

The 11th Central European Congress of Rheumatology

Prague, December 8–10, 2016

Twenty years after the first congress of rheumatologists from Central Europe, which took place in Piešťany (Slovakia), the 11th Central European Congress of Rheumatology was organised in Prague on 8th–10th December, 2016. The Congress was a joint event of seven rheumatological societies from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The presidents of the societies were members of the organising committee chaired by Jiří Vencovský and were supported by the local organising committee of their Czech colleagues. The Congress was organised under the patronage of Svatopluk Němeček from the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic.

All Congress events took place in Clarion Congress Hotel in Prague. The opening ceremony was chaired by Jiří Vencovský and Karel Pavelka. The opening lectures were delivered by Steffen Gay (“Epigenetics regulating our cells and mind in health and disease”) and Renate E. Gay (“Mentoring in the global world of science”). The program of the Congress consisted of general sessions and satellite symposia as well as poster sessions. General sessions were organised by the national societies, and their lectures were supplemented by oral presentations of selected poster papers from various countries. The following general sessions were presented: Systemic sclerosis, Cardiovascular manifestations of rheumatic diseases, Environmental factors, Psoriatic arthritis and Vasculitis. Malignancy and rheumatic diseases, Epidemiology, Antiphospholipid syndrome, and Early and easy access rheumatology. The Polish Society for Rheumatology organised the session on malignancy and epidemiology. The following lectures were delivered during the session: “Rheumatic diseases and malignancy: from bench to bedside” (Eugeniusz J. Kucharz), “Paraneoplastic syndromes in rheumatology” (Przemysław Kotyla), and “Prevalence and clinical characteristics of rheumatoid arthritis in Poland” (Bogdan Batko, Marcin Stajszyk, Jerzy Świerkot, Filip Raciborski, and Piotr Wiland; lecture delivered by Piotr Wiland). Additionally, during the session the following papers were presented: “The efficacy of stopping biologicals in patients with spondyloarthritis” (Małgorzata Tłustochowicz, Joanna Kur-Zalewska, Anna Raczkiwicz, Bartłomiej Kisiel, Witold Tłustochowicz; presented by Anna Raczkiwicz, Poland), “Neoplasms in rheumatoid arthritis – our experience” (Ana Gudelj-Gračanin, Ivan Marković, Tatjana Barišić, Jadranka Marković-Vergels – Croatia), and “Accumulation of S 100A11 protein in rheumatoid arthritis and its correlation with disease activity and inflammation” (Lucie Andrés Cerezo, Barbora Šumová, Klára Prajzlerová, David Veigl, Karel Pavelka, Jiří Vencovský, Ladislav Šenolt, Czech Republic).



Prague, December 9th 2016. A group of participants from Poland, from left: Justyna Fryc, Anna Raczkiwicz, Beata Maciążek-Chyra, Maciej Milchert, Marta Skoczyńska, Piotr Wiland, Przemysław Kotyla, Eugeniusz J. Kucharz, Magdalena Kopeć-Mędrak, Justyna Kramza, Anna Lewandowska-Polak, Anna Kotulska (photo from the author's collection)

Six satellite symposia were organised during the Congress. The symposia were devoted to various topics including immunology (chaired by Josef Smolen and Jiří Vencovský), right treatment for the right patient – making successful therapeutic decisions based on different patient profiles (chaired by Eugeniusz J. Kucharz and Zoltán Szekanecz, lecture entitled: “Early diagnosis and guidelines in rheumatoid arthritis” was delivered by Eugeniusz J. Kucharz), psoriatic arthritis (chaired by Jiří Štolfa and Diamant Thaçi), management of spondyloarthropathies (two symposia chaired by Josef Smolen and Jiří Vencovský, and Peter Balint and Ladislav Šenolt, respectively), rheumatoid arthritis (chaired by Jiří Vencovský and Eugeniusz J. Kucharz; the lecture entitled “Comorbidities in patients with rheumatoid arthritis” was delivered by Eugeniusz J. Kucharz). Poland contributed also to the symposium of young rheumatologist, Marcin Milchert, who presented the paper “Increased interest in polymyalgia rheumatic and giant cell arteritis leads to increased incidence”.

Several poster presentations were delivered by Polish rheumatologists. The following posters were presented:

- “Susac syndrome” (Bogna Grygiel-Górniak, Mariusz Puszczewicz),
- “Differences in the incidence of selected clinical and immunological manifestations used in the SLICC classification in lupus patients ‘with’ or ‘without’ the presence of anti-Ro/SSA-60 antibodies” (Magdalena Dryglewicz, Maria Majdan, Dorota Suszek, Aleksandra Majdan, Zofia Kiełbik, Maciej Grzywnowicz),
- “Panniculitis in an opioid-addicted patient” (Justyna Fryc, Stanisław Sierakowski),
- “Annual changes of serum surfactant protein D in patients with systemic sclerosis” (Anida Grosicka, Eugeniusz J. Kucharz),
- “Vitamin D in rheumatoid arthritis: its relationship with autoantibodies and laboratory disease activity markers” (Cezary Iwaszkiewicz, Małgorzata Schlabs, Małgorzata Roszak, Piotr Leszczyński),
- “Serum osteopontin levels in patients with rheumatoid arthritis” (Magdalena Kopeć-Mędrék, Małgorzata Widuchowska, Anna Kotulska, Anna Lis-Święty, Ligia Brzezińska-Wcisło, Eugeniusz J. Kucharz),
- “On the 150th birth anniversary of Dr. Edmund Faustyn Biernacki and his forgotten contribution to the discovery of erythrocyte sedimentation rate” (Eugeniusz J. Kucharz, Anna Kotulska),
- “Polymyositis as a mask of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis – diagnostic difficulties” (Arkadiusz Koszarny, Dorota Suszek, Maria Majdan, Angelika Dobrowolska, Joanna Mitek, Anna Jamroz-Wiśniewska, Konrad Rejda),
- “Satisfaction and dissatisfaction of patients with rheumatic diseases receiving biologics” (Anna Kotulska, Piotr Wiland, Eugeniusz J. Kucharz, Marzena Olesinska, Anna Felis-Giemza, Magdalena Kopeć-Mędrék, Aleksandra Zon-Giebel, Wojciech Romanowski, Lucyna Szymczak-Bartz, Małgorzata Tłustochowicz, Jolanta Lewandowicz, Joanna Kowalska-Majka, Jolanta Bucka, Maria Majdan, Zofia Kiełbik, Mariusz Korkosz,



