

Patterns of the abstracts submitted and accepted at the Congresses of ERA-EDTA Madrid (1999) and ERA-EDTA and EKRA Nice (2000)

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Introduction

The Nice congress was the first combined ERA-EDTA and European Kidney Research Association (EKRA) Congress. As expected, we have recorded an increase in both the amount and the quality of the scientific work. The objective of this editorial is to describe the patterns of the abstracts submitted to the Nice congress in the year 2000, and to compare them with the patterns of the ERA-EDTA congress in Madrid, the year before.

Nice Congress (2000)

The number of abstracts submitted to the ERA-EDTA Congresses has continued to increase (mean increase 64 abstracts per year) (Figure 1). As expected, the largest number of abstracts was devoted to Dialysis (652 abstracts, 38% of total). The smallest group was represented by Transplantation (255 abstracts, 15% of total). Three hundred and twenty two abstracts out of 1736 (19% of total) were accepted as oral communications, with the highest acceptance rate for Transplantation (24%) and the lowest acceptance rate for Nephrology (14%). These 322 abstracts were placed in 48 sessions, distributed along 3 days (morning and afternoon) and eight rooms. When the acceptance rate was calculated by pooling oral communications and posters, it increased from 19 to 62%, with the highest percentage for Basic Sciences (74%) and the lowest for Nephrology (45%).

Differences between the Nice (2000) and Madrid (1999) Congresses

In comparison with the 1999 ERA-EDTA Madrid Congress (Table 1), there was an increase in the acceptance rate of oral communications (from 15 to 19%) and a decrease in the acceptance rate of posters (from 59 to 43%). This is reflected by a reduction in the mean score of abstracts accepted as oral communications in Nice in all topics except Basic Sciences, and by an increase in the mean score of those accepted as posters. The mean score of rejected abstracts increased by about half a point, reflecting the lower overall acceptance rate in Nice. The number of submitted abstracts increased by 41 units (from 1695 to 1736), with an absolute increase in Basic Sciences (+50%, from 20.2 to 24.1%) and Dialysis (+82%, from 33.6 to 38.2%), but a decrease in Nephrology (–51%, from 28.8 to 23.0%) and Transplantation (–40%, from 17.4 to 14.7%). The number of accepted abstracts (as oral communications or posters) overall decreased by 11.8%, as a consequence of the lower number accepted as posters (from 1000 to 750). More interestingly, the acceptance rate for Basic Sciences, adjusted for the overall decrease of 11.8% at the Nice congress, as compared with the Madrid congress, increased by 6.3%, as the acceptance rate for Dialysis (+5.8%), with no changes for Transplantation (–0.8%) and a wide decrease for Nephrology (–14.0%).

The mean score decreased, as expected, from oral communications to posters (mean \pm SD, 6.70 ± 0.54 to 5.77 ± 0.54 at the Nice Congress; 6.99 ± 0.36 to 5.53 ± 0.55 at the Madrid Congress). Note that a small number of authors chose only the poster presentation. The mean score of oral communications at the Nice Congress was lower for Nephrology (6.50 ± 0.55) than for the other topics (Basic Sciences 7.00 ± 0.52 ; Dialysis 6.71 ± 0.53 ; Transplantation 6.59 ± 0.57).

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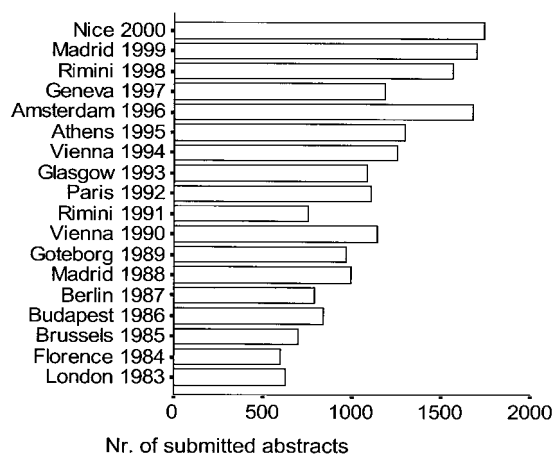


Fig. 1. Number of abstracts submitted to the ERA-EDTA Congresses.

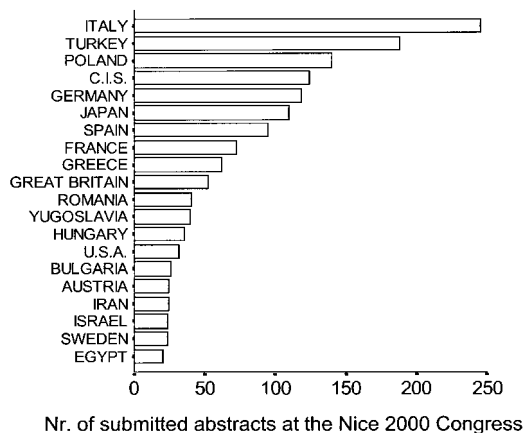


Fig. 2. Number of abstracts submitted to the ERA-EDTA and EKRA Nice Congress by country.

Differences between countries

The largest number of abstracts submitted at the Nice 2000 Congress, came from Italy, Turkey, and Poland (in decreasing order: 14%, 11%, and 8%, respectively) (Figure 2). It is noteworthy that Japan also made a significant contribution to the overall number of submitted abstracts, being in the sixth position (6% of the total submitted abstracts) and thereby overcoming several European countries such as Spain, France, and Great Britain (in decreasing order).

