

## Editorial

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# 19<sup>th</sup> European Symposium on Organic Chemistry (ESOC-19)

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The 19<sup>th</sup> European Symposium on Organic Chemistry was held in the Universidade de Lisboa from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2015. The meeting was approved by IUPAC and EuCheMS, and attracted nearly 700 participants from 51 countries coming from the five continents. It is the 19<sup>th</sup> in a series of biannual ESOCs, whose first symposium was held in Cologne (Germany) in 1979. Characterized by the excellence of their speakers, these prestigious events have been held all over Europe and in 2015, for the first time, in Portugal.

This meeting aimed at stimulating new emerging areas in Organic Chemistry. Particular emphasis was given to catalysis and synthesis. In addition, the most recent advances in the chemistry of carbohydrates and proteins, natural products, materials and polymers, were also presented at the meeting.

The scientific program encompassed 11 plenary lectures, 14 invited lectures, four of which were young researcher invited lectures, 24 oral communications, seven flash presentations and 411 posters.

In ESOC-19 the first Patai-Rappoport Lecture Award, sponsored by Wiley and created by Prof. Ian Marek, the Chief Editor of the Patai Series, was attributed to Prof. Peter Chen (ETH, Switzerland). Another innovation in ESOC-19 was the creation of the EurJOC Young Researcher Award, and the first Award was given to Prof. Nuno Maulide (University of Vienna) by Dr. Haymo Ross, on behalf of ChemPubSoc Europe, the organization of chemical societies that co-own the *European Journal of Organic Chemistry*. Both awarded lectures were given at the Opening Session, while at the Closing Session the 2014 EuCheMS Lecture Award, co-attributed to Prof. Christina Moberg for her outstanding achievements in Organic Chemistry, was given by Prof. David Cole Hamilton, the President of the European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences Organic Division. In this Session also the Best Oral Presentation Prize and the poster prizes Organic and Biomolecular Chemistry Poster prize, ChemComm poster Prize and MedChemComm poster prize were given by the Royal Society of Chemistry, together with three more poster prizes, namely SYNFACTS Poster prize sponsored by Thieme Verlag, the ESOC-19 poster prize and the Portuguese Society of Chemistry poster prize. These comprised the awards given at this meeting to motivate the younger generation of organic chemists to strive for excellence when conducting research.

In summary, the meeting brought together scientists from academia, industry and students at the start of their careers, with expertise in a diversity of areas covering organic chemistry. The relevance of organic chemistry to innovation and health was demonstrated at this meeting, and this offered new perspectives for business opportunities, contributing to foster new collaborations and innovation in Europe.

We are grateful to the editor in Chief of *Pure and Applied Chemistry*, Prof. Hugh Burrows, for the dedication of this issue to ESOC-19, and the authors for accepting our invitation and for their contributions. One of the highlights of this volume is the paper authored by Christina Moberg, that describes the synthesis of *O*-acylated cyanohydrins. They serve as starting materials for a variety of biologically active compounds and

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illustrate the usefulness of the method she has developed to access products with improved enantiomeric purity in enantioselective syntheses, by continuous *in situ* recycling of the undesired minor enantiomer back to starting material by coupling the catalytic reaction to an exergonic transformation of a sacrificial reagent. Reactions and interactions between *peri*-groups in 1-(dimethylamino)naphthalene salts is authored by the John Wallis group (Nottingham Trent University, UK) and structures are described with a much higher degree of C–N bond formation than those previously reported, resulting from the reaction of a dimethylamino group and an aldehyde or ketone placed at the *peri*-positions of the naphthalene ring. Also, recent advances in the understanding of the reduction of optically pure hydroxyalkylphosphinates and phosphine oxides, key intermediates for the preparation of P-stereogenic ligands are reported by the group of Damien Héroul (Aix Marseille Université, France). In medicinal chemistry research, we highlight the paper authored by László Kiss (BIAL – Portela & C<sup>a</sup>, Portugal) comprising the synthesis and *in vivo* SAR studies of peripherally selective FAAH inhibitors with improved aqueous solubility. In addition, synthetic approaches to dihydrochalcones by the group of Amélia P. Rauter and of isonucleosides by Nuno M. Xavier (both from Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Ciências, Centro de Química e Bioquímica) are amongst the contributions dedicated to biomolecular chemistry. Catalysis is also well documented with the paper on palladium catalyzed oxidative aminations and oxylation by Giovanni Poli (Université Pierre et Marie Curie, France), and the synthesis of new spiroacetals achieved by sustainable gold catalysis.

We thank all the attendees, in particular our speakers and sponsors, the advisory board and the members of the organizing committee, for their outstanding contribution for the success of this meeting. We wish to express our gratitude to our Committee of Honour for their presence in this meeting and the Editors of *Pure and Applied Chemistry* for the dedication of this issue to ESOC 2015 (ESOC-19). Most importantly, we congratulate all the awardees, recognized in this meeting by the excellence in their organic chemistry research!