



What to expect from the ERS International Congress 2023

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This article provides an overview of the reasons to attend the 2023 ERS Congress, including a summary of the ECM session and the NEXT programme. <https://bit.ly/46ghP4g>

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For the second consecutive year, the European Respiratory Society (ERS) International Congress will be held in a hybrid format, in Milan, Italy and online, from 9 September to 13 September 2023. This year, the Congress will return to a 5-day programme covering the latest advances in science and clinical practice across the full range of respiratory topics. Thousands of researchers and health professionals will have the opportunity to share their knowledge and work at the world’s largest respiratory meeting. In this article, we provide a glimpse of the ERS Congress 2023 including a summary of the Early Career Member (ECM) session, an overview of the Networking EXcellence Training (NEXT) programme, and the “top picks” from the programme selected by the members of the International Congress Programme Committee (ICPC). The full programme is available at: <https://www.ersnet.org/congress-and-events/congress/programme/>.

Overview of the 2023 ERS Congress programme

The ERS will once again run an interactive hybrid Congress. There will be postgraduate courses onsite on Saturday, as well as the primary care, patient day, and the Italian sessions. The Chinese, Spanish/Portuguese and French language sessions will feature in the ERS TV studio on Saturday.

From Sunday to Tuesday, there will be seven rooms running live streamed scientific sessions covering the most important topics in respiratory medicine. In addition, there will be five rooms running additional oral presentations, up to 60 poster sessions per day, the ERS TV studio running live programmes and two skills workshop rooms hosting additional paid hands-on sessions.



Besides your favourite sessions such as Lungs on fire, Guidelines, Hot topics and State of the art, in 2023, there will be dedicated networking programme on Wednesday morning with the following sessions included as part of your Congress registration:

- How can the International Respiratory Coalition help tackle pressures on respiratory healthcare systems?
- ERS Women's networking event
- How to build a successful, sustainable, international research network?
- Excellence in rare diseases care and research: the ERN-Lung initiative
- Building support for clean air policies: empowering the respiratory community to advocate for clean air locally, nationally and internationally
- How to reduce the tobacco and e-cigarette epidemic in youth

Throughout the Congress centre, delegates will find zones for networking and charging their devices, an overflow area to watch sessions in case of high demand, and the popular clinical skills zone which allows delegates to experiment with virtual reality and simulators.

Early career member session

The ECM session aims to bring together respiratory professionals to discuss key aspects for successful career development. This session is organised by the Early Career Member Committee (ECMC) and will take place on 11 September (15:45–17:00 h, CEST). The topics were selected based on the ERS priority topics for 2023 and ECM's needs identified in previous sessions.

This year, the session will start with a talk about the importance of environmental awareness in respiratory medicine, given by Lucilla Piccari (Hospital del Mar, Barcelona, Spain). The aim of this talk is to help in making our scientific and clinical practice more environmentally conscious. Leticia Kawano-Dourado (HCOR Research Institute, São Paulo, Brazil) will then explain how to communicate your research to the public and how to use the media and social media to disseminate knowledge. The third presentation will focus on how ERS activities can help ECMs shape their career. Niki Ubags (Lausanne University, Lausanne, Switzerland), former ECMC chair, will identify the different opportunities available for ECMs within the ERS and how participating in these activities can help boost your career in the respiratory field. Some of these activities were also described in a previous Early career forum article in *Breathe* [1], along with testimonials from ECMs on the impact that being part of ERS activities can have on professional careers [2]. Finally, the 2023 ECM awardee will give the Mina Gaga lecture, hoping to inspire other ECMs to apply for the award next year. The current chair and co-chair of the ECMC, Sara Cuevas Ocaña and Thomas Gille, will chair the session and are looking forward to seeing you there!

Networking EXcellence Training programme

The second edition of the NEXT programme will take place on 9 September (by invitation only). This programme is directed at promising early-career clinicians, researchers and allied health professionals who will present their work at the ERS Congress. The programme includes support prior to the ERS Congress and a 1-day training session for participants to enhance their professional career. It also offers participants the opportunity to interact with peers from different fields and strengthen their international network. More information about the NEXT programme is provided in a previous article of the Early career forum article, together with testimonials from participants of the first edition [3].

