



CONFERENCE REPORT

11-12 December 2020

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME.....	10
YING ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND FACULTY	12
THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF ATTENDEES	14
EVALUATION REPORT	16
THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	17
KEY STATISTICS.....	17
RESULTS.....	18
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	30

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are over 2.5 million people with HIV living in the European region¹. Over the last three decades, tremendous advances have been made. While overall treatment opportunities have greatly evolved and those diagnosed early have the same life span as non-HIV infected people, PrEP and early test and treatment strategies are not equally available Europe-wide, resulting in a still impressive 140,000 new cases each year². Of these, a significant number are diagnosed in a late stage.

Meanwhile, key experts who have been there from the beginning of the epidemic start to retire and young doctors who have less access to expertise and reduced experience with complex patients are dealing with changing models of care and increasing mobile populations requiring Europe-wide insights.

In this framework stimulation of a new generation of key opinion leaders from all over Europe is essential. It is the mission of EACS to stimulate synergies among talented young professionals and to provide YING with a continuous platform for exchange of knowledge and experiences and for setting up relevant collaborations throughout Europe.

Following the previous YING meeting held in Brussels in 2018, the participants recommended a yearly meeting to reinforce the network and guarantee continuous exchange of information and pooling of ideas. The YING Conference 2020 is now in its third edition and in the continuity of the YING symposium that took place at the 17th European AIDS Conference (EACS 2019).

The YING Conference 2020 envisioned to promote continuous connection of a group of young clinicians to interactively discuss the latest insights in the field taking into account perspectives from different areas and disciplines.

Learning objectives

The objectives of YING are to promote young clinicians' expertise in HIV throughout a very high scientific level conference, headed in collaboration with a steering committee composed of four key experts. They support and help the Young HIV Experts/Investigators with the following objectives:

- > Develop a high-level scientific programme;
- > Gather experts/investigators, particularly young physicians to share their visions in the future management of patients infected with HIV;
- > Provide opportunities to publish in a prestigious journal an overview of the meeting drafted by the faculty.

1. HIV/AIDS surveillance in Europe 2019. 2018 data – World Health Organization- Regional Office for Europe
2. UNAIDS. UNAIDS Data 2019. Available from: https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/2019-UNAIDS-data_en.pdf (last accessed December 2019)

Activity Description

The EACS Young Investigators (YING) is an educational project aiming to foster exchanges among young HIV experts across Europe.

The third YING Conference was planned from 11-12 December 2020 at the Royal Academies for Science and the Arts in Brussels, but the current Sars-Cov-2 pandemic prevented the secretariat from organising an in-person event in serene conditions. Therefore, the YING Organising Committee with the support of the EACS Bureau made the decision to organise the YING Conference 2020 online, on the same dates as initially planned.

The two-day event involved plenaries and workshops. The scientific programme was established by a faculty of young talented clinicians following discussion at the 17th European AIDS Conference (EACS 2019) guided by an organising committee of four senior experts. The programme was built up by plenary lectures and interactive workshops on a variety of currently utterly relevant themes dealing with clinical issues, care practices, scientific advances and patient participation. The participants were able to follow online the six workshops and discuss the following topics: Be funded! / YINGers: Where are they? / COVID 19 & HIV / Contraception, pregnancy and breastfeeding / Clinical cases / Public and patient involvement.

The YING Conference 2020 is accredited by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME®) for a maximum of 6 European CME credits (ECMEC®s).

Key sessions synopses

This meeting featured plenary sessions, workshops and panel discussions.

THE FIVE PLENARIES

The use of neutralising AB in clinical studies

ART prevents and suppresses HIV-1 replication but does not eradicate the long-lived latent reservoir of integrated proviruses. A small fraction of HIV-1-infected individuals develop antibodies that effectively neutralise the majority of existing HIV-1 isolates. This neutralising activity is due to one or a combination of monoclonal antibodies that target different non-overlapping epitopes on the HIV-1 envelope. Immunotherapy with broadly neutralising antibodies may be an alternative or an adjuvant to ART because, in addition to preventing new infections, anti-HIV-1 antibodies are able to clear the virus, directly kill infected cells and produce immune complexes that can enhance host immunity to the virus. In this state-of-the-art plenary session, the discovery a development of neutralising antibodies as well the current applications in (pre-)clinical studies were discussed.

Learning objectives

1. To understand the mechanisms and implications of HIV latency;
2. To summarise the evidence for naturally occurring neutralising antibodies and their clinical implications;
3. To interpret the current evidence for broadly neutralising antibodies and their potential therapeutic/preventative utility.

Tops & flops in the field

There have been a number of new developments in HIV treatment, including the inclusion of two-drug regimens in the 2019 EACS & DHHS Guidelines and ever-increasing use of integrase inhibitors. This session highlighted guidelines updates and emerging concerns related to newer drugs. The ethics of gaining new data when many people are virologically suppressed was reviewed. Finally, this session focused on how the next evolution of HIV treatment and injectables can be best integrated and put into practice; what the data gaps are and how new developments can be ensured and are implemented in a safe, cost-effective manner.

Learning objectives

1. To describe changes to consensus HIV treatment guidelines and the data driving these;
2. To consider the ethical issues of modern antiretroviral research;
3. To appraise the evidence for injectable ART and its potential benefits and challenges.

