

### Report from the 1<sup>st</sup> International Congress of the Euro-Asian Association of Dermatovenereologists, 25–26 March 2011, Kiev, Ukraine

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The Euro-Asian Association of Dermatovenereologists arranged their first international congress which attracted participants from 32 countries. Gunnar Nyman was one of the participants and found it interesting and well worth attending and recommend you all to join the 2<sup>nd</sup> congress in Moscow next year.

The 1<sup>st</sup> International Congress of the Euro-Asian Association of Dermatovenereologists (EAAD) took place in Kiev on March 25–26, 2011. This was the largest dermatology congress to be held in Ukraine so far, and the first international one.

EAAD is a new association, which was founded as a forum for Russian-speaking dermatovenereologists. They mainly hail from the states of the former Soviet Union, which have a combined population of about 300 million citizens and are home to more than 10,000 “derm-vens”.

This first congress took place in the Ukrainian House (the former Lenin Museum) in Kiev (Fig. 1) and attracted 854 participants from 32 countries. A bit strange to a foreigner, but there have apparently been few contacts between the ex-Soviet states until now. The historical importance of these “new” contacts was made clear from the beginning, with welcoming words from no fewer than eight representatives of different political, administrative and academic institutions, as well as a greeting broadcast from the EADV president Frank Powell in Dublin. This was followed by a folk music performance (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1. The congress was held in the Ukairainan House (the former Lenin Museum).

The congress covered all important fields of dermatology and venereology in three parallel sessions on both days, complemented by plenary lectures given by *Thomas Ruzicka* (Germany), one of the founders of EAAD (Fig. 3), who talked about eczema treatment, and *John Harper* (UK), who talked about atopic dermatitis.

There were several lectures by international speakers, among whom three were Swedes. *Magnus Bruze* talked about the importance of patch testing, a procedure practically not performed at all in Ukraine so far. *Marius Domeika*, well known in the field of STI in Eastern Europe, spoke about STI diagnosis now and in the future in this part of Europe, while *Amra Osmancevic* gave a lecture on vitamin D in psoriasis treatment during UVB therapy. This last topic was of special interest, as the Ukrainian Association of Psoriasis was a co-organiser.

Most of the speakers however, came from former Soviet states. The organisers had recognised the language barrier and provided simultaneous interpretation of all sessions between Russian and English, the two official languages of the congress. In spite of this great effort, it would certainly have been ben-



Fig. 2. Folk music-performance from the opening ceremony.



Fig. 3. The founders of the Euro-Asian Association of Dermato-venereologist (from the left): Prof Yuriy Andrashko (Ukraine), Prof Aleksandr Litus (Ukraine), Prof Nikolay Potekaev (Russia) and Prof Thomas Ruzicka (Germany).

official to understand Russian, because the interpretation was of variable quality and most of the text slides in lectures given in Russian were in Russian with Cyrillic letters. The problem with the slides was mentioned to the organisers, who will try to address it at future congresses, acknowledging that it would have been easier to follow the interpretation if one had been able to read the slides.

Some of the lectures covered topics that are not commonly addressed at other international congresses, such as the necessity to change the strategy for preventing congenital syphilis in Ukraine, the dermatological effects of low-dose radiation after Chernobyl, and skin symptoms of tuberculosis. The history of Ukrainian and Russian dermatology was also given attention.

During the closing ceremony, Dr *Ludmyla Derevyanko* (Ukraine) pointed out that there should also be a female Ukrainian colleague in the organising committee, considering the fact that a great majority of derm-vens in Ukraine are female. According to the response she received afterwards this was a popular initiative, at least among younger female participants.

Overall, I found the congress very interesting and well worth attending.

The plan is to hold an international EAAD congress every year. Next year's congress will be held in Moscow on March 21–23. I think it is interesting and important for Scandinavian col-

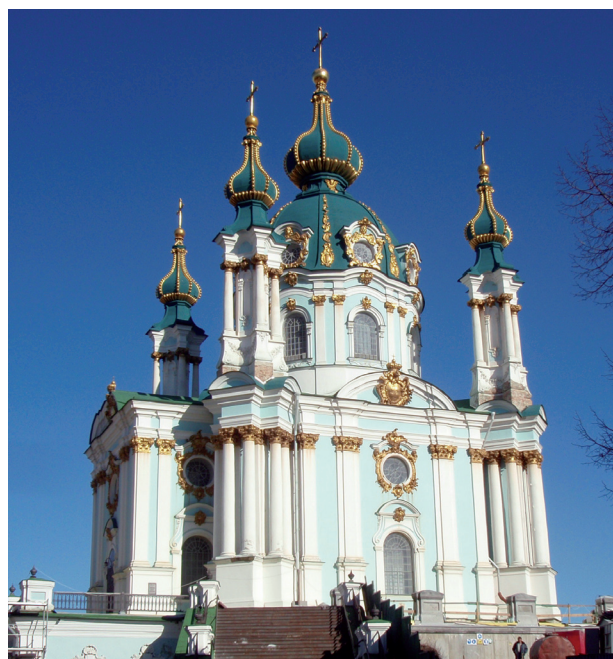


Fig. 4. St. Andrew Church; one of many very beautiful sights in Kiev.

leagues to attend, as speakers, as participants and, not least, to establish contacts and networks with our colleagues from the east. I also consider it important that English-speaking colleagues attend in order that there is an incentive to continue and enhance the interpretation and avoid the risk of EADD being an association with congresses just for Russian-speaking persons, excluding instead of including others.

As the Baltic states have already achieved with their successful international BADV Congresses, most recently in Vilnius and Tartu and with a forthcoming EADV Congress set to be held in Riga in 2013, I am sure that Ukraine will also take its rightful place in European dermato-venereology. During the time of the Congress there was also a press conference because of the registration by the Ukrainian authorities of the International non-governmental organization “Dermatologists for children” with participation of the SSDV Foundation for International Dermato-Venereology.

Kiev will apply for an EADV Spring Congress. I hope they get it and that many of you will go there to get to know this lovely city and its friendly people.