This year, the NEXT training session will begin with a welcome introduction to participants from the chair and co-chair of the ECMC. The first sessions of the day will focus on training in communication skills, specifically how to prepare a scientific presentation and how to chair scientific sessions. These sessions will include short lectures and practical activities where participants will be able to practice their presentations for the ERS Congress and receive feedback. These activities will be led by UbiK media (Barcelona, Spain), a company specialising in professional communication of scientific research and technical content. The four best speakers will be invited to present their work during the Science slam session, followed by an audience vote to select the winning presenter. This session will take place on 12 September 15:45–17:00 h, CEST.

After the morning activities, participants will be invited for a mentoring lunch where they will be able to interact with their peers, ECMC members and the ERS leadership team.

The afternoon will start with a keynote lecture given by James Chalmers (University of Dundee, Dundee, UK) on manuscript writing and publishing, followed by a breakout session. The next session will be a panel

discussion on time management and work–life balance, led by Thomas Gille and Joana Cruz. This discussion will include Sejal Saglani (Imperial College of London, London, UK) and Sara Cuevas Ocaña as panellists, so make sure you get your questions ready for session. This will be followed by a lecture on leadership in respiratory medicine given by Mina Gaga (a former President of the ERS and Ministry of Health in Greece). The NEXT programme will end with key take-home messages from the ECMC chair and co-chair and a joint dinner with the NEXT participants.

“Top picks” from the programme selected by the ICPC

Members of the ICPC share their “top picks” from the Milan programme to help you select your agenda.

Prof. Nicolas Roche (Science Council Chair)

The 2023 ERS Congress will represent a unique opportunity to participate in Hot topics sessions covering a great variety of areas of respiratory medicine including digital solutions, new modalities of respiratory support in acute and chronic respiratory care, multi-omics, preconception origins of respiratory diseases, disparities, and impact of deprivation. Personalised care, digital medicine and climate change will feature at the top of the avenues explored. This year, the Guidelines sessions will deal with palliative care (outside cancer), severe community-acquired pneumonia, ICS/formoterol on demand, and pneumothorax. There will also be journal sessions, of course from the *European Respiratory Journal*, but also with *JAMA*, *New England Journal of Medicine* and *The Lancet*. They will provide summaries and analyses of top-ranking publications in pulmonary medicine.

Prof. Richard Costello (Education Council Chair)

The 2023 ERS Congress represents an opportunity for specialists from across Europe to meet, share ideas and hear the latest information on the ever-changing field of respiratory medicine. This is so important because sharing knowledge and experiences improves the quality of healthcare and positively impacts patient care. In keeping with the focus of the city of Milan’s strategy, the theme of the Congress is how to promote better lung health and promote a green and sustainable environment. There are several sessions which will deal with this topic, informing and inspiring critical action. As always, there will be summaries of the latest journal articles, opportunities for you to see experienced clinicians show critical thinking as they dissect aspects of clinically challenging cases in the Lungs on fire sessions, symposia on aspects of how research is leading to personalised care, and critical analysis of the top-ranking publications in pulmonary medicine.

Prof. Maria Bonsignore and Prof. Sergio Harari (Milan Congress Chairs)

The 2023 ERS Congress has a special focus on the environment and climate change, and this theme will be represented during many symposia in the Milan programme. Other good reasons to attend the Congress include a full-sized meeting as in the past, with opportunities to update yourself on the recent advances in all fields of respiratory medicine and to network, which is especially relevant for young researchers. Saturday will re-establish the tradition of face-to-face postgraduate courses, after so many years of online courses. On the final day (Wednesday 13 September), the ERS Congress will open new perspectives including open sessions with Milan citizens, special interest group meetings, and further networking opportunities. We have tried hard to put together the best and largest respiratory medicine Congress in the world and hope you will join us in Milan in September 2023.

