Dear colleagues,

Welcome to our summer 2018 newsletter. We had a wonderful scientific and networking congress under the presidency of Sandra Vilarinho and her team and I want to thank them one more time for the wonderful organisation and hospitality offered to all of our registrants.

Our executive team changed at the 2018 Congress in Albufeira and I want to thank Moshe Mock who has now left the EC for his diligent work as our General Secretary and Treasurer over the last 8 years. Having held the position before Moshe I know what a demanding job this is and he has made some important developments to the position during his time in role. I wish him well for the future. We also have some members on the team including the two scientific chairpersons who were inspirational in preparing the Portugal congress. I hope the energy and ideas from all of our new members will be transformation in the way we operate as a team.

The Federation was established to benefit all of our societies and associations and the outgoing team endorsed a proposal to allow for a liaison member from each society to have regular contact with one of our team members on the executive. Goran Arbanas has been in contact with all of our member societies and associations and we hope to have this firmly established over the forthcoming months. Please contact us if you are interested in contributing into this important bridging role between the EC and your national group as we still need a number of people to take up this opportunity and this may include for your society.

As always, be in touch if you want to make any suggestions or contribute further into the work of the Federation.

Professor Kevan Wylie
President, EFS (2017-2020)

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The European Federation of Sexology (EFS), according to the GDPR (UE) n. 2016/679, recognizes an email address as “Personal Information”. The email addresses are stored in the private archive of the EFS in order to send the email newsletter or private communication to affiliated societies and associations. No spam will be sent. It is kindly requested to contact our official email address info@europeansexology.com for further information or to request the cancellation of your contact details from our archives.
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**BECOME A MEMBER!**

Member societies have the following benefits for their affiliates:

1. The possibility of citing the EFS logo on your letterhead
2. Patronage of the EFS
3. Participation of EFS executive committee members as keynote speakers at your local conference (by invitation)
4. A regular newsletter
5. The journal "Sexologies", the organ of the EFS, which allows members to publish their papers, have a subscription at reduced rate and receive advance information on EFS meetings
6. Substantial reduction for members to a personal subscription of journal "Sexual & Relationship Therapy" (£55 / €35)
7. Advice to each country on a European Standard of Excellence For the Training of Professionals
8. Help your society to make a stand when human sexual rights are not respected
9. A reduction of 10 Euro for every society paying for 2 years: the current year and the next year.

Subscribe now: http://www.europeansexology.com/membership.htm

**MEMBER SOCIETIES**

**AUSTRIA:** Austrian Society for Sexology

**BELGIUM:** Flemish Society of Sexology, Institute of Family and Sexuality Studies, Society of Sexologists with University degree in Belgium (SSUB)

**BULGARIA:** Sexuality and Health Foundation

**CROAZIA:** Croatian Association for Sexual Therapy

**CZECH REPUBLIC:** Sexological Institute

**DENMARK:** Dansk Sexologforening; Danish Association for Clinical Sexology

**ESTONIA:** Estonian Academic Society of Sexology

**FINLAND:** The Finnish Association for Sexology (FIAS)

**FRANCE:** Interdisciplinary post University Association of Sexology (AIUS); Centre International de Formation et de Recherche en Sexualité (CFRES); Societe Francaise de Sexologien Clinique; Association des Sexologues Clinicien Francophones (ASCIIF)

**GEORGIA:** The Society of Georgian Sexologist: Education, Research, Treatment (SGS)

**GERMANY:** Deutsches Gesellschaft für Sozialwissenschaftliche Sexualforschung (DGSS); Deutsch Gesellschaft für Sexualforschung (DGFS)

**GREECE:** Greek Society of Sexology and Inter-Gender Relationships

**ISRAEL:** Israel Society for Sex Therapy (ISST) - Italy

**ITALY:** Associazione Clinica e Terapia in Sessuologia (ACTS); Gruppo Ricerca in Sessuologia, School of Clinical Sexology; Istituto Di Sessuologia Clinica, Institute of Clinical Sexology – ICS; Fondazione Carlo Molo; Sessualità Italian Center (CIS); Associazione Italiana Sessuologia Psicologia Applicata (AISPA); Societa Piemontese di Sessuologia Clinica (SSSC); Federazione Italiana Di Sessuologia Scientifica (FISS); Institute for Research in Clinical Sexology (IRSC)

