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Editorial

During the last 40 years we have seen more progress in science and technology compared with all preceding generations in the previous century. We have also witnessed several intellectual, technological, medical and social revolutions spearheaded by the silent contraceptive revolution and followed by those in reproductive health, gender equality, information, communication, globalization, international assistance, etc. By the change of the millennium, approximately 1 billion couples used contraception. Hormonal contraception has become safer, more effective and more widely used. Moreover, hormonal contraception confers significant non-contraceptive medical benefits, such as reduced risk of ovarian and endometrial cancers, protection from dysmenorrhea and pelvic pain associated with endometriosis, and a specific defence against menorrhagia, acne and hirsutism. Oral contraception is the most effective means of contraception that can be reversed without a physician visit. New hormonal contraception delivery methods are easier for some women to use and they allow for longer action and a decreased need for compliance. The broader choice of hormonal delivery systems also means that more women find hormonal contraception acceptable. Because of the lower dosages, fewer side-effects and a growing understanding of the risks, many women who would have been denied use because of their medical conditions in the past can use hormonal contraception today. Obviously, the safety aspects are of continuous interest, but decisions on appropriate contraception must take into account the expressed desires of the individual and the benefits and risks of the method. Medical eligibility is therefore a better expression compared to the former designation of contraindications or relative contraindications. A 1994 document – updated in 2000 – of the World Health Organization (WHO) Scientific Working Group represents an attempt to develop a worldwide consensus on eligibility criteria for contraceptives.

Despite the improved safety, controversy is an inevitable element of medical progress. Since the 'Dear Doctor' letter sent out in October 1995 from the UK Committee on Safety of Medicines, the debate about third-generation oral contraceptives and deep venous thrombosis has been rancorous. Controversy has raged and generated numerous studies, analysis and re-analysis. A recently completed trial in the English High Court has contributed, through the judicial process, to the goal of reaching a sensible conclusion. Following ten expert witnesses, the judge determined that third-generation oral contraceptives do not carry any higher risk of venous thromboembolism. Obviously this judgement was based upon the small difference in risk presented in the different case-control studies, but hopefully the statement will make it easier to end the polemic discussions derived from commercial interests and the natural concern of prescribers. Still, however, it is important to keep in mind that a judicial sentence is not synonymous with

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Israel: A. Yeshaya
Italy: V.B. Bruni,
P.G. Crosignani
Latvia: M. Orlean
Lithuania: V. Sadauskas
Poland: M. Lech
Portugal: D.M. Rebelo,
M.T.M.P. Sousa Fernandes
Russia: V.N. Prilepskaya,
S.I. Savelieva
Slovenia: B. Pinter,
A. Pretnar-Darovec
Spain: C. Coll Capdevila,
P. Martínez
The Netherlands: R.J.C.M. Beerthuizen,
O.E. Loeber
Turkey: S. Özalp, H. Satiroglu
United Kingdom: A. Bigrigg, A. Webb

In this issue

Minutes of the General Assembly
of the ESC, Genova, Italy, 2002

ANNOUNCEMENT

Readers of the ESC Newsletter are invited to send letters expressing their opinions and to submit articles about topics of interest in their own countries for inclusion in future newsletters.

Articles should be sent to the Chief Editor,
Dr D. Wildemeersch.

Minutes of the General Assembly of the European Society of Contraception

Genova, Italy, 12 April 2002

Present:	S.O. Skouby (<i>President</i>) E. Aubény (<i>Vice-President</i>) M. Short (<i>General Secretary</i>) B. Pinter (<i>Assistant Secretary</i>) D. Cibula (<i>Treasurer</i>) ESC members
Apologies:	A. Verougstraete (<i>Assistant Treasurer</i>)
In attendance:	P. Erard, <i>ESC Central Office</i>

1. Welcome address

The President welcomed all attendees on behalf of the Executive Committee and thanked them all for their continued support towards the European Society of Contraception.