Acute HIV infection: State of the art

Recognising and diagnosing acute HIV infection is crucial to link patients to care early and presents an important opportunity for prevention. In addition to the well-documented public health benefit, early initiation of antiretroviral therapy (ART) has a number of beneficial effects including improved preservation of immunologic function, significantly reduced time to viral suppression, reduction of the viral reservoir, and importantly improved long-term complications of untreated HIV such as bone health, cardiovascular disease, malignancies, amongst many others. In this state-of-the-art plenary, the clinical picture, diagnosis and therapy of acute HIV infection were presented, accompanied with data from centres who have led the way in treating acute HIV infection.

Learning objectives

1. To recognise the key features of acute HIV and barriers to timely diagnosis;
2. To critique the evidence for immediate ART in people with acute HIV;
3. To describe the real-life outcomes of acute HIV management and how to implement lessons learned.

Models of care

The HIV landscape has dramatically changed, and HIV infection is now considered a long-term, manageable chronic disease. Although there are some differences among European countries in the 90-90-90 goals, chronicity challenges and quality of life is a primordial objective in our clinics.

In this plenary, different European models of care, highlighting pitfalls and opportunities for people living with HIV were reviewed. Innovative models of care, such as the “chronic care model” and patient-centered model were discussed as well as new technologies such as machine learning, and artificial intelligence that could help clinicians change the standards of care at an individual and population level.

Learning objectives

1. To describe different models of HIV care across Europe and their pros/cons;
2. To summarise guidance applicable to non-HIV specialties & primary care, and models for information sharing;
3. To identify opportunities to embrace new models and technology in an era of ageing and increasing co-morbidity.

Bridging East vs West Europe in light of the HIV epidemic

European HIV clinicians and researchers should battle HIV together and look beyond their borders. This is especially true in light of the rising HIV epidemic in the East in contrast to falling numbers of new HIV infections in the West. This plenary provided an overview of the current HIV epidemic and discordant HIV care facilities in Europe, illustrated solutions, and offered best practices that can be applied in clinics all over Europe.

Learning objectives

1. To summarise the epidemiology of HIV in Eastern & Western Europe;
2. To highlight the key gaps and challenges in HIV diagnosis and care for each geographical region;
3. To review lessons learned in meeting HIV targets and which may be transferable to other regions.

THE SIX WORKSHOPS

Be funded!

This interactive workshop gave young researchers the opportunity to explore multiple pathways for securing funding for HIV-related research projects. Early-career researchers with big ideas were invited to brainstorm on how to best be successful in receiving funding for their projects as well as on how to cope with the unavoidable pitfalls, drawbacks and disappointments of securing funding.

YINGers: Where are they?

In order to guide EACS' ambition to grow YING and ensure it is appropriately inclusive, a questionnaire was undertaken for existing YING members and new participants in the YING Conference 2020. The responses were collated to facilitate a wide discussion around issues that young doctors face in training, for example, “Do you feel there is pressure to be both a clinician and a researcher?”. The aim was to have an open debate about the challenges and pitfalls of training in HIV in a non-threatening, open atmosphere. The moderators shared their personal YING experience and journey.

COVID-19 & HIV

2020 will be recorded as the COVID-19 pandemic year. This novel and challenging disease has stressed healthcare systems to limits never seen before. Knowledge of COVID-19 and HIV co-infection has evolved fast as everything during this atypical year. The session addressed some questions still open in December 2020: Are there special precautions to be taken for people living with HIV? Do people living with HIV have a lower risk for COVID-19 infection? And if this is the case, what are the causes? What has been the impact of lockdown and social distancing on adherence, psychosocial well-being, and isolation in people living with HIV? What has been the impact on prevention programmes (Testing and PrEP)? Has this been different among European countries?

Contraception, pregnancy and breastfeeding

More than half the people living with HIV worldwide are women, many of childbearing age. This workshop provided a comprehensive overview on pregnancy planning, management of HIV during pregnancy and delivery, including ART and non-ART aspects, breastfeeding and contraception in women living with HIV. Different scenarios that might occur in Eastern and Western Europe were considered and other relevant issues for women reviewed including PrEP, HPV screening and vaccination and drug-drug interactions.

Clinical cases

Clinical cases on HIV, PrEP, and STIs sent by YING Conference 2020 participants were discussed during this workshop. These clinical cases were reviewed and selected by the moderators of the workshop as well as prepared with the authors before the conference. The three clinical cases discussed were on HIV and COVID-19, Unusual skin lesions in HIV positive patient in the COVID-19 era, and Management of tuberculosis in an HIV positive patient.

Public and patient involvement

This workshop explored the different ways researchers could embed patients into study planning and design, the ways that a patient could be involved and engaged in research, how this would benefit the young researchers, and what both they and the patient might gain on that journey.

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

Friday, December 11, 2020 Afternoon			
13:00-13:05	Address from the Steering Committee		Nathan Clumeck (Belgium)
13:07-13:25	Plenary 1	The use of neutralising AB in clinical studies	Philipp Schommers (Germany)
13:27-13:46	Plenary 2	Tops & flops in the field	Laura Waters (United Kingdom)
13:48-14:11	Plenary 3	Acute HIV infection: State of the art	Maximilian C. Aichelburg (Austria) & Dominic Rowley (Ireland)
14:11-14:20	Coffee break		
14:20-14:50	Panel discussion		<i>Chair:</i> Annemarie Wensing (Netherlands) <i>Discussants:</i> Maximilian C. Aichelburg (Austria) & Adrian Curran (Spain) & Philipp Schommers (Germany) & Dominic Rowley (Ireland) & Laura Waters (United Kingdom)
14:55-15:35	Workshop 1	Be funded!	Maximilian C. Aichelburg (Austria) & Casper Rokx (Netherlands) & Oana Sandulescu (Romania)
15:40-16:20	Workshop 2	YINGers: Where are they?	Dominic Rowley (Ireland) & Agata Skrzat-Klapaczyńska (Poland)
16:25-17:05	Workshop 3	Covid-19 & HIV	José I. Bernardino (Spain) & Silvia Nozza (Italy)
17:05-17:20	Networking session		

