

European Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy

ESGE: Leading The Future of Surgical Education, Innovation, and Collaboration

The European Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy (ESGE) is dedicated to advancing excellence in gynaecological endoscopy by promoting education, scientific research, innovation, and international collaboration.

OVERVIEW

Founded in 1989, ESGE is one of the world's leading organisations dedicated to advancing minimally invasive gynaecological surgery. Bringing together more than 5,000 members and 25 National Affiliated Societies from over 75 countries, the ESGE promotes excellence through education, scientific collaboration, research, guideline development, and international networking.

One of the greatest challenges facing minimally invasive gynaecological surgery is the variation in training and clinical practice across Europe. Surgeons often have access to different educational opportunities, technologies, and operative experience depending on where they train. As surgical techniques continue to evolve rapidly, ensuring that clinicians develop validated technical skills and deliver consistently high standards of care has become increasingly important.

To address this challenge, the ESGE has significantly expanded its educational activities and strengthened collaboration between European centres. Under the leadership of President Ertan Saridogan, the Society has broadened participation across its committees and Special Interest Groups (SIG), bringing together experts from different countries to advance key areas, including laparoscopy, hysteroscopy, robotics, imaging, reproductive surgery, and surgical education. These groups develop educational programmes, facilitate collaboration, and enable the sharing of expertise across Europe.

Education remains at the heart of the Society's mission. Through the ESGE Academy and the Gynaecological



Endoscopic Surgical Education and Assessment (GESEA) programme, surgeons have access to structured training that combines theoretical learning, simulation, practical assessment, and internationally recognised certification. The Young Endoscopists Platform (YEP) further supports trainees by facilitating international educational exchanges, allowing young surgeons to gain experience at recognised European centres before attending the Annual Congress. Together, these initiatives help harmonise surgical standards while fostering collaboration between institutions and countries.

Keeping pace with innovation presents another major challenge for the specialty. Robotic surgery, advanced imaging, simulation, AI, and new surgical technologies continue to transform minimally invasive gynaecology. However, adopting new techniques without appropriate training or robust clinical evidence risks compromising patient safety. The ESGE advocates for responsible innovation, ensuring that new technologies

are introduced alongside high-quality education, structured skills assessment, and evidence-based clinical guidance.

Managing increasingly complex benign gynaecological conditions also requires closer collaboration between specialties. Women with severe endometriosis, deep infiltrating disease, complex pelvic pathology, or congenital anomalies often require coordinated care involving gynaecological surgeons, colorectal surgeons, urologists, radiologists, fertility specialists, and pain teams. Recognising this, the ESGE promotes multidisciplinary education through its SIGs, hands-on cadaveric courses, and scientific meetings that encourage collaboration across disciplines and countries.

One example of this commitment is the ESGE Hands-on Laparoscopic Cadaveric Dissection Course introduced in the UK by the SIG for Training and Education chaired by Lina Antoun. The course brought together faculty from across Europe, including Ertan Saridogan, Chair of Fibroids & Adenomyosis; Helder Ferreira, ESGE Academy Faculty; Andreas Hackethal, Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist, Frauenklinik an der Elbe, Hamburg, Germany; and Smruta Shanbhag, Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, UK, and provides advanced practical training in pelvic anatomy and complex laparoscopic surgery while encouraging the exchange of surgical experience between international experts.

The ESGE Annual Congress remains the Society's flagship educational event, bringing together surgeons, researchers, trainees, and industry partners from around the world to discuss emerging evidence, share new techniques, and explore the latest developments in minimally invasive gynaecological surgery. The 35th ESGE Annual Congress will take place in Kraków,

Poland, from 4th–7th October 2026, with an extensive programme of pre-Congress workshops offering additional opportunities for practical training.

The ESGE also recognises that optimal surgical and non-surgical management in contemporary gynaecology requires the creation and dissemination of evidence, so it has established its own international, scientific, peer-reviewed, open-access journal.

As minimally invasive gynaecological surgery continues to evolve, the ESGE remains committed to strengthening education, supporting international collaboration, and promoting evidence-based practice. By harmonising surgical training and encouraging responsible innovation, the society continues to improve standards of care and surgical outcomes for women across Europe and beyond.

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