

ESU courses in your countries: A collective report

Best local practices, topics covered, and challenges addressed

By Dika De Groet

What are the usual urological challenges that you face in your clinical practice? What are the emerging technologies that you wish to see in your institution? Are you familiar with the best practices and urological trends in your country? The European School of Urology (ESU) takes these into consideration when designing its courses and integrating them into the scientific programmes of local urological events in various countries. Here are some of the testimonials and highlights of recent ESU courses that took place this year.

In Austria

On 2 April 2022, the ESU course "Prostate cancer: Treatment for biochemical recurrence (BCR) after local therapy and for oligometastatic disease" commenced during the Central European Urological Meeting (CEUM) which was held in Vienna, Austria.

Professor and Chairman of Urology at the Medical University of Vienna, Prof. Shirokin F. Shirokin reported some of the highlights of the course: "Course Chair Prof. Amul Stenzl covered the challenging question of which is the best local treatment for patients with oligometastatic prostate cancer (PCA): Is it surgery or radiotherapy? He indicated that in general, the definition of oligometastatic PCA is not precise due to exclusion of data on lymph node metastasis, type and quality of the imaging modalities, and size of individual metastases. A multidisciplinary team should perform careful patient selection for oligometastatic PCA management by taking into account the risks, benefits, and alternatives to each treatment in a shared decision-making process with the patient."

Prof. Shirokin added that course presenter Prof. Gert De Meester discussed the benefits and opportunities of adjuvant versus early salvage radiotherapy for biochemical recurrent PCA. Prof. Shirokin said, "Prof. De Meester underscored that in patients with rising PSA levels, negative PSMA PET-CT is not a reason not to refer the patient to the radiotherapy department. He believed that definitive cure is more important in these patients compared to overall mortality goals."

According to Prof. Shirokin, Prof. De Meester stressed that urologists should not extrapolate the data from patients with low- and intermediate-risk disease to the high-risk population, where long-term disease can still be used. Six months of androgen deprivation therapy should be considered a standard of care when cure is important. He highlighted the importance of doing the right intervention for the right patient at the right time. The proposed strategy is to refine with the patient a personalized treatment plan that prevents under- or over-treatment, as well as, under- or over-treatment.

In Cyprus

On 9 April 2022, the ESU Course "Diagnostic and therapeutic management of male infertility" took place during the 4th Conference of the Cyprus Urological Association in Limassol, Cyprus. Experts in the field Course Chair Prof. Nikolaos Sofikitis, Prof. Aref Muneer, and Prof. Mikkel Fode offered their insights during the course.

The association's president, Dr. Chrysanthos Koufalis, mentioned that one of the highlights was the live broadcasting of a robotic surgery. He stated, "The operation was conducted by Dr. Decian Cahill and Dr. Bradley Russell. They demonstrated the advantages of Retzius sparing technique and the posterior Rocco's stitch, as well as, their benefits on early continence."



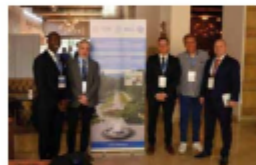
Prof. Stenzl and Dr. De Meester at CEUM

When asked about his impression of the ESU course, local faculty member Dr. Aleksandar Sasic said, "The course comprised well-chosen topics and thoroughly prepared lectures rich in urological novelties."

In Serbia held in the jubilee year celebrating 150 years since the founding of the Serbian Medical Society, the latter's National Congress of Urological Section was host of the ESU Course "Lasers in endourology". The course took place on 12 May 2022 in Vrnjaska Banja, Serbia.

President of the Urological Section, Prof. Dragoslav Basic, stated "The ESU course was overseen by experts Course Chair Prof. Thomas Knoll and Dr. Leye Ajayi. They introduced new techniques related to laser basics, using lasers in the stone treatment, treatment of benign prostatic hyperplasia and urothelial tumours. In Serbia, the use of lasers in urology is still in its early stages, so the presentations included both theoretical lectures and presentations of the practical use. In Ukraine

On 9 September 2022, on day two of the congress of the Ukrainian Urological Association (UUA) held in Kiev, Ukraine, 145 delegates onsite and 904 online participants viewed the virtual ESU course "Update on prostate cancer". The course was led by Course Chair Prof. Gert De Meester and Dr. Pim Van Leeuwen.