**NETHERLANDS:** Nederlandse Vereniging voor Seksuoologie (NVVS); Dutch Society for Sexual Medicine; Rutger (the Dutch Expert Centre on Sexuality); NORWAY:** Norwegian Society for Clinical Sexology

**POLAND:** Polish Sexological Society (PORTUGAL): Sociedade Portuguesa de Sexologia Clinica

**ROMANIA:** Institute of Sexology

**RUSSIA:** Russian Scientific Sexological Society

**SLOVENIA:** Slovenian Sexological Association

**SPAIN:** Asociacion Española Sexologia Clinica (AES); Federacion Española de Sociedades de Sexologia (FESS); Societat Catalana de Sexologia

**SWEDEN:** Swedish Society for Sexology; Swedish Institute for Sexual Research

**SWITZERLAND:** Fonds Universitaire Maurice Chalumeau; Institut Sexcorporal International; Zürcher Institut für klinische Sexologie & Sexualtherapie (ZISS); ASPSC-SPVKS : Association Suisse des Psychologues Sexologues Cliniciens – Schweizer Psychologenverband Klinischer Sexologen

**TURKEY:** Sexual Health Institute (SHI); CETAD; Turkish Association for Cognitive and Behavioural Psychotherapies (TACBP); Turkey Microbiological Society; UK: College of Sexual & Relationship Therapists (previous BASRT); British Society of Byopyschosocial Obstetrics and Gynaecology (BSBOG); Sheffield Society for The Study of Sexuality & Relationships (SSSRR).

**NOTE FROM TREASURY**

To: Member societies who did not pay their dues for 2017 yet.

**Object:** EFS kindly ask to pay your dues to the new bank account.

**Name:** European Federation of Sexology Iban: NL 15 INGB 0006 510681

The new statute of EFS was approved by the General Assembly in Dubrovnik 2016. The document is available on the EFS website at http://www.europeansexology.com/files/statutes%202006%20final.pdf
The 14th Congress of the European Federation of Sexology (EFS) took place from 9th to 12th of May 2018 in one of the most beautiful cities of Portugal: Albufeira.

This year edition, like all the previous ones, has combined work with pleasure. The main theme of the congress was "From Sexology to Sexologies". This was the occasion to celebrate Sexology with emphasized "S": SexologieS. The congress has aroused the interest of the psychologists, psychiatrists, urologists, gynecologists, general practitioners, endocrinologists, educators, teachers, social workers, researchers, nurses, and different working forces in the field of Sexology. Participants came from all parts of the world, different specialties from various countries and continents ultimately brought together and united for the interest of Sexology.

The conference began with two symposia. The first symposium was organized by the youth committee about "Youth sexual health: risk factors and sexual functioning in the 21st century". The second symposium was a collaboration between the EFS and the World Psychiatry Association and was entitled "From sexology to psychiatry and vice versa". After the opening ceremony, the gold medals were awarded to A. Giami (Paris, France) for his work on "European sexology between sexual health and sexual rights: the future of a legacy", and to E.A. Jannini (Rome, Italy) for his work on "Measuring (female) pleasure".

The program was composed of ten more additional symposia:
- Evidence based, sexual health and sexual rights
- Intimacy and sexuality
- Education in clinical sexology. From North to South: Where are we going?
- Treatment approaches for sexual dysfunction: current picture and news
- Sexology - the European Journal of sexology and sexual health: important recent published studies
- Female sexual problems: from pharmacotherapy to women's empowerment
- Sexual dysfunction of patients with chronic conditions
- Health and citizenship among trans populations. A multicentric approach: Brazil, France, Italy, Norway, Portugal.
- New insights on hypersexuality

Several themes were discussed during the congress. Topics concerning male, female and couple sexuality; but also sexual dysfunction, sexuality and organic disorders (obesity, cancer, mental pathologies, chronic pathologies...). The therapeutic aspects have also been addressed and different psychotherapy techniques were discussed. In addition, lectures, readings, and symposia were devoted to sexual rights and sexual education.

Different workshops were organized:
- Couple dynamics and EFT in the context of sexuality,
- Methodology for qualitative sex research and focus groups,
- The influence of sexual and non-sexual emotions on sexual function,
- Cancer & sexuality, sex & relationships of how to write a scientific paper,
- Treatment of sexual trauma and sober sex: clinical guidelines.

The program also included oral communications and seventy-two posters were presented. The congress was a scientific success and was a unique platform to gain new perspectives. Ambitions are still important since the challenges in Sexuality are enormous. Furthermore, it seems quiet essential that work toward a long-term plan to making progress and achieving better sexuality is invested.