Saturday, December 12, 2020 Morning			
09:00-09:05	Introduction		Tristan Barber (United Kingdom)
09:07-09:27	Plenary 4	Models of care	José I. Bernardino (Spain) & Markus Bickel (Germany)
09:30-09:50	Plenary 5	Bridging East vs West Europe in light of the HIV epidemic	Casper Rokx (Netherlands) & Marta Vasylyev (Ukraine)
9:55-10:25	Panel discussion		<i>Chair:</i> Laura Waters (United Kingdom) <i>Discussants:</i> José I. Bernardino (Spain) & Markus Bickel (Germany) & Casper Rokx (Netherlands) & Oana Sandulescu (Romania) & Marta Vasylyev (Ukraine)
10:25-10:35	Coffee break		
10:35-11:15	Workshop 4	Contraception, pregnancy and breastfeeding	Adrian Curran (Spain) & Christine Gilles (Belgium) & Marta Vasylyev (Ukraine)
11:20-12:00	Workshop 5	Clinical cases	Hazal Erdem (Turkey) & Mikhail Savchenko (Russia) & Jochen Schneider (Germany) <i>Moderators:</i> Markus Bickel (Germany) & Agnès Libois (Belgium)
12:05-12:45	Workshop 6	Public and patient involvement	Tristan Barber (United Kingdom) & Ben Cromarty (United Kingdom) & Renee Finkenflügel (Netherlands)

YING ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND FACULTY



THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

- **Tristan Barber**
Royal Free London NHS
Foundation Trust London
London, United Kingdom
- **Nathan Clumeck** (Chair)
Saint-Pierre University Hospital
Brussels, Belgium
- **Laura Water**
Mortimer Market Centre, Central
and North West London NHS
Foundation Trust
London, United Kingdom
- **Annemarie Wensing**
University Medical Center Utrecht
Utrecht, Netherlands

THE YING FACULTY

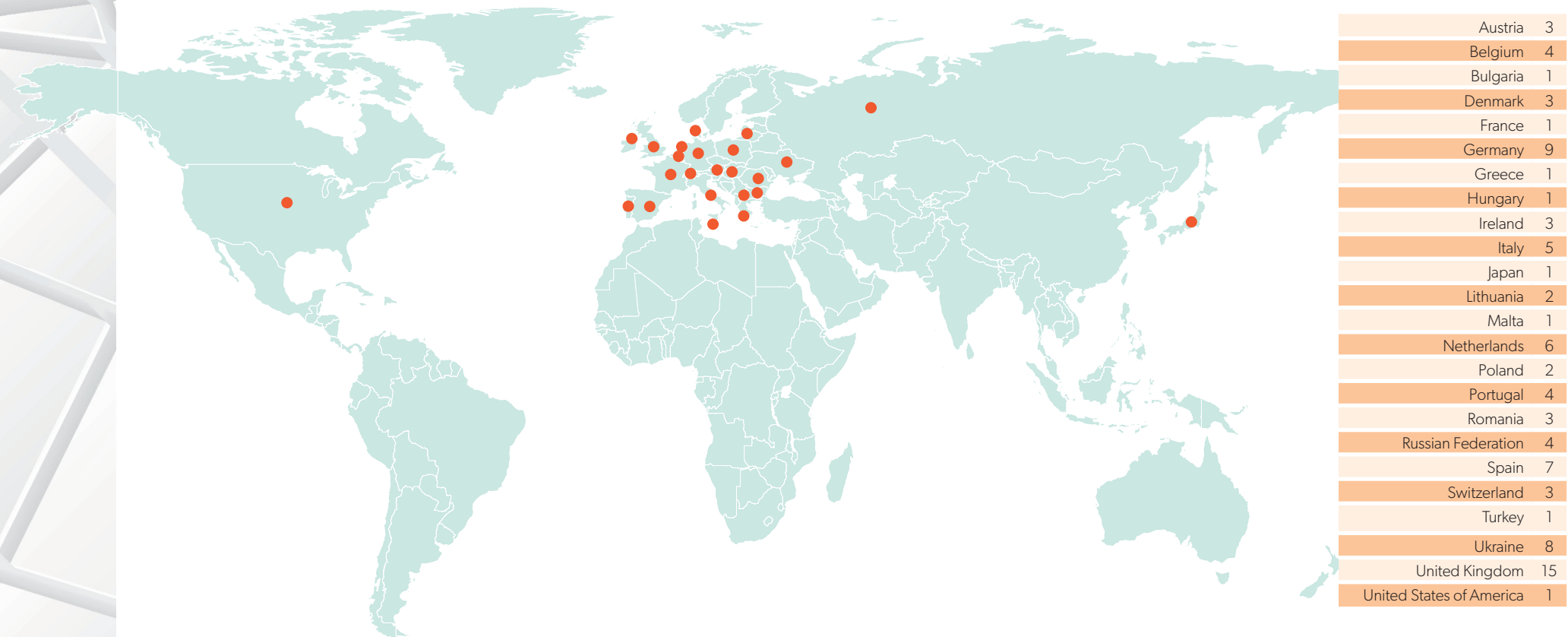
- **Maximilian C. Aichelburg**
Sozialmedizinisches Zentrum
Ost-Donauspital
Vienna, Austria
- **José Ignacio Bernardino**
Hospital Universitario La Paz
Madrid, Spain
- **Markus Bickel**
Infektiologikum
Frankfurt, Germany
- **Adrian Curran**
Hospital Universitari Vall
d'Hebron
Barcelona, Spain
- **Christine Gilles**
Saint-Pierre University Hospital
Brussels, Belgium
- **Agnès Libois**
Saint-Pierre University Hospital
Brussels, Belgium
- **Silvia Nozza**
Ospedale San Raffaele,
Milan, Italy
- **Casper Rokx**
Erasmus - University Medical
Center Rotterdam
Rotterdam, Netherlands
- **Dominic Rowley**
Midlands Regional Hospital
Portlaoise, Ireland
- **Oana Săndulescu**
Matei Bals Institute for Infectious
Diseases
Bucharest, Romania
- **Agata Skrzat-Klapaczyńska**
Medical University of Warsaw
Warsaw, Poland
- **Christoph D. Spinner**
University Hospital Klinikum
rechts de Isar (TUM)
Munich, Germany
- **Marta Vasylyev**
Lviv Regional Public Health Center
Lviv, Ukraine

THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF ATTENDEES

This two-day conference targeted young experts specialised in the field of HIV/AIDS. The participants had to fulfil the following criteria in order to be invited to the conference:

- >Be a medical doctor and/or be involved in clinical trials in the field of HIV;
- >Be at early stage of HIV career;
- >Have published in international journals or be involved in clinical trials;
- >Have proven ability in interaction of the English language.

The 89 attendees came from 24 countries and represented the four European regions (East, North, South, West) plus the rest of the World (USA and Japan). Among them, 81.5% were physicians, 7.7% were researchers and 10.8% had another specialty.



EVALUATION REPORT

THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The meeting attendees received a SurveyMonkey link (an online platform that specialises in gathering data in a digital format). Data was analysed in Excel to measure how the meeting was perceived by attendees and to gain insights on ways to enhance the programme in the future. Of the 89 attendees, 66 provided their feedback, with the number of responses varying between questions.

There were 35 questions asked in total and the responses are displayed along with the number of respondents, plus the number who skipped the question (for transparency). The questions relating to the use of the platform online will not be detailed here.

All quantitative results are displayed as either 100% stacked column bar charts or clustered column bar charts produced in excel. The qualitative results have been edited for grammatical purposes only (the sentiment has not been changed). Furthermore, as there was repetition in the responses received, we have only included the responses of different opinions to provide as much breadth and representation from the attendees as possible.

The raw data was analysed by the EACS Secretariat, and writing support was provided by Nex&Com Agency, a medical education and communications agency based in Paris. If you have any questions about the data within the report, please contact the EACS Secretariat at info@eacsociety.org.

KEY STATISTICS

Overall, **92.5%** of respondents were very satisfied/satisfied of the YING Conference 2020.

Over **79%** of respondents rated the sessions on Day 1 as extremely useful/useful and over **84%** of attendees rated the sessions on Day 2 as extremely useful/useful.

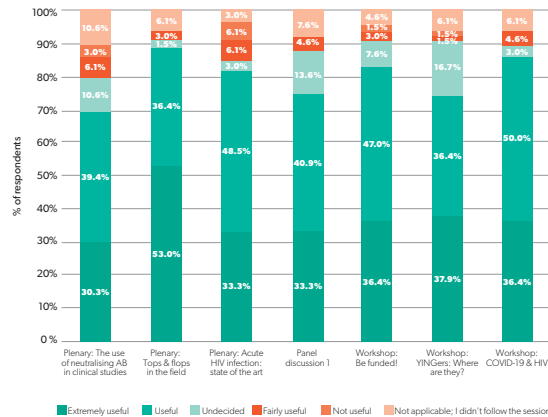
90.8% of respondents thought that the event fulfilled the educational goals and learning outcomes.

63.1% of respondents said that they intended to modify their clinical practice based on this educational activity.

95.4% of respondents would recommend the EACS YING Conference to their colleagues.

RESULTS

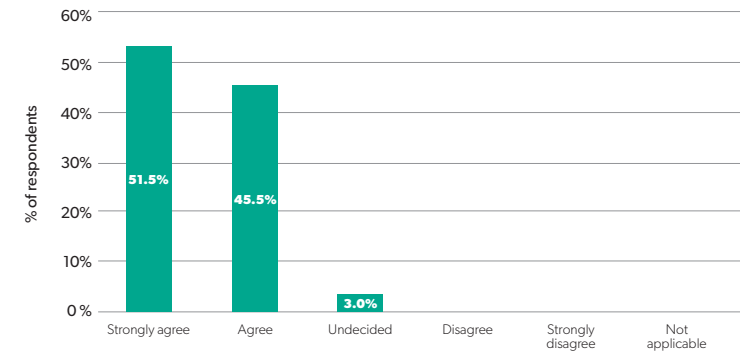
Question 1: DAY 1 (11-12-2020) How useful to you personally was each session?



Number of respondents = 66

79.9% of the respondents found the sessions on Day 1 to be extremely useful/useful.

