



This Newsletter brings you all the news and announcements from the Early Career Scientists' Association (ECSA).

If you have any feedback, questions or ideas, feel free to contact us on: [ecsa@iarc.fr](mailto:ecsa@iarc.fr).

For more information on the featured topics, check out the [SharePoint](#) or follow us on [twitter](#).

## ECSA new features

### ❖ ECSA Blog

Life as a researcher is not only about science, so we decided to create this blog as a **place to share experiences**. In the 2nd post, Shama Virani, a former IARC postdoc, shared with us her experience on changing from postdoc to P-staff position.

Visit the blog page on [ECSA Sharepoint](#) to read more about her story!



**We are looking for volunteers** to write contributions! Your post can discuss any topics that you could think of, including your life as a scientist, your tips, and of course... science!

## Did you know?

- ❖ The IARC [Career Prospects Portal](#) is a joint collaboration between ECSA and ETR to meet the needs expressed by Early Career Scientists for guidance and resources on career development. On this useful intranet portal, you will find:
  - Tools to reflect on your professional project, to look for a job and create a professional network, prepare for job interview
  - **A list of job opportunities!!!** Please also send any job opening you are aware of to [jobecsa@iarc.fr](mailto:jobecsa@iarc.fr)
  - A **Job Application Clinic**: A personalized and confidential service to assess your job application (your cover letter and CV) provided for free by Anouk Berger or Isabelle Battaglia (ETR). Make an appointment for this one-on-one meeting to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your application.
- ❖ IARC has an **exchange space** where you can drop and take objects, furniture, etc. [Contact Roland Wedekind for more information.](#)
- ❖ **Slack** is a great tool to communicate within IARC. We also have an IARC-ECS dedicated channel to promote discussion between us (outing organisation, reaching for help). Check *Interact with us tab* on the ECSA SharePoint (<http://collab.iarc.fr/communities/ecsa>).
- ❖ If you experience hardship during your stay at IARC, Anouk Berger from ETR is your main focal point. You can also contact any ECSA Organizing Committee member.

# Past ECSA Social Events

## 3<sup>rd</sup> ECSA Ping Pong Tournament



On 2<sup>nd</sup> October, around 10 ECS took part in this tight and intense tournament!

## October Tea Party



On 17<sup>th</sup> October, more than 20 ECS gathered around the delicious cakes brought by Alexandra Sexton Oates! Thanks Alexandra for hosting this tea party!

### Call for volunteers



Tea parties only exist thanks to volunteers who graciously bring food to share! If you are interested in volunteering to host a future tea party, please add your name on the list [here](#).

## Round table: Horizon Scanning Session

Lead by **Professor Nicol Keith** from Glasgow University, this workshop aimed at helping ECS with career planning. The interactive session, held on November 11<sup>th</sup>, brought the participants to reflect on several topics including what being a researcher means for them and what the academia expects from researchers.



*How will you find your next job?*

Top answers from participants:

1. Through networks
2. On the employer's website
3. Previous position in the institute or company

# Next ECSA Social Events

## International get together

The next international get together will take place in **Barabaar November 21<sup>st</sup>**. It is a great opportunity to meet international people working in Lyon. Icebreaking BINGO included!

Register **before 18th November** at <https://doodle.com/poll/gd6vbziehbygtbc4>



## December tea party

Hosted by Maria and Hannah, the theme is 'waffles live!' – as in they will be making waffles fresh for us! **December 10 at 15:30 at the cafeteria (room next to the bar)**



## Christmas after work dinner

The Christmas after work dinner will take place soon. Time to wrap up the year and share a good time together!

**Upcoming date and mandatory registration through doodle!**

# Winter Lyon events

Are you looking for fun and a sporting activity? These two activities are for you:



## ➤ La course des lumières

This charity race organized by Centre Leon Bérard in Lyon aims at raising money for cancer treatment research. It takes place in the evening and you can either walk for 4km or run for 10km. Part of your registration fee goes towards the fund and collecting money from friends is facilitated through the website. <https://lyon.coursedeslumieres.com/> **November 16**

## ➤ Skimania

Lyon is only 2-3 hours away from the famous Alpine ski resorts!!! A great opportunity to go skiing or learn how to ski. Skimania is a company which organizes day-trips from Lyon to 16 ski resorts, including world-class ones: Courchevel, Tignes, La Clusaz, etc. The price (50 to 60 €) includes: the coach, the ski pass, and a guide to and from the ski resort. Possibility to add ski classes. Not a ski fan? The trip without the ski pass costs 27 € . At the ski resort, you can rent snowshoes or just stroll in the village and enjoy a hot chocolate in a bar. Weekends and longer stays also available.

<https://www.skimania.com/>

**Every Saturday and Sunday, starting November 23<sup>rd</sup>**



There are also great upcoming cultural events!