Amira Mâamri
Male and female orgasm is a neuromuscular phenomenon triggered by sexual (somatic and mental) stimuli, accompanied by anatomical and physiological responses including gender-specific vasocongestion of the erectile tissues, lubrications, and pelvic contractions centrally evaluated as able to induce pleasurable sensations with different levels of intensity. This function is not yet fully understood and defined, because of the great variability in factors including localization, stimulation techniques, self-image and quality of romantic and/or social relationship. Despite the dramatic importance of this function in the sexual economy, both anatomical and physiological studies are in their infancy, being the scientific ignorance in the female orgasm deeper than in the male one. Particularly in female orgasm, scientific literature seems frequently contaminated by (political) opinions, rather than based on empirical evidences. The nominalistic debate on clitoral vs. vaginal orgasm, existence of G spot [or clitourethrovaginal (CUV) complex] and female ejaculation/squiring substituted and frequently replaced the production of scientific evidences. This seems particularly inadequate in a historical time characterized, according to Baumann, by a postmodern sexual liquidity where pleasure is progressively substituting both love and reproduction as aim of sexuality. I performed several morphofunctional studies on human pleasure. More recently, starting from the easier male model, I generated a new psychometric tool using the same psychometric criteria of the largely used visual analogue scale for pain, but adapted for pleasure. My Orgasmometer specifically measures the intensity of orgasm, demonstrating that premature ejaculation is associated with significantly lower, with respect to a congruous control group, intensity of pleasure. Recently applied to a population of 526 women with or without various female sexual dysfunctions, I demonstrated that female sexual symptoms are associated with a lower perceived orgasmic intensity. Conversely, some important components of female sexuality, such as lubrication, orgasm satisfaction and masturbation, have a positive correlation with perceived orgasmic intensity. The Orgasmometer was thus found to be a well validated, quick and simple tool for the assessment of the orgasmic experience in both functional and dysfunctional male and female.
O. Kontula
Population Research Institute, Helsinki, FINLAND

INCREASE IN MASTURBATION HABITS AMONG GENERATIONS

Objective: Each generation has adopted views on masturbation via transforming cultural definitions of sexuality and normality. This talk will present how masturbation habits have changed during the last decades in different generations and how these habits are linked to the relationship status. Design and Method: In Finland five national sex surveys based on random samples from central population register have been conducted: 1971, 1992, 199, 2007, and 2015. They are representative of the total population within the age range of 18-54 years in 1971 (N=2152) and 18-74 years in 1992 (N=2250), 1999 (N=1496), 2007 (N=2590), and 2015 (N=2250). Measures include the last time when respondents masturbated and age at first orgasm through masturbation. Results: Each new generation, both men and women, had been more active in masturbation than the previous one. They also had their first masturbation younger. The increase was almost unrelated to the relationship status and to the years spent in the relationship. The masturbation habits that each generation had internalized in adolescence seemed to remain almost unchanged through the course of their lives. Conclusions: The implications of these findings are that masturbation did not decrease with age and that masturbation was not a compensation for a missing sex partner. For most it is an independent way to gain sexual pleasure. The results indicate that masturbation is linked to the perceptions within a given culture of its nature and consequences during the teenage years of participants.

Stefanie Spahni¹, U. Brun del Re²
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PORNOGRAPHY USE AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION IN ADULT WOMEN AND MEN

Objective: Access to online pornography has strongly increased in the past years and it is assumed that pornography use is more frequent in men and more often solitary than with the partner. Empirical research has linked pornography use to addiction and sexual violence, and showed primarily negative effects on romantic relationships. But pornography use may also be a source of relationship quality. Design and Method: This study assess how pornography use is associated with relationship satisfaction and tests if talking about sexuality with the partner and shared pornography use moderate this association. Data was gathered using an online questionnaire study. Participants were recruited via different online platforms and mailing lists. 1091 individuals (444 women, 647 men), with average age of 36.81 years (range 18 - 60) filled out the questionnaire. Results: Results confirm that a more frequent solitary pornography use is associated with lower relationship satisfaction. In contrast, shared use and sexual communication reduce this negative effect and are associated with higher relationship satisfaction. Conclusions: Sexual communication and shared pornography use are potential resources in romantic relationships that can buffer against the negative effects of solitary porn use. They should be fostered in consulting and couple therapies for better relationship outcomes.

