

2023 Report of the activities of the Working Group 'Pathology in favour of developing countries'

By the end of 2023, this Working Group (WG) counts 67 members, many of which coming from underprivileged countries. A slight increase in the number of members has been observed (+8) with respect to 2022, indicating some interest in this working group, high engagement of members, most actively contributing to shaping the activities of the WG with their suggestions and contributions.

In 2023 the WG organised and delivered its first webinar '*Pre-analytical steps: challenges and impact on the diagnostic outcome*', with speakers from the Netherlands, India and Italy. There were more than 600 participants registered and a second webinar has already been approved by ESP and hopefully it will be offered early 2024.

The most significant activity of the WG in 2023 was the organisation of two joint sessions and two poster sessions at the 35th ECP held in Dublin, from the 9th to the 13th of September.

The first was the short course '**Molecular pathology at low cost: good practice and pitfalls**', jointly organised with the 'Molecular Pathology' WG, which was held on the 13th of September. Speakers from Kenya (Prof shaheen Sayed), Romania (Prof Emilian Gheorhe Olteanu), Tunisia (Prof Karima Mrad) and the Netherland (Prof Ed Schuurin) shared their experience on how to effectively make molecular diagnosis with limited resources. The second joint session, '**Pathogen-driven haematological malignancies**', organised with the 'Infectious diseases' WG and the Haematopathology affiliated society, was held on the 13th of September. Speakers from Kenya (Prof Shaheen Sayed), Italy (Prof Pier Paolo Piccaluga), Pakistan (Prof Shahid Pervez) and Germany (Prof Leticia Quintanilla-Martinez) presenting rare haematological malignancy cases driven by different pathogens. Both sessions were followed by lively Q&A sessions with engaging questions from the audience and participants joining online.

At the ECP, this WG also contributed with two poster session, one of which jointly organised with the Cardiovascular pathology, Digital and computational pathology and Electron microscopy WGs, held on the 12th and the 13th of September.

- Regarding future activities, the WG has received the approval for four joint sessions for the 36th ECP, to be held in Florence in September 2024:
- 1) Joint session Ophthalmic Pathology and Pathology in Favour of Developing Countries WGs (Short course). Title: An eye out for developing countries
- 2) Joint session between the Gynecological Pathology and Pathology in favour of developing countries WGs (Joint symposium). Title: Molecular understanding of tropical diseases as a tool to improve diagnosis and treatment
- 3) Joint session between the Pulmonary pathology and Pathology in favour of developing countries WGs (Videomicroscopy session). Title: Diagnosing lung pathology on HE and cytological smears – how far can you get, and where are the limits?
- 4) Joint session between the History of Pathology and the Pathology in favour of developing countries WGs (Joint symposium). Title: The Rosetta stones of pathology

A preliminary programme has been submitted at the end of 2023, and we are working to recruit speakers from different geographic locations to share their experiences.

Also in preparation, we aim at offering a webinar in 2024, which will focus on the pre-analytical phases, illustrating challenges and pitfalls, and at which extent they can impact on the overall diagnostic process.

During the business meeting, an election for Chair/co-Chair was carried out. Giulia De Falco was re-elected Chair and Maurizio Martini was elected co-Chair of the WG. The aim for 2024 is to work even more closely with all WG members, and hopefully to attract new ones, as well as to reinforce collaborations with other WGs and actively contribute to activities of ESP.

Giulia De Falco, Chair of the WG, 4.01.2024