Council. A first face-to-face meeting is already planned for 4 September 2015 in Zürich. The NAS Committee will have an EU Subcommittee formed by the representatives of NAS from EU countries. A second structure created is the International Societies Council, consisting of delegates from all non-European country members of EAACI. The International Societies Council will focus mainly on joint educational and international cooperation projects.

Exciting Patient Organisations Committee activities in Barcelona

With the help of the local patient organisation in Spain, Pilar Hernandez from AEPNAA, JM allergist Silvia Sanchez-Garcia and allergist Angel Mazón, we organised a challenging and stress level raising (!) activity in the Clinical Village, creating a unique situation where doctors visiting the Village could choose their own celebrity patient from pictures we posted. And, as you know, every picture tells a story, so behind every celebrity there was a case to discover: for some reason I don’t understand, most women chose Brat Pitt. After two days of sessions when people tried to diagnose illnesses based on the patient histories provided and using an analysis method of their choice, 25 doctors received a certificate confirming that they had solved the problem.

On Monday 8 June, we had our POC Workshop. Despite the marvelous and innovative sessions and presentations by our speakers (each of them role models for the allergy community such as Kirsten Beyer, Wesley Burk, Susan Wasserman, Magnus Wickman and Moisés Calderón), the number of attendees was not as high as expected. Clearly, a challenge for next year’s event is to improve on that.

Our Business Meeting opened with a presentation by Gideon Lack, who spoke about the inclusion of and/or collaboration with patient organisations in the LEAP study, and he ended with taking questions from the representatives of the 22 patient organisations out of the 31 members of the POC attending the Congress. We are grateful that the representatives’ attendance was made possible by a specially reserved grant through the continuing support of Novartis.

Frans Timmermans
EAACI Patient Organisations Committee Chairperson

Thomas Werfel
EAACI NAS Committee Chairperson

Ioana Agache
EAACI Vice-President Communications and Membership
**EAACI/UEMS Knowledge Exam**

The 8th EAACI/UEMS Knowledge Exam for Allergology and Clinical Immunology took place on 6 June 2015 during the EAACI Congress Barcelona. A record-breaking 56 participants took the exam, 8 of them from outside Europe, including from Chile, Ecuador, Saudi Arabia and New Zealand. Once again perfectly prepared by the local Spanish organisers and the EAACI HQ Education team (led by Viviane Knerr and Jeanette Kobler), each candidate had to answer 120 multiple choice questions in 3 hours, covering a wide range of areas in allergology, as well as basic and clinical immunology. For the first time, a glossary containing some highly specific terms such as certain foods in 13 different languages was provided. Also, 14 candidates benefited from the generous support of UEMS to reduce exam fees.

All candidates received a detailed summary of their tests and, if successful, a valued EAACI/UEMS certificate. The exam was formatted according to latest test methods and recent UEMS standards, and analysed by the Institute for Medical Education (IML), Switzerland. EAACI is considering offering a second date for the exam in the future, in the autumn, as well as distinct pediatric or adult tracks to reflect the different medical backgrounds of participants. Interest Groups and Task Forces are providing questions on recent guidelines and consensus papers to become an integrated part of the exam. In collaboration with the JMs and EAACI HQ, example questions are regularly published to facilitate test preparation.

I would like to take this opportunity to cordially thank the members of the Exam Committee, the whole ExCom, Jan de Monchy and Jacques Gayraud from UEMS, and the EAACI HQ Education team for their continuous support. I hope that National Allergy Societies will increasingly benefit from this opportunity to test their knowledge and encourage young colleagues to participate. The Exam Committee, chaired now by Carsten Schmitt-Weber, will continue to work to maintain and enhance the quality and attractiveness of the exam, and we look forward to welcoming anyone willing to contribute within the Exam Committee.

**Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier**
EAACI Vice-President Education and Speciality and Past Exam Committee Chairperson

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**Did you miss the Clinical Village?**

The Clinical Village held during the EAACI Congress 2015 was a great success. Born in Copenhagen as the Allergy Bazaar, the event was renamed in order to attract more physicians. With the aim of showing “hands on” practical procedures used in the diagnosis and treatment of allergic patients in clinics, this year there were 16 stations on different topics, from skin tests to immunotherapy, staffed by more than 90 volunteers from all over Spain (and a couple from abroad), with the majority coming from Catalonia. Anna Sala did a great job coordinating this activity, organising volunteers, materials used, posters, videos, etc. Some of the most interesting procedures included:

- learning how to treat an anaphylactic reaction, using adrenaline autoinjectors, which you could inject into a “fake” thigh, and also practicing basic cardio-pulmonary resuscitation with a dummy;
- performing controlled sting tests with wasps, on a sponge covered with chicken skin to simulate human skin;
- learning how to self-administer intravenous therapy for hereditary angioedema;
- getting to know the basic notions of nasal endoscopy;
- discovering how to read and interpret specific IgE in allergen microarray results;
- getting down to the nuts and bolts of m-health opportunities;
- trying out recipes for double blind food challenge tests to make sure they are “truly blind”;
- learning about allergen immunotherapy and how to administer it in a clinic; and
- perfecting skin testing skills (prick, intradermal and epicutaneous).

Bad news if you missed it this year. But you will have another chance to have a go in Vienna, during the EAACI Congress 2016. Of course, some stations will be repeated but there will also be some new ones: was anything missing that you believe should be included? In the meantime, you can at least find the posters online at [http://www.eaaci2015.com/clinical-village/](http://www.eaaci2015.com/clinical-village/).

**Victòria Cardona**
EAACI 2015 Congress Chair
Subcutaneous AIT
Allergopharma – the specialist in diagnosis and therapy of allergic diseases
Beat Allergy fun run/walk

Ow, this was a highlight of the Congress: a great event in which many of us participated and had a lot of fun! You had to register beforehand, due to the requirements of the insurance and to be able to provide T-shirts and participant numbers.

The event took place on Sunday evening at 20:00 but all the available places were already taken on Saturday! In total, 192 Runners/walkers took part. The atmosphere was very friendly during the warm-up, and with the support of the EAACI Headquarters team, we started the 3 Km circuit. I arrived in 167th place, but it could have been worse!

We had participants from Barcelona and all over the world, from the USA, Japan and Australia, with all ages taking part, both fit and “not so fit” (like me!).

I highly recommend that you participate next time. Don’t think you can’t do it: everyone can! You just have to go at your own pace, and not overdo it. It wasn’t a matter of winning, or beating any records, but just a way to interact with our peers and patients, in a joyful activity which helped to raise awareness of allergic diseases. So, next time, don’t hesitate: join us to “Beat Allergy” in Vienna!

Victoria Cardona
EAACI 2015 Congress Chair

Anaphylaxis Training Station

On 6 June, coinciding with the beginning of the EAACI Congress 2015, a street marketing campaign (“Escuela de Anafilaxia – educando en prevención”; “School of Anaphylaxis – education in prevention”) took place at Plaza de la Universidad, in downtown Barcelona.

Organised and supported by EAACI and the two Spanish allergy societies (SEAIC and SEICAP), with the sponsorship of ALK-Spain and MEDA-Spain, and with the collaboration of the two patients’ organisations AEPNAA and Immunitas Vera, this action aimed to raise awareness among the general public about anaphylaxis, and to increase people’s knowledge about the causes, prevention and management of this severe allergic condition, including training in the proper use of adrenaline auto-injectors.

For this purpose, we engaged the professional services of Saatchi & Saatchi Health who designed a 100% recyclable and friendly set-up, similar to a classroom. There, pedestrians – attracted by 3 hostesses – could step in and be educated about anaphylaxis by the 30 volunteer allergists, nurses and patients’ advocates who participated in this event.

From mid-day until 8 pm, over 2,000 people received general information about anaphylaxis, whilst some 70–80 “students” received additional teaching and had an opportunity to have professional advice about their conditions.

All in all, it was a small grain of sand with which to build up the mountain of prevention.
Each year EAACI honours European researchers and clinicians who have contributed significantly to the development of innovative diagnostic and therapeutic strategies for the control and prevention of allergic diseases, to the understanding of their pathophysiology, and to the strengthening of allergology as a specialty in Europe.