G. Gore-Gorszewksa
Jagiellonian University, Department of Philosophy, Krakow, POLAND

SAFE SEX IN OLDER AGE? KNOWLEDGE ABOUT STIS AND AWARENESS OF STI RISK AMONG POLISH AGING POPULATION: PILOT STUDY

Objective: Sex in later adulthood remains taboo in many countries, leading to e.g. excluding older adults from sexual health promotion. An increased prevalence of sexually transmitted illnesses follows. Aim of this study was to assess the awareness of STIs’ existence, knowledge related to STI topics, risks and helpseeking behaviors among older adults, as it is essential for the sexually active aging cohort to remain safe and free from infections. Design and Method: Original self description questionnaire contained questions regarding participants’ sex life, knowledge about STIs, risks and using STI preventing measures, with follow-up request about the reasoning behind some answers. Respondents consisted of 109 individuals between 50 – 89 years of age (M = 62.5; SD = 8.3). Survey was conducted at a health resort, with privacy and anonymity ensured. All participants gave their informed consent. Results: Apart from HIV/AIDS, other STIs are hardly known by name. Over ¾ of respondents aged 50-59 consider themselves to be in at least small risk of STIs, while almost none of those 70+ believe to be at any risk. Only 17% of respondents consulted healthcare specialist regarding possible sexual problem when they were 50+. Younger participants believe medical specialist is the best person to support in case of sexual problems, older would seek for help and advise from a friend or no one. Conclusions: The limited knowledge about STIs and reluctance in help-seeking behaviors displayed by study sample is disturbing. Further research on a representative group of Polish older adults is required, to verify results from this pilot study.
Moments and memories from Albuferia
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Sexuality and mental health: Annual Nordic Association for Clinical Sexology conferences

Successful conference and annual meeting in The Nordic Association for Clinical Sexology in Trondheim, Norway 12-15 October 2017.

The annual NACS conferences venues alternate between the Nordic countries; in 2016, the conference was held in Tartu, Estonia, in 2018 it will be held in Turku, Finland. This year the conference was held in Trondheim, Norway on the topic “Sexuality and mental health”.

To highlight the international work on sexuality and mental health, Lale Say, from WHO attended the conference and presented the WHO operational framework, where sexual health is intertwined with reproductive health. She also presented the proposition for the ICD-11 to add a new chapter on sexual health where both sexual dysfunctions and gender incongruence are included, and hence excluded from the chapter of mental disorders. The NACS conferences are attended by many practitioners who are more interested in obtaining new knowledge than presenting their own research; the conferences can therefore put more effort in giving space for interesting lecturers to present their work on relevant topics. At this conference, Norwegian doctor Anna Louise Kirkengen presented her work under the title “Sexually abused – Bodily inscribed” – about the long-term consequences of sexual abuse. Consequences that can also be “read” in physiological changes in the CNS. Jon Arcelus from University of Nottingham, UK, presented research on mental health in Trans youth, suggesting that it may benefit young trans people to start hormonal treatment earlier than what is common in present practice.

Specialist in clinical psychology Atle Austad from Norway talked about genital identity in men, and the need to teach young boys about what is a normal penis.

Specialist in psychiatry, Haakon Aars and specialist I clinical psychology Cecilie Brøvig Almås, both from Norway, talked about the need to be aware of sexuality in psychiatric patients. Aars highlighted problematic consequences of medication on sexual function, and Brøvig Almås went into depths on psychotic patient’s ambivalence concerning intimacy.

Professor Leif Edward Ottesen Kennair from the University in Trondheim presented research about risky sexual behaviour and health outcomes.

Specialist in clinical psychology, Elsa Almås described options of using modified sex therapy to help clients repair sexuality after sexual trauma.

Professor Janniko Georgiadis from Groningen, Netherlands gave an instructive presentation of a theoretical framework of the human sexual brain and gave examples from studies focusing on sexual response.

In addition to the invited speakers, there were 21 oral presentations and 6 posters from all the Nordic countries, and from Turkey and Morocco on topics such as gender incongruity, social sexology, sexual problems, medical sexology, sexuality and culture, and sexological counselling.

Participants expressed great satisfaction with the scientific programme as well as the social program. The organising committee in Trondheim had organised a magnificent organ concert in the great cathedral Nidarosdomen, live chamber music at the get together at Litteraturhuset on Thursday night, and live ballroom music at the gala dinner on Saturday night. The food, the hotel, the surroundings were all very satisfactory for the 150 participants from the Nordic countries and our guests from England, Netherland, Morocco, Palestine and Turkey!

