

ESGE and ESGENA – A Growing and Successful Partnership!



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Bibliography

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“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success” *Henry Ford*

ESGENA congratulates ESGE on 60 years of successful and inspiring work.

ESGENA has had the privilege of working successfully with ESGE for 28 years. Without ESGE, ESGENA would probably never have existed. The key person in the early years was Professor Jean Francois Rey from France who supported the foundation of ESGENA and encouraged the co-operation between ESGE and ESGENA from the very beginning.

How did it all start? In the 1990s, the *Society of International Gastroenterology Nurses and Endoscopy Associates* (SIGNEA) was the international umbrella organization for nurses in gastrointestinal endoscopy, having its focus on the USA. In Europe, the desire arose to be more responsive to its own needs. Consequently, a group of committed nurses met in Oslo in 1994 to discuss the need of a European society for GI endoscopy nurses. Professor Rey supported the idea from the beginning. In 1995, a group of 13 nurses from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom developed the statutes and structure of the new society. The first election took place during the UEG Week in Paris in October 1996. The *European Society of Gastroenterology and Endoscopy Nurses and Associates* (ESGENA) was born (► **Fig. 1**)!

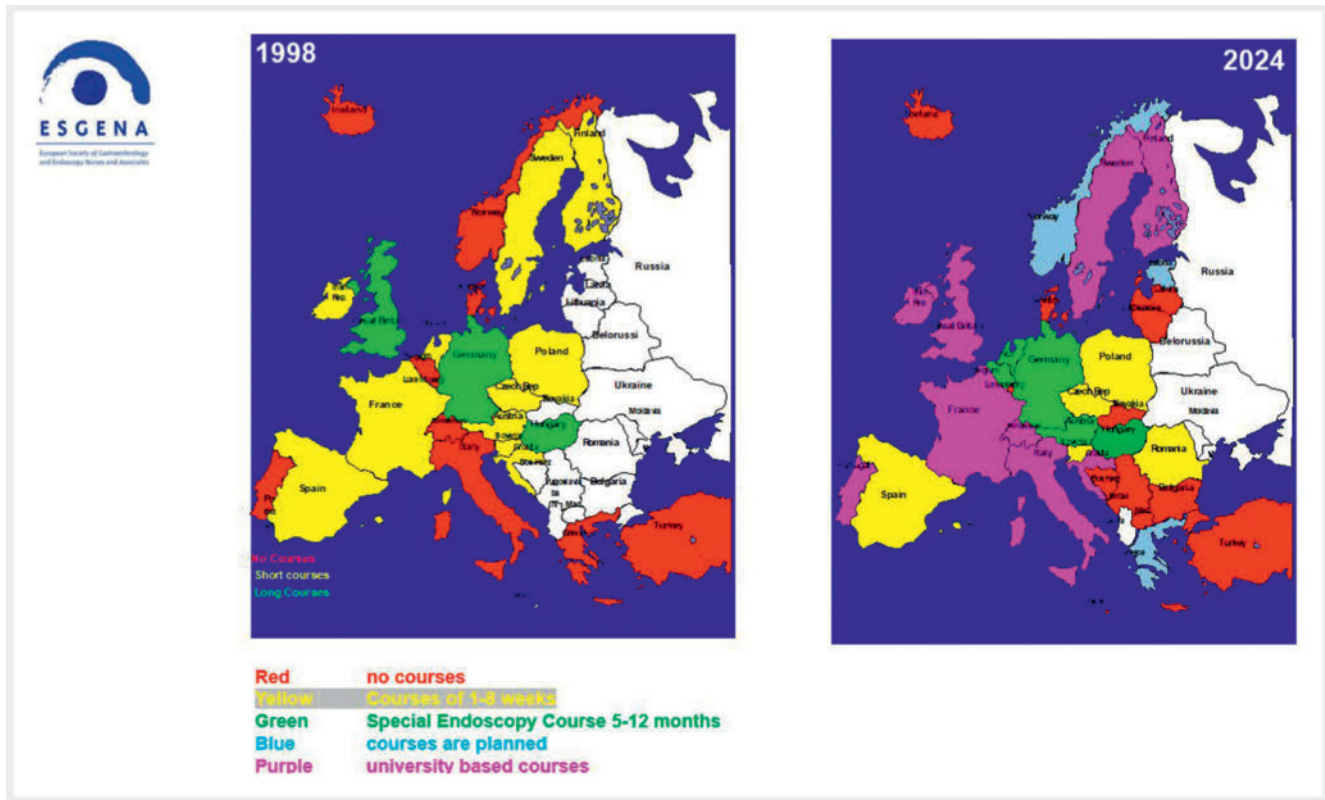
Today, ESGENA has over 7,000 members who are mainly incorporated members of national gastroenterology nurses societies and nursing associations from 29 European countries. ESGENA also grants individual membership to nurses worldwide. ESGENA has about 400 individual members mainly from European countries, but also some from Asia, Africa, Australia, and America. – Why? SIGNEA has ceased to exist, and nurses