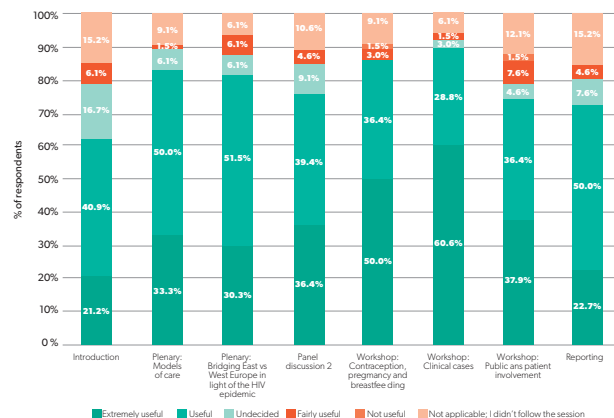
Question 3: The content was presented clearly



Number of respondents = 66

97% of the respondents found the content was presented clearly.

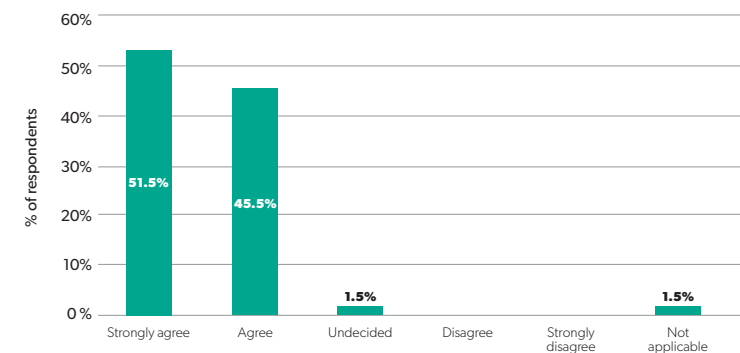
Question 2: DAY 2 (12-12-2020) How useful to you personally was each session?



Number of respondents = 66

84.2% of the respondents found the sessions on Day 2 to be extremely useful/useful.

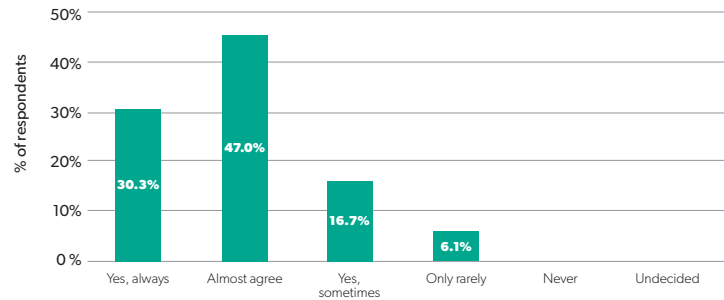
Question 4: The presented information was well balanced and consistently supported by a valid scientific evidence base



Number of respondents = 66

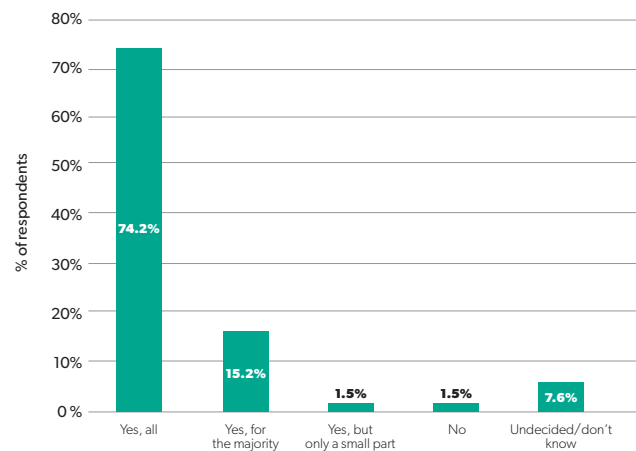
97% of the respondents found the presented information was well balanced and consistently supported by a valid scientific evidence base.

Question 5: Was there adequate time available for discussions, Q&A and learner engagement?



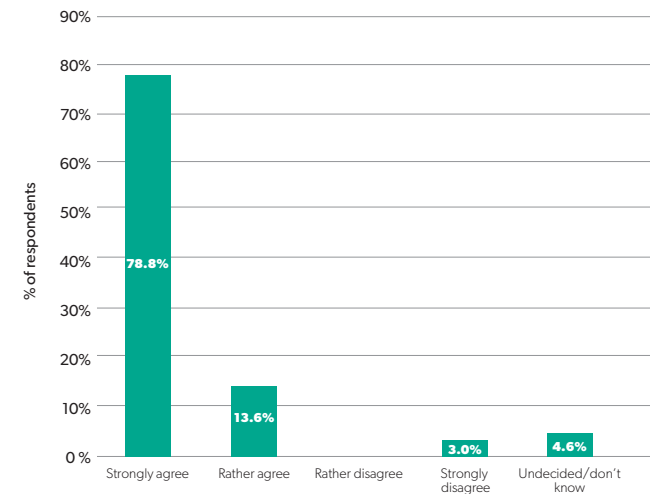
Number of respondents = 66

Question 6: Did all faculty members provide their potential conflict of interest declaration with the sponsor(s) as a second slide of their presentation?



