ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC REPORT 2001 - 2002
ESC WORKING GROUP ON PATHOGENESIS OF ATHEROSCLEROSIS (#23)

The objectives of the Working Group on the Pathogenesis of Atherosclerosis is to advance understanding about the pathogenesis of atherosclerosis and to find out new treatments regarding atherosclerosis and atherosclerosis-related diseases.

After Stockholm meeting, chairmanship of the WG 23 was transferred to Prof. Seppo Ylä-Herttuala. Discussions about the nature of WG 23 have continued since even though we represent a very fundamental area of research regarding cardiovascular diseases, our Working Group has remained quite small and dominated by basic science. It has been debated whether separate vascular biology meeting better fulfil our goals and advance vascular biology and basic atheroslerosis research. On the other hand, ESC can provide excellent meeting logistics and framework for the basic science-oriented symposia. One major problem still is that most of the basic scientists don't look ESC Annual Meeting as a meeting of choice since program is heavily dominated by clinical cardiology and funds required for travelling are used for other smaller meetings. In this sense, WG 23 has been involved in the organization of the Second European Vascular Biology Meeting in Ulm in September 2001. The meeting was able to attract an exciting program but September 11 tragedy reduced the number of participants. However, it was decided in Ulm that a third meeting will be organized in two years time as a joint venture of German Cardiac Society and interested Working Groups from ESC. To improve the visibility of basic science in ESC meeting it is especially noteworthy that in Berlin meeting a Basic Science Track has been organized by Working Groups where a program consisting of basic science runs throughout the Berlin meeting so that participants representing mainly basic science can enjoy a full program of fundamental biology and pathology of cardiovascular diseases throughout the meeting (see attached newsletter).

In Berlin meeting WG 23 has been involved in the organization of the following sessions:

	Meeting location	Meeting date
Inflammation and Atherosclerotic Plaque Rupture	11.00, Paris	Sept 1
Microembolization from Atherothrombosis, Basic Mechanisms and Clinical Relevance	14.00, Brussels	Sept 1
The Cardiologist as DNA Detective in Daily Clinical Practice	8.30, Madrid	Sept 3
New Technologies Applied to Basic Cardiology: Techniques, Possibilities and Limitations	11.00, Madrid	Sept 3
Signal Transduction as a Key to Understand Vascular Function	8.30, Rome	Sept 4

ESC 2003 meeting will be held in Vienna and proposals for the scientific sessions need to be sent to the Chairman by the end of September 2002. It would be very important that the proposals will be sent with accurate address information to Chairman at least one week before the deadline since formatting the proposals to the forms required by ESC will take some time.

Current nucleus members are as follows: Seppo Ylä-Herttuala, Chairman, Johannes Waltenberger, Co-Chairman, Andrew Newby, Andrew Baker, Cathy Shanahan, Keith Channon, Lale Tokgozoglu, George Pasterkamp, Sarah George and Wouter Jukema. There have been several fruitful interactions between the members of the Working Group during the last year.

Seppo Ylä-Herttuala, MD, PhD, FESC
Chairman, Working Group on Pathogenesis of Atherosclerosis

24th ESC Congress Berlin August 31st to September 4th 2002

Dear Colleagues,

The annual ESC meeting in Berlin will be an even more attractive than usual event for both clinicians and basic scientists involved in Atherosclerosis Research. As usual we were highly successful in proposing topics for the prearranged symposia and thanks is due to the members of the Nucleus and other working group members who made suggestions. Some of these have been incorporated into a specially focused Basic Science Track, details of which are given in the next paragraph. I would like to encourage you especially to bring along your junior colleagues to this meeting as it will provide an intensive experience as well as an overview of more general areas if they wish to attend other sessions.

Basic Science Track

The quality of basic science prearranged sessions at the ESC congresses has been rising progressively. However, the attendance by basic scientists has not increased in proportion, certainly not to the levels at the American Heart Association. Advertising widely to basic scientists well before the abstract deadline, production of integrated programmes that occupy the whole congress and giving basic scientists greater 'ownership' of the selection process could dramatically alter this situation.