## ➤ Japan Touch

This 2-day festival is dedicated to Asia cultures, with a focus on Japanese pop culture. Go there to taste different types of green tea, to watch martial arts demonstration, participate in cooking workshops and get a shiatsu massage. When you will get there, you will be amazed to see people dressed in cosplay, the video games corner, and the fun ambiance. Bonus: great shops to find a unique Christmas present. <https://www.japan-touch.com/lyon/>

**November 30<sup>th</sup> - December 1<sup>st</sup>**

## ➤ Fête des lumières

A great even not to be missed: for 4 nights, artists light up buildings, streets, and parks in Lyon. Over 40 light shows create a poetic, and magical atmosphere. Last year, 1.8 million visitors enjoyed the show!

<https://www.fetedeslumieres.lyon.fr/>

**5-8 December**



## ➤ The contemporary art biennale

Lyon hosts a large contemporary art exhibit in several locations including a decommissioned factory. This year's theme is "Là où les eaux se mêlent" (where the waters meet) and features 532 artists. The majority of the artworks is created specifically for this edition!

<http://www.labiennaledelyon.com/uk/la-biennale-d-art-contemporain.html>

**Until January 5<sup>th</sup> 2020**

## Wrap it up

In this section we feature a wrap-up of published papers by ECS members. In this issue, it is with great pleasure that we are featuring the latest papers of **Mathilde His (postdoc, NME)**, **Roland Wedekind (PhD student, NME)**, **Ljubica Zupunski (postdoc, ENV)**, and **Anna Schmutz (doctoral student, DIR)** with a brief summary of their main findings.



Mathilde His

### Prospective analysis of circulating metabolites and breast cancer in EPIC

This study identifies potential novel pathways for breast cancer development. The results, published in BMC Medicine, are based on more than 1600 cases of breast cancer and 1600 controls which are part of the large European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) cohort. The team analysed more than 120 metabolites in plasma samples from 3248 women and investigated the relationships between each metabolite and the risk of developing breast cancer in the years following blood collection.

Higher concentrations of acetylcarnitine, and lower concentrations of arginine, asparagine and of 5 different phosphatidylcholines were associated with an increased risk of breast cancer in women who were not using oral contraceptives or hormones for menopause treatment.

This is the largest study published so far identifying possible new biomarkers of future breast cancer development.

You can also check the full article: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-019-1408-4>



Roland Wedekind

### Syringol metabolites as new biomarkers for smoked meat intake

This article describes the first findings from a dietary intervention that was conducted at IARC to identify new biomarkers of processed meat intake. Twelve colleagues (8 ECVS!) consumed bacon, salami, hotdogs or control diets for 3 consecutive days each in a randomized order. All food was provided at IARC as lunches at the cafeteria and sandwiches.

Untargeted metabolomics analysis of blood and urine samples was applied to identify potential biomarkers. These biomarkers can help to assess the association between intake of particular meat products and cancer, by giving insight on the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and ultimately guide cancer prevention.

With the dietary intervention study, we identified several wood smoke derived syringol metabolites in blood and urine as potential biomarkers of smoked meat intake. We validated their ability to discriminate consumers from non-consumers of smoked meat among 474 European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and nutrition (EPIC) cross sectional study participants. These promising tools to estimate smoked meat intake in epidemiological studies will be tested in a colorectal cancer case-control study to assess their association with cancer risk.

We thank all colleagues who took part in the first dietary intervention conducted at IARC!

**Come to my science café on 26<sup>th</sup> November at 1 pm to learn more about the study!**

You can also check the full article: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/nqz222>





### Cancer after Exposure to Radioiodine in Childhood and Adolescence: $^{131}\text{I}$ -Related Risk and the Role of Selected Host and Environmental Factors

Ljubica Zupunski

Ionizing radiation is one of the established risk factors for thyroid cancer, especially after exposure in childhood. The authors expanded previously published population-based case-control study on subjects exposed to Iodine-131 ( $^{131}\text{I}$ ) from Chernobyl fallout at age  $\leq 18$  years using improved individual  $^{131}\text{I}$  absorbed thyroid doses. The paper presented reinforced evidences of  $^{131}\text{I}$  carcinogenic effect after childhood thyroid exposure. Analysis showed that overweight and benign thyroid nodules are thyroid cancer risk factors. The authors suggested that stable iodine supplementation in months and years after the accident in iodine deficient areas has the potential to decrease  $^{131}\text{I}$ -related thyroid cancer risk in people exposed in childhood.

The results are important for improvement of radiation protection policies in case of future nuclear accidents and of medical surveillance of the affected population. Further research is needed to gain more insights into the underlying biological mechanisms of radiation-induced thyroid cancer development, including the role of benign nodules, as well as iodine deficiency.