We now look forward to the 40th anniversary of NACS in Finland next year!

Elsa Almås
President NACS 2017-2018
EFS youth committee’s first research Project was conducted with the young population from 5 different countries including Italy, Malta, Turkey, Romania, and Norway in a sample of university students aged between 18-25. This study focused on sexual dysfunction in young people and the role of distress, Quality of Life and alexithymia over sexual problems.

In 2018 and 2019 EFS youth committee aims to study on the cultural differences and myths in sexuality in different nationalities which will be a second multinational study of this committee. This project aims to show that different cultural backgrounds have some common and different sexual myths. These sexual myths might influence different sexual behaviors, problems, and dysfunctions. Some of the myths may be transcultural, yet the others could be specific to cultural with its influences on owns sexual behaviors. Our hypothesis is with the effect of global mass media, the differences in the sexual myths in the youth population might be less significant when compared to older generations in different sociocultural backgrounds. This project will contribute to the literature in the sense of differences and similarities of sexual myths between age groups in different sociocultural backgrounds.

Anıl Gündüz
The youth committee of the European Federation of Sexology has been committed to stamp down it’s presence not just with presentations during the Congress and helping out with the organisation, but also with working on new research. The aim is always to indulge deeper in the reality of Youth’s sexuality. During this year’s congress the Youth committee presented a research on Youth Sexual health around various European countries. The research was presented in the Grande Real hall by our Chairperson Filippo Maria Nimbi, who with the help of the work of Mats Johannessen, Anil Gunduz, Rayka Kumru and myself compiled a research with various representative samples from around Europe. Before briefly explaining the research I would like, in the name of all the Youth Committee, to thank Filippo for his work and for always motivating us to work. It’s a blessing to have this golden opportunity to work in tandem with many young and determined professionals from all over the continent. It’s a truly enriching and insightful experience.

The research consisted of a socio-demographic introductory part in the form of a questionnaire, and subsequently five other psychometric questionnaires measuring different aspects of sexual functioning (IIEF, FSFI, SCS, SF36, TAS-20). The questionnaires were administered adopting a snowball sampling technique from the general population from Italy, Malta, Norway and Turkey.

The participants were all between 18 and 25 years of age. The main differences from the socio-demographics questionnaire were various. First of foremost that Maltese group reported more often to be in a relationship, married, and employed rather than be a students and being a parent. With regards to sexual orientation, our data confirmed the trend in men to be clustered in the extreme ends of the continuum whereas women tended to be distributed along the whole continuum of the Kinsey scale.

The Italian group reported the lowest levels of desire to have children. Add to this, Italian and Turkish groups have the highest percentages of smokers. The high consumption of alcohol and recreational drugs was found to be reported in all countries.

With regards to Male Sexual complaints, Norway, Italy and Turkey reported more sexual complaints than Malta. Maltese male group reported more Penis dysmorphophobia distress, and more sexually satisfied. On the other hand, with regards to the female sexual complaints, Norway, Italy and Malta reported more sexual complaints than Turkey. The Maltese group reported more distress in every complaint.

Although this is just a short snippet of all results, we are going to publish all the results, discussions and conclusions in a paper. One of the main suggestions is the importance to ameliorate access to evidence-based sexual health services for young people.

Nicholas Briffa
Save the Date!

UPCOMING

C O N G R E S S E S, EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION

ESSM School for Sexual Medicine
16 – 25 Nov. 2018
Budapest, Hungary
http://www.essm.org

21st ESSM CONGRESS 2019
February 14-16, 2019
Ljubljana, Slovenia,
www.essm-congress.org

24th Congress of the World Association for Sexual Health
October 12, 15 - 2019
Mexico City, Mexico
https://issmessm2018.org

EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF SEXUAL HEALTH - REVUE EUROPEENNE DE SANTE SEXUELLE

Created in 1992, “Sexologies” is a bilingual Journal (English - French) and publishes quarterly original, synthetic articles on human sexuality, its dysfunctions and its management. Sexologies is the official journal of the European Federation of Sexology (EFS), published with the scientific cooperation of the Interdisciplinary post-academic Association of Sexology (AIUS) and the French Federation of Sexual Health and Sexology.

