

WORLD ENDOSCOPY ORGANIZATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

A summary of our achievements,
growth, and impact throughout 2025

Inside: Presidential message, WEO activities, ENDO 2026 status,
and upcoming initiatives



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FOREWORD

BY THE WEO PRESIDENT PROF. LARS AABAKKEN

Dear colleagues and friends,

2025 has been another exciting year for WEO, and for me personally, as current President. It is a truly humbling experience to observe and participate in the multitude of activities around the globe.

As in previous years, WEO has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the promotion and education of high-quality endoscopy across all the zones of our society. Throughout the year, our initiatives have been delivered through a variety of formats, including online, in-person, and hybrid events, ensuring accessibility and engagement for a diverse audience of healthcare professionals.

In defining and nurturing our unique position in the world of endoscopy and endoscopic Societies, I believe that we are indeed focusing on three core elements: Education and exchange that involves collaboration between the global regions; projects that aim to describe, compare, and align variations of practice across the globe; and, finally, democratization of endoscopy by training and education in the underserved areas of the world. As you read the report below, I trust you will see that most WEO activities do indeed fall into one of those categories.

The regional collaboration is ensured partly by joint societal sessions in international meetings, and partly by committee work and publications with participation from all parts of the world. The publications from our AI committee are excellent examples, ensuring that both development and dissemination of AI take all regions of the world into consideration.



We also encourage work encompassing regional guidelines, not to develop yet another guideline, but rather to have a birdseye view of the various publications on similar topics, to identify where consolidation and alignment may be appropriate.

Our outreach initiatives continue to grow, in Asia, under the leadership of Professor Pausawasdi, in Latin America, led by Professor De Moura from Brazil, and increasingly also in Africa, where Professor Bhat has spearheaded new initiatives, including in-region training at quality centers along the northern region and in the Middle East.

Once more, I need to thank our friends and partners in industry for their invaluable collaboration and support. Our activities cannot be maintained without your continued support, but I do hope that WEO's educational efforts are also seen as a valuable way to ensure appropriate and safe use of new equipment, as well as a significant contribution to the increased global dissemination of endoscopic methods.

Our engagement in China adds to the expansion of WEO regions. During 2025, a number of activities have been initiated and continued (see the report below for details). It is increasingly clear that our Chinese colleagues and endoscopy-related Chinese industry, now well established within China, are finding useful avenues of collaboration with WEO for expansion beyond their national borders. We very much welcome this development.

Bringing it all together, I'm proudly looking forward to this year's ENDO 2026, scheduled in Cape Town, South Africa, September 24-26. The Scientific Committee is working hard to finalize the program, but I would like to welcome you all to submit your quality abstracts, which represent a large part of this conference – the core WEO event of the year.

Finally, a huge thank you to our team in Munich, under the able leadership of Michel, even more so, thank you to the scores of volunteer professionals across the world who work tirelessly to actually accomplish all our activities.



WEO MISSION AND HISTORY

Our mission

To be the world leader in endoscopic education while promoting high standards and quality in endoscopy.

Our history

The World Endoscopy Organization (WEO) was founded in 1962 in Munich, Germany, as a global non-profit organization dedicated to advancing digestive endoscopy. Originally known as the Organisation Mondiale d'Endoscopie Digestive (OMED), the society evolved over decades as a federation of regional endoscopy organizations, focusing on education, training, and the promotion of high standards worldwide. In 2010, it adopted its current name, World Endoscopy Organization, reflecting a modern and unified global identity.

In recent years, WEO has expanded its activities significantly, including the launch of its own World Congress of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ENDO), the development of global training and outreach programs, and the introduction of individual membership, further strengthening its role as the leading international organization dedicated to excellence, education, and innovation in endoscopy.