2. Minutes of the last meeting (Ljubljana, 2000)

The Minutes of the last General Assembly (Ljubljana, June 30, 2000) were read and signed as an accurate account of the proceedings.

3. Report on the 7th Congress in Genova

The President considered this Congress to be an absolute success in terms of organization and the scientific program. He thanked P. Crosignani (Congress President) and his Organizing Committee for their efforts in leading the Congress to this point. Also, the services of BC Congressi were highly appreciated. The Scientific Committee and the speakers were thanked for their excellent contributions. S. Skouby reported that 179 abstracts were submitted. The figures on Congress participation were presented as follows:

Number of participants: 1502 (on April 10)

Top 5 countries present:

Italy	288
France	167
UK	127
The Netherlands	53
Germany	50

4. Report by the General Secretary

a. Membership report

M. Short reported on the ESC membership as follows:

Situation January 1, 2002

- 764 membership records
- 33 members were 'excluded' on January 1, 2002 since no contribution had been paid for 2 consecutive years (2000 and 2001)

Situation April 10, 2002

- 370 new members (combined Congress registration and membership)

In conclusion

ESC = 1134 members

- 916 ordinary members (50 euro)
- 198 affiliated members (25 euro)
- 20 associated members (35 euro (outside Europe))

Top 5 memberships (ordinary membership):

• France	192
• Italy	161
• Portugal	95
• UK	76
• Czech Rep.	53

A total of 40 countries are represented in the Society.

b. Overview of past Committee meetings

The General Secretary informed the ESC members about the meetings held by the different committees:

- Brussels, July 2000 (Briefing treasurers)
- Brussels, Sept 2000 (Executive Committee)
- Brussels, Nov 2000 (Board and Executive Committee)
- Florence, Dec 2000 (Organizing Committee Congress)
- Genoa, Feb 2001 (Organizing Committee and Executive)
- Paris, March 2001 (Board and Executive Committee)
- Coimbra, Oct 2001 (Board and Executive Committee)
- Berlin, Feb 2002 (Executive Committee)

c. Activity report

M. Short reported on the activities of the ESC since the last General Assembly:

- Follow-up of granted research projects (will be presented later by D. Cibula)
- 6th Seminar, Coimbra (Oct 2001)
The Secretary thanked D. Rebelo (the Organizer) and his Portuguese colleagues for an excellent Seminar. Also, E. Aubény, B. Pinter and O. Loeber were thanked for their work related to the development of the scientific program.
- 7th and 8th Seminar (in process)
It was reported that the organization of both was proceeding. This item is discussed later during the Assembly.
- 7th Congress, Genoa (already reported by the President)

- 8th Congress, Birmingham (will be reported later during the General Assembly)
 - FIGO and CPMP (to be presented by S. Skouby later in the meeting)
 - Barcelona Declaration
- M. Short explained that the ESC has undersigned this declaration, together with many other Societies, to express our concern about President Bush withdrawing grants to societies which provide contraception and abortion services in underdeveloped countries.
- Journal activities (will be reported later during the General Assembly)

d. Structural progress

The General Secretary explained that – due to the complexity – the ESC has delegated the following issues to an external and professional company (Deloitte and Touche):

- Accountancy
- VAT
- Legal advice

It was said that an upgrade of the actual Statutes and Rules of Procedure was strongly recommended. This would be reported by D. Cibula later.

Besides the existence of an ESC Congress contract, the Executive Committee was in the stage of preparing a contract for seminar organizers.

No comments or questions raised from the audience on all above points

5. Report from the Treasurer

D. Cibula explained that the financial matters of the Society became more and more complex and that he would restrict his report to a general overview. However, detailed reports were presented each time on the occasion of each Executive Committee and Board meeting in a transparent way.