Number of respondents = 66

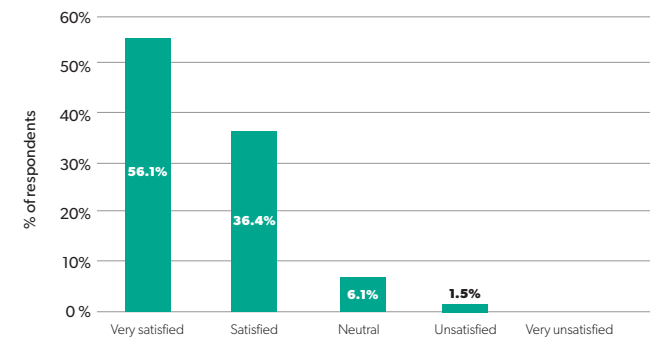
Question 7: The information was overall free of commercial and other bias (free of commercial influence)



Number of respondents = 66

92.4% of the respondents found the information was overall free of commercial and other bias (free of commercial influence).

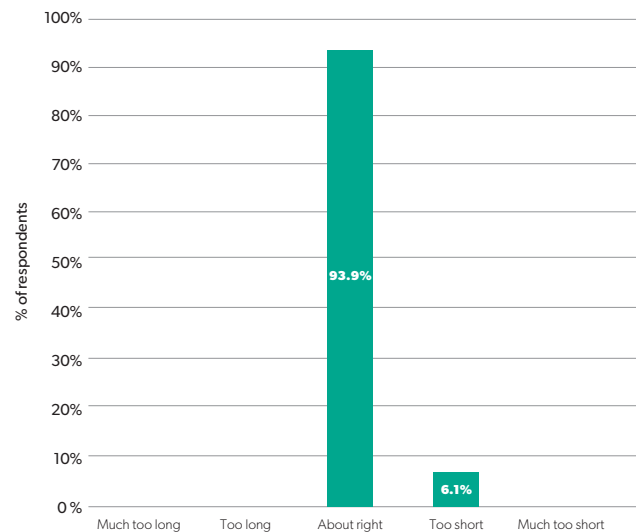
Question 8: Overall, how satisfied were you with the event?



Number of respondents = 66

92.5% of the respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the event.

Question 9: Was there adequate time available for discussions, Q&A and learner engagement?



Number of respondents = 66

Question 10: What did you like about this event?

- Excellent organisation
- The very good collaboration and respect between people / Good representation across Europe
- Very good programme: interesting materials for lectures, the speaker's enthusiasm, topics clinically relevant and various, new information, young and dynamic speakers
- The content was free of influence from the industries.
- Seniors take time to present their data, concepts and ideas for inspiration of young scientists.
- Interaction & networking: possibilities to interact with the faculty and the attendees, interesting discussions, critical thinking and discussions, excellent panelists
- Best virtual congress in 2020!

Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

Question 11: What did you dislike about this event?

- The online meeting for everybody. It is not the same, questions and net-working more difficult / No face-to-face meetings.
- Internet and connection problems / technical problems
- The interruptions at the end of discussion for time constraints
- The slides were way too small on the screen.

Number of respondents = 66

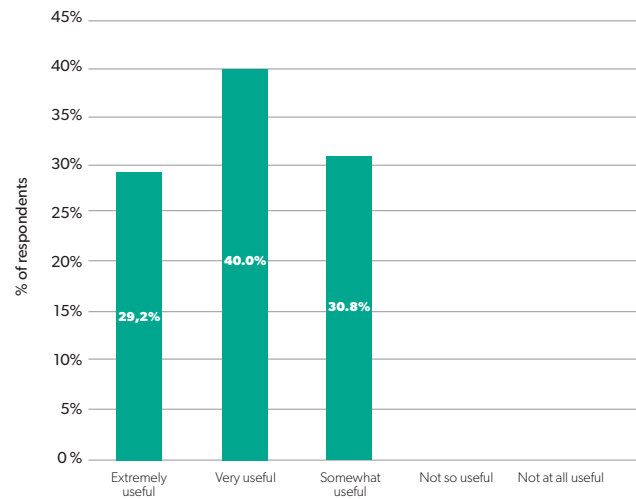
15% of respondents could not find anything they did not like.

Question 12: What are some aspects we can improve upon for the next event?

- The possibility to organise a face-to-face meeting obviously
- Zoom or another platform would have been more interactive.
- About the content:
 - Maybe include a YING-poster session where people can practise presenting ongoing work
 - More clinical cases and practical recommendations
 - A strong focus on new research about HIV cure and immunology
 - Propose learning / research groups for specific topics (i.e. improving HIV diagnosis, management of chronic comorbidities ...) to start networking after the event
 - Having more non-medical/patient experts (like in PPI session). Adding new aspects of the research process, as it was with PPI
- Include YING basic researchers and epidemiologists
- More interaction / more time for discussion and networking

Number of respondents = 66

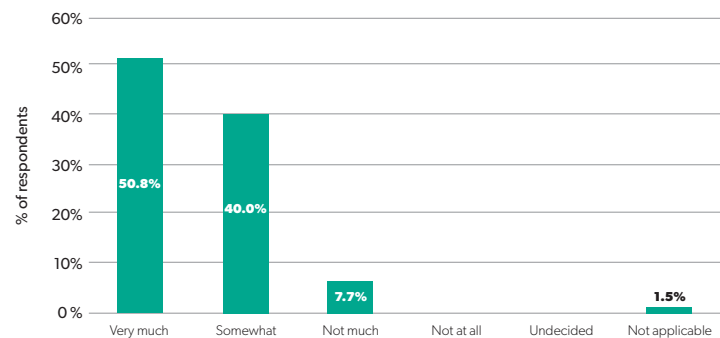
Question 13: How useful for your professional activity did you find the event?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

69.2% of respondents found the event extremely useful/very useful for their professional activity.