The ESU course and local faculty during the congress of the Serbian Medical Society

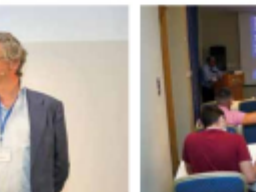
Participant Prof. Olexander Shulyk provided some of the highlights of the ESU course. He shared, "The level of the speakers' knowledge and their presentations were excellent. They discussed the recommendations of the EAU Guidelines; the latest achievements in studies of a very complex category of patients; the issues in salvage treatment, and the standard of care when cure is important. He highlighted the importance of doing the right intervention for the right patient at the right time. The proposed strategy is to refine with the patient a personalized treatment plan that prevents under- or over-treatment, as well as, under- or over-treatment."

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In Bulgaria

During the national congress of Bulgarian Urological Association held in Zlatni Piasetsi, the hybrid ESU course "Prostate biopsy – Current standards" led by Course Chair Dr. Juan Gómez Rivas took place on 22 September 2022.

Participant Prof. Marin Georgiev shared a highlight of the course, specifically from the lecture "Therapeutic vs. Diagnostic, End of debate?" by course presenter Dr. Giancarlo Milano. The latter stated that transperineal biopsy became the "gold standard" and led to the replacement of the widely



Course in Limassol provides updates on male infertility management



Receiving vital info on current prostate biopsy standards at the Bulgarian congress

popular transrectal biopsy in specialized centres. This is due to the lower percentage of infectious complications via the transperineal route, with easier access to lesions located in the ventral part of the prostate, and more widespread possibility for transperineal biopsy under local anaesthesia, which will allow its performance in true ambulatory/office setting.

According to Prof. Georgiev, the course presenters support the concept of transperineal biopsy without antibiotic prophylaxis, which is impossible when using transrectal access.

In Slovenia

Inaugurated in the programme of the 8th Slovenian Urological Association Congress held in Ljubljana, the ESU course "Chronic pelvic pain and surgical treatment of benign prostatic hyperplasia" commenced on the 1 October 2022 and led by Course Chair Assoc. Prof. Matjaž Rakar.

Participant Dr. Andreja Kogelnik shared, "The ESU course was one of the most awaited parts of the congress and it did not disappoint." He then provided some of the key messages from presenter Dr. Almeida Pinto, who discussed the guidelines and potential differential diagnoses in male and female chronic pelvic pain.

Dr. Pinto underscored that with every patient examination, the evaluation of chronic pelvic pain should start with in-depth history taking. This is to better understand the mechanism and origin of the patient's pain. Moreover, the patient's sexual history should be noted and muscle tenderness should be checked during the physical examination. Pelvic pain can be phenotyped and then further assessed by its urological, psychological, gynaecological or gastrointestinal, neurological, and infectious features.

"These activities (ESU course and HOT) were so popular among the African urologists that these were fully booked."

Dr. Pinto also recommended to always ask about gross haematuria, haematospermia, lower abdominal pain and urgency as these are urological red flags. "We should keep in mind that nociceptive stimulus that refers to the neural encoding of tissue damage is not the same as pain, which is the patient's subjective experience. If we cannot find and treat well-known diseases, pain should be treated, preferably based on the mechanism. An important point in chronic pelvic pain treatment is also to adjust patients' expectations and help them understand and live with their condition," concluded Dr. Pinto.

In the Czech Republic

Complementing the programme of national congress of the Czech Urological Society held in Pilsen, the ESU course "Technological innovations in the diagnosis and minimally invasive treatment of prostate cancer" took place on 20 October 2022 spearheaded by Course Chair Prof. Henk Van Der Poel and Prof. Bernard Malavaud.

Participant Dr. Milan Kidl provided some of the key messages such as from Prof. Henk Van Der Poel's lecture "Image-guided surgery in prostate cancer management". Prof. Van Der Poel mentioned 30 minutes during robotic prostatectomy (Hypocore Accuracy 3D) to simulate functional outcome. Results from literature show a significant reduction in positive margins (14.7%). The role of sentinel node diagnostics during radical prostatectomy was

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Enthusiastic participants of the ESU course in Ljubljana, Slovenia

In Greece

The ESU course "Benign Prostatic Obstruction: How is new technology influencing standards of care surgical treatment?" commenced on 8 October 2022 in Athens, Greece during the 25th Panhellenic Urological Congress. Participants Dr. Jason Kyriakidis, Dr. Evangelos Fragkiadis, and urology trainee Mr. Theodoros Spinoza shared the following highlights of the course.

Course Co-Chair Prof. Stavros Graves described the different options for endoscopic enucleation, including holmium laser enucleation of the prostate (HoLEP), Thulium laser enucleation of the prostate (ThuLEP), diode laser enucleation of the prostate (DiLEP) and bipolar enucleation of the prostate (BiPOEP) in detail.

Despite HoLEP's wider acceptance over the others and its subtle establishment as the new "gold standard" of enucleation approach, postoperative outcomes of any transurethral enucleation approach are related with the prostatic enucleation itself rather than the energy used for its accomplishment and similar outcomes should be expected from any energy source used.

