

# ESC NEWSLETTER - Volume 6 - Number 2 - 2009

Newsletter from The European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health

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## Humanitarian Aid

### Humanitarian Aid Grant 2009

In January, ESC put out a call for applications and as no funding was allocated in 2008, the available budget for 2008 and 2009 was combined, making a total of 10,000 euro available. Thirteen applications were received, each supported by a Board member.

The Executive Committee (EC) and two Board members, Iolanda Blidaru (Romania) and Meera Kishen (UK) made the final selection in May. It was unanimously agreed to choose two winners who will each receive 5,000 euro. The 2 successful grants are:

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#### Project A

Testing strategies for male involvement in improving the uptake of family planning services in peri-urban settings in Uganda, submitted by Wilson Jaga of Uganda, endorsed by Board Member J.-J. Amy of Belgium.

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#### Project B

Promoting self-care and a healthy and responsible sexuality among low-income Chilean young people (Prosalud Chile), submitted by Veronica Schiappacasse of Chile, supported by Board Member Irving Sivin of USA.

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We will be following these two projects over the year and will keep you informed of their progress.

*Pictures from the promotional activities of Prosalud Chile*



WCD  
2009

### World Contraception Day 26 September 2009

This will be the 3rd year for this event which the ESC is again supporting. The WCD vision is: "To have a world where every pregnancy is wanted".

The 2009 motto will be "**Your Life, Your Voice: Talk Contraception**".



The target age range will be 15-19 years. A youth taskforce will be chosen to interact with this age group and there will be a contraceptive guide, leaflet and posters. These and other media events and further information are available on the 2009 version of the WCD website: [www.your-life.com](http://www.your-life.com). Every country will have an opportunity to take part. Tell you colleagues and make this an eventful day.

ESC  
Workshop

### ESC Workshop, Budapest 23-26 April 2009

We held our first ESC workshop for 19 invited participants from 11 central European countries. It proved a great success and we all learnt a lot from each other about the conditions and facilities in these countries. The programme comprised a mixture of lectures and small group discussions, and among other things, the participants practised fitting the different types of IUD and learnt the skills of critical reading. We have decided to run a similar event next year and we will be giving you more information in due course.

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*Good planning and organizing, interesting approach, updated approach, good selection of the participants, highly qualified lectures*

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*I have very positive impression about this workshop because it provides useful information for each clinician, especially for health professionals in the field of reproductive health and family planning*

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#### *A participant's view on the ESC workshop*

I have been working in the area of family planning, contraception and STDs for over 20 years. I am a member of the Bulgarian Society of Family Planning. I lecture and give tutorials and workshops on problems relating to unwanted pregnancy and the risk of STDs with students of medicine and dentistry as well as midwifery. I have known about the ESC for years and followed its activities on the Internet. I participated in the Second Congress of the ESC which was held in Athens 6-8 May 1992 and in November 1995 I attended a contraception training course at the St Louis Hospital, Paris, organised by Dr. David Serfaty.

Following the suggestion by Assoc. Prof. Blagovest Pehlivanov I sent in my application for participation in the workshop held in Budapest, 23-26 April 2009. This workshop was not only informative from the medical point of view but very important for networking with colleagues from other European countries as well as with leading ESC experts.

Despite the busy programme, time passed quickly because it was a real pleasure to hear really fascinating lecturers, all of whom deserve special mention: Prof Amy, Prof. Lazdane, Prof. Bartfai, Prof. Bitzer, Prof. Crosignani, Prof. Lech, Dr. Bigrigg. Of course I could not imagine this workshop without the subtle presence and assistance of Sarah Randall and Peter Erard.

Through our informal exchanges and while working in groups, we enriched our knowledge of specific problems and challenges we are faced with in our respective countries. Every country has its own problems to solve.

Bulgaria for example has a high abortion rate amongst women who have not given birth, with 20 per cent opting for a second abortion as well. During the discussions the Polish colleagues expressed their reluctance to perform abortions.

At the same time every woman in Bulgaria has the right to have an abortion up to 12 weeks gestation and every Bulgarian woman over the age of 35 has the right to terminate the pregnancy up to 20 weeks for medical reasons, the presumption being that the risk of having a baby with Down syndrome increases. And this happens despite the available early and late biochemical screening for Down's Syndrome, opportunities for amniocentesis and of course, for carrying out foetal morphology on ultrasound. The methods used to terminate a pregnancy at 13 – 20 w.g. are not always safe.

All this is against the background of the demographic collapse in the country due to young people emigrating, the poor economic situation and the lack of solid social policy. There is insufficient awareness in Bulgaria of the use of contraceptive methods. Studies show that only 5 per cent of Bulgarian women take oral contraceptives and use IUDs. Abortions still outnumber births.

The knowledge acquired in Budapest will help me in my future work.

I would like to offer, with the assistance of ESC, to organize a similar workshop in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, whereby we could, as hosts, enrich the practical and professional work by showing you the historical and cultural heritage of our country. I very much hope this will happen.

Best regards  
*Assoc. prof. Maria Malinova, Bulgaria*

*J.-J. Amy, G. Lazdane, M. Lech, G. Bartfai, P.G. Crosignani, J. Bitzer, S. Randall, A. Bigrigg, a participant, a group picture*



## Membership

### Membership

Membership of ESC at the end of May 2009 stands at 1159, with 201 new members and 314 affiliated members. Over 50% of 2008 members have still to rejoin. If you are one of these 50%, please renew your membership as soon as possible. Forms are available from the website.

The Society has had contact with several countries who are considering affiliation. At present the affiliated societies are:

- Societa Italiana Della Contraccezione (SIC)
- USA Family Planning Society
- Hacettepe University Nursing Dept
- Russian Society of Contraception (RSC)
- Spanish Society of Contraception (SEC)

The benefits of affiliation are a reduced membership fee whilst still maintaining full voting rights for members, as well as free copies of the journal and this newsletter.

## Other ESC Grants

### Other ESC Grants

**Article 14** is a grant to support an individual, group, institute or organisation with a project related to the aims of the ESC: for example research, audit, review, needs assessment.

**Article 18** is a grant to support a regional or local course or meeting within Europe related to the aims of the ESC.

The first round of applications for these grants closed on 30 April 2009. There were 12 applicants for article 14 and 1 for article 18. They are currently being assessed by the Internal Scientific committee, who will make recommendations and then the Board will vote during July.

**Applications will be considered every 4 months. Calls for applicants for the second period of 2009 are open until 31 August and for the third period of 2009, until 31 December.**

Forms are available from the ESC website and applicants must be current ESC members. Please consider applying.

All materials to be included in the ESC Newsletter should be submitted (electronically) to the:

ESC Central Office, Peter Erard, [esccentraloffice@contraception-esc.com](mailto:esccentraloffice@contraception-esc.com), Opalfeneweg 3, 1740 Ternat, Belgium, T. +32 2 582 08 52 - F. +32 2 582 55 15

All Newsletters are also to be found on the website of the Society: [www.contraception-esc.com](http://www.contraception-esc.com) (go to 'News')

Chief editor: Sarah Randall, United Kingdom