The Charles Blackley Award 2015 for the Promotion of the Specialty was awarded to Luis Delgado. He has worked intensively within the research field of occupational and interstitial lung diseases, severe cutaneous drug eruptions, ocular allergy, and allergy and asthma in sports practice, and has been a very active member of EAACI holding many different positions within the Academy’s leadership.

The Clemens von Pirquet Award 2015 for Improving Clinical Research was awarded to Anne Moneret-Vautrin. She is a dedicated internist, allergist and scientist, looking deep into the immunological mechanisms causing (food) allergic reactions, and providing information and support to improve the quality of life of allergic patients. She is the founder and President of the Allergy Vigilance Network and has a long-standing track record in allergy research, mirrored by more than 380 papers.

The Daniel Bovet Award for improving the Treatment and Prevention of Allergic Diseases was awarded to Marek Kowalski. His major research interests include pathogenesis and management of bronchial asthma and COPD, the immunology of respiratory infections, immunology of ageing and hypersensitivity to NSAIDs. He has authored or co-authored more than 300 publications. He has held different positions in the EAACI leadership and also chaired the EAACI Congress 2009 in Warsaw.

The Paul Ehrlich Award 2015 for Improving Experimental Research was awarded to Wyttske Fokkens. Her main field of interest is sinus surgery and the mucosal pathology of the upper and lower airways. She is the current President of the European Rhinologic Society (ERS) and the International Society of Infection and Allergy of the Nose (ISIAN). She is the author of more than 300 papers on allergy and rhinology.

The Ethics Workshop session on “How to perform our daily practice as European allergologists” took place on Sunday, 7 June 2015. Too few attendees perhaps, but ideal for an authentic meeting, just as this one was! Enrique Terol, Policy officer DG Sanco, D2 Healthcare systems gave a lecture on “Transparency - Continuous Professional Development: the patients as a partner”, using five clinical scenarios.

Free movement of patients and professionals within the EU was another matter of discussion.

To EU citizens, free movement is the right most closely associated with EU citizenship. Since the 1960s this right has been reinforced by the Treaty of Maastricht (1993), the right of residence (Directive. 2004/38), the recognition of professional qualifications (Dir. 2005/36/EC), and by the Directive on patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare (2011/24).

The headline messages here are that patients have rights to choose care abroad and be reimbursed.

The health workforce balance is the other side of the coin. Many countries have faced an outflow of health workers, leading to an uneven geographical distribution of staff within states and within Europe. The balance between the right to move freely within the EU and principles of ethical recruitment becomes a sensitive question.

Jacques Gayraud
EAACI Ethics Committee Chairperson

Glenis Scadding and Otto Spranger
EAACI Ethics Committee Members
General Assembly 2015

The EAACI General Assembly 2015 took place on 8 June during the EAACI Congress in Barcelona, with the lively participation of 186 EAACI members.

The reports from the President, Secretary General and Board of Officers gave the membership an overview of EAACI activities over the past year, as well as plans for the following years. EAACI activities continue their increasing trend, with a positive growth curve. Internal structures are functional and expanding to 13 staff members, with robust finances. To help optimise internal governance and operational activities, a user-friendly Operational Manual has been created.

A new Interest Group on Eosinophilic Esophagitis has been established. As reported by the VP, EAACI educational activities, Congresses and other events are among the best worldwide; membership has grown to 9,000; EAACI’s communication strategy has increased its impact and our external presence has dramatically improved. In addition, EAACI has an increasingly strong advocacy and outreach agenda.

Finally, members and participants at the General Assembly unanimously approved the nominations for the Board of Officers and Executive Committee members for the 2015–2017 term. EAACI President Nikos Papadopoulos submitted a package of amendments to the Constitution to the General Assembly. The package, which had received a 90 per cent acceptance rate in a public consultation circulated three months earlier, was generally approved. In the case of the proposal to change the name of the Academy by adding the word “asthma”, it was agreed that an electronic vote will be undertaken to ensure that as many members as possible can participate and have their say. The motion that a minimum 1,000 members with voting rights be required for the vote to be valid and that the vote must be passed by a two-thirds majority was accepted.