Our objectives

- To develop and implement quality education in digestive endoscopy
- To increase access and knowledge of endoscopy in underserved areas of the world
- To support international cooperation to achieve optimal practices in endoscopy
- To inform the public of the many benefits from high quality and safe endoscopy

For more than 60 years, WEO has been the voice of world endoscopy

WEO GOVERNING COUNCIL

Executive Committee 2024-2026



President

Lars Aabakken (Norway)



President-Elect

Asadur Jorge Tchekmedyian (Uruguay)



Past President

Hisao Tajiri (Japan)



Secretary General

Mário Dinis-Ribeiro (Portugal)



Treasurer

Yutaka Saito (Japan)

Standing Committee Chairs 2024-2026



Colorectal Cancer Screening

Evelien Dekker (Netherlands)



Documentation and Standardization

Koji Matsuda (Japan)



Education

Douglas Faigel (USA)



Outreach

Kulwinder Dua (USA)



Research

Anthony Teoh (Hong Kong SAR)



Standards of Practice, Chair

Edward Despott (UK)



Stomach and Duodenal Diseases

Mitsuhiro Fujishiro (Japan)



Surgical Endoscopy

Philip Chiu (Hong Kong SAR)

AD HOC COMMITTEE CHAIRS



Alumni

Dario Ligresti (Italy)



Artificial Intelligence

Yuichi Mori (Norway)



Pancreato-biliary

Dong-Wan Seo
(South Korea)



Super Minimally Invasive Interventions

Enqiang Linghu (China)



Esophageal Diseases

Prateek Sharma (USA)



Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

Helmut Neumann
(Germany)