All reports were archived at the ESC Central Office in Brussels.

a) Report on the 6th Congress, Ljubljana

Outgoings

Venue, catering and social program	-239 944.04
Printed and promotional matters	-39 081.26
Organization and co-ordination costs	-55 259.73
Distribution and secretariat costs	-22 345.71
Local Organizing Committee costs	-6 314.79
VIPs	-66 755.27
Staff (on-site)	-7 450.59
Index adjustments	-1 268.06
Unforeseen expenditures	-1 824.66
Total	-440 244.11

Incomings

Sponsors and exhibitors	331 363.49
Registrations	292 633.33
Total	623 996.82
Balance	183 752.71

b) Report on the 6th Seminar, Coimbra

Outgoings

Venue	-2 670.77
Translation	-2 821.42

Printing and promotion	-8 375.36
Organization costs	-9 362.18
Postal and related costs	-2 294.24
Secretariat costs	-1 492.87
VIPs (speakers/chairmen)	-13 430.50
Local Organizing Committee	-899.12
Participant dependent costs	-7 851.40
Unforeseen expenditures	-593.30
Total	-49 791.16

<i>Incomings</i>	15 000.00
Balance	-34 791.16

c) Overview of the year 2000

	OUT	IN
Committee costs	-30 021.93	
Bank (costs/benefits)	-798.58	2 235.24
Membership		20 869.97
Secretariat working costs	-45 221.31	
ESC Publications	-3 379.63	
Web site	-1 344.37	
German ESC, accountancy	-18 046.65	
Deloitte and Touche	-749.88	
Unknown	-158.46	
Research program	-45 045.00	
5th Seminar	-428.14	95 463.33
6th Congress	-425 107.71	623 285.72
Total	-57 0301.66	655 937.26

d) Overview of the year 2001

OUT	
Committee costs	53 283.82
Bank	148.77
Taxes	1513.06
Memberships	458.32
Working costs ESC Officials	27 441.24
Secretary costs Central Office	30 987.35
Publications	6 933.19
Website	147.38
Accountancy and advise	10 278.24
Research program	17 017.00
6th Seminar Coimbra	33 023.90
7th Congress Genoa	52 568.88
6th Congress Ljubljana	10 417.99
Congress Prague	14 637.43
Total	-258 856.57

IN	
Memberships	20 907.42
Interests and other financial incomes	15 746.41
Subscription congresses	-800.00
Seminars	10 000.00
Exhibit	66 250.00
Total	+112 103.83

e) Overview of accounts

On working account	219 385.86 euro
On saving account	241 804.59 euro
On USD account	8 316.26 USD

f) Conclusions

D. Cibula concluded by stating that every money transfer/payment is declared and proofed by documents, archived in the Central Office and controlled by Deloitte and Touche for accountancy reasons. This was a very transparent system for new Executive and Board Members for the future.

The Treasurer showed an official declaration, prepared and made by Deloitte and Touche, stating that the financial statements of the ESC as of December 31, 2001, are correct and without any misstatement or irregularity (audit for the year 2001).

At the last General Assembly, a question was raised about the follow-up of projects which were allocated grants on the occasion of the Seminar in Amsterdam (1999). D. Cibula reported on this as follows:

- Project 1 (S. Carr, A. Bigrigg) – project is making good progress, results are analyzed, paper will be submitted
- Project 2 (R. Beerthuizen) – project rewritten, new title, waiting for approval of the Dutch Foundation for Contraception, estimated finalization December 2002
- Project 3 (J. Rademakers) – finished in the beginning of 2001, article has been submitted

No comments or questions raised from the audience on all above points

The report of the Treasurer was accepted unanimously by the members of the ESC and accepted by the General Assembly –

Two members of the Society needed to be elected as external auditors. The following names were put forward and accepted by the General Assembly: Carlo Bastianelli (Italy) and Michael Cox (UK). Both accepted the function as auditor.

6. Matters arising

a. The ESC and VAT

The President explained that the implementation of some important recommendations made by Deloitte and Touche might induce – if accepted – changes in the Statutes and Rules of Procedure.