To conclude, Nikos Papadopoulos officially handed over the EAACI Presidency to the new President, Antonella Muraro, who then introduced the key objectives of the Strategic Program 2015–2017 to the audience.

Peter Hellings
EAACI Secretary General
Michael Walker
EAACI Executive Director

Busy pressroom, outstanding media coverage

This year the EAACI Congress generated even more interest in the media with a total of 1,200 online hits and an audience of over 1 billion people in 33 countries reached. This compares to almost 1,000 online hits and an audience of 900 million people in 2014.

Most coverage in Europe came out of Spain (27%) closely followed by Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy and France. A high impact was also achieved in the USA, Canada, Argentina, Venezuela and Mexico.

Journalists from 36 different media outlets and 18 countries attended the Congress to hear the latest findings and communicate personally with experts in the field of allergy. Articles covering a wide range of topics such as the scientific highlights of the Congress, EAACI allergy awareness activities, the launch of the Global Atlas of Allergic Rhinitis and Chronic Rhinosinusitis, and EAACI’s advocacy efforts at the EU level were featured in well-known media.

The local media briefing on Friday with Congress Chairs Victòria Cardona and Tomás Chivato attracted national TV, radio stations and news wires, as well as the main trade media in Spain.

EAACI Communications Team
Vienna awaits for you!

In 2016, the EAACI Congress will move to Central Europe, to Vienna, a traditional city with its sights set firmly on the future. The Austrian capital has long been a melting pot of nationalities and innovations, and combines Habsburgian flair with excellent cuisine, traditional and modern music, fine arts and architecture. And if you need a break from the hottest news in allergy and clinical immunology presented in a modern venue, the Messe Wien Exhibition & Congress Center, you can reach the city centre in less than 30 minutes to enjoy a cup of coffee in a traditional Viennese coffee house, or a refreshing “Gespritzer” in one of the Heurigen, the local winery-restaurants offering a relaxed country atmosphere in the heart of the city.

The theme of the next EAACI Congress 2016 is “Waltzing with allergens”. This theme illustrates the fact that advances in research, diagnosis and treatment of allergic and immunologic diseases are the results of the ever-turning dances of scientific research and clinical practice, modern methodology and traditional methods of observation, of innovation and experience, as well as of patients and academia. And indeed, we want our Congress to be as challenging and as enjoyable as a classical Viennese waltz!

On top of that, 2016 is the year of anniversaries and celebration! We will recognise the “110 years of allergy” since the Austrian paediatrician Clemens Freiherr von Pirquet coined the term “allergy” in 1906. Pirquet was the first to realise that antibodies are not always protective but can induce harmful reactions. Of course, it took another 60 years to discover IgE, one important inducer of hypersensitivity reactions, and, in 2016, we will be commemorating IgE’s 50th birthday. Last but not least, EAACI Congress 2016 will be the first EAACI Congress held under a female President, Antonella Muraro!

So, mark your calendars and save the dates: 11–15 June 2016. All of us on the Local Organising Committee and the Austrian Society of Allergology and Immunology (ÖGAI) will do our best to make EAACI Congress 2016 a memorable scientific, social and cultural event for you!

Barbara Bohle
EAACI Congress 2016 Chair

#EAACI2015 and #AllergistsGetTogether Meeting

Clearly the Annual Congress in Barcelona was a great success, with vivid scientific discussions taking place on site. But what was remarkable this year was that delegates also actively participated in a virtual conversation taking place under the hashtag #EAACI2015: from the beginning to the end of the Congress, nearly 6,800 tweets were posted by 550 participants resulting in 7,037,829 impressions! Delegates engaged with each other, or followed up on breakthrough studies presented during parallel sessions they could not attend, while those not physically part of the Congress stayed up-to-date with all the important aspects as if they were there.