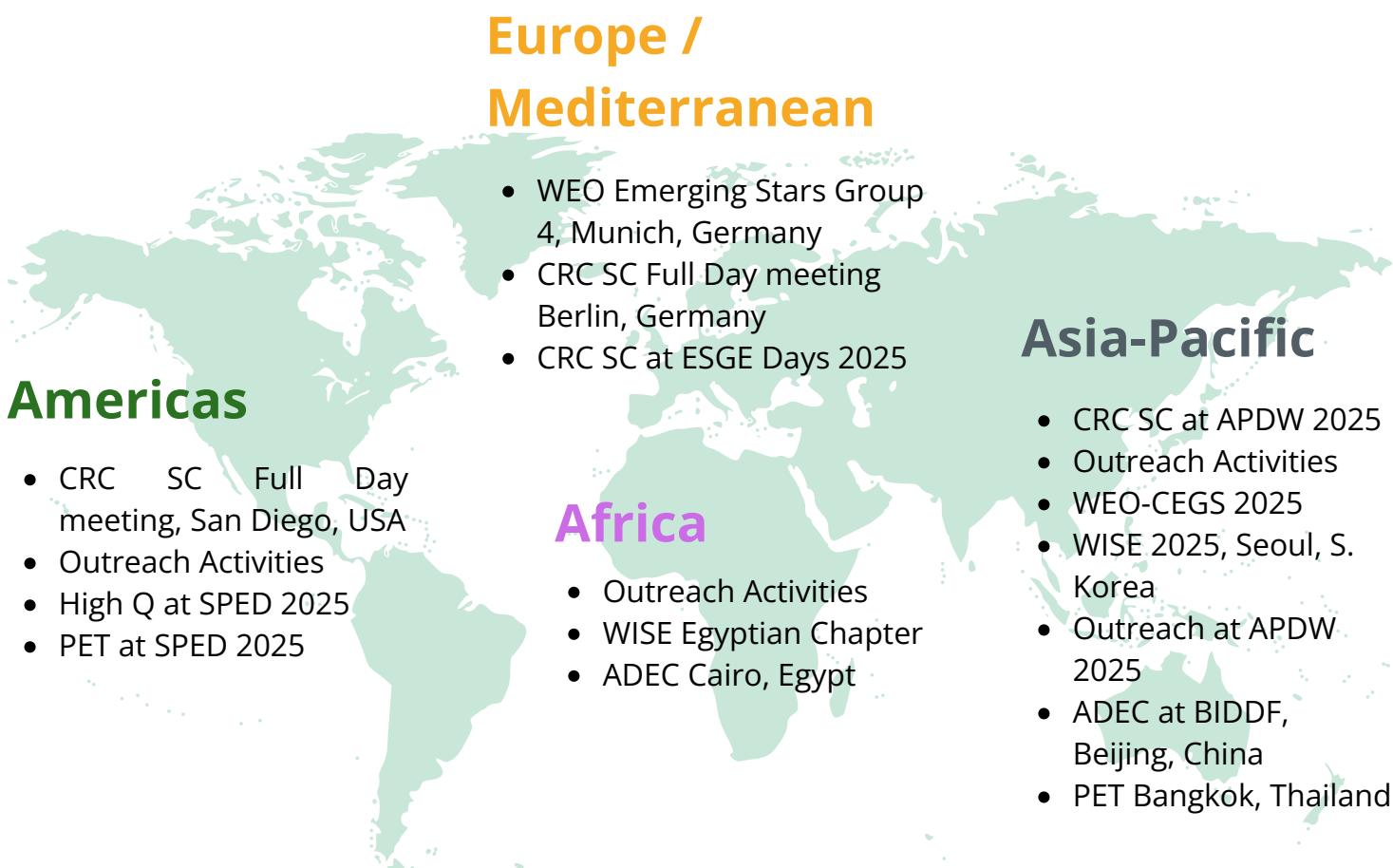
WEO OFFICE

	<p>Executive Director Michel Neijmann (Netherlands)</p>		<p>Office Manager Alexandra Junginger (Germany)</p>		<p>Project Manager Ajlana Osmanagic (USA)</p>
	<p>Project Manager Nick Strogov (Germany)</p>		<p>Senior Project Manager (Independent Senior Consultant) Laura Schleser-Low (Singapore)</p>		

WEO HIGHLIGHTS 2025

In 2025, the World Endoscopy Organization demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the promotion and education of high-quality endoscopy across the Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and Africa regions.

Throughout the year, our initiatives were delivered through a variety of formats, including online, in-person, and hybrid events, ensuring accessibility and engagement for a diverse audience of healthcare professionals.



WEO HIGHLIGHTS 2025 - CONTINUED

3,500+	• Healthcare professionals at our global conference each time
2,000+	• Professionals trained in 80+ countries each year
12,300+	• WEO newsletter subscribers
550+	• WEO individual members
15+	• Events endorsed annually
10+	• Programs & courses offered
40+	• Centers worldwide (CoE, CORE, training centers)
4.8/5	• Average course rating

The **WEO Centers of Excellence** program brings together endoscopic centers from around the world that are recognized for their high standards in endoscopic procedures, education, and research. These centers work closely with WEO to support its mission of promoting high-quality endoscopy, with each designation granted for five years and the possibility of renewal.

In 2025, one new center joined the program: the Royal Free Unit for Endoscopy & Centre for Gastroenterology, Royal Free Hospital & UCL Institute for Liver and Digestive Health. There are currently 20 WEO Centers of Excellence worldwide.

The **Collaboration of Organized and Recognized Endoscopy units (CORE)** continues to grow, with the total number of CORE members increasing to 11. CORE brings together endoscopy units committed to quality, collaboration, and shared learning.

Two new applications were accepted this year: Sindh Institute of Advanced Endoscopy & Gastroenterology in Karachi, Pakistan, and Aditya Hospital & Gastro Center in Sri Ganganagar, India.

WEO was present at ESGE Days, DDW, SPED, UEG Week and APDW congresses.

This year, **16 events were endorsed by WEO**

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee led by Professor Douglas Faigel offers courses and workshops to help healthcare professionals learn and grow. These include the ADEC, PET, VCEN, High Q, and the Emerging Stars programs, along with the Centers of Excellence and CORE initiatives.

Advanced Diagnosis in Endoscopy (ADEC)

In 2025, two ADEC programs were held. In June 2025, during the 22nd Beijing International Digestive Disease Forum, the WEO was represented by current President Lars Aabakken, Past Presidents Hisao Tajiri and Jean-François Rey, and Past Secretary General Dong-Wan Seo, with varying involvement, including participation in ADEC.

Another ADEC activity was held on May 15, 2025, in Cairo, Egypt, as part of the Egyptian Digestive Disease Week (EDDW). This one-day course focused on improving GI endoscopy diagnosis using high-definition technology.

It was led by Dr. Jean-François Rey from France and Prof. Serag Zakaria from Egypt, and included case discussions, live voting, and quiz sessions. An international faculty from France, Spain, the UK, and Egypt shared their experience with 130 in-person participants. The course also reached many more viewers through live online streaming and local medical education TV.