D. Cibula continued, saying that the Executive Committee and the Board indeed had prepared important changes to be approved by the General Assembly. Some time ago, the ESC applied for a VAT number in Belgium. Unfortunately, the final answer of the Ministry of Justice in Belgium arrived too late to enable the Executive Committee to forward this proposal to the members of the Society in time. D. Cibula said that this was the reason why it cannot even be presented during the General Assembly, unless the General Assembly votes for an exception which is essential for the life of the Society.

He reported that after one and a half years, the application for a VAT number has still not been approved by the Belgian authorities. Although there was at first positive advice from the regional authorities, the local VAT authorities did not agree

with the allocation of a VAT number. After a long negotiation via Deloitte and Touche, the local authorities finally agreed and sent the file to the last step, namely the Ministry of Justice. Unfortunately the Ministry rejected the application because the address of the Central Office is not mentioned in the Statutes. Only this change will allow us to have a VAT number. This VAT number is essential for the organization of the next congresses and for many financial matters in general (invoicing process, etc.). D. Cibula clearly stated that entering the address of the center of activity (the Central Office) in the Statutes had nothing to do with changing the address of the official seat of the Society.

For the above-mentioned reasons, the following extension to the Statutes is proposed:

Besides the official seat in France, the Society has an office in Belgium at:

ESC Central Office
Essenestraat 77
B-1740 Ternat
Belgium

The Board of Directors is entitled to change the address of the seat in Belgium.

The Society will be validly represented in lawsuits, either as plaintiff or defendant, by the Board of Directors, which will be represented by the President or the Vice-President or other representatives (nominated by the Board)."

The President asked the ESC members first to decide if they agreed to vote for this change. The General Assembly unanimously agreed to vote.

The President asked the ESC members if they accepted the changes presented by the Treasurer. The General Assembly unanimously agreed.

b) The German Society

The President introduced this matter by reminding the members that a German ESC Society was established several years ago with the aim of facilitating the VAT affairs in relation to the Congress in Prague (1998). However, it turned out that there were no advantages to be gained by creating this Society. Although this Society has no activities, it has been formally established. This means that the procedure for closing down this Society is costly, difficult and complicated. It implies in fact that the General Assembly needs to decide whether to close down the Society and thereafter inform the German authorities. S. Skouby reported that M. Van Santen, former Treasurer of the ESC, has forwarded an alternative of transforming the German Society into a national German Contraceptive Society. This would not impose any cost for the European Society. The name of the German Society would be changed as well and the European ESC will have no commitments towards the German Society.

The President asked the ESC members to consider if we need either to close down the German society or if we can agree to transform it into a national society. The President asked the ESC members first to decide if they agreed to vote for this change. The General Assembly unanimously agreed to vote.

The President asked the ESC members for their decision on the proposals related to the German Society. The General Assembly unanimously agreed to transform it into a national society.

7. Seminar reports

a. 6th Seminar, Coimbra

The President briefly reported that 207 participants (124 Portuguese) attended this Seminar. Furthermore, 38/207 evaluation forms were received (details are available at the ESC desk). For the first time, a simultaneous translation (Portuguese) was carried out. He underlined that there was a high input about the local situation in the program and he concluded by thanking the organizer, David Rebelo, for his excellent organization.

b. Other seminars

S. Skouby said that it was originally planned to organize the 7th Seminar in Israel and the 8th Seminar in Hungary. However, a request came from A. Yeshaya to change the order.

The General Assembly unanimously agreed.

In conclusion, the new planning will be as follows:

- 7th Seminar in Hungary (Sept 2003), organizer G. Bartfai
- 8th Seminar in Israel (2005), organizer A. Yeshaya

8. Next Congress

The 8th Congress will be organized in Birmingham (ICC), UK. President of the Organizing Committee is J. Newton. Congress dates are 23–26 June, 2004.

9. Journal report

G. Creatsas, Editor-in-Chief, reported in brief on the last 2 years of the European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care:

- 247 papers were published
- 88% acceptance rate – 12% rejection rate
- Very short review time
- Journal is cited in Index Medicus and close to obtaining an impact factor
- Best papers from this Congress will be encouraged to publish
- Need for more case reports
- Need to improve the services between the reviewers and the editorial office
- Distribution and promotion of the Journal – wish to expand outside Europe
- Website, internet opportunities
- Procedure to avoid conflict of interest should be established (articles from the industry)

S. Skouby added that the ESC is exploring the internet opportunities together with the publisher in order to reduce increased publication costs.

