

EASOM

European Association
of Schools of Occupational Medicine

EASOM BULLETIN

TWENTY-SECOND EDITION

JULY 2020

The screenshot displays the EASOM website interface. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with the following items: Start (highlighted), Aims and Scopes, Constitution, EASOM Position Paper, Summer Schools, Fact Sheets of Profession, EASOM Bulletin, and Members. The main content area features the EASOM logo and a heading: "EASOM - European Association of Schools of Occupational Medicine". Below this, a paragraph states: "EASOM is active in international meetings and conferences. EASOM holds an annual Summer School to promote sharing of knowledge and experience of teaching within Europe." A news article titled "XX. EASOM Summer School postponed" is featured, with the text: "The EASOM Summer School 2020 in Belgrade on the theme 'Teaching Occupational Medicine to Undergraduate Students of Medicine: Needs, Methods and A Way Forward' is going to be postponed due to the CoVID-19 pandemia. EASOM Board monitors epidemiological situation and will bring". To the right of the main content is a search bar and a section titled "Reducing the burden of occupational cancers" with a sub-heading "International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health". A snippet of text reads: "Read here our proposal to improve the recognizing and reporting OC - an article EASOM published in open access in IJERPH." Below this is a "Read more..." link. At the bottom right, there is a section titled "What is new in EASOM?".

More Information about EASOM: <https://www.easom.eu/>



BULLETIN – TWENTY-SECOND EDITION

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For comments and questions about this Bulletin, contributions and suggestions for the next Bulletin, please send an e-mail to: epauncu@gmail.com

Editorial of the EASOM President

Begoña Martínez-Jarreta

Dear members of EASOM,

Dear colleagues and friends,

In 2020, a global SARS-CoV-2 pandemic broke out and dramatically altered the landscape of our lives. The immediate and visible consequences of this pandemic are already here, but will most likely be followed by others in the near future and we will have to both face and overcome them.

Sadly, a large number of health professionals around the world have lost their lives or fallen ill from the COVID-19 pandemic. What happened cannot leave us unmoved, because this is an infamous reality that could have been avoided and must not be repeated.

Occupational Health professionals have had to make a tremendous effort to cope with the enormous demands placed on them in the field as a result of the pandemic. Exposure to the virus in workplaces has proven to be a continuous source of resurgence, however those are not the unique challenging issues for Occupational Medicine that pandemic has brought up abruptly.

The definition of some of the major issues raised by this pandemic in the field of Occupational Medicine (OM) was made early and beautifully by committed colleagues and members of EASOM such as Professor Lode Godderis and Professor Emeritus Raymond Agius (data and websites to find these recent editorials on COVID-19 are available at the end of these words). All the issues they have identified really deserve an intense reflection by all of us involved in the field of Occupational Medicine and its training.

No doubt, it has been a defiance for Occupational Health professionals and highlighted their importance, as well as the need to invest in Occupational Health & Occupational Medicine and Prevention.

COVID-19 disease has been the focus of attention for some time and still is, but it should not prevent us from continuing to care about other important matters and endure pursuing our dreams and goals.

We must remember that 2019 was a good year for EASOM. An unforgettable edition of the EASOM Summer School took place in Latvia thanks to the excellent work carried out by Professor Eglite and her team from the University of Riga. Moreover, for the first time in the history of our association,

EASOM Summer School was held in a Baltic State. An important subject in our field of specialty was selected as the theme for Riga Summer School: occupational cancer and training in this field.

As colophon during the last session of the Summer School, an EASOM declaration entitled: Improving Education and Training to Reduce the Burden of Occupational Cancer. The Riga-European Association of Schools of Occupational Medicine (EASOM) Statement on Work-Related Cancer was approved.

This declaration addressed and underlined occupational cancer and the importance of providing medical professionals with training in this field. It was published just a few months later in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health and it is available at EASOM website since then (<https://www.easom.eu>).

Early 2020 had also been particularly good for EASOM. Indeed, the first pan-European examination in the field of occupational medicine was held at the end of January 2020 at the UEMS headquarters in Brussels. To reflect the words of evaluators who assessed the first European examination in upmost favorable terms, it represented a milestone in the history of our specialty.