Sexologies offers a large panel of information to all health-related professionals working in the field of sexuality: anatomic-physiological aspects and basic research; psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioural and relational evaluations of sexual difficulties; epidemiological, sociological, forensic data; information on new sexology-related molecules; research on sexual physiology, reports on specialized congresses; press and books reviews; ethical aspects; calendar of major events around the world.

Major international experts in their field joined the editorial committee as Field Editors, confirming and enhancing the will for scientific excellence of the journal.

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Dear Chiara,

the EFS & ESSM CERTIFIED PSYCHO-SEXOLOGIST (ECPS) exam has successfully arrived at the 3rd edition, which has been held in the beautiful frame of Lisbon on 28th February 2018. This challenging adventure started in 2014 in Istanbul. Where does the idea come from?

The ESSM and EFS have been collaborating since 2013 to promote the highest standards of healthcare in the field of Sexology and Sexual Medicine. This was an initiative of the two presidents of EFS and ESSM at that time (me and Hartmut Porst). As a result of this collaboration, a certification procedure has been initiated to distinguish excellence amongst individual psych-sexologists from around the world.

As said, we are now at the 3rd ECPS exam (1st in Istanbul in 2014 and the 2nd in Madrid in 2016). How was this edition and how many ECPSs are there now in the world?

The European Psycho-Sexology Accreditation (E.P.S.A.) committee has developed a long-term plan to protect and to enhance the role of psycho-sexologists in Europe. Within this context, the eligibility criteria for someone to apply are of high standards. Today, and after 3 examination periods, we have about 100 people who have obtained the EFS and ESSM psycho-sexologist accreditation certificate. Please note that the work of this committee applies to psycho-sexologists, so it refers to the field of sexology relevant to psychologists and/or psychiatrists.

The success of such a certification costs of many efforts. I was wondering about the people working behind. Who is the core of the ECPS organization?

As with most such activities, there is a group of people working. We have the full members, the honorary advisors and the associate members. Full members of the E.P.S.A. have the duty to design, organize and implement tasks for the accreditation of psycho-sexologists and relevant educational courses. Today, the full members are:

(Chair) Evie Kirana, Psychologist (Greece)
Janico Georgiadis, Neuroscientist (The Netherlands)
Tilmann Krueger, Psychiatrist (Germany)
Lior Lowenstein, Gynecologist (Israel)
Yacov Reisman, Urologist (The Netherlands)
Francesca Tripodi, Psychologist (Italy)
Remzie Kounelaki, Psychologist (UK)
Xanti Ntoni- Fymbo, Psychologist (Denmark)

Honorary advisors are prominent scientists of international repute and high distinction that serve in advisory capacity to the E.P.S.A. committee. Their role is to provide advice to the committee on scientific and executive issues that come within their experience and expertise.

1) Prof. Pedro Nobre (Portugal)
2) Prof. Chiara Simionelli (Italy)
3) Prof. Alain Giami (France)
4) Prof. Erick Janssen (Belgium)
5) Prof. Kevan Wylie (UK)
6) Prof. Uwe Hartmann (Germany)
7) Prof. Astrid Højgaard (Denmark)
8) Prof. Peter Weiss (Czech Republic)
9) Prof. Rafi Herouti (Israel)
10) Prof. Anita Clayton (USA)
11) Prof. Jim Pfaus (Canada)
An **Associate Member** is someone that contributes to the objectives of E.P.S.A. by participating in specific projects that aim to facilitate the role of psycho-sexologists in Europe. The Associate Member could be an EFS/ESSM certified psycho-sexologist (ECPS) that has demonstrated special interest in ESSM/ EFS educational activities or has had an active role within national or international societies and would like to be involved in the work of the E.P.S.A. Associate members are assigned specific tasks under the supervision of full members. Such tasks may involve, for example, mapping of educational events relevant to sexology or the dissemination of information relative to the exam etc.

**So, if somebody would like to become an associate member please let us know!**

The joint EFS and ESSM adventure is not only represented by the exam. Which other projects have been shared so far?

In an unofficial way, one can very often see scientists participating at activities of both societies. Whether these are educational or research activities. This is reasonable as sexual health is a multidisciplinary field; and it is this that makes it so unique. In terms of formal collaboration, the two societies had implemented a common congress in the past. Today, the ECPS is the field of collaboration, and I personally, would hope for more common projects in the future. Not only joint congresses, but also joint educational activities and research activities. In my perspective, by joining the EFS and ESSM human and capital resources, we would not only manage our resources more effectively, but we would also develop activities that enhance sexual health through a bio-psychosocial perspective.