10. Agenda items by members

Anne Webb (UK) asked for an indication in the publications with possible conflicting interest. S. Skouby stated that the Editorial Board has agreed to implement this in the short term. The General Assembly unanimously agreed.

11. Board elections

The President briefly referred to the Statutes to introduce the issue:

“Each country may have one representative on the Board of Directors, if there are five paid-up ordinary members from that country. The number of paid-up members required to enable a second representative to be elected is detailed in the Rules of Procedure (20 or more). No country may have more than two elected representatives.”

The following is the list of the present Board Members ($n = 25$):

Aubény, Elisabeth	<i>France</i>
Bartfai, György	<i>Hungary</i>
Beerthuizen, Rob	<i>The Netherlands</i>
Bigrigg, Alison	<i>UK</i>
Bruni, Vincenza B.	<i>Italy</i>
Cibula, David	<i>Czech Republic</i>
Coll Capdevila, Carme	<i>Spain</i>
Creatsas, George	<i>Greece</i>
Jones, Sheila	<i>Ireland</i>
Lech, Medard	<i>Poland</i>
Loeber, Olga E.	<i>The Netherlands</i>
Martinez, Paca	<i>Spain</i>
Orlean, Melanija	<i>Latvia</i>
Özalp, Sinan	<i>Turkey</i>
Pinter, Bojana	<i>Slovenia</i>
Pretnar-Darovec, Alenka	<i>Slovenia</i>
Prilepskaya, Vera N.	<i>Russia</i>
Rebelo, David Madureira	<i>Portugal</i>
Serfaty, David	<i>France</i>
Short, Mary	<i>Ireland</i>
Skouby, Sven	<i>Denmark</i>
Unzeitig, Vit	<i>Czech Republic</i>
van Santen, Maarten R.	<i>Germany</i>
Verougstraete, Anne	<i>Belgium</i>
Webb, Anne	<i>UK</i>
Yeshaya, Arie	<i>Israel</i>

S. Skouby continued by saying that due to the fact that we will accept an increased number of Board Members (because of an increase in ESC members), we can foresee a situation where we will have more than 25 Board Members. In principle, the Society decided earlier on that we should have no more than 25. On the other hand, we have no approved Rule of Procedure for this situation. The matter has been discussed by the current Board who decided that, for now, until the next General Assembly, we should accept two Board members per country, if there are at least 20 ESC members from that country. The new Board should work on a proposal to limit this number in the future.

A break was organized in order to collect the names of elected new Board Members (by the countries themselves), according to the following overview. In addition, some countries have now reached the number of five members which allows them to have one representative (not mentioned in the Table).

(Number of actual mandates in parentheses)

Belgium (1)	> 20 +1	Latvia (1)	< 20
Czech Rep. (2)	> 20	Poland (1)	< 20
Denmark (1)	< 20	Portugal (2)	> 20 +1
France (2)	> 20	Russia (2)	> 20 +1
Germany (1)	> 20 +1	Slovenia (2)	> 20
Greece (1)	< 20	Spain (2)	> 20
Hungary (1)	> 20 +1	The Netherlands (2)	> 20
Ireland (2)	> 20	Turkey (1)	> 20 +1
Israel (1)	< 20	UK (2)	> 20
Italy (1)	> 20 +1		

Some countries did not perform the ballot before the General Assembly meeting. For these countries, the seat will be left open until a national ballot has been arranged.

From the actual list of Board Members, V. Unzeitig (Czech Republic) and B. Pinter (Slovenia) needed to be re-elected since their first mandate of 6 years is ending.

