



## Meeting Report: The 15<sup>th</sup> ESO Stroke Summer School 2011 in Heidelberg and Mannheim

Kristina Szabo<sup>1</sup>, Rolf Kern<sup>1</sup>, Christoph Lichy<sup>2</sup>, Roland Veltkamp<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Neurology, Universitätsklinikum Mannheim, University of Heidelberg, Mannheim, Germany

<sup>2</sup>Department of Neurology, University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany

### Background

The ESO Stroke Summer School is an annual educational course initiated by the European Stroke Initiative in 1997, where well-known experts in the field of stroke from all over Europe speak about and discuss up-to-date selected topics with young stroke physicians. The Summer School is organized each year by a different team of stroke physicians in a European city, and is supported and endorsed by the ESO. This year's 15th ESO Stroke Summer School took place between July 24 and 30, 2011, and for the second time since 1998, it was hosted by the two Neurology departments of the University of Heidelberg, in Mannheim and in Heidelberg. Both departments of the two medical faculties and their chairmen Professor Werner Hacke (Heidelberg) and Professor Michael Hennerici (Mannheim) have a long tradition of stroke research and treatment. The course coincided with the celebration of the 625<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University of Heidelberg, the oldest University in Germany. The complete program of the Summer School can be found on the summer school website [www.stroke-summer-school-2011.com](http://www.stroke-summer-school-2011.com).

### Participants

The Local Organizing Committee chose 40 participants from over 60 applications from 24 countries. The participants came from 23 countries: 37 from Europe (Austria 1; Belgium 1; Bosnia and Herzegovina 1, Czech Republic 1, Estonia 1, France 3, Germany 2, Greece 1, Hungary 1, Italy 1, Republic of Macedonia 1, Portugal 4, Romania 2, Russia 3, Slovakia 1, Sweden 1, Switzerland 1, Netherlands 1, United Kingdom 6, Ukraine 1), and 3 from non-European countries (India 1, Japan 1, United States 1). As the participants were expected to contribute actively to the course, the Local Organizing Committee asked them to prepare a short presentation about an interesting stroke case from their department.

## Program

The participants arrived on Sunday afternoon and were invited to a welcome reception starting with a “rocking kick-off lecture” by Werner Hacke about the recent developments of acute stroke therapy accompanied by heavy metal music. Later we had dinner at the Restaurant *Kulturbrauerei* in the historical centre of Heidelberg. A part of the course itself was held at the *IWH (Internationales Wissenschaftsforum Heidelberg)* in Heidelberg. The IWH is a center for scholarly exchange in all areas of science and academic research which opened on the occasion of the 600th anniversary of the Ruprecht-Karls-University in Heidelberg. The other part took place at the *Patientenhaus Mannheim* on the Campus of the Universitätsklinikum Mannheim. During the course, a complementary bus transfer was arranged driving the participants to the different events. The morning program consisted of 40 lectures on a wide range of topics concerning stroke medicine. Neurologists, neuroradiologists, neurosurgeons, vascular surgeons, rehabilitation specialists and cardiologists from 10 European countries discussed their views with the participants. Main topics were the interdisciplinary treatment of acute ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke, stroke prevention and rehabilitation. Many of the lectures were taped and made available for viewing on the ESO Virtual University website ([www.stroke-university.com](http://www.stroke-university.com)). During the afternoons, workshops offered the opportunity for hands-on experience with various neurovascular techniques, the opportunity to visit the Stroke Unit, the Neurological Intensive Care Unit, the Doppler laboratory and the MRI department. On Thursday afternoon, the group was taken to the *Kliniken Schmieder* nearby Heidelberg, a large Neurological Rehabilitation Clinic. A particular highlight in two afternoon sessions was the carefully prepared challenging case presentations by the participants. Three of these were awarded for the excellent presentations: Dr. Paolo Costa (Brescia, Italy), Dr. Olena Fartushna (Kiev, Ukraine), and Dr. Ana Patricia Antunes (Lisbon, Portugal).

The traditional ESO Special Symposium during the Summer School was held on Wednesday evening in the *Alte Aula* of the Heidelberg University, a representative hall from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The symposium was framed by piano music (played by Min-Ae Kim) from W.A. Mozart and R. Schumann who both spent some time of their life in Mannheim or Heidelberg. Didier Leys, Michael Brainin, and Kennedy Lees gave a lucid overview on the challenges that stroke poses in aging populations. Amongst others, the efforts undertaken to raise the awareness of the global burden of stroke by the first United Nations high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases in New York were emphasized. The meeting was held to address the prevention and control of worldwide diseases, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes mellitus, and chronic pulmonary disease, accounting for 36 million of the 57 million deaths in 2008.