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**ECPS eligibility criteria**

The ESSM and EFS collaborate to guarantee and promote the highest standards of healthcare in the field of Sexology and Sexual Medicine. For these propose educational program and qualification exam were set-up. For the first in history, in 2014 the ESSM congress was joint by the EFS congress and qualification examination for mark of excellence is set-up in collaboration between the ESSM and the EFS.

**Eligibility criteria**

The candidate eligible to take the exam must demonstrate expertise in psycho-sexology and obtain proof of:

- Psychology degree or
- Psychiatry degree or
- MD degree with additional psychotherapy training
- Post graduate training in sexology (providing certificate) including relevant supervised experience of at least 2 years (providing 2 letters of recommendation according to preformat).

The EPSA committee has the responsibility to assess eligibility of applicants to take the exam, and the final decision for each applicant has to be approved by the majority of the committee.

- The Syllabus of Clinical members. All applicants will receive an answer concerning their eligibility to take the exam, Sexology, and Sexual Medicine approximately 30 days after the application deadline.
- Examination format
- Competency on the curriculum shall be assessed through a written exam consisting of 100 multiple choice questions.

For the application process visit **www.essm.org**

**Preperation material and Preparation course**

The ESSM and EFS Syllabus on Clinical Sexology (ed) Kirana P, Tripodi F, Reisman Y, Porst H :2013, Medix, Amsterdam is the preparation material endorsed by the EPSA. Candidates are advised to select additional preparation material, according to their own preferences and needs. It is the candidates’ responsibility to choose the study materials that will best prepare them for the exam.

- Also, an intensive 3 day preparation course will be held just before the exam. Candidates that would like more information on the preparation course may visit the ESSM website at **www.essm.org**
Sexual Education in Romania, a sad perspective in 2018

First place in a bad sense and in a bad list. This year Romania celebrates its youngest grandmother, Stefana, a 23 year old of Roma ethnicity, she gave birth at 12 years old, and her child Maria gave birth at 11 years old. Stefana stated that she wanted for her child to go to school and have a normal life. Romania is known for being the first country in the europe with the most child mothers, as stated by Eurostat in 2015. The trend unfortunately continues.

There are aproximately 480 abortions at 1000 births, according to WHO in a publication from 2012. In an interview in the media, Prof. Dr. Carstoiu, Gynecologist, from the Medical University “Carol Davila” in Bucharest stated that 20% of women do not visit regularly the gynecologist, and 25% visit only when it is something wrong, painful or they suspect a pregnancy. All of these are treatable of course. This goes in line with a prevalent negative belief in Romania, that you go to the doctor only when it hurts.

There is a need to mention that the National Institute of Statistics is known in Romania to have some wrong numbers regarding social and health issues on the ground. No one really knows the real number of abortions or pregnancies since some of the women undergo these procedures in their homes without medical supervision, not in the hospital setting. Some private clinics do abortions in teenage women under the umbrella term “exploratory consultation under anesthesia” so their medical record doesn’t mention abortion.

Worrying the future of sexual education isn’t very bright. In late december 2016 a new law was proposed and voted in 2018 by the Romanian House of Representatives and is at the moment in the Senate waiting to be voted, the final step of the journey, before being implemented. This law which is lobbied by a group of NGOs and the Romanian Orthodox Church is called “The law of children’s innocence”. It is against sexual education in schools, by teachers, professors or volunteers without the parent’s written and signed consent, and without proper sexual educator training. If broken the punishment is jail up to 3 years, a fine, and a criminal record. One huge problem is that there isn’t a institution which can legally train sexual educators in Romania. This comes after the law of Health Education for Children flew through the voting process. It’s result, there are now optional courses from grade 5 to 8 were children are taught about general hygiene, but no mention of Sexual Education.

By the looks of it, there isn’t going to be a change in the medium to long future.

Adrian Calomfirescu
If you’ve parented a teenager or pre-teen in the past five years you’ve thought about sexting. Specifically, you’ve asked yourself whether your child would ever do it, is doing it, should do it, and if you would want to know about it. As a sex therapist or a researcher, you know sexting is prevalent and an integral part of new days intimate relationships. Some consider sexting relatively harmless, as long as its consensual. Others are beset with worry. No matter your perspective on kids and sexually explicit messaging, there is one thing that all parents, therapist and children need to know: Sexting under the age of 18, even if consensual-is a felony (https://www.legalmatch.com/law-library/article/sexting-minors.html). That’s right—although arrest and prosecution of minors who sext is exceedingly rate, possessing a sexually explicit image of anyone under 18 years old counts as possessing child pornography. This past year a sexting scandal at a Virginia (USA) middle school resulted in five pre-teens having their phones seized by authorities after sexually explicit images of peers were found on their phones (https://www.dailydot.com/irl/teen-sexting-virginia/).