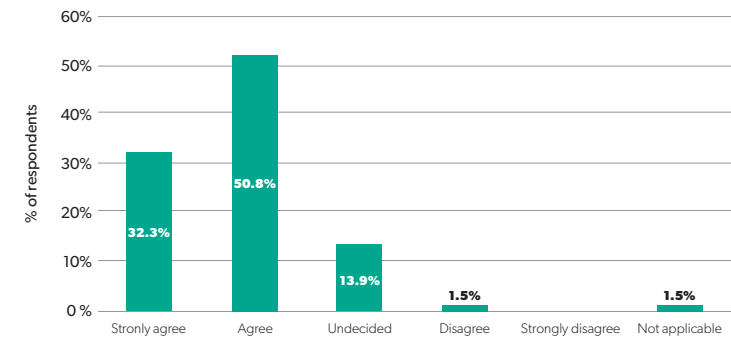
Question 14: Did the YING Conference fulfil your educational goals and expected learning outcomes?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

90.8% of respondents thought that the event fulfilled the educational goals and learning outcomes.

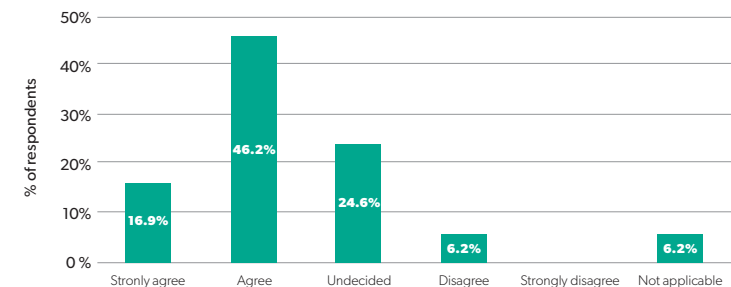
Question 15: Will you implement what you learned in your practice?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

83.1% of the respondents said that they will implement what they learned in their practice.

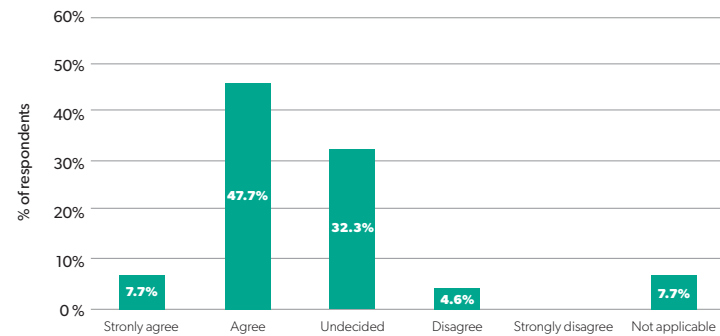
Question 16: Do you intend to modify/change your clinical practice based on this educational activity?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

63.1% of the respondents will modify/change their clinical practice based on this educational activity.

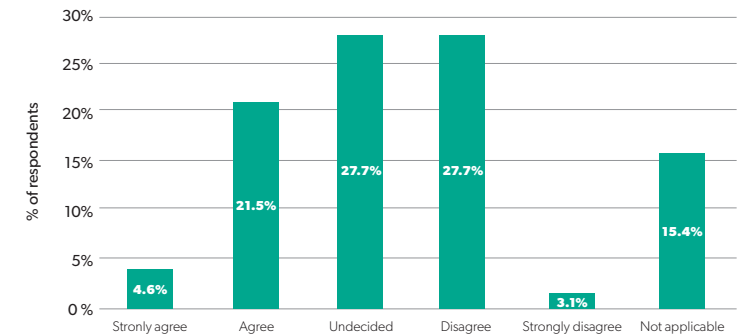
Question 17: Can your practice and practice system accommodate these changes?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

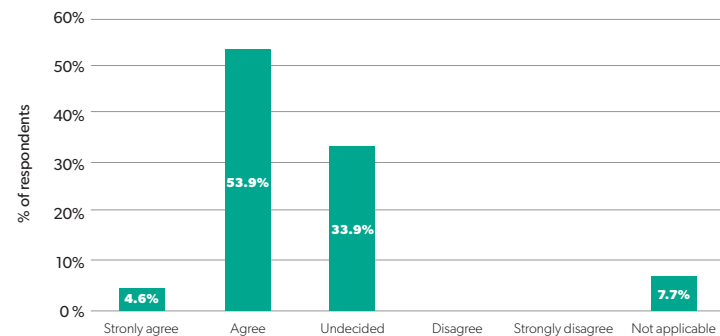
55.4% of the respondents think their practice and practice system could accommodate these changes.

Question 19: Will patient access to the treatments provided be a barrier to implementing these changes?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

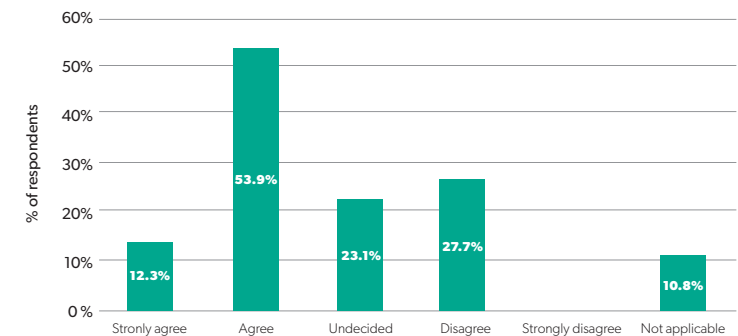
Question 18: Can your patients accommodate these changes?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

58.5% of the respondents think their patients could accommodate these changes.

