



BRACHYTHERAPY

2022 GEC-ESTRO Workshop

“Improving Brachytherapy Together”

1-2 December 2022 | Nice, France

Introduction by the Chair

The annual congress that ran during 1-2 December was one of the best Groupe Européen de Curiethérapie-European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (GEC-ESTRO) meetings ever! This was one of the most attended annual meetings, with about 200 registrations, great industry support and an attractive, extensive programme. It was the first on-site congress after two years of online meetings in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that was evident at every corner. Bright faces, inspiring discussions from early morning until late at night and excellent presentations. There were so many highlights, I can't begin to list them, out of fear of missing something amazing!

The congress started early on 1 December with the sessions of working groups – gynaecological, prostate, breast, head & neck, skin and gastrointestinal cancers, health economics in radiation oncology – where we experienced many hands-on discussions and brainstorming, and we learned about future projects. The discussions in GEC-ESTRO working groups are characterised by the fact that members from every corner of Europe come to speak and discuss, and every voice is heard, every voice counts. All ideas are examined from all angles and discussed critically and in an atmosphere of friendship. We enjoyed it very much!

During the plenary session held on the evening of the 1st of December we realised very quickly that artificial intelligence (AI) would be a major influence on our lives as physicians and radiation oncologists – in other words, as specialists in brachytherapy. AI will change the way in which brachytherapy will be delivered. If we do not adapt in the near future to how our specialty is delivered, we run the risk of losing it to those who do. As brachytherapists, since we use our hands to effect cures, we may be the key to saving the specialty as we have skills that may not be replaced by AI, especially if we maintain all our skills and empathy as we guide patients through their course of cancer care.

On the second day, we enjoyed lectures in different tracks (gastrointestinal, gynaecological, prostate, skin and head & neck cancers, physics, radiotherapy and paediatrics) and we learned a lot about the current state of the art and future developments in brachytherapy for different indications. Finally, at the end of the GEC-ESTRO meeting, we heard about and discussed another aspect of brachytherapy that is indispensable for the future of interventional radiation therapy: how to shape the future of the next generation of brachytherapy specialists, what specific aspects of brachytherapy training are required for physicians, medical physicists and radiotherapists and how to improve it.

In summary, all the developments that were presented during the 2022 GEC-ESTRO annual meeting in Nice, France, are challenges and guides for the future of interventional radiation therapy all in one. The meeting demonstrated that we are united and heedful to keep brachytherapy at the forefront of radiation oncology.



Vratislav Strnad

Chair of the GEC-ESTRO Workshop
Chair of the GEC-ESTRO Committee



Meeting room



Exhibition



From left to right: Frank-André Siebert, Chair-Elect of the GEC-ESTRO committee, Vtratislav Strnad and Ina Jurgenliemk-Schulz, Past-chair of the GEC-ESTRO committee