For this achievement we have to acknowledge the work of UEMS-OM but also EASOM and its members, who dedicated time and effort to this matter by actively cooperating in the creation of a questions bank, amongst many other activities.

No doubt we must congratulate both societies and I have to say that EASOM must be proud of this achievement that was made possible in the framework of good collaboration and support between two different European societies devoted to Occupational Medicine.

I would like to point out that EASOM and UEMS-OM had aimed to sign an agreement in 2019 but that this was not possible prior to the examination. Different points of view were preventing this in 2019. However, these differences did not prevent cooperation and good partnership between colleagues from both societies to achieve one common goal, which was to promote our specialty through this examination. In short, their good collaboration brought the first pan-European examination in our field to a successful conclusion.

The outbreak of the pandemic prevented us from disseminating all EASOM good news about a successful 2019 Summer School and the first successful pan-European examination in our specialty in early 2020. But this Bulletin is helping now with it.

European Examinations will have to be held annually so that Occupational Medicine can consolidate this objective as a medical European specialty. Nevertheless, achieving this goal will entail getting everyone involved and the members of EASOM have a fundamental role to play.

The pandemic led to the decision to postpone the 2020 Summer School that had been scheduled for Belgrade and was nearly fully arranged by March of the present year. We must thank Professor Petar Bulat and his team at Belgrade University for their invaluable work and great reaction.

It also meant that the 2020 Spring Board Meeting (BM) was held online for the very first time. During that BM, an agreement to hold the Belgrade School in 2022 and to retain in 2021 the Summer School

in Leuven (Belgium) as scheduled was reached but with the focus on COVID-19 and OM training. Professor Lode Godderis is the local coordinator of Leuven Summer School (August 2021).

Information and news on all of the above are provided in this 2020 EASOM Bulletin.

Last year we ended our 2019 Bulletin with certain words and some of them sounds now like a prophecy: *we know how challenging this moment is for Occupational Medicine, but we also have confidence in our strengths and in what we can achieve if we remain united, because we all share the same enthusiasm and vocation for Occupational Medicine and the same desire to overcome the challenges facing us regarding training in the field.*

Let's keep moving forward together, overcoming any defiance and getting the best of ourselves and from EASOM.

Begoña Martínez-Jarreta

President of EASOM

April 2020

Agius R. Covid-19 and Health at Work. *Occup Med (Lond)* <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqaa075>

Agius R. Doctors' deaths from covid-19 should be reported to the coroner *BMJ* 2020;369:m1622. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m1622>

Godderis L . Good jobs to minimize the impact of Covid-19 on health inequity. ILO https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/safety-and-health-at-work/events-training/events-meetings/world-day-safety-health-at-work/WCMS_742059/lang--en/index.htm

May 2020

Godderis L, Boone A, Bakusic J. COVID-19: a new work-related disease threatening healthcare workers *Occup Med (Lond)* <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqaa056>.

June 2020

Godderis L, Luyten J. Challenges and opportunities for occupational health and safety after the COVID-19 lockdowns *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. <https://oem.bmj.com/content/oemed/early/2020/06/08/oemed-2020-106645.full.pdf>

Report on the 19th EASOM Summer School, 29-31 August 2019, Riga, Latvia, Riga Stradins University, Latvian Association of Occupational Physicians

OCCUPATIONAL CANCERS: EXPOSURE, PREVENTION AND RETURN TO WORK. Scope, Agenda, Activities and Results

Maija Eglite, Ieva Kalve

The Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine of Riga Stradins University is a full member of European Association of Schools of Occupational Medicine (EASOM) from 2015. Riga Stradins University is the leading university of Latvia offering medical training. The Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine works in cooperation with the Latvian Association of Occupational Physicians (LAOP). Main objectives of LOAP are to develop occupational health and occupational medicine specialties in Latvia.



The Summer School was for the first time organized in the Baltic States. Latvia was selected. Latvia is located in the north-eastern Europe with a coastline along the Baltic Sea. Latvia has 1,957,200 inhabitants and territory of 64,589 km².