Canada, USA, and Belgium were the countries with the highest percent acceptance rate of abstracts as oral communications (50%, 48%, and 47%, respectively), as compared with an overall average value of 19%. However, only four abstracts were submitted from Canada.

A specific difference in the interest for the four main topics (Basic Sciences, Nephrology, Dialysis, and Transplantation) was noted for the different countries, both in absolute and percent terms, with respect to the abstracts submitted by each country. In absolute terms (Table 2), Italy was in first position with respect to abstracts submitted in the field of Basic Sciences and Dialysis, second position in Transplantation and third position in Nephrology. In comparison with the ERA-EDTA congress in Madrid, Germany had an increased interest for Transplantation, shifting from the fourth to the first position, whereas Turkey showed an opposite pattern descending from first to fourth position. By analysing the interest of each country for the four topics in percentage terms, Switzerland was in the first position for Basic Sciences, the Slovak Republic for Nephrology, Japan for Dialysis, and Thailand for Transplantation. Italy was most equilibrated with respect to all of the four topics, with a higher interest for Dialysis (45 *vs* 38% overall mean) and a slightly

Table 1. Differences in the number of submitted abstracts and acceptance rates between Madrid and Nice Congresses

Submitted abstracts		Basic Sciences	Nephrology	Dialysis	Transplantation	Total
Madrid	<i>n</i>	342	488	570	295	1695
Nice	<i>n</i>	392	437	652	255	1736
Difference	<i>n</i>	50	-51	82	-40	41
Madrid	%	20.2	28.8	33.6	17.4	100.0
Nice	%	24.1	23.0	38.2	14.7	100.0
<i>Accepted ABS as OC</i>						
Madrid	<i>n</i>	58	68	80	41	247
Nice	<i>n</i>	69	59	133	61	322
Madrid	%	17.0	13.9	14.0	13.9	14.6
Nice	%	17.6	13.5	20.4	23.9	18.5
<i>Accepted ABS as Posters</i>						
Madrid	<i>n</i>	213	278	323	186	1000
Nice	<i>n</i>	220	138	289	103	750
Madrid	%	62.3	57.0	56.7	63.1	59.0
Nice	%	56.1	31.6	44.3	40.4	43.2
<i>Accepted ABS as OC or Posters</i>						
Madrid	%	79.2	70.9	70.7	76.9	73.6
Nice	%	73.7	45.1	64.7	64.3	61.8
Difference		-5.5	-25.8	-6.0	-12.6	-11.8
Adjusted difference		6.3	-14.0	5.8	-0.8	-11.8

Table 2. Number of submitted abstracts by topic and congress (Madrid and Nice)

Madrid	<i>n</i>	Position	Nice	<i>n</i>	Position
<i>Basic Sciences</i>					
Italy	53	1	Italy	53	1
Germany	43	2	Poland	43	2
Poland	30	3	Germany	37	3
Turkey	27	4	C.I.S.	35	4
Spain	24	5	France	22	5
Japan	19	6	Japan	19	6
Yugoslavia	15	7	Great Britain	16	7
C.I.S.	14	8	Switzerland	14	8
Brasil	12	9	Spain	13	9
Hungary	9	10	Sweden	13	10
<i>Nephrology</i>					
Turkey	64	1	Turkey	80	1
C.I.S.	57	2	C.I.S.	54	2
Italy	56	3	Italy	49	3
Germany	30	4	Poland	37	4
Spain	25	5	France	18	5
Poland	24	6	Japan	18	6
Yugoslavia	23	7	Romania	17	7
Romania	23	8	Germany	16	8
France	17	9	Spain	13	9
Greece	13	10	Greece	13	10
<i>Dialysis</i>					
Italy	118	1	Italy	111	1
Turkey	57	2	Turkey	70	2
Japan	43	3	Japan	68	3
Greece	38	4	Poland	50	4
Poland	34	5	Spain	39	5
Germany	28	6	Greece	38	6
France	27	7	Germany	32	7
Spain	23	8	Great Britain	24	8
C.I.S.	20	9	C.I.S.	23	9
Yugoslavia	19	10	France	21	10
<i>Transplantation</i>					
Turkey	39	1	Germany	33	1
Italy	30	2	Italy	32	2
Spain	28	3	Spain	30	3
Germany	25	4	Turkey	26	4
C.I.S.	20	5	C.I.S.	12	5
Poland	14	6	France	11	6
France	14	7	Poland	10	7
Egypt	12	8	Hungary	10	8
Iran	11	9	Portugal	10	9
Japan	10	10	Iran	7	10

lower interest for Transplantation (13 vs 15% overall mean). By pooling renal replacement treatment modalities (Dialysis and Transplantation), Iran was the country coming into first position, with a percentage of 88%, compared with an overall value of 52%, meaning that in this country the attention to the topics of the Basic Sciences (4%) and Nephrology (8%), that are more related to the pre-dialysis phase, is low.

In conclusion, the observed trend towards the increase in Basic Sciences (possibly partially explained by the combined Congress) and Dialysis abstracts, and the reduction in Clinical Nephrology abstracts

is an issue open to debate. This editorial is a good opportunity to understand the time trend of research in Nephrology and the different patterns of interest of countries that contributed to the success of this important annual meeting.

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