S. Skouby presented the final list of Board Members as follows:

Belgium	?	Italy	G. Crosignani
Belgium	A. Verougstraete	Italy	V. Bruni
Czech Republic	D. Cibula	Latvia	M. Orlean
Czech Republic	V. Unzeitig (re-elected)	Lithuania	V. Sadauskas
		Poland	M. Lech
Denmark	K. Petersen	Portugal	M.T. de Sousa
Denmark	S. Skouby	Portugal	D. Rebelo
Finland	D. Apter	Russia	I. Savelieva
France	D. Serfaty	Russia	V. Prilepskaya
France	E. Aubény	Slovenia	A. Pretnar-Darovec
Germany	T. Rabe	Slovenia	B. Pinter (re-elected)
Germany	M. van Santen	Spain	C. Coll Capdevila
Greece	D. Lazaris	Spain	P. Martínez
Greece	G. Creatsas	Sweden	?
Hungary	I. Batar	The Netherlands	O. Loeber
Hungary	G. Bartfai	The Netherlands	R. Beerthuizen
Ireland	?	Turkey	H. Satiroglu
Ireland	S. Jones	Turkey	S. Özalp
Israel	A. Yeshaya	UK	A. Bigrigg
		UK	A. Webb

It was said that a Board Meeting would be organized immediately after the General Assembly to vote for a new Executive Committee.

12. Any other business

C. Coll asked the Executive Committee for a formal appointment and date to transfer the German ESC into a German national society. S. Skouby explained that we will have to rely on the professional agency dealing with this issue.

13. Date of next meeting

Birmingham, between 23 and 26 June, 2004.

Membership

Persons wishing to join the Society should write to:

Orga-Med Congress Office
ESC Central Office
Essenestraat 77
B-1740 Ternat, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 582 08 52
Fax: +32 2 582 55 15
email: orgamed@village.uunet.be



The European Society of Contraception welcomes all professionals, doctors and non-doctors, effectively working within the field of contraception and reproductive and sexual health in Europe. Persons outside Europe may become Associate members. The membership fee is 50 EURO (if from Europe); the associate membership fee is 35 EURO (if from outside Europe).

Membership includes subscription to the Official Journal of the Society, *The European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care*, and delivery of the quarterly Newsletter, free attendance at the seminars and workshops, as well as a preferential registration fee for the ESC Congresses.

Editorial – continued from page 1

a medical verdict on eligibility of second- and third-generation oral contraceptives. An individual clinical evaluation based upon updated evidence should still serve as a guideline for prescription. The exactly optimized prescription of oral contraception will be the topic of the upcoming 3rd European Esbjerg Consensus Conference on sex steroids and cardiovascular disease. The meeting is being held under the Auspices of the ESC in Monte Carlo, Monaco, 7–9 November 2002. The lectures and discussions will provide evidence for best practice in obtaining beneficial effects from sex steroids and information about the possible selection criteria to minimize adverse drug effects. Hopefully, many ESC members will contribute their expertise to the discussions and the reports of this important meeting.

Sven O. Skouby
President of the ESC

The European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care



The Official Journal of the European Society of Contraception

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: G. Creatsas

EDITORS: C. Coll Capdevila and S. O. Skouby

The Journal publishes original peer-reviewed research papers as well as review papers and other appropriate educational material. The Editors welcome submissions from members of The European Society of Contraception and from non-members anywhere in the world.

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The individual subscription rate
for 2002 is 75.00/\$130.00

The institutional subscription
rate for 2002 is £130.00/\$210.00

Members of the Society receive the Journal automatically, since the Journal subscription is included within their membership fee.

Seminar

7th ESC SEMINAR

Budapest, Hungary, 12–14 September, 2003

*‘Contraceptive practice in Europe:
differences in availability and accessibility’*

Registration is free for members. Non-members pay 60 euro (including ESC membership for 2003).

For information: www.contraception-ESC.com

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Congress

8th CONGRESS

OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CONTRACEPTION

Birmingham, UK, 23–26 June, 2004

A holistic approach to sexual health’

For information: www.contraception-ESC.com

ESC Central Office, Essenestraat 77
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