The topics of the Summer School are very important for Latvia, as the incidence of occupational diseases, including occupational cancers, is increasing every year. Cancer is the number one killer around the world – claiming more lives than tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. One third of all cancers are preventable and one third are treatable with early detection and proper resources.

Occupational morbidity characterizes the general situation in Occupational health and safety (OH&S). Occupational morbidity in Europe continues to increase. This is well illustrated by the example of Latvia, where the rate of occupational diseases is average as in Europe.

The number of occupational patients and diseases revealed for the first time during a year has been gradually increasing since 1996 until 2018 in Latvia. The total number of newly revealed OD patients per 100,000 employed persons was 11.5 in 1996 and 184.2 – in 2018. Number of newly revealed OD patients in 2018 exceeded that of 1996 by 16.1 times, but number of first-time registered OD by 28.4 times.

In Europe musculoskeletal diseases are the leading diseases followed by diseases of the nervous system and sensory organs, among them, carpal tunnel syndrome. Occupational oncology is one of the last places in the structure of occupational diseases.

The occupational oncological diseases account for about 4 to 20% of the cancer cases in developed European countries (WHO). Occupational cancers (OC) are under-recognized in Europe (EUROGIP). OC in Latvia are about 0.05 – 0.8 % of the cancer cases. The occupational oncological morbidity in Latvia is 10 times lower than in many European Countries.

The aim of the Summer School is to attract occupational medicine specialists to the issues of occupational oncology, to increase their knowledge, to exchange transnational experience in order to solve better the problems of occupational oncology. The aim of the Summer School is also to upgrade skills of occupational medicine specialists in teaching occupational health and safety – how to design, conduct and evaluate a good quality educational seminar in occupational health and safety with special address on occupational oncology.

The scope of the Summer School is to introduce participants with the cancer problems in Latvia and Europa, to analyze the latest research data on occupational carcinogens, their kinds, prevalence in different workplaces and occupations, discuss national strategies, experience in establishing occupational cancer registries in countries.

In order to achieve the aims and scope above, lectures, group works, panel discussion, world café were organized. The issues discussed concern to:

1. Employers/labor inspectors
2. Workers
3. Other health professionals
4. General population and media.

The Summer School provided platform for sharing experiences, practical tools and examples of good practices.

Agenda

The Summer School was opened by RSU Rector professor Aigars Petersons, with an introduction by EASOM President Professor, MD Begoña Martínez-Jarreta, EASOM Secretary General MD Nicole Majery and local organizer professor, MD Maija Eglite.

The schedule of the Summer School provided floor to 14 lectures, four workshops and a World Café. There were lectures every day, Panel discussion, group works and World café on the second day, discussion in four groups of participants from different countries and Closing session on the third day.

Social events were organized during the Summer School – Riga sightseeing tour and the conference dinner.

All materials of the Summer School are free accessible in the website area dedicated to this School - www.easom.eu.

Participants and guests

The 2019 Summer School hosted 67 participants from different parts of Europe. This event aroused great interest among members of Latvian Association of Occupational Physicians. RSU residents and local organizers also attended the Summer School. The list of lecturers you can see in the attachment.



Photo by RSU, Participants of the 19th EASOM Summer School in Riga

Activities and results

Studying at Summer School was in three blocks:

- I. Cancer as a major occupational health problem
- II. Prevention of occupational cancers
- III. Return to work after cancer

Day 1 (29th of August) has been dedicated to the importance of occupational cancer as the major health problem, to well investigated occupational carcinogens and new risk factors, also the questions about eliminating/reducing exposures and preventive measures.

The main lessons learned from Block I training are as follows:

The annual number of new cases of cancer all over the world increased from over 14 million in 2012 to almost 22 million in 2030 due to population growth and aging alone.

- The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) estimate that:
 - one-in-five men and one-in-six women worldwide will develop cancer over the course of their lifetime, and
 - one-in-eight men and one-in-eleven women worldwide will die from their disease.
- A number of factors appear to be driving this increase, particularly:
 - a growing and ageing global population;
 - an increase in exposure to cancer risk factors linked to social and economic development;
 - new methods of cancer diagnosis.