In addition, laparoscopic/robotic adenectomy was presented as an excellent approach for larger prostates. Subsequently, Course Chair Prof. Thorsten Bach highlighted all new minimally-invasive treatment options of benign prostatic hyperplasia including Rezūm Water Vapor Therapy Treatment, Prostate Utricular LIFT (PUL), Transurethral Microwave Thermotherapy (TUMT), Prostate Artery Embolization (PAE) and the iTIND device, discussing each of them in detail.

Rezūm and PUL were presented as trending approaches which can be performed without the need of general anaesthesia, while PAE was faced with a little scepticism.



Prof. Malavaud provides EAU Guidelines recommendations on the role of MRI in PCA

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also mentioned, when the combination of Indigocyanine Green (ICG) + radioisotope (99mTc) application appears to be a promising method.

PSMA-rediguided surgery, i.e. the use of labelled tracer during salvage lymphadenectomy in case of biochemical recurrence, or the use of fluorescent tracer to better identify the resection margins during radical prostatectomy, is another innovative technology discussed.

African and European urology meet in Tunisia. Tunisia's Urology (ATU)'s 22nd annual congress took place in Hammamet, Tunisia from 20 to 22 October 2022 in conjunction with the 15th PAUSA (Pan African of Urologic Surgeons Association). More than 400 participants from all over the world convened and were welcomed by ATU's president Dr. Ahmed Zidi.

The European School of Urology (ESU) course, "Adenoma for urologists", and the hands-on-training courses of the EAU Section of Uro-Technology (ESUT): laparoscopic basic skills and flexible

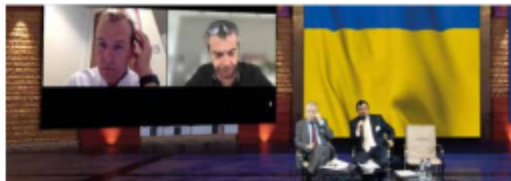
endoscopy courses were integrated in the congress programme. These activities were so popular among the African urologists that these were fully booked.

The ESU course took place on the first congress day. The topic was well chosen as adrenal glands represent challenging anatomy and testing their pathology often requires an experienced surgical team.

The ESU faculty

The ESU faculty consisted of Prof. Gözen and Assoc. Prof. Hans Langenhuijsen provided lectures on EAU Guideline recommendations and indications for adrenal surgery, adrenal surgery techniques through videos, and insights on surgical complications of adrenal surgeries and how to deal with such situations. The course encouraged fruitful discussions among the participants.

On the second day of the congress, the ESUT workshop took place. Prof. Ali Gözen and Prof. Stefania Ferrari presented lectures centred on the ESU training programmes EBLUS (European Basis



The USA and the ESU forge on in Africa and online

Laparoscopic Urological Skills) and EST-e1 (Endoscopic Stone Treatment step 1). The lectures were followed by hands-on training sessions. These were attended by 60 enthusiastic participants who performed the pelvic training exercises under the guidance of the faculty. The overall ambience, enthusiasm and interest were great.

The lecture "New robotic platforms in urologic surgery: It is really a chance for Africa" by Prof.

Gözen was well received and was followed by lively discussions. Although the discussions did not end with a conclusion, aspirations and motivation for high-technology operations in Africa were envisioned.

Interested in knowing which ESU course will take place in your country? Visit <https://www.esu.org/education-events/events> to find out.

Challenges for urologists in Armenia

And how the EAU can help the Armenian Association

By Louk Kazian

In a conversation with EAU Secretary General Prof. Chapple, President of the Armenian Urological Association Dr. Ruben Hovhanninyan proposed a two-step mission for his Association: involve and engage urologists in Armenia with their national Association, and then in turn integrate more closely with the European Association of Urology. The European Association of Urology is in turn uniquely equipped to help Armenia's urologists through its educational programmes, courses and opportunities for scholarship abroad.

Dr. Ruben Hovhanninyan began his term as President earlier this year and has been exploring options to improve urological care in Armenia. His conversation with Prof. Chapple took place at the Armenian Association was one week away from its Annual Congress and ESU course in Yerevan (23-24 September 2022).

Goals of the Armenian Association of Urology Dr. Hovhanninyan first painted a picture of urology in Armenia, and his experiences in his first months as

President of its Association: "Our Association was founded in 1999, not long after the 1996 ESU Course in Tallin, which we both attended! The EAU was critical for many urologists in the region forming their own national association around that time. We currently have around 120 urologists in Armenia, including residents who have a three-year residency. There is no widespread health insurance, and urologists are typically paid per operation."

