

In remembrance of Helmut Mittermayer 1947 - 2010

Dear Members,



Helmut Mittermayer, Professor and Head of the Institute for Hygiene, Microbiology and Tropical Medicine at the Elisabethinen Hospital in Linz, Austria, unexpectedly passed away on Tuesday, 6 July 2010.

We are not only losing a highly respected friend and colleague, but also one of the pillars of our organization. Helmut has been involved with the Society since the eighties just after the Society was founded. In 1993, he started *ESCMID News*, the first printed newsletter for our members, and took over the role as Editor-in-Chief. He was instrumental in providing information to our 2'000 members at that time. During this period, he was a member of the ESCMID Publications Subcommittee and also represented Austria in the European Council. The *ESCMID News* proved to be very successful for many years, and only recently, the print version was completely replaced by the online newsletter.

In 1995, the success of the 7th ECCMID in Vienna was largely attributed to the diverse and excellent Scientific Programme composed by the Scientific Committee and chaired by Helmut. Despite his demanding position as head of the Institute for Microbiology, Hygiene and Tropical Medicine of the Elisabethinen Hospital in Linz that he held from 1984 until two weeks ago when he passed away, he always found time to instruct and support colleagues, experts as well as trainees. His opinion was respected by the Austrian Health Authority, and many scientists around the globe profited from his numerous appearances as a speaker at international and local scientific events as well as from his nearly 300 scientific publications.

More recently, Helmut has been very active in several of our Study Groups, sharing his wide expertise in clinical microbiology and infectious diseases. Another strong commitment of his was with EUCAST, where Helmut contributed his immense knowledge for more than a decade. He had just recently been instrumental in convincing colleagues in Austria to "go EUCAST" and only a month ago he was appointed member of the EUCAST Steering Committee representing Austria and the EUCAST General Committee. In fact, he was travelling back home from a committee meeting in Stockholm, when he unexpectedly died.

ESCMID has lost a dear friend, a staunch supporter, a true European and a lively colleague. Helmut was a true gentleman with a twinkle in his eye and a friendly smile despite his full schedule in Linz and abroad. We will always remember Helmut as a fine person and his contributions will remain with us for many years. On behalf of the Society, we offer our deepest sympathy to Helmut's family and friends.

ESCMID Executive Committee