Dr. Jean-François Rey shared, **"Perfect technical organization and positive feedback from participants. The education program was well completed."**

Prof. Serag Zakaria added, **"It was a very successful scientific course. The five presentations were great — descriptive and of a highly technical standard. The quizzes went as perfectly as we had planned."**

Participants described the sessions as high quality, well organized, and highly interactive.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Program for Endoscopic Teachers (PET)

WEO held two PET courses, under the guidance of PET Program Director Jonathan Cohen and PET Co-Director Douglas Faigel. Feedback from the participants was excellent.

Many shared that the course was **“practical, engaging, and very useful for daily teaching”** and noted that PET would directly improve how they train future endoscopists.

The PET course in Bangkok (January 2025) was especially praised for its friendly learning atmosphere and interactive sessions. Participants appreciated the hands-on training and small-group discussions, and the generous allowance of time to ask questions and learn from one another.



The Lima PET course (August 2025) also received very positive feedback and offered an important learning experience for the faculty. While English was required, the presence of Spanish-speaking faculty made discussions easier and more inclusive. This highlighted the value of teaching in local languages in the future.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Video Capsule Endoscopy Network (VCEN)

Under the guidance of the international course director, Dr Jean-François Rey, VCEN 2025 featured three engaging webinars and covered a wide range of topics in video capsule endoscopy.

More than 130 participants joined from around the world to learn about AI in clinical practice, patient preparation, small-bowel inflammation, and technological advances.

The international faculty — representing USA, Brazil, Uruguay, Italy, France, United Kingdom, Denmark, Hungary, Israel, China, and Russia — shared global insights, and the flexible online format encouraged active Q&A sessions.

The VCEN course continues with the upcoming WEO Capsule Endoscopy Global Summit (WEO CEGS) on March 21, 2026, in Chongqing and online. Themed “The Voice of World Capsule Endoscopy”, WEO CEGS will bring together experts to explore the latest innovations and research in the field.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

High-Quality Endoscopy Course

Two High-Quality Endoscopy (High-Q) courses, **led by Dr. Fabian Emura**, were held in 2025, each underlining the strong demand for practical, quality-focused education in upper GI endoscopy. Both courses received excellent feedback.

The High-Q course in Bogotá (January 2025) was a big success. Onsite participants were fully gender-inclusive, with an even split between women and men – a part of WEO's ongoing effort to make all courses more inclusive. Participants came from across Latin America, including Chile, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Argentina, and other countries. One of the interviewed attendees specifically mentioned, **"The scientific content was excellent"**, and 100% of participants agreed that the course would have a significant impact on their daily practice.

The Lima course (August 2025) drew over 80 participants, both onsite and online, from Latin America and beyond. The program was packed with practical sessions on early cancer detection, quality metrics, systematic upper GI endoscopy, mucosal cleaning, and management of conditions such as Barrett's esophagus and chronic gastritis. The sessions were lively and interactive.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Emerging Stars Program

Emerging Stars is the flagship activity of the WEO Education Committee, led by Professor Ibrahim Mostafa as course director. The Emerging Stars course supports talented young doctors in developing the skills they need to become future leaders in digestive endoscopy and to build a strong network of next-generation experts. The program comprises a structured curriculum of three training modules. Each module lasts six or seven days and takes place in different cities around the world, with intensive face-to-face training. The program can be completed in 15 to 18 months.

Group 4, Course 1 was held in Munich in the last week of February. Doctors from 21 countries joined the 2025–2026 program, which offers three in-person training modules over 18 months.

During the course, international experts shared practical guidance on communication, managing conflict, time management, professional etiquette, and personal presentation. Career development and creative problem-solving were also key topics of the program.



OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The WEO Outreach Committee works to expand access to endoscopy and provide training in underserved regions in Africa, the Middle East, South America, and Southeast Asia. The Committee is chaired by Kulwinder Dua, with regional co-chairs Purnima Bhat, Mahmoud Mohamed Omar, Eduardo Hourneaux de Moura, and Nonthalee Pausawasdi. They focus on building partnerships with local GI and endoscopy groups to improve patient care worldwide.

In 2025, the Committee ran several training activities around the world. For example, in **Southeast Asia**, a workshop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, brought together 78 delegates from eight hospitals. The program included lectures, live demonstrations, and hands-on training in ERCP, EUS, and pseudocyst drainage.