Prague, December 9th 2016. Meeting of the presidents of the rheumatological societies. From left: Jiří Vencovský (Czech Republic), Klaus Machold (Austria), Iztok Holc (Slovenia), Josef Smolen (Austria), Branimir Anić (Croatia), Zoltán Szekanecz (Hungary), Eugeniusz J. Kucharz (Poland), Karel Pavelka (Czech Republic) (photo from the author's collection)

Aneta Barbara Bielinska, Piotr Leszczyński, Katarzyna Pawlak-Buś, Mariusz Puszczewicz, Dominik Majewski, Katarzyna Smolik, Teresa Migas-Kukla, Małgorzata Sochocka-Bykowska, Maria Jolanta Szarecka, Bernadeta Luberda, Małgorzata Falenta-Hitnarowicz, Jadwiga Świkszcz-Gniadek, Wanda Lepiarz-Rusek, Grzegorz Rozwadowski, Barbara Chara, Jerzy Zajdel, Zbigniew Zdrojewski, Maria Maciejowska-Roge, Irena Rosmus-Kuczia),

- “Impaired mouth state in patients with systemic sclerosis correlated with skin involvement” (Justyna Kramza, Eugeniusz J. Kucharz),
- “The incidence of hypersensitivity to NSAIDs in the group of patients with musculoskeletal disorders” (Anna Lewandowska-Polak, A. Sztanka, K. Słodkowski, Adam Lentas, Olga Brzezińska-Pawłowska, Joanna Makowska),
- “Clinical presentation of patients with the presence of antisynthetase autoantibodies” (Anna Masiak, Monika Marzec, Julia Kulczycka, Zbigniew Zdrojewski),
- “Association of HLA-DRB1 alleles with mixed connective tissue disease” (Agnieszka Paradowska-Gorycka, Barbara Stypińska, Marzena Olesińska, Anna Felis-Giemza, Małgorzata Mańczak, Zenobia Czuszyńska, Zbigniew Zdrojewski, Monika Jurkowska),
- “Genetic variants in IL-12 and IL-27 in the patients with systemic lupus erythematosus” (Agnieszka Paradowska-Gorycka, Anna Sowińska, Barbara Stypińska, Malwina Katarzyna Grobelna, Marcela Walczyk, Marzena Olesińska, Piotr Piotrowski, Piotr Paweł Jagodziński),
- “IL-12B gene polymorphism and IL12 P70 serum level among Polish patients with rheumatoid arthritis” (Agnieszka Paradowska-Gorycka, Anna Sowińska, Barbara Stypińska, Ewa Haładyj, Andrzej Pawlik, Katarzyna Romanowska-Próchnicka, Marzena Olesińska) (the poster was not presented, but its abstract appeared in the Congress abstract book),
- “Lack of significant association between the STAT3 polymorphism, VEGF serum level and rheumatoid arthritis in the Polish population” (Barbara Stypińska, Marzena Olesińska, Andrzej Pawlik, Agnieszka Paradowska-Gorycka),
- “FLT-1 genetic variation affects the clinical rheumatoid arthritis phenotype” (Agnieszka Paradowska-Gorycka, Anna Sowińska, Barbara Stypińska, Andrzej Pawlik, Damian Malinowski, Katarzyna Romanowska-Próchnicka, Ewa Haładyj, Marzena Olesińska),
- “Paediatric rheumatologist and orphan disease – a story without a happy ending” (Justyna Roszkiewicz, Małgorzata Biernacka-Zielińska, Elżbieta Smolewska),
- “The relationship between inflammatory parameters and clinical manifestations of early spondylarthrosis” (Maria Skoczyńska, Łukasz Lubiński, Maria Misterska-Skóra, Piotr Wiland),
- “Impact of HIF-1 gene polymorphism and its protein level on RA activity” (Agnieszka Paradowska-Gorycka, Katarzyna Romanowska-Próchnicka, Marzena Olesińska)
- “Clinical presentation of patients with MDA-5-associated dermatomyositis” (Anna Masiak, Anna Wojteczek, Zenobia Czuszyńska, Katarzyna Wierzba, Karol Gątecka, Zbigniew Zdrojewski).

A special issue of the Czech journal of rheumatology (Česka reumatologie) was published with Congress abstracts. The scientific program was supplemented by a social program including a dinner in Villa Richter restaurant near Prague Castle. There was also meeting of the presidents of the organising societies.

All countries contributed significantly to the scientific program of the Congress. It is a pleasure and important to note that Polish rheumatologists presented a significant portion of the papers, and Polish posters constituted about 35% of all poster presentations.

The 11th Central European Congress of Rheumatology was a successful event, especially because it was attended by several young investigators. The organisation of the Congress was also very efficient. The next Congress of Rheumatologists of our region will take place in Croatia.

Eugeniusz J. Kucharz