Beyond the hard work in the lecture rooms and workshops, the participants were offered a social program to get to know each other and to get an impression of the local scenery. Visits to the famous Roman style cathedral in Speyer (UNESCO site) and to the baroque chateau in Schwetzingen were part of the program. The last evening in a Palatine vineyard added to the personal flavour of the week.

The closing session of this year's summer school was a special symposium on Saturday morning in Mannheim. Michael Hennerici gave his answer to Werner Hacke's musical introduction by speaking about the tragic effects of stroke on the lives and works of famous musicians and painters framed with musical excerpts from work of G.F. Händel, J. Haydn and

M. Reger, Jan van Gijn and Michael Karenberg gave delightful insights to the history of stroke and neurological eponyms. The summer school was concluded by Laszlo Csiba, the host of ESO Stroke Summer School in 2012, who presented the beauty and creativity of Debrecen and Hungary.

### **Evaluation**

The participants were asked to fill out an anonymous non-structured questionnaire to evaluate the scientific content and the organisation of the summer school. Among the frequently mentioned positively ranked aspects of the course were the educational and scientific contents of the program, the workshops and case presentations, as well as the opportunity to meet renowned scientists and others working in the field of stroke. Similar to the previous courses, the attendees' recommendations for future summer schools are to offer more time for the individual presentations of the participants, to have more interactive courses and to provide more free time and longer breaks. (But after all, it isn't called school for nothing!)

### **Acknowledgements**

The local organizers were glad to have had the opportunity to arrange the 15th ESO Stroke Summer School at our institutions. We would like to thank the speakers, who gave their lectures enthusiastically and free of charge, for their tremendous efforts and academic excellence. We were also delighted by the very active and cheerful group of participants who made this summer school a memorable event. Financial support was granted by the ESO executive board, and by the following sponsors: Boehringer-Ingelheim, Bayer Healthcare, Lundbeck, EV3 and SYGNIS. Logistic support was given by the University of Heidelberg and the University Medical Centre Mannheim.



## Figures

Fig. 1. Participants of the 15<sup>th</sup> ESO Stroke Summer School

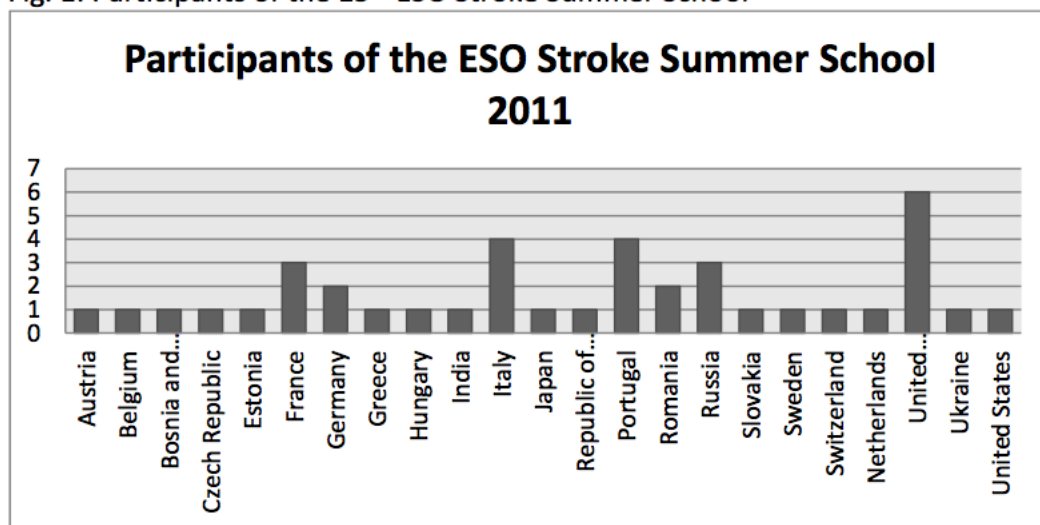


Fig. 2. Group photo of the 15<sup>th</sup> ESO Stroke Summer School at the IWH in Heidelberg