Similar efforts took place across **Africa**. The Committee visited Morocco, Algeria, Namibia, Rwanda, Kenya, and other countries. These visits helped assess local needs, improve WEO training centers, and introduce new techniques. As tutor Anders Egeland and WEO President Lars Aabakken reported after their Windhoek, Namibia visit: "We gained vital experience with the telementoring system and plan to install it here and at our other training centers once finalized."

The Committee also published guidance for running endoscopy training courses in low- and middle-income countries, and continues to strengthen regional collaborations with formal agreements and integration of local centers into the Outreach network. These activities will continue in 2026, building on lessons learned to bring high-quality endoscopic training to more regions in need.



COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING COMMITTEE

The CRC SC continues to expand its influence and collaborative reach through a calendar of regular, high-profile meetings led by Professor Evelien Dekker. Historically, it is anchored by well-established annual gatherings preceding major international congresses – Digestive Disease Week (DDW) in the United States and United European Gastroenterology Week (UEGW) in Europe. The CRC SC has also extended its footprint to the Asia-Pacific region, organizing sessions at the Asia Pacific Digestive Week (APDW) as the network of participants grows and matures.



The two flagship CRC SC events took place in **San Diego in May**, preceding DDW 2025 and in **Berlin in October**, preceding UEGW 2025, with similar formats of Expert Working Group sessions in the morning followed by afternoon plenaries. The expert groups covered, amongst other topics, fecal immunochemical testing (FIT) for screening, addressing inequities in CRC screening, polyp detection and characterization, resection and AI, surveillance after colorectal neoplasia, evaluation of new tests, and post-colonoscopy colorectal cancer (PCCRC) and colonoscopy quality. The plenaries highlighted new data on screening modalities; quality indicators; strategies to broaden access; and practical recommendations. The Berlin gathering also underscored potential future collaborations, with lively discussions signaling new directions for joint projects and shared initiatives.

Beyond these two events, the CRC SC maintained a broader presence by contributing to the **ESGE Days and APDW conferences**, where the Committee offered two sessions that spotlighted the most recent research and updates in the field. Taken together, the year's work reflected the CRC SC's ongoing dedication to convening leading experts, accelerating knowledge exchange, and fostering collaborative initiatives that advance colorectal cancer screening around the world.



PANCREATOBILIARY AD HOC COMMITTEE

The Pancreatobiliary, Ad Hoc Committee focuses on topics and challenges related to pancreatobiliary procedures and other endoscopic advances for cholangiopancreatic diseases. The Committee and its Chair, Professor Dong-Wan Seo aim to collaborate with gastroenterologists and other clinical experts to advance pancreatobiliary endoscopy and bring it to a higher level.

Two major activities of this Committee are the WEO International School of EUS (WISE) and the WEO Fellowship Program.



WISE 2025

A total of 45 trainees from 26 countries, including Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, China, Colombia, Singapore, Spain, and others, completed five online modules of EUS training, ranging from basic anatomy to interventional and advanced EUS teachings. Onsite hands-on training for half of the 2023–2024 top participants took place at the end of October in conjunction with the EUS Summit in Seoul, South Korea.

The WISE Egyptian Chapter 2025 welcomed more than ten participants from Egypt and the neighboring Arabic countries. The Egypt chapter Module 1 took place in September 2025 and Module 2 in December.

WEO PUBLICATIONS IN 2025

- Research Committee: Professor Anthony Teoh worked with both the Research and Pancreatobiliary Committee members on "**WEO guidelines on endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography biliary cannulation and sphincterotomy techniques**", which was published in *Digestive Endoscopy (DEN) Open Access* in June 16, 2025.
- Dr. Yuichi Mori and Dr. Nayantara Coelho-Prabhu contributed to the "**World Endoscopy Organization's (WEO) response to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Initiative on Artificial Intelligence for Health**". This statement, issued on behalf of the WEO's AI committee, reflects on the recently published WHO guidance on the global use of AI. The publication addresses the potential inequalities associated with access to advanced technologies, such as AI, in the field of endoscopy. This article was published in *Digestive Endoscopy* in August, 2025.
- AI Committee: The Committee's paper, "**The Legal and Ethical Framework for AI in Gastrointestinal Endoscopy: A World Endoscopy Organization International Consensus Statement**" was published by *Annals of Internal Medicine* on December 8, 2025.
- Education Committee: Their new position statement, "**Telementoring in Gastrointestinal Endoscopy**", was published on December 1, 2025 in *Digestive Endoscopy*.

