

Impressions from the 12th ESGENA Congress in Vienna, 18–20 October 2008

After the World Congress that was held in Vienna 10 years ago, it was great to be back again in the wonderful city of Vienna with its rich culture. The conference was held in the same venue as before, at the Austria Center, and the contrast between the two events clearly showed the extent to which ESGENA has progressed from its initial phase to become a well-established organization for continuing education.

The high quality of the presentations, workshops and posters was a sign that many committed people had been working together for years to raise the standards of nursing care and research in gastroenterology. The 481 participants from all over Europe (see table at the end of this article) – and from as far away as the United States, Brazil and Thailand as well – were proof of the successful work carried out by ESGENA's Board and members over the years. Together with the Austrian Society of Endoscopy Nurses (Interessensverband Endoskopiepersonal Austria, IVEPA), a compact and varied conference programme was presented.



The Austria Center, Vienna, venue for the 12th ESGENA Congress.

The meeting began on the Saturday morning with live demos from the United European Gastroenterology Week postgraduate training programme. The afternoon featured two sessions with four parallel workshops. In conjunction with the medical industry, subjects discussed included hygiene surveillance, capsule endoscopy, HF surgery and stricture management. Key ESGENA members explained the English quality assurance model, and in another workshop hands-on training in how to make simple dummies was provided. Most attractive of course were the two sessions of hands-on training in endoscopic techniques using biosimulators. Dozens of highly qualified and committed endoscopy nurses from all over Europe were available to provide assistance and training for colleagues.

After the first full day, we enjoyed the Welcome Reception. This was a lively evening in the pleasant atmosphere of a typical Vienna Heurige (wine tavern), with a folk music group and plenty of tasty Austrian food. It was an ideal event for meeting old acquaintances from all over Europe and the world, as well as for making new contacts. This was the only occasion at which most of the participants were united, and it was very clear – again in the same location as last time – how much ESGENA has grown over the past decade.

On Sunday, the scientific programme contained eight parallel sessions held in two halls. The main topics dealt with were sedation, pediatric patients, gastroenterology patients, psychology, education and management. Two free paper sessions gave 12 courageous delegates the opportunity to share their local experience and research. The abstracts are included in this issue of ESGENA News and on the web site so that readers and participants can discover or remember the many interesting presentations.

The biosimulator workshops also continued in the morning for doctors and in the afternoon for nurses – again made possible by the highly motivated training team.

The poster exhibition was another attractive aspect of the Congress. Several national societies offered posters introducing themselves, and the structures, activities and benefits of ESGENA were presented. Eighteen scientific posters from around Europe as well as from Israel, Turkey, Brazil and Thailand demonstrated the everincreasing quality of nursing research. Several posters addressed aspects of sedation, while others were about bowel cleansing, patient information, nurse-performed endoscopy and nursing in hep- 8 atology. Some described suggested improvements for endoscopic techniques as well as other nursing care subjects. Original titles like 'Propofol – the patient's best friend during endoscopy' and 'The neighbor around the corner' (prostate cancer detection during colonoscopy) caught our attention. The presenters' research skills and originality were remarkable, and discussions around the posters led to interesting insights. All of the posters were evaluated carefully by a jury, but unfortunately only one was able to win the prize – a digital camera for the Danish authors of 'Nurse-led rehabilitation clinic for patients with chronic hepatic insufficiency'.



St. Stephen's Cathedral.



A rickshaw at the Austria Centre during the Vienna Congress.

At the general assembly in the evening, there was a special highlight in addition to the usual agenda: Christiane Neumann was awarded honorary membership in appreciation of her many years of hard work and effective commitment for ESGENA. This was very well deserved, in view of her rich experience in endoscopy nursing over decades and the invaluable contributions she has made to the Society's structure and many of its documents. Without Christiane's commitment, ESGENA would not yet have developed to such a high level.

On the Monday, there was a plenary session in the morning on new techniques and developments, followed by the announcement of the best free paper and the poster awards, as well as an invitation to the next Congress in London. For the fortunate ones who still had time and energy, there was an opportunity in the afternoon to visit the

ESGE Learning Area, to listen in to a few UEGW sessions and to discover new developments during a stroll through the exhibition halls. In addition to the wide variety of information it provided, this year's ESGENA Congress was yet another successful event for gastroenterology nurses to meet and exchange ideas with each other, to contact colleagues internationally and to enhance interest in our profession.

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ESGENA conference participants by country

Australia 3	Estonia 8	Jordan 3	Saudi Arabia 1
Austria 17	Finland 3	Latvia 3	Serbia 2
Belgium 53	France 4	Luxembourg 10	Slovenia 7
Brazil 2	Germany 21	Malta 1	Spain 16
Bulgaria 1	Greece 8	Monaco 1	Sweden 18
Canada 4	Hungary 3	Netherlands 67	Switzerland 18
China 2	Iceland 6	New Zealand 1	Thailand 1
Croatia 8	Ireland 16	Norway 21	Turkey 3
Czech Republic 4	Israel 11	Portugal 19	United Kingdom 14
Denmark 49	Italy 33	Romania 9	USA 7
			Total 481