Just before the Opening Ceremony, EAACI supported a physical meeting of allergy twitter activists from around the world. The #AllergistsGetTogether meeting was a novel initiative aiming to welcome passionate tweeters to the Congress, as well as allowing them to meet each other and have a discussion on how social media are influencing their professional lives. Thanks to all for making the #EAACI2015 conversation educational, interesting, engaging and inspiring. The next virtual conversation to take place will be: #PAAM2015! Stay tuned!

Angel Mazon and Olympia Tsilochristou
EAACI Website and Social Media Coordinator Editors

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Ninety-three participants from twenty-six countries were welcomed in Istanbul for the Allergy School on Molecular and Laboratory Asthma from 16–18 April 2015. The school was organised by the EAACI Asthma Section and endorsed by the Turkish National Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, which provided 16 scholarships to its junior members.

The school aimed to improve physicians’ knowledge on genetic studies, lung function tests and biomarkers research in asthma. Meral Ozguc, Michael Kabesh, John Holloway and Grzegorz Woszczek introduced us to the basics of genetics and how different techniques can be applied to study the complex genetic associations in asthma patients. On the second day, the value of different lung function techniques was discussed. Leif Bjermer, Chair of the Asthma Section, gave an animated lecture and taught us when to use which lung function measurement. During the day, several other excellent speakers shared their knowledge about bronchial provocation tests and tools to evaluate biomarkers in the lower airways.

An asset of this Allergy School were certainly the hands-on sessions. Participants could learn and see how to perform N2 wash-out, FENO, CalvNO, mannitol provocation and sputum induction. During the Allergy School, participants had the opportunity to discuss the outcomes of their most recent studies with seniors and two of them, Mateja Žavbi and Inês Mota, were awarded with a poster prize.

On the last day, different imaging techniques (CT, PET and VP/Spect) were discussed. To conclude, Svetlana Sergejeva presented us with her view on the need for future research in drug development: is it improving the penetrating of drugs to the small airways or is it sustained release preparations of inhaled steroids enabling once a month treatment? It was clear that nanotechnology will provide the tools to facilitate these developments but one has to be aware of the side-effects that may occur. During the closing of the School, Leif Bjermer concluded that the event had been a great success, mostly due to excellent speakers and a very interactive audience. Special thanks was addressed to Ömer Kalayci and Arzu Bakirtas, for their dedicated work in organising the School in Istanbul, with strong and professional support from EAACI HQ staff.

Sven Seys
EAACI Immunology Section Past JM Representative

Ozlem Cavkaytar
EAACI Pediatric Section JM Representative

Food Allergy Training Course in El Escorial

The 2015 Food Allergy Training Course will be held from 24–26 September at El Escorial, 45 km northwest of Madrid, Spain. Organised by the EAACI Food Allergy Interest Group, the course aims to gather some 20 faculty members and 80 participants to discuss food allergy in adolescent and adults.

The course will start with an overview of the burden of food allergies in this age group. A session will be dedicated to two of the most challenging presentations of anaphylaxis (mammalian meat anaphylaxis and food-dependent exercise induced anaphylaxis) and to anaphylaxis management. Afterwards the major plant and animal food allergies in adolescents and adults will be reviewed in comprehensive sessions combining clinical allergy with basic allergen science, and showing the added value of component resolved diagnosis and the potential of hypoallergens in specific food immunotherapy.

The theoretical programme will be complemented by practical workshops and sessions which will take up 40% of this 2-day course. Participants will learn how to collect the right medical data from a food allergic patient, how to evaluate quality of life, the key aspects of oral food challenges, and even how to perform skin prick tests or how to prepare recipes to blind foods for challenges.

Montserrat Fernández Rivas
Organising Committee Chair
EAACI Food Allergy Interest Group Board Member

Clare Mills
Organising Committee Chair
EAACI Food Allergy Interest Group Chairperson
PAAM 2015

There are only a few months remaining before the 4th Pediatric Allergy and Asthma Meeting (PAAM) takes place in Berlin, so please ensure that you are registered.

PAAM is one of EAACI’s largest focused meetings and is the flagship meeting of the Pediatrics Section. Approximately 800 attendees joined us at each of the previous PAAM meetings held in Venice (2009), Barcelona (2011) and Greece (2013); feedback from these meetings was excellent.

