

13th ESC Congress



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The 13th ESC Congress, Lisbon, 28-31 May 2014 Challenges in Sexual and Reproductive Health

Dear colleagues and friends,

We are looking forward to warmly welcome you in Lisbon on the occasion of the 13th Congress of the European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health (28-31 May 2014).

We propose to present and discuss the latest scientific information and knowledge regarding contraception and reproductive health as well as to promote the right of each individual to access adequate health services and to be informed about methods of family planning.

A considerable proportion of the scientific programme will be interactive, including debates and workshops.

The full scientific programme is available at:
www.eschr.eu/events/esc-events/2014/scientificprogramme

There is no better place in Europe to discuss these topics than the beautiful city of Lisbon. Lisbon is a city that combines the charms of olden times with modern state-of-the-art facilities. Here, you can enjoy visits to historical monuments, exciting cultural events, superb traditional cuisine amidst all the comforts of a modern city.

Teresa Bombas, Congress President

Abortion law Spain



Statement of the ESC on the change of the abortion law in Spain

The European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health is profoundly concerned and worried by the proposal of the Spanish Government regarding the change of the abortion law.

This change would in our opinion endanger the sexual and reproductive health of Spanish women.

Until now Spain was known as a country with a women friendly legislation providing safe abortion and giving women the right to choose between carrying on with a pregnancy or termination of pregnancy. Historic and scientific evidence shows that restrictive legislations do not lead in the end to fewer abortions but lead to harm to women and families.

Countries with the legislation like the present one in Spain (like the Netherlands, Switzerland etc.) have the lowest abortion rate across Europe. We therefore strongly support the manifesto of the Spanish Society of Contraception on the new abortion law.

Full text of the manifesto is at: www.eschr.eu/sites/eschr.eu/files/manifesto.pdf

*Johannes Bitzer, ESC President
On behalf of the Executive Committee*



CHALLENGES IN SEXUAL AND
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
28 > 31 MAY 2014

www.eschr.eu/events/esc-events/2014

Induced abortions Poland



Induced abortions - the best kept secret of Poland

Poland belongs to those countries with the most restrictive abortion laws, and due to the Catholic Church's influence there is no effective political movement for change. The official, government statistics on induced abortions provide very incomplete data.

A few months ago, the CBOS (one of the most credible Polish centres for public opinion studies) published the results of a study entitled *Doświadczenia Aborcyjne Polek* (Induced abortions – Experience of Polish Women). It was very innovative, and the first study related to the topic of induced abortions in Poland for many years.

It has revealed that about 4 million (4.1 to 5.8 million) Polish women experienced at least one induced abortion in their lifetime. The methodology of the study does not allow estimations of the annual number of induced abortions in Poland, but the percentages of women, in the different categories, sheds some light on the issue. The data does not correspond at all with the official data of the annual number of induced abortions amongst the population of almost 40 million inhabitants - 159 induced abortions in 2002, 193 in 2004, 339 in 2006, 499 in 2008, and 641 in 2010.

Moreover in the group of catholic women (who actively participated in church life) the percentage experiencing at least one abortion in their lifetime was equal or even higher than the percentage in the group of non-catholic women. The study has also revealed the lower uptake in the younger generation: 10% of women aged 18-24 year compared to 42% aged 55-64 year.

Of course, during the lifetime of the younger women, the number of abortions may increase, but the growing popularity of modern contraceptive use in younger women may result in a decrease in the number of induced abortions.

Medard Lech, Poland

Barometer study



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IPPF Barometer study

The ESC endorsed the Barometer study on Women's access to modern contraceptive choice.

This Barometer aims to provide a policy and status overview on young women's access to modern contraceptive choice across ten EU member states: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Sweden. The selection of countries aims to ensure a meaningful and balanced geographical scope and analysis.

They are considering conducting the study in other EU countries in 2014.

Full info at: www.ippfen.org/resources/barometer-womens-access-modern-contraceptive-choice

WCD 2014



World Contraception Day, 26 September 2014

The initial meeting for this year's WCD took place in London in February with representation from all the associated NGOs: Asia Pacific Council on Contraception (APCOC); Centro Latinoamericano Salud y Mujer (CELSAM); German Foundation for World Population (DSW); International Federation of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology (FIGIJ); International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); Population Council (PC); Population Services International (PSI); Marie Stopes International (MSI); Women Deliver (WD) and ourselves.

The campaign will remain focused on educating young people around the world about sex and contraception.

The campaign's vision (to have a world where every pregnancy is wanted) and mission (to improve awareness on contraception to enable young people to make informed decisions on sexual and reproductive health) will remain unchanged, as will the 2013-15 strategy, under the umbrella theme 'It's Your Life, It's Your Future'.

Key points presented at the meeting were:

- Worldwide 41% of all pregnancies are unintended, which equates to around 80 million every year
- Research shows that greatest educational need is amongst young women. One in ten births is to a mother who is still a child herself
- A significant number of women have unprotected sex the first time they have sexual intercourse with a partner
- Abortion rates are high, especially amongst teenagers
- Women in industrialized countries are as likely to have an abortion as women in developing regions
- There are still a lot of myths around contraception

In 2014, a key aim is to maintain momentum for WCD throughout the year by leveraging communications opportunities outside of WCD itself (September 26). Perhaps your organisation can think about mentioning WCD in any events you have planned for 2014.