You can also check the full article: <https://doi.org/10.3390/cancers11101481>



### Mapping of the Global Cancer Research Funding Landscape

Anna Schmutz

This paper is part of a larger project aiming at developing an evidence-based strategic positioning for the Agency.

Combining a number of different approaches, at the heart of which lies an extensive bibliometric analysis, we present a nearly exhaustive mapping exercise of cancer research funding organisations in the world: 4693 organisations from 107 countries engaged in funding cancer research today have been identified. Our contribution should be of interest in terms of discussions on methodology and necessary standardisation of data on the global research enterprise. Additionally we make available an important tool to navigate cancer research funding in the world to any interested stakeholder.

We believe that our work will provide a solid baseline from which to start related analyses and that it will contribute to the efforts of classification and coordination of investments in cancer research

You can also check the full article: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jncics/pkz069>



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Please send to ECSA your latest publication or other unpublished experiments and projects that you would like to share and advertise in the newsletter!

## Goodbye Interview

Sabine Naudin arrived at IARC in January 2016 for her Master's internship. She was awarded a competitive grant from the Auvergne-Rhone-Alps region shortly after her arrival to continue her research as a PhD student. She recently received her PhD from the University of Lyon 1 and is currently a postdoctoral scientist in the NMB group. She will be leaving the agency in the end of November.



### **Briefly, can you describe your PhD project and the main results published during your time at IARC?**

My work during my PhD consisted in the investigation of the role of alcohol consumption and lifestyle determinants on the risk of pancreatic cancer. This cancer is commonly diagnosed at late stage and one of the most fatal cancers worldwide. So far, there are only limited opportunities for early detection and effective treatment, therefore the identification of modifiable risk factors may offer relevant scientific evidence for its prevention. The first article of my PhD was published in March 2018 in the International Journal of Cancer (doi: 10.1007/s10654-019-00559-6). This paper presented our findings on the relationship between alcohol consumption and pancreatic cancer incidence within the EPIC study. The second article was published in the European Journal of Epidemiology in September 2019 (doi: 10.1007/s10654-019-00559-6) and investigated the relationship between a score combining several lifestyle factors, i.e. smoking, alcohol, obesity, diet and physical activity, and the risk of pancreatic cancer in the EPIC study.

The third part of my work consisted in the examination of this healthy lifestyle score with respect to the risk of lymphoma. Results of this evaluation were recently summarised in a short report submitted to the International Journal of Cancer.

### **What do you think is the most valuable thing you have learned during your experience as a PhD student at IARC?**

Before coming at IARC, I had never practiced speaking English outside of the classroom. Over the years, all my colleagues and supervisors have been incredible resources and very supportive to help me improve my confidence in speaking and presenting in English. They have contributed so much to give an unexpected perspective to my experience here.

### **Can you please tell us about an unexpected or funny moment you experienced at IARC?**

I would say that the most unexpected moment that I recall, was the day my supervisor, Dr Pietro Ferrari, suggested that I could transform my Master's degree work into a PhD program!

### **We know that soon, sadly, you will be leaving IARC. Would you like to share with us your future projects?**

I will be leaving IARC at the end of November. In January, I will start a position as a postdoctoral

fellow at the US National Cancer Institute (NCI) in the Metabolic Epidemiology Branch at the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics. There, I will continue working on research projects related to pancreatic cancer epidemiology.

### **I guess you are currently busy preparing your trip to the US. So far, have you encountered any difficulties?**

So far, there have been no particular difficulties. I was lucky enough to be able to anticipate and combine my NCI interviews and the preparation for the PhD thesis submission and defence. I guess the most complicated parts are yet to come! (For example, clearing out my apartment and preparing everyone involved in the move – my partner and my cat – to fly to Washington DC).

### **Is there anything that you will miss from Lyon?**

My friends, French food and my bike!

### **Finally, what would your wise words be to our PhD students and other ECS at IARC?**

Take with you only the positive side of the PhD experience because this is the only part which will make you grow. Failures can always be seen as positive experiences as soon as you consider them as a starting point for what you can improve in the coming years.

# Welcome to IARC

New Early Career Scientists arrivals from October to November 2019



**Mayo Hirabayashi**  
Postdoc  
ICE



**Samrat Das**  
Postdoc  
MMB



**Racheal Mandishora**  
Postdoc  
ICB



**Li Zhang**  
Postdoc  
SCR



**Veronica Davila Batista**  
Postdoc  
NMB



**Heleen Van Puyvelde**  
Doctoral student  
NEP



**Lea Marichand**  
Master student  
LSB



**Liesel Claeyns**  
Doctoral student  
MMB



**Ramon Cierco Jimenez**  
Doctoral student  
ESC/WCT



**Mariana Gomes da Silva Araujo**  
Postdoc  
EGE



**Anna Luisa Silva Almeida Vicente**  
Doctoral Student  
EGE