The Basic Science Track at the Berlin ESC congress is an initiative designed to achieve these objectives. Together with Committee Members of the ISHR European Section, European Atherosclerosis Society and European Vascular Biology Association 10 related sessions have been organized on "Plasticity and remodelling in the heart and blood vessels". **There will also be two specially selected abstract sessions staged in the same room and each of the abstract presenters will receive a travel grant to cover the full cost of attendance.**

Some of the world's leading experts will address topics that fall into the following areas: The Molecular and Cellular Basis of Myocardial Remodelling, Stem Cell Research, Endothelial Cell Mediators and Signaling, Pathogenesis and Treatment of Unstable Atherosclerosis and Reverse Cholesterol Transport. For more details see the table. About equal numbers of sessions were suggested by Working Groups of the ESC and by members of the basic science societies. While the Basic Science Track will provide a dramatic new focus, at least as many other basic science sessions will also take place, ensuring that there is still something of high quality for all cardiovascular researchers at this ESC congress (see further below).

Session title	Organisers
1. Cell to cell contacts in cardiovascular remodelling	E Dejana (Milan) SJ George (Bristol)
2. Cellular basis of myocardial remodelling	C Ceconi (Brescia)
3. Myocardial and vascular interstitial matrix in congestive heart failure; does it matter?	JJ Mercadier (Paris) M Komajda (Paris)
4. Stem cells in vascular biology; pathophysiological role and therapeutic potential	S Dimmeler (Frankfurt) VM van Hinsbergh (Leiden)

5. Novel approaches to modulate unstable atheroma	R DeCaterina (Pisa) N Marx (Ulm)

Session title	Organisers
6. Inflammation and atherosclerotic plaque rupture	A Tedgui (Paris) G Hansson (Stockholm)
7. Regulation of high density lipoprotein and reverse cholesterol transport	B Nordestgaard (Herlev) E Hurt-Camejo (Gothenburg)
8. Signalling pathways in left ventricular remodelling	C Ceconi (Brescia) JJ Mercadier (Paris)
9. Signal transduction as a key to understand vascular function	S Yla-Herttuala (Kuopio) J Pearson (London)
10. Endothelium-derived relaxant factors; controversies and concensus	TF Lüscher (Zürich) R Busse (Frankfurt)

I am looking forward to seeing you in Berlin.

Seppo Ylä-Herttuala, MD, PhD, FESC
Chairman, Working Group on Pathogenesis of Atherosclerosis

Other Vascular Biology sessions

Session title	Organiser
1. Vascular gene therapy – croughing tiger or hidden dragon?	C Ceconi (Brescia)
2. Smooth muscle cell proliferation; an old enemy finally vanquished?	AC Newby (Bristol)
3. DNA microarrays of atherosclerotic tissues - identity of new target genes	S Yla-Herttuala (Kuopio)
4. Thrombosis and inflammation in acute coronary syndromes – which comes first?	R DeCaterina (Pisa)
5. Microembolisation during atherothrombosis; basic mechanisms and pathological significance	R DeCaterina (Pisa)

Other Myocardial Biology sessions

Session title	Organiser
1. New insights into counter-regulatory signalling mechanisms in myocardium	D Garcia-Dorado (Barcelona)
2. Cardiac heterogeneity: strategy for survival	G Heusch (Essen)
3. Myocardial death in coronary heart failure	P Barton (Harefield)
4. Potential of stem cells for differentiation into cardiac myocytes	H Eppenberger (Zürich)
5. Adenosine and the heart; new insights from molecular biology	AC Newby (Bristol)
6. Electrical remodelling during ventricular pacing	K Sipido (Leuven)
7. Downregulation of delayed potassium channels in heart failure	K Sipido (Leuven)
8. New insights into reperfusion injury	G Ambrosio (Perugia)
9. Alpha-adrenergic coronary vasoconstriction in man	G Heusch (Essen)