"Our Association's challenges are two-fold. I believe cooperation between our Association and the Armenian Ministry of Health could be greatly improved. Secondly, I feel our Association needs to find a way to attract an involve more of Armenia's urologists in our Association."

Cooperation with EAU

During the discussion, Prof. Chapple said: "I think the Armenian Association is uniquely placed to improve urological care in Armenia: on the one hand representing and supporting urologists, on the other hand working with the government to advance on medical policy. The close tie between the EAU and the Armenian Society also means that we can

effectively reach Armenian urologists and help them best treat their patients." Prof. Chapple also pointed out that the EAU's and the Armenian Association's missions are fully compatible: raising the level of urological care in Europe and its neighbouring regions. The EAU has several "tools" in its toolbox, from educational and scholarship programmes to the latest medical guidelines.

Dr. Hovhanninyan referred to the ESU courses which are held in conjunction with the Armenian Society's Annual Congress on a regular basis as an important step, and suggested further expanding that cooperation. Other options are helping Armenian Urologists attend EAU events, participate in scholarship programmes and the like despite the challenging requirements of being published in a peer-reviewed journal.

The Armenian Association is currently trying to arrange travel grants from local industry. Language barriers also play a part – a Russian translation of the EAU (Pocket) Guidelines might be useful not just for Armenia but for the



Dr. Ruben Hovhanninyan, President of the Armenian Urological Association

wider region where it is historically spoken as a second language and use of English is more limited. Prof. Chapple promised that these options will be explored with the European School of Urology and Guidelines Office, respectively.

Another milestone in Armenia

Long-delayed complete update on stone disease

By Dr. Ruben Hovhanninyan

For us Armenian urologists, urinary stone disease has become a routine, as Armenia is an endemic zone for this pathology. We have been treating it as a "marital duty by the 4th decade of marriage," so the decision to devote this year's entire ESU course to stones has not been casual. We had decided to shake off the crust of indifference, which inevitably covers one, when, from day to day, you deal with a disease as mundane as stones scattered all over the place. This did make us rethink this pathology. It did truly reinvigorate our curiosity, we rediscovered the "grander" of our "strenuous", we did update ourselves. Moreover, we finally hosted a long-awaited ESU course – after three years of halt due to COVID pandemic.

No doubt – the list of topics for the ESU course and our 2022 Annual Meeting (23-24 September) have been rich. We can refer to enthusiastic citations from both the faculty, local organisers and participants, express supportive views on the quality of organisation and the ESU-esque scientific and depth. Still, we will miss very important topics. The subjects – all related to the urinary stone disease – have been the hottest ones and meticulously chosen, the professional content of presentations has been the highest possible, the presenters have demonstrated their art of discussion.

However, this is not the point. It is hard to expect anything less than that from an ESU course. Even the fact that thanks to huge work done by the ESU Faculty we have set the priorities and the goals with regard to the management of urinary stone disease, we have refined our approach and views of the stone diseases is not the most precious achievement.

The explanation of why the expectations of the Armenian urological community have been exceeded lies in a different sphere: in the most alive sphere of human emotions and feelings. It is very easy for an educated person to share professional information. However, one can share



Dr. Petik and Dr. Tolias during the ESU Course in Yerevan

and touch the feelings of the audience, create an emotional interaction to help turn information into knowledge and mentality. The old Greek saying about the student, "who is not a vessel to be filled, but a torch to be lit" is a precise description of what has happened in the Ballroom of the Yerevan State Medical University, just when two out of three speakers were of Greek origin.

The team of Dr. Theodoros Tolias from Austria has entirely reached its goal. They managed to make the audience love toward the stone disease flame up again. Dr. Tolias, Dr. Alai Petik from the Czech Republic and Prof. Athanasios Papatziros from Greece did manage to bring about both the deep feeling of satisfaction and strong wish to further contribute to the development of our society and our professional family: the EAU.

We want to thank and at the same time congratulate the leadership of the EAU and ESU for the organisation of a very fruitful professional event, our speakers, Ms. Sophie Mills, the ESU staff, all those, who has been next to us and contributed to making our ideas reality either by immediate participation or sincerely wishing our undertaking to be a success, to all those one hundred twenty-six Armenian urologists, for whom this bright event has been organised. We want to thank our industry sponsors – Recordart, Stada, Asterta,



Prof. Athanasios Papatziros takes some questions from the audience

Audobon Bioscience and Global Medical Trading, for the selfless and generous support of the activities of our Association, of both short- and long-term plans. We are sure that the investment made by the EAU and ESU in building the development of Urology for the welfare of our nation will be appreciated by participants and patients, those who make a quality, life-saving, and/or further international professional and human development.