Understanding of cancer has changed in the world over the last two centuries (GLOBOCAN 2018).

Cancer and other oncological diseases shift from acute to chronic condition.

Cancer was understood as an acute condition until the end of the 19 century, usually advanced disease at a late stage with very short expected survival; treatment not possible. In the 21-century cancer and other oncological diseases are understand as a chronic condition: early detected curable disease; prolongation of survival is possible even with an advanced stage of the disease; so far there is no life-long treatment to control the disease.

Occupational cancer is cancer caused by occupational hazards: occupational agents, factors and conditions. Occupational cancer belongs to avoidable cases and it should be avoided. Lung cancer, mesothelioma, bladder cancer and leukemia are the most common occupational cancers.

WHO considers that the prevention of exposure to carcinogens in the workplace may be the most efficient way to prevent cancer.

We have discussed the information on long-known carcinogens as well as new exposures and evidences related to occupational cancer.

The development of OH&S sector facilitates the change of historically classical occupational hazards (dust, noise, chemical substances) to new ones. Dusts that can cause cancer: leather or wood dusts, asbestos, crystalline forms of silica, coal tar pitch volatiles, oven emissions, diesel exhaust, tobacco

smoke. New occupational hazards come to the foreground: physical overload, ergonomic factors, psycho-emotional overload, new unexplored chemical substances, etc.

There are problems of using asbestos in Europa. The EU placed a general ban on asbestos in 2005. Because of this asbestos is not used on large scales so we are more concerned with the late onset diseases of pleural mesothelioma and lung cancer. As these malignancies have a latency period of 20-40 years after asbestos exposure, it is believed that now in 2019 we are at the end of the peak of asbestos related mesotheliomas and lung cancers in Europe.

Malignant mesothelioma is in approximately 25,000 to 43,000 people yearly worldwide. Since the 1970 the one-year survival of mesothelioma has increased from 10% to 44% at the end of the first decade in the new millennium for both sexes, while the three-year survival has remained constant below 10%. The single biggest cause of cancer deaths in the world is lung cancer. Although the survival of mesothelioma is lower, lung cancer has a much higher incidence rate in the world.

On the first day of Summer School, the issue of ionizing radiation as a cause of occupational oncology was discussed. Fields of high occupational risk are following: production, use, storage, and utilization of radiation sources (nuclear power plants, nuclear weapons, nuclear waste, etc.); human and veterinary medicine (radiologists, assistants of radiologists, radiotherapy, minimally invasive procedures (angio surgery, cardio surgery, neurosurgery), procedures under X-ray control (traumatology, anesthesiology), dentists, veterinarians, etc.); customs, airport, industrial defectoscopy; aircraft staff, astronauts (cosmic radiation); works underground with poor ventilation (radon); irradiation of food (preservation); scientific laboratories.

Biological agents are well known and recognized as carcinogens, most of them can also occur in occupational settings and environments – includes viruses, bacteria, fungus and parasites. Two main mechanisms for development have been described.

The first mechanism: changes in affected organs (cells) can happen at several levels: changes in physiological processes at organ/tissue level, functional changes at cell level; changes at molecular level (genotoxicity in particular).

The second mechanism: effects of toxins elaborated by biological agents, some of these are extremely potent poisons.

Physical occupational carcinogens: solar radiation; ultraviolet radiation (wavelengths 100-400 nm, encompassing UVA, UVB, and UVC); ultraviolet-emitting tanning devices; Very hot beverages at above 65°C (drinking); magnetic fields, extremely low-frequency; radiofrequency electromagnetic fields.

In to-day changing world very important is to understand new exposures and evidences related to occupational cancer. In this regard, discussions were hold about sedentary work and night shift work.

The scientists from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) investigated the link between levels of physical activity and risk of colorectal cancer. Using observational studies based on more than 430,000 men and women in the United Kingdom, the study showed that higher levels of physical activity were associated with lower risk of colon cancer and that higher levels of sedentary behavior were associated with increased risk of colon cancer.