“Sexting” is the term used to describe the act of sharing or receiving sexually explicit messages and nude or partially nude images via electronic devices. A recent systematic review and meta-analysis¹ found that 1 out of 7 teenagers ages 12-17 have ever sent a sext, and 1 out of 4 have ever received one. According to the law, there’s nothing wrong with sexting between consenting adults. In fact, sexting may now be a standard part of many dating relationships—it’s a modern-day version of flirting or foreplay. Numerous websites offer tips on how to sext perfectly or offer ideas for great sexting. Adolescents’ interest in sending or receiving sexually explicit images of a romantic or sexual partner may be developmentally appropriate; it’s normal for adolescents to be sexually curious, identity-seeking, and to explore their own likes, dislikes and boundaries. What’s more, a recent focus group study² of 12-17 year-old teenagers found that they sext for perfectly practical reasons, such as feeling less shy than flirting in person, or because it’s a safer alternative to “in real life” (IRL) sexual activity. In another national survey³ conducted among teens and young adults aged 13-26, participants reported engaging in sexting to get someone’s attention, give their girlfriend or boyfriend a sexy “present”, be liked or noticed, or just enjoy the feelings of excitement and flirtation.

But, there are downsides to sexting if you are younger than 18 years old, and potentially, at any age. Even sexts that are originally created in the context of a trusting romantic partnership can be forwarded to friends, classmates and strangers. Reasons why someone might forward sexts that were once obtained consensually could include to impress peers, out of spite after a breakup, or to blackmail and control someone. There have been multiple tragic instances when sexts gone viral reportedly have contributed to suicides by teenagers and young adults, including those of Jessica Logan, Tovanna Holton and Amanda Todd. Of course, exceptionally few sexting incidents result in death, but the number that result in some form of non-fatal self-injury, retributive aggression, depression, or other harms is presently unknown. That is why in some states and countries draft new laws to guide decisions about how to handle minors who send sexts. While in the US some states a five-year minimum sentence for teenagers being prosecuted for child pornography felonies, in the UK, parents arrest for their children’s sexting is discussed.

As a researcher, I was curious: What percentage of youth understand that, until laws change, underage sexting is a crime? In a study me and my colleagues have published this year,⁴ we tested this question among a US national representative sample of 1,560 children ages 10-17, we found that the majority (86%) of children did know that underage sexting is a crime. However, 14% responded that they did not believe that underage sexting is a crime, or were not sure it was a crime. That means that while 6 out of 7 youth understand that sexting could lead to serious legal consequences, 1 in 7 may still need education about the possible consequences of underage sexting.

Our study also found that the majority of children in our sample also reported that they believed that sexting would probably get them in trouble at school (71%) or with the police (59%), hurt their chances of getting a job in the future (61%) and hurt their friendships (57%), their romantic partners (62%) or their relationship with their family (66%). Whether sexting would indeed hurt their chances of getting a job, their friendships, partners and so on remains an empirical question worth studying.
Perhaps social norms are evolving and in 10 or 15 years a few errant sexts will not be a major impediment to landing a job as anything from an elementary school teacher to President of the U.S.A. Another interesting finding from our study was that children in the sample were not likely to report instances of sexting, when they knew about it, to authorities or potentially helpful adults like police or teachers. Less than a third of the children would report sexting to the police or to their teachers. If they choose to tell someone, it would often be their parent, but the chances of that happening are also relatively low.

Adolescence is a time of significant change and transformation throughout many areas of life which includes navigating relationships and social status. This is also a period in which adolescents display great interest in experimenting with sex and experiencing romantic and sexual relationships. This developmental stage and curiosity, combined with rapidly changing technology, likely serves as a breeding ground for adolescent sexting behavior. However, whether prevalent, fun, or natural, sexting under the age of 18 is still a crime in most places, and until that changes parents, clinicians, teachers, children and others should be aware of the potential legal consequences and perhaps became mobilized to change state laws if they are troubled by them.

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References