WCD does not just have to be 26 September – consider it all the year round.

Sarah Randall, ESC Representative

Board representation



Election procedure for Board members in 2014

The Central Office advised each country about the number of Board Member vacancies. Application forms were available on the ESC website. Closing date for applications was end of March and e-voting for each country (if applicable) will be arranged in April. Applicants and members will be informed of the results and they will be announced formally at the General Assembly in Lisbon (29 May 2014). The (paid-up) members of the following countries will be invited to vote in April: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Turkey, UK

Application forms for membership of other committees and groups are available and circulated on the website: (Executive Committee, Internal Scientific Committee, Expert Groups and Website Committee).

9th Congress of the SFC



9th Congress of the Francophone Society of Contraception, Burkina Faso

The Francophone Society of Contraception held its 9th Congress in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) on the 30th and 31st January, 2014. The congress was entitled “Contraception: current trends, access, availability and deliverance of products”, and included many topics which are relevant for the increase in modern contraception prevalence rates in African countries.

Induced abortion is legally forbidden and often socially disapproved of many of those countries, thus leading to high rates of unplanned childbearing and risky abortions. The total fertility rates are highest in Niger (7.6) and Burkina Faso (6.0). Very interesting were positive experiences with the improved technique of insertion of intrauterine devices immediately postpartum, whereby use is made of a longer ring clamp for placement. The information provided on the situation of family planning in the Francophone countries of this region of Africa was of great interest.

The congress was organised jointly with the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Burkina Faso, and attended by more than 400 participants from Burkina Faso and other French speaking countries of West Africa. There were few participants from Morocco and France, and several international organisations, like the World Health Organization, the International Consortium of Emergency Contraception, the Population Council and Marie Stopes International.

The session of the European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health included two lectures. Katarina Sedlecky spoke about contraceptive considerations in adolescents with chronic illnesses and disability, and Jean-Jacques Amy about hormonal contraception and sickle cell disease. The lectures were well received and followed by a constructive discussion.

*Jean-Jacques Amy
Katarina Sedlecky*

ESC Seminar



Anne Szarewski 1959 – 2013

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the unexpected death of Dr Anne Szarewski on Saturday 24th August 2013. Dr Anne Szarewski was a great friend of the European Society of Contraception and Reproductive Health, she was a Clinical Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Cancer Prevention at the Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine and the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care. The research studies for which Anne will be best remembered were on testing for HPV; she was also very involved in the prevention of cervical cancer and hormonal contraception. She was very popular with patients and work colleagues.

On the 8th January 2014 a Memorial Reception celebrating the life of Anne took place, organised in the historic Great Hall at St Bartholomew's Hospital of London. Over 300 participants of the Memorial Reception prized the work, the principles and character of the late Anne Szarewski. She was the only child born into a Polish family living in London, she spoke Polish very well but regrettably she was too busy to travel to Poland, though it was always her plan to do so, but her time unexpectedly was over when she only reached 53 years. We should always keep her in our memory as a very friendly and smiling person.

Medard Lech, Poland

ESC Seminar



ESC Seminar, Israel

The Seminar will take place in Tel Aviv in autumn 2015. The title of this seminar will be: Removing medical, social, cultural and religious barriers to effective and safe contraception.

Tel Aviv, often called "the city that never stops," was the first modern Jewish city built in Israel, and is the country's economic and cultural centre. It is a lively, active city with entertainment and culture. Situated on a 14-kilometer-long strip on the Mediterranean sea coast, Tel Aviv extends between the Yarkon River to the north and the Ayalon River to the east.

It began its history in Jaffa (Yafo) - the ancient 3,000-year-old adjoining city that lies to its southwest. The current Old City of Jaffa was built during the Ottoman Empire and its stone houses and narrow alleyways now house the picturesque artists' quarter. Among the main attractions of Old Jaffa are Gan HaPisga - the Summit Garden with its restaurants, galleries, shops with Judaica, and a unique atmosphere, the seaside promenade and walls of the old city, the visitors' centre in the old courtyard, and the fishing port.

Projects / Courses



Project or course grants

The ESC provides funding to support a project or course within Europe.

- The available budget for applications received between 1 January and 30 June 2014 is 35,000 euro.
- Deadline for this application period: 30 June 2014.
- Info and application forms: www.eschr.eu/education/grants

A session dedicated to some ESC Granted Projects is scheduled during the 13th ESC Congress

- Contraceptive practice and use of women requesting surgical termination of pregnancy in Latvia - Ilze Viberga (Latvia)
- Emergency contraception: a guideline for service provision in Europe - Anne Webb (UK)
- Routine follow-up versus self-assessment of complete abortion following medical abortion, effect on its success and acceptability: a randomized controlled trial - Kristina Gemzell Danielsson (Sweden)
- The sexual and reproductive health research in Latvia - Iveta Kelle (Latvia)

All materials to be included in the ESC Newsletter should be submitted (electronically) to: Nancy Habils, newsletter@eschr.eu
ESC Central Office, Orga-Med Congress Office, Opalfeneweg 3, 1740 Ternat, Belgium, T. +32 2 582 08 52.

All Newsletters are also to be found on the website of the Society: www.eschr.eu/publications/newsletter

Chief editor: Katarina Sedlecky, Serbia