Night shift work induced carcinogenesis theories are following: disturbance of the circadian system due to light at night with alteration of the sleep–activity pattern leading to potential melatonin suppression and circadian gene alterations. Sleep deprivation that results from the need to sleep when it is not readily possible and misaligned with the surrounding active daytime social environment. Genes that are responsible for maintaining circadian rhythms were identified and may function as transcriptional factors and regulate expression of genes in cancer-related pathways, such as cell cycle, DNA repair, and apoptosis.

Several of chronic infections very wide spread, many of them having occupational origin. Biological and physical occupational carcinogens are less wide spread than chemical factors.

The problem is difficult to grasp, as around 120,000 chemicals and millions of mixtures are used in the EU. Up to 50% of all recognized occupational diseases linked to chemical exposures.

When discussing occupational tumors, the following also need to be considered:

There are synergistic effects between some occupational carcinogens and lifestyle factors and other cancer risk factors (tobacco use, alcohol, a diet low in vegetables and fruits, inactive lifestyle, a high body mass index, overexposure to UV radiation, personal characteristics such as age, gender, and race, a family history of cancer etc.); the presence of certain medical conditions, such as chronic infection with Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C.

Most cancers cannot be attributed to a single risk factor or cause.

New occupational cancer risks are nanomaterials and endocrine disruptors. Nanoparticles can penetrate all parts of the body and cause occupational etiology tumors. Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDC) can produce adverse developmental, reproductive, neurological, cardiovascular, metabolic, carcinogenic and immune effects in human. EDC interfere with the synthesis, secretion, transport, activity or elimination of natural hormones.

Occupational cancer (OC) is entirely preventable and interventions at the workplace can save millions of lives every year (IARC).

The prevention of OC is specific because it relies heavily on legislation, since the population at risk can be relatively easily identified.

Preventive measures for occupational cancer have an established hierarchy:

1. Prohibiting the manufacture of chemicals and other agents known to be carcinogenic in humans (in a limited number of countries);
2. Protective Measures;
3. Legislation – at national and EU level.

Day 2 (30th of August) has been dedicated to the questions of prevention - block II. Prevention of occupational cancers. The focus was on collecting and registering data on occupational etiology cancers. The colleague from Netherlands shared his experience with the cancer roadmap whose main

goals are to raise awareness and exchange best practices, provide information, influence on the behavior at work, collect good practices.

The European Network of Cancer Registries (ENCR), established within the framework of the Europe against Cancer Program of the European Commission, has been in operation since 1990. ENCR promotes collaboration between cancer registries, defines data collection standards, provides training for cancer registry personnel and regularly disseminates information on incidence and mortality from cancer in the European Union and Europe.

The objectives:

1. improve the quality, comparability and availability of cancer incidence data;
2. create a basis for monitoring cancer incidence and mortality in the European Union;
3. provide regular information on the burden of cancer in Europe;
4. promote the use of cancer registries in cancer control, health-care planning and research.

Experiences from diagnostics, registration, treatment and return to work of patients with occupational cancer were shared by representatives from Croatia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Luxembourg and Spain. Specialists agree that the focus on reducing occupational cancers must be focus on the following factors: OHS – legislative measures; education (workers, employers, physicians, experts); medical surveillance; awareness.

Panel discussion debate were on the following lines:

1. the gap between campaigns, legislation and reality of daily practice in different EU countries;
2. level of awareness of medical doctors (all specialities, also oncologists) on etiology of occupational cancers;
3. awareness of medical doctors regarding detection of occupational cancers;
4. training importance of medical doctors at different educative levels on occupational cancer;
5. EASOM contribution to occupational cancer related issues.

On the second day there were discussions, i.e. World café on communication about occupational cancers. The World café methodology was following: we have prepared four tables with a board next to each table and a marker to collect the information and write it on the board. The world café coordinator divided the participants into 4 groups. The coordinator named the responsible person for every table. At the beginning each group must go to a table (the groups are numbered from 1 to 4), and the tables also and initially each group goes to the table that have the same number. After 15 minutes of discussion at a table and having answered the questions of that particular table, the group moves to another one. Therefore, all groups rotate and move from one table to another in order. In the end, every group has visited all the tables and has answered each table questions.