WEO publications to date are all posted on WEO website. Complete articles and full references are available here:

www.worldendo.org/publications

ENDO 2026 — 5TH WORLD CONGRESS OF GI ENDOSCOPY

September 24-26, 2026

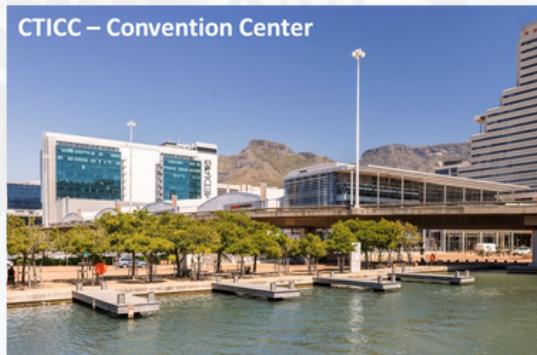
Cape Town, South Africa

From the inaugural world congress in Hyderabad, India in 2017, the ENDO congresses have proven to be the cornerstone of endoscopic education worldwide, endorsed by both participants and industry partners alike.

The next ENDO congress will include the latest developments in endoscopy worldwide, live demonstrations, hands-on training sessions, speaker lectures, scientific symposia, a learning center, top-notch local and international faculty, and much more. The cooperation with local medical societies promises to offer delegates a wide range of attractive topics. The opportunity to network with the peers from literally all over the world remains a strong incentive.

Preparations for ENDO 26 have been gathering pace in the second half of 2025, with online abstract submission and registration opening last autumn. The Scientific Program is almost ready, and the first batch of international speakers has been invited. Many have accepted and we will have a very diverse and interesting faculty delivering excellent content.

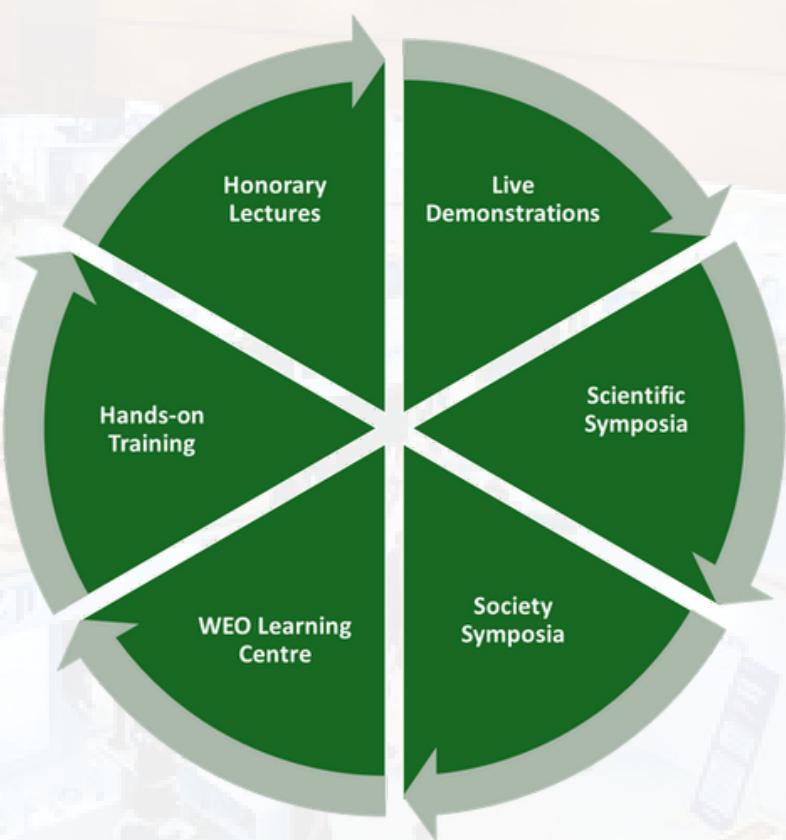
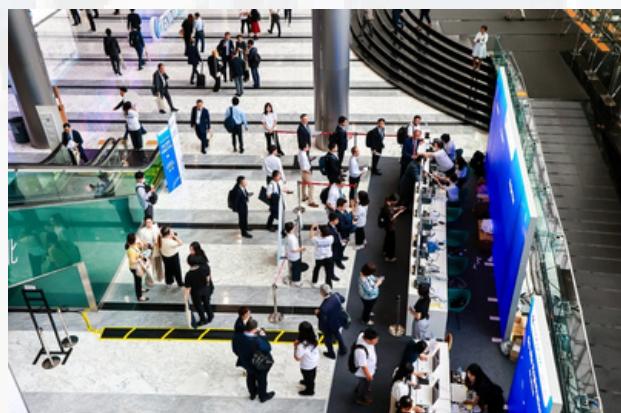
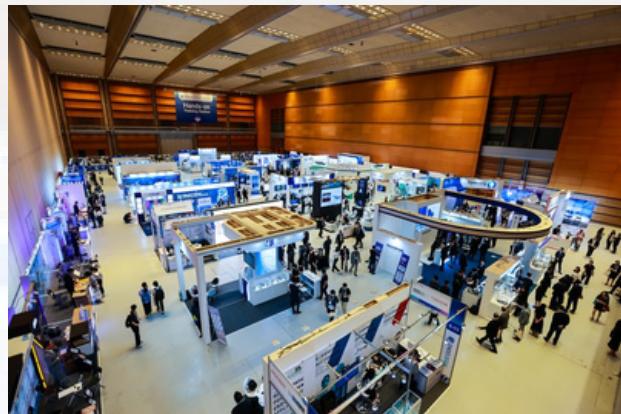
Scientific cooperation with many peer organizations is also a key element of this world congress, as SIED, A-PSDE, ESGE, SAGES, KSGE, ASGE, and JGES are all supporting the new generation of doctors with grants offered for the best abstracts.