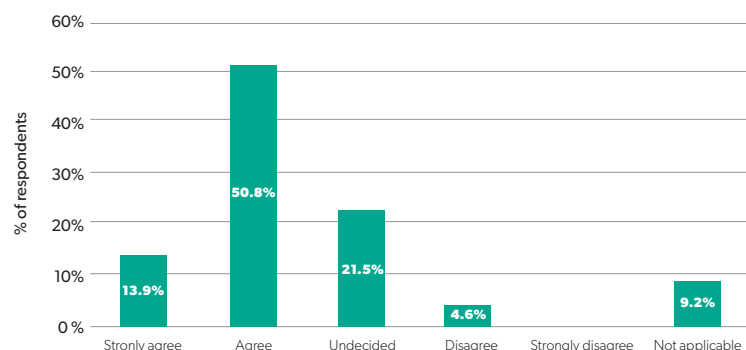
Question 20: On average, did you utilise the patient treatment strategies described in this educational activity prior to your participation?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

66.2% of the respondents utilise the patient treatment strategies described in this educational activity prior to their participation.

Question 21: Do you intend to modify/change your clinical practice based on this educational activity?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

64.7% of the respondents intend to modify/change their clinical practice based on this educational activity.

Question 22: What did you like about this event?

- Congratulations to all the organisers
- Thank you for providing events of such high quality and allow us to keep the connection with friends from abroad
- Have the possibility to reach these videos and presentations in the resource library or other place of the EACS website
- Would be nice if the presenters had more time to finish their talks and not have their sentences cut off because of time limits
- Size of slides too small

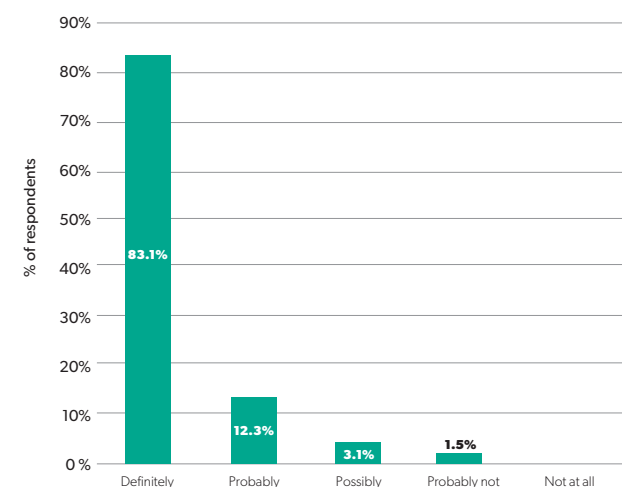
Number of respondents = 28; 38 respondents skipped this question.

Question 23: What was your main priority when attending the YING Conference 2020?

- Networking with peers, interact with colleagues, meeting other young researchers in the field
- Sharing experience, knowledge, and best practices
- Learning from other HIV specialists around Europe

Number of respondents = 46; 20 respondents skipped this question.

Question 24: Would you recommend the EACS YING Conference to your colleagues?



Number of respondents = 65; 1 respondent skipped this question.

95.4% of the respondents would recommend the EACS YING Conference to their colleagues.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the YING Organising Committee, we would like to thank the expert speakers who were involved. It would not have been possible to create such a programme without them. We are truly grateful for their investment and look forward to working with them all again in the future. Their names and countries are all below:

- **Maximilian C. Aichelburg,**
Austria
- **Tristan Barber,**
United Kingdom
- **José Ignacio Bernardino,**
Spain
- **Markus Bickel,**
Germany
- **Nathan Clumeck,**
Belgium
- **Ben Cromarty,**
United Kingdom
- **Adrian Curran,**
Spain
- **Hazal Erdem,**
Turkey
- **Renee Flinkenflügel,**
Netherlands
- **Christine Gilles,**
Belgium
- **Agnès Libois,**
Belgium
- **Silvia Nozza,**
Italy
- **Casper Rokx,**
Netherlands
- **Dominic Rowley,**
Ireland
- **Oana Săndulescu,**
Romania
- **Mikhail Savchenko,**
Russian Federation
- **Jochen Schneider,**
Germany
- **Philipp Schommers,**
Germany
- **Agata Skrzat-Klapaczyńska,**
Poland
- **Christoph D. Spinner,**
Germany
- **Marta Vasylyev,**
Ukraine
- **Laura Waters,**
United Kingdom
- **Annemarie Wensing,**
Netherlands

The European AIDS Clinical Society Governing Board would like to express their gratitude to Nathan Clumeck who has chaired YING since 2016. The YING Conference 2020 was his last YING meeting as Chair. Thanks to his mentorship and visionary leadership, YING is now a well-established group of young HIV specialists within EACS.

The YING Organising Committee wishes to thank the EACS Secretariat and the Nex&Com Agency for their contribution in making the YING Conference 2020 successful.

The European AIDS Clinical Society would like to thank ViiV Healthcare for their support in part in the form of an educational grant.

YING | EACS Young
Investigators
Conference



EACS
European
AIDS
Clinical
Society