Practical issues important to occupational physicians were discussed at the World café. For practical occupational physicians important were questions about collaboration between specialists regarding to occupational cancer, recommendations for return back to work, for workplace/worktime adaption in case of disability/post – disease period in case of occupational cancer or occupational disease in general. It was also important to share experience of specialists from different countries on issues such as diagnostic, registration and compensation of patients with oncological occupational diseases.

The questions of occupational physicians training regarding occupational cancers also were discussed.

Main recommendations: it is necessary to build up collaboration between organizations (also associations) which are involved in occupational physicians' certification, training at national and EU level to define problems, needs and opportunities for training programs improving in future.

Day 3 (31 of August) has been dedicated block III – Return to work after cancer. The lecture gained new insights into working capacity after cancer.

About half of the patients with cancer are people of working age. Most cancer survivors are able to stay in or return to work. The risk of unemployment is 1.4 times higher among cancer survivors than among healthy control. Very important questions: the legislation encouraging return to work; communication between stakeholders; knowledge of cancer and work; positive attitudes towards workers returning to work after a cancer.

The discussion in four groups of participants from different countries were organized. The main issues covered a work ability in cancer survivors and factors that predict a less successful return to work (socio-demographic, work-related, disease-related etc.).

Summary 29-31th of August, 2019

The host country for XIX Summer School was Latvia. For the first time the EASOM Summer School was organized in the in the EU Baltic states. There were 67 participants from 16 different countries. We worked 3 days, 14 lecturers with 22 topics. Different working forms: presentations, panel discussion, World Cafe and discussions in groups.

It was a nice opportunity to build up special knowledge on area of occupational cancers. The aims and the scope of the Summer School were fulfilled.

EASOM statement on improving education and training to prevent /fight against occupational cancer was adopted at the end of the Summer School. It can be consulted on the EASOM page, at <https://www.easom.eu/16-news-2/60-reducing-the-burden-of-occupational-cancers>.

Report on the ICOH Scientific Program and Conference of IAHO, Mumbai, India

Lutgart Braeckman

End of January 2020 (some weeks for the lockdown worldwide), a three-day ICOH conference took place in Mumbai, a very special place located in India, and one of the fastest growing economies in the world with so many problems and opportunities in the domain of occupational health. The conference entitled: Key to sustainable OSH – Evidence, Practice and Collaboration was part of a greater Conclave in which also a nation conference was included of the co-organizer of the ICOH part, the Indian Association of Occupational Health, IAHO.



International Conclave on Occupational Health – 2020

Incorporating

ICOH Scientific Program

70th National Conference of IAHO - OCCUCON 2020

and

68th Annual Conference of IAHO Mumbai Branch

28th January to 1st February 2020 | Nehru Centre, Worli, Mumbai, Maharashtra, INDIA

The conference was the result of one year hardworking of the host organization, especially the IAHO branch located in Mumbai, and no less than eight ICOH scientific committees: Effectiveness in Occupational Health Services (EOHS); Education and Training in OH (SCETOH); Rural Health: Agriculture, Pesticides and Organic Dusts; Mining Occupational Safety and Health; Occupational Health in the Construction Industry; Occupational Health and Development; OH in Small-Scale Enterprises and Informal Sector; MEDICHEM.

The final programme can be consulted here: http://occuconindia.com/scientific_programme_icoh.html.

The conference as a whole was a success given the quality of the contributions and - in general - good audiences. From SCETOH side we had many contributions:

- a keynote on Evaluation of education by Lutgart Braeckman,
- two hours of interesting oral presentations on education,
- a one hour panel discussion on the evaluation of education (together with SC Effectiveness of OH Services),
- an almost whole day on Basic Occupational Health Services organized by Suvarna Moti (IAHO) with 3 keynotes, a round table and a workshop ,

- a workshop on how to find reliable online information (Paul Smits, Frank van Dijk), and
- a workshop on Core Values at work (Michel Guillemin and workgroup members)

During the conference, a so-called mid-term business meeting of SCETOH took place on January 28th, 2020 (see picture).



Given the experience that it is not easy for many ICOH members to travel long distances to congresses far away, the high costs in money, time and effort and recently the Covid-19 epidemic, online task groups and meetings (and education) might have a bright future, complementary to face-to-face meetings.