Susanne Lau and George du Toit, past and present chairpersons of the EAACI Pediatric Section, are excited and proud to be the co-chairs of this year’s meeting which will be held in Berlin, from 15–17 October 2015. The Pediatric Section and the Scientific Committee have developed an exciting scientific programme, and all aspects of the diagnosis and treatment of pediatric allergy and asthma will be addressed.

The first plenary session raises the question: “are we on the brink of a revolution in food allergy?”. The second plenary will be a joint session with the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and addresses new aspects of asthma. The final plenary will focus on eosinophilic gastrointestinal disease and will be held in cooperation with ESPGHAN.

There will also be symposia and workshops on recent developments in the diagnosis and management of immunotherapy, atopic skin disease, drug allergy and eosinophilic gastrointestinal disease. Two postgraduate courses (Food Allergy and Pediatric Rhinitis) will be offered on the first day of the meeting. In addition, this year’s meeting will (like the EAACI Congress 2015 in Barcelona) present hands-on workshops in a “Clinical Village” and in “Challenging Clinical Scenarios” sessions, to which participants are encouraged to bring cases. We thus hope to facilitate interaction between participants and the expert lecturers who will be attending.

We will also be encouraging interaction on social media platforms: the event’s Twitter hashtag will be #PAAM2015.

More information about the meeting and scientific programme can be found on http://www.eaaci-paam.org.

PAAM 2015 will be an outstanding event for pediatricians, dieticians and primary care physicians with an interest in allergic diseases in children and adolescence and we look forward to welcoming you all to Berlin for the 4th PAAM Meeting.

● Susanne Lau
EAACI ExCom Member and PAAM Chair

George du Toit
EAACI Pediatric Section Chairperson and PAAM Co-Chair

ISMA 2015

The growing universe of allergenic molecules being discovered and made available for diagnosis is one of the challenges molecular allergology faces today, stressing the need to bridge the gap between science and clinical practice. The scientific program planned for ISMA 2015 (19-21 November 2015, Lisbon, Portugal) will help you fill this gap, travelling from symptoms to molecules and back again.

The Scientific Programme this year is of outstanding interest. Highlights include talks on: new major allergenic molecules (e.g. p 23) essential for the diagnosis and immunotherapy of mite allergy (Susanne Vrtala, Wien); an analytical and public health view of singleplex vs multiplex approaches to molecular diagnosis (Robert Hamilton, Baltimore); an open discussion of clinical cases examined with a CRD approach (chaired by Jörg Kleine-Tebbe, Berlin); latest news of the relevance of molecular diagnosis for intervention and treatment (Rudi Valenta, Wien); and the molecular biomarkers of severity identified by the Europrevall study (Ronald van Ree, Amsterdam). The full list of topics can be consulted at: http://www.eaaci-isma.org/programme.html.

As a characteristic feature of ISMA meetings each symposium will end with two selected oral abstract presentations, bringing you the most innovative and up-to-date information on the area, as submitted to the Scientific Program Committee by participants. Moreover, all poster sessions will be unopposed, providing presenters with an appropriate stage and interaction with experts in the field.

● Luis Delgado
ISMA 2015 Co-Chair

Paolo Matricardi
EAACI Interest Group on Allergy Diagnosis Secretary and ISMA 2015 Co-Chair
Upcoming events

**EAACI CONGRESS 2016**

**Food Allergy Training Course**
24 - 26 September 2015
El Escorial, Spain

**Winterschool on Basic Immunology Research in Allergy and Clinical Immunology**
4 - 7 February 2016
Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy

**FOCUSED MEETINGS**

**Drug Hypersensitivity Meeting (DHM 2016)**
21 - 23 April 2016
Malaga, Spain
www.eaaci-dhm.org

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

**ALLERGY SCHOOLS**

**Food Allergy Training Course**
24 - 26 September 2015
El Escorial, Spain

**Winterschool on Basic Immunology Research in Allergy and Clinical Immunology**
4 - 7 February 2016
Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy

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