

**10-year report of the EPODES course in Epilepsy Surgery in Brno in
Czech Republic, 2008-2018**

ILAE - CEA

1st EPODES Course on Epilepsy Surgery

**March 18–23, 2008
Brno, Czech Republic**



**ILAE Comprehensive Epilepsy Surgery Course Series
8th EPODES - Basic Epilepsy Surgery Course**

Brno, Czech Republic, 22-26 January 2018

**CONTINENTAL Hotel
Brno, Czech Republic, www.continentalbrno.cz**



The idea of organising a course emerged when Cigdem Özkara was secretary of the CEA in 2007. The commission formed a steering committee including Peter Halasz who was also a member of CEA, Walter Van Emde Boas, Kristina Malmgren, Bertil Rydenhag and Ivan Rektor. The main aim at that time was to provide necessary knowhow to the Eastern European countries with restricted resources and who had not developed any epilepsy surgery programs yet.

Professor Özkara designed a project denoted EPODES (European Project on Development of Epilepsy Surgery) which consisted of three modules: Courses, visiting fellowship (VF) and visiting professorships (VP). The students who participated in the courses would be eligible to apply for a VF program to spend 3 months in a host institute. The host institutes were the ones who had declared their willingness to accommodate a fellow after receiving informative invitation from the project organisers. An expert on epilepsy surgery who was accepted to spend one month at a host institute (whose member/s had already attended the course) would be the VP. The cost would be 500 \$ for VP and 1500 \$ for VF.

The venue for the course was discussed among the members of the committee and Brno was decided on due to both its localisation almost in the middle of Europe and the cost effectiveness. CEA approved this Project and the first course was organised in 2008 in Brno where Ivan Rektor was the vice rektor of the university. Therefore the university resources could be utilised for accommodation and the meeting itself. There were 21 tutors and 31 students mainly from East Europe and a few from South America and one from Africa. Attendance and accommodation were free for almost all of them and for a number of students travel costs were also reimbursed.

That year Prof. W. Van Emde Boas visited Bucharest as VP while a neurosurgeon from Armenia visited Motol Epilepsy Center in Prague and Petia Dimova from Bulgaria visited Grenoble as VF. A very concrete result of the first course is that participants (students) from that course started epilepsy surgery programs in Bulgaria and in Serbia, both programs have been very successful and sustainable and are still running.

After a two year pause the course was repeated in Brno in January 2011 with 50 students, this time in Hotel Continental which has hosted the following courses since then. Unfortunately VP and VF modules were not realized any more as they were not further financed by the CEA.

From 2011 the course has been successfully repeated every year (with between 40-50 participants) and the steering committee decided to make some modifications in 2014, changing the concept into a course cycle with three courses: basic, advanced and pediatric with palliative interventions. Moreover it was decided to target not only eastern Europe since there was an increasing demand from other parts of the world. The multinational (mainly european, but lately also american) tutors represent a wide spectrum of epilepsy surgery programs. Although the abbreviated name included Europe (EPODES), it was decided not to change the name as it was a well known brand after so many years. It became possible also to open up for bursaries for students outside Europe from 2015 due to new economical support from the ILAE Surgical Commission.

In total 388 students has participated in the EPODES courses from 2008 up to 2018.

There are other courses on epilepsy surgery of which some are technical (the SEEG-courses) and others research oriented (San Servolo courses) but the unique feature of the EPODES course cycle is that it is so comprehensive, thoroughly introducing the concept of the multidisciplinary team and how it works and covering many aspects of surgical treatment, not least the comprehensive outcomes.