from all over the world feel the urge to share experiences with European nurses.

ESGENA is member of the *European Specialist Nurses Organisation* (ESNO) which represents the interests of specialist nurses on the European level. This co-operation is politically very important because ESNO is our voice in Brussels and our platform to share experiences with nurses from other speciality fields.



► **Fig. 1** ESGENA Governing Board, Scientific and Technical Secretariat at ESGE Days 2024.



► **Fig. 2** Specialist education of endoscopy nurses in Europe comparing data from 1998 and 2024.

ESGENA's success is the expansion and harmonization of continuing education for nurses working in endoscopy and gastroenterology. The European Core Curriculum for Endoscopy Nursing has been implemented in many European countries. In the countries having courses with official recognition, these specialisation courses cover a 1–2-year education. Comparing data from 1998 and 2024, there is a clear trend towards academic courses for endoscopy nursing on bachelor's and master's degrees (► **Fig. 2**). Advanced roles for nurses have been established with a great variety depending on different national health systems and regulations. What is possible in one country, may be impossible in a neighbouring country. Examples for these differences are nurse endoscopists, NAPS, capsule endoscopy review, functional tests, PEG placement, stoma Care, nutrition, IBD and liver nurses.

The collaboration with ESGE and UEG was already anchored in the first ESGENA statutes. Since 1996 ESGENA has organised its annual conferences at UEG Week. The excellent co-operation with the UEG grew over three decades. When ESGE Days was established in 2018, it was a logical decision for ESGENA to establish a GI endoscopy nurses' programme in this new and growing endoscopy conference.

In the late 1990s, ESGENA was involved in many ESGE workshops in the Eastern European countries which combined live endoscopy demonstrations, didactic lectures and hands-on training for local endoscopists and nurses. In these workshops a clear teamwork was established between ESGE and ESGENA,



► **Fig. 3** Team discussion at the hands-on training during ESGE Days 2022.

and the role of the team started to become more and more prominent (► **Fig. 3**, ► **Fig. 4**).

After ESGENA introduced the training on pig organs at ESGENA workshops during the UEG Week in Geneva in 2002, training on bio-simulators was also established at the ESGE learning centres during the UEG Week. Today, this kind of hands-on endoscopy training is a major offering both ESGE Days and at UEG Week that attracts hundreds of delegates.



► **Fig. 4** Hands-on training during ESGE Days 2024 – Practical demonstrations.

These workshops are a clear example of the increased collaboration between ESGE and ESGENA to promote working in teams.

The development of guidelines, curricula and position statements is another success story for the co-operation between ESGE and ESGENA. Consequently, ESGENA representatives are part of various ESGE committees. ESGENA has been involved in many publications which are relevant for nurses and improve patient care in GI endoscopy. These publications have been focused on endoscope hygiene, endoscope reprocessing, procedural sedation, basic training, and sustainability. ESGENA looks forward to involvement in ESGE publications on quality assurance and endoscopic techniques.

Good collaboration between endoscopists and endoscopy nurses at the European level is critical. Teamwork is the key to success, and this is what ESGE and ESGENA embody together at the European level!

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.