ENDO 2026 — CONTINUED

The ENDO World Congress is known to be a magnificent platform for interaction between doctors from different backgrounds and cultures. This diversity offers an additional perspective on the many scientific developments around the globe and consolidates a truly resourceful global network focused on improving healthcare in an ever-changing world.

Join us from 24 – 26 September 2026 at the world-renowned Cape Town International Convention Centre, South Africa: <https://www.worldendo2026.org/>



WEO FUTURE PLANS

NEW INITIATIVES

We are very happy to share with you our two new initiatives initiated in 2025

The WEO Alumni Ad-Hoc Committee brings together past WEO course participants to create a global network of GI endoscopy leaders. By sharing real-world experiences, championing WEO's mission, and empowering the next generation, this committee keeps alumni connected, inspired, and ready to lead.

The Committee assisted in obtaining testimonials from attendees regarding individual membership. In addition, a database of alumni willing to contribute to the preparation of WEO events has been established, based on an open call among Emerging Stars and WISE alumni.

- WEO Alumni, Ad Hoc Committee

The committee supports WEO alumni, builds global connections, and actively contributes to WEO's promotional mission.

- WEO ERCP MASTER CLASS 2026

The WEO INSPIRE.YOU Master Class offers expert webinars and hands-on training for experienced physicians.

WEO INSPIRE.YOU MASTER CLASS 2026

Go beyond the basics — master advanced ERCP among global experts. Join online sessions and hands-on training

✓ Advanced ERCP
✓ Case-Based Learning

✓ Hands-On Practice
✓ Small Group Format



The WEO INSPIRE.YOU Master Class 2026 focuses on advanced ERCP for physicians who already have experience and want to develop skills in areas such as cholangioscopy and complex stenting.

The program combines expert-led webinars and intensive hands-on training.

Course Timeline

- Webinar 1: April 10, 2026 – 14:00 CEST
- Webinar 2: May 22, 2026 – 14:00 CEST
- Onsite training in Düsseldorf, Germany: July 10-11, 2026



THANK YOU WEO INDUSTRY PARTNERS

WEO's progress is powered by our trusted network of industry partners. These long-standing collaborations underscore a collective dedication to elevating endoscopic education and solidifying WEO position in the field of endoscopy. As we expand, we will actively cultivate existing relationships and welcome new partners who share WEO's mission and values.

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