Preface

This edition of Toxicology Letters contains the abstracts of the 51st Congress of EUROTX, hosted by the Portuguese Society of Pharmacology through its Section of Toxicology, in Porto, Portugal, 13th–16th September 2015. EUROTX is the Federation of National Societies of Toxicology in Europe, which together have approximately 7,000 members. In addition, EUROTX counts more than 200 individual members coming from 50 countries, mostly from Western Europe. As such, the annual EUROTX Congress represents a unique occasion to participate in the most important regular event of Toxicology in Europe and one of the most relevant worldwide, providing an important channel for the exchange of information between researchers and foster Toxicology. The Continuing Education Courses (CEC) held on the first day of the meeting, where insights into the current state of actual topics in Toxicology are presented, are additional strong reasons to attend the annual EUROTX Congress. In 2015, well-acknowledged scientists offered cutting-edge courses on dominant subjects, such as 3R methods in Toxicology, new recreational drugs, thresholds of toxicological concern, hazard characterization, co-exposure risk assessment, and risk assessment in food safety.

The theme of the 51st Congress, ‘Bridging Sciences for Safety’, upholds the important role of Toxicology in bridging the knowledge of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacology, Physiology, and many other sciences, for the desired path of humankind towards a safer world. The scientific programme originated from a high number of excellent proposals received for CEC, symposia, workshops, and keynote lectures, featuring major topics in the field of Toxicology within research, industry and regulation. Key highlights from invited speakers were in the areas of immunotoxicology, nanotoxicology phytotoxicology, drug-induced liver injury, microbiomes and personalised health care, ABC transporters and xenobiotic (pharma)toxicokinetics, carcinogens in food, alternative toxicity testing, risk assessment, quality and impact of omics sciences, long-term effects of environmental contaminants, endocrine disruptors, non-monotonic effects of hormonally active substances, doping in sports, microRNAs in Toxicology, rational and safe use of drugs, emerging drugs of abuse, regulatory setting of in vivo mutagenicity testing, substance evaluation under REACH, and reactive metabolites in adverse drug reactions.

Another highlight of EUROTX 2015 Congress is the debate between EUROTX and the Society of Toxicology (SOT). Each year the EUROTX annual meeting includes a debate format that originated in the early 1990s in which leading toxicologists advocate opposing sides of an issue of significant toxicological importance. This year, our debaters addressed the proposition: “In vitro alternatives are ready to be implemented and relied upon for human safety testing”. Regardless of framework differences and personal convictions, each scientific debate delegate presents relevant evidence and compelling scientific arguments to persuade and appeal to the response of the audience in order to obtain the approval or refusal of the motion. In addition to being a featured session at EUROTX 2015, this debate also took place (with the debaters taking the reverse positions) in San Diego, California, during the SOT Annual Meeting, March 22nd – 26th.

In addition to the contributions from invited speakers, more than 1,000 abstracts were received from around the world for posters presentations. Poster presentations also contributed to make EUROTX 2015 an exceptional scientific event, through the quality of research and innovation presented, consolidated by prolific scientific discussions and the establishment or reinforcement of scientific networks.

Special thanks are due to all colleagues and societies for their contribution with proposals for sessions and in particular to the Scientific Programme Committee of EUROTX 2015, chaired by the EUROTX President Prof. Aristidis Tsatsakis, for the excellence of the sessions and presentations, as well as for the revising contributions to this special issue in support to the 2015 Local Scientific Committee, chaired by Prof. Félix Carvalho.

Featuring in the UNESCO’s World Heritage list, since 1996, warrants Porto’s natural, cultural and historical attraction. Porto is also renowned for its gastronomy and the famous Port wines. We were honored to welcome the EUROTX delegates from all over the world and to offer the opportunity to not only establish and reinforce scientific networks, and share the advancements and insights in Toxicology, but also to experience the hospitality of this beautiful city of the northern region of Portugal.

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