Report on the First European Occupational Medicine Appraisal

Alenka Škerjanc, Kari Reijula, Begoña Martinez Jarreta and Fabriziomaria Gobba

After many years of hard work UEMS OM Section passed the first European Appraisal on 23rd January 2020 at Domus Medica Europea in Brussels. With strong dedication and hard work in creating MCQs of colleagues from UEMS OM WG1 and EASOM colleagues a bank of questions was organized.



The info on the exam was put to UEMS OM website, promoted through section's member national activities and many travels of the UEMS OM president to the National OM meetings throughout Europe. Finances were low and marketing could not have been strong so we expected around 7 applicants at the most. At the end 14 applied, one cancelled in last week and one missed the flight so finally there were 12 applicants at the first appraisal. The Brussels Office gave full support and equipment, the CESMA supervisors were very attentive and gave us instructions how to further develop the procedure and also hints how to solve the current stress.

After the procedure 10 applicants out of 12 passed the exam. Being asked some questions we discovered that most of the applicants were trainees in OM and two were specialists already. The average age of the applicants was 32,7 years. Most of them got info about the Exam by their national representatives. The strongest motivation was to test their knowledge against ETRs, they were strongly motivated by their employers and colleagues.



All of the applicants gave the highest mark (5) to the technical information, contact and customer service. Also, the venue was rated high (4). They estimated the covering with ETRs medium mark, namely the ETRs differ from their national training requirements and national ETRs were bias for them. The same happened to the literature expectations, they were mostly linked to national suggestions and the literature on the UEMS OM Appraisal website link was foreign to them. They wished to have more time for MCQs, despite all finished the test, in fact they would like to have more time to check the answers once more. The first applicant finished and put the test to the examiners 20 minutes before the official end. Also, the estimation of the weight of MCQs was estimated almost 4. There were many positive experiences (well organized, clear instructions, high level of questions, good coverage, meeting foreign candidates), the only negative was to lack time.

The exam was a milestone for the specialty of OM to promote its practise and research among other medical specialties and to raise self-esteem because we are far in front of many clinical specialties. We are going to continue to reach the stable and high-level OM education all over Europe.

XX EASOM Summer School postponed

Begoña Martinez Jarreta, Nicole Majery

The EASOM Summer School 2020 in Belgrade on the theme “Teaching Occupational Medicine to Undergraduate Students of Medicine: Needs, Methods and A Way Forward” is going to be postponed due to the CoVID-19 pandemic.

EASOM Board monitors epidemiological situation and will bring decision on new dates as soon as they are assured that all participants could, without health risks, attend EASOM Summer School.

Further information will be provided in this EASOM website as soon as it becomes available.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Pre - Announcement

2020 EASOM International Webinar

On the Topic

The Role of the Occupational Health Specialist in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Petar Bulat

With more than 14 million people infected and more than 600 thousand deaths to date, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world by storm. Although emergencies, including public health emergencies such as this one, are common in the world, rarely is the whole world affected by the same emergency at the same time. One hundred years from the Great War and the 1918 flu pandemic, we are learning once again how much we are all connected.

Healthcare workers, including medical doctors, nurses, but also all the supporting staff having a role in providing healthcare to the population around the world, have been affected in more than one way. Healthcare workers care for the patients affected by SARS-CoV-2, but also for all the other patients which need regular or emergency healthcare interventions. In addition, as most of the reports have shown, around 10% of infected people are healthcare workers, and in most healthcare facilities more than 10% of the staff gets infected.

This public health emergency has underlined the role of occupational medicine and occupational physician in the prevention and protection of healthcare workers, but also all the other workers which are at risk of infection at their workplace. Due to the current extraordinary circumstances, we have decided to postpone the EASOM meeting planned for August this year in Belgrade, and instead we will organize a webinar to underline and discuss the “Role of the Occupational Health Specialist in the COVID-19 pandemic “.