Prof. Silke Meiners (conference and research seminars director)

On Sunday morning (10 September 08:30 h, CEST), I would recommend attending the symposium “War, climate change, migration, and respiratory infections”, which I find a very important and timely topic. On the same day at 13:45 h, the symposium “Novel concepts for understanding mechanisms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease initiation and progression” will present a truly translational session covering COPD-related pathomechanisms and potential therapeutic targets such as: novel immune mechanisms of COPD initiation and progression; approaches to lung regeneration; targeting metabolic alterations in COPD; and translation of resilience and pathogenesis to personalised therapy for COPD. I would also recommend the symposium on “Novel aspects of T-helper 17 cells in lung diseases”, which will take place on Sunday at 15:30 h and will include novel insights on Th17 function in COVID-19, tuberculosis, and obstructive airway diseases.

On Monday, don’t miss the Hot topic session at 8:30 h on “What did you always want to know about omics analyses for clinical practice?”. And, of course, at 15:30 h there is the Lung Science Conference session that presents the highlights of this year’s Lung Science Conference on “Post-viral lung diseases: from basic immunology to clinical phenotypes and therapy”.

On Tuesday at 11:45 h, there will be the Scientific year in review that provides an overview of basic and translational scientific highlights and major achievements in the respiratory field within the past year, focusing on abnormal lung tissue damage and repair. On the same day at 15:30 h, the Journal session “The best of the European Respiratory Journal” is definitely a must to attend. If you are an ERS member, don’t forget to attend the Assembly meetings on Tuesday (starting at 17:15 h).

Prof. Pierantonio Laveneziana (Educational Programmes Director)

I am looking forward to the sessions on clinical physiology, such as the Skills Workshops on “Interpretation of cardiopulmonary exercise tests: Tips and pitfalls in cardiopulmonary exercise testing assessment”, and the symposia on “Better outcomes for adults with chronic breathlessness: earlier diagnosis and management” and “The ‘silent zone’ is heard: latest insights and updates in small airways disease in asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease”. I’m also looking forward to the “Lungs on fire” sessions, which always provide us with very rich discussions around difficult and didactic clinical cases in various areas of respiratory medicine. Clinical physiology is the top pick I invite you to select in your personalised agenda. Finally, the postgraduate courses are back at the 2023 Congress, do not forget the one on “Advanced cardiopulmonary exercise testing: CPET in health and cardio-respiratory disease”. You are going to love it!

Prof. Hilary Pinnock (Education Council Chair – elect)

There is much of interest in this year’s Congress programme. It is worth arriving in Milan for the Saturday programme and joining the primary care sessions arranged by the Primary Care Group. This year there is a focus on the impact of smoking and poor air quality on respiratory health. The speakers will discuss the role of individual clinicians in treating tobacco addiction, the public health challenge of reducing exposure to biomass – and the final talk on vaping as a strategy to support quit attempts should raise some interesting questions. It will also be worth staying right through to the Wednesday when an interesting and slightly different programme is being prepared with opportunities to catch up on what is happening in the ERS and enjoy networking. In between Saturday and Wednesday, there will be all the favourite symposia, hot topics, and debates – and one of my personal favourites: the poster sessions which are such a good place to meet like-minded colleagues.

Prof. Stylianos Loukides (Educational Programmes Director – elect)

The first day of the forthcoming ERS Congress will focus on postgraduate courses where various topics will be addressed. A broad spectrum of topics and target audiences will drive the above postgraduate courses. Considering the different topics, the audience will gain an advanced knowledge focusing on clinical matters, practical considerations and specific skills. Summarising the topics, we must mention the ultrasound skills beyond the lung and pleura, and the early detection of lung function impairment beyond traditional spirometry involving an artificial intelligence approach. Furthermore, a masterclass in asthma and COPD, a practical approach to pulmonary embolism, a multidisciplinary approach for interstitial lung diseases, topics related to interventional procedures in the paediatric population, and mediastinal staging, as well as an overview of lung ageing focusing on physiological alterations and molecular mechanisms in both normal and age-related diseases will be presented. Primary care will have a central role in the above, either in the direction of disease assessment and monitoring and/or in preventing both tobacco addiction and environmental changes.

Final remarks

The 2023 ERS Congress programme will be full of outstanding scientific sessions and enriching resources and opportunities for ECMs to enhance their professional career. This article provides important information for attendees to plan their Congress in advance and develop a personalised agenda. We hope to meet you at the ERS Congress!

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