Please register for the webinar on the [LINK](#)

that will soon appear in EASOM website (<https://www.easom.eu>)

and join us

in early September

News: EASOM Summer Schools in 2021 and 2022

Begoña Martínez-Jarreta, Nicole Majery

The EASOM Summer School 2020 was to be celebrated in Belgrade on the theme “Teaching Occupational Medicine to Undergraduate Students of Medicine: Needs, Methods and A Way Forward”, however it had to be postponed due to the CoVID-19 pandemic.

During 2020 Spring Board Meeting an agreement to have this Belgrade School in 2022 and to retain in 2021 the Summer School in Leuven (Belgium) as scheduled was reached. Professor Lode Godderis is being the local coordinator of the XXI Leuven Summer School (August 2021) and he has already done a preliminary proposal to focus on COVID-19 and its impact in OM training.

Further information will be provided in this EASOM website

ADMISSION of a new EASOM FULL MEMBER

Decision was taken by EASOM Board of Management during 2020 Spring Board Meeting according to article 2 EASOM Constitution.

The EASOM Board of Management wants to welcome to University of Catania (Catania, Sicily, Italy) and Prof. Dr. Venerando Rapisarda.

The School of Occupational Medicine of the University of Catania

Venerando Rapisarda

The School of Occupational Medicine of the University of Catania annually welcomes doctors in specialist training and PhD students in order to guarantee their training and professional growth. These objectives are achieved through careful theoretical and practical training, which also develops in the context of scientific research. In fact, each doctor is included in a specific research group and his name will be present in the scientific papers that are subsequently published in conference proceedings and peer-review journals.



The Palazzo dell'Università, seat of the University. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Catania

Each doctor in training has the obligation to attend the licensed hospital structures (Polyclinic-University Hospital and High Specialization Hospital for Emergencies) according to a well-established program. In addition, this training program provides for the execution of specialist diagnostic tests and medical surveillance for workers exposed to risk, including those exposed to ionizing radiation.

The training includes training activities in public and private companies affiliated with the University.

Physicians in specialist training and PhD students are called to present research data as speakers both in national and international conferences.

In addition, the School of Occupational Medicine of Catania adheres to the Continuous Medical Education (CME) training and has established the “Etnean Days of Occupational Medicine”, now in their fifth edition. Each of these days is opened by an international host, expert in the field of Occupational Medicine.

Finally, the numerous national and international scientific collaborations encourage the exchange of students and doctors in training every year.

Prof. Dr. Venerando Antonio Rapisarda is physician, Occupational Medicine specialist, Ph.D in “Occupational Infection Diseases”, Authorized Doctor for ionizing radiation risks protection, is Professor of Occupational Medicine at the University of Catania (Sicily, Italy) and also Director of the Occupational Medicine Operation Unit in Catania’s Polyclinic-University Hospital.



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4th Etnean Occupational Medicine Workshop

He has so far published several scientific papers on national as well as international peer-review journals as far as Occupational Medicine and Workplace Hygiene and Safety issues are concerned.

The studies carried out have assessed in-vitro, ex-vivo mutagenic and carcinogenic effects as well as effects on workers exposed to: xenobiotics, asbestiform fibres and radiations.

He has also dealt with work organization dysfunctions; studies about the ergonomic, psycho-physical wellbeing and promotion of health in workplaces. Namely, these studies have been dealing with impact on lifestyles (i.e. tobacco consumption, alcohol abuse, dieting, sedentary lifestyles and so on),

and with non-transmissible chronic diseases related to work activities and their effects on the eligibility for the specific task.

Right from the beginning of his activity as a researcher, he has been addressing his interests to studying physical agents like vibrations, noise, as well as to biological ones. To this purpose, in several studies he has analysed vaccination coverage of risk exposed workers.

Studies on healthcare workers have enabled to shed light on shift work risks and their health effects on workers.

He is a member of the Scientific Committee and teaches in II Level University Master Courses.

He is a member of numerous Scientific Societies and editorial boards of impacted international scientific journals.

He has organized several Scientific Meetings and has been a Speaker in various conferences in Italy and abroad.

Since 2017, he has been a co-organizer of the “Etnean Occupational Medicine Workshop”, where Occupational Medicine inter-disciplinary issues are dealt with.