DNA DAY 2012 & 2013

Participation 2009-2012

- 2009 : 90 submissions
- <u>2010</u> : 136
- <u>2011</u> : 130
- <u>2012</u> : 266
 - from 151 classes
 - From 23 countries
 - Over 20 submitted: Italy, Lithuania, Cyprus, Poland, Portugal
 - several countries for the first time:
 - (e.g. France, Germany)

Country	DNA-Day Essay 2012
Italy	57
Portugal	40
Lithuania	37
Cyprus	23
Poland	23
United Kingdom	14
France	12
Croatia	10
Macedonia,	10
Greece	9
Turkey	8
Estonia	5
Sweden	4
Germany	3
Slovenia	3
Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Lichtenstein, Russian Federation, Serbia, Switzerland, Thailand	
(1 each)	8

How were 2011–12 different?

- Started notifications earlier (letter to 2011 teachers and to Presidents, in early December)
- All essay submissions through website; judges also used abstract-scoring software
- Improved information/scoring criteria to judges; two rounds of judging. More volunteers for judging
- Winners announced on ESHG Website on DNA Day; videos by ESHG geneticists on each essay question

1. It is reported that it will soon be possible to sequence a person's genome for under 1000 Euros. Would you want to have your genome sequenced? What would be the potential advantages and disadvantages, particularly as related to your health? What would you like to know about your health risks and those of your family and what would you rather not know? How might this information lead you to modify your life style or life choices?

2. Genes exert their influence on organisms by being turned on and off in precise ways and at precise times. Normal development and even behaviour are regulated by these processes, whereas birth defects and disease can result when problems arise during the process of "gene regulation". In the last 30 years, genomic research has uncovered many mechanisms affecting gene expression that earlier scientists could have never imagined. Choose a gene regulation process (some are listed below) and, using references to support your arguments, explain how that process, when it goes wrong, can be involved in the production of disease, such as cancer.

An additional feature of this year's contest was video presentations by two geneticists commenting on the essay questions (https://www.eshg.org/dnaday2012.0.html).

Dr. Marjolein Kriek commented on the first essay question on sequencing a person's genome. She is a Clinical Geneticist at the Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands.

Dr. Jon Frampton commented on the second essay question on gene regulation mechanisms. He is a stem cell biologist at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

The winners were announced at the end of the video presentations:

Winners

First Place

S. Jesmanas,

R. Jankauskiene;

Radviliskis Vaizgantas gymnasium, Radviliskis, Lithuania. (question #2)

Second Place (ex-aequo)

N. Stepurko,

J. Baniukevič; Lithuanian Youth Information and Technical Creativity Center (LYITCC), Vilnius, Lithuania. (question #1)

K. Ozgun, B. Arusoğlu; TED Istanbul College, Istanbul, Turkey. (question #1)

Third Place

H. M. Ranhada; Ancorensis Cooperativa de Ensino, Vila Praia de Âncora, Portugal. (question #2) This year the essays were scored by 21 geneticists from all over Europe. The ESHG would like to thank the following colleagues who accepted to act as judges:

- Kristin Becker, Germany
- Steffan Bos, The Netherlands
- Ana Carrio, Spain
- A J. Clarke, United Kingdom
- Christophe Cordier, France
- Martina Cornel, The Netherlands
- Domenico Coviello, Italy
- Celia DeLozier, Fresno, CA, United States
- Georg B. Ehret, Switzerland
- ▶ Gerry Evers-Kiebooms, Belgium
- Sarah Funtowiez, France
- Shirley Hodgson, United Kingdom
- Dorit Lev, Israel
- Bela Melegh, Hungary
- Laszlo Nagy, Hungary
- Beata Nowakowska, Belgium
- Tayfun Ozcelik, Ankara, Turkey
- Reiner Siebert, Germany
- Cristina Skrypnyk, Bahrain
- Maria Soller, Sweden
- Henna Tyynismaa, Finland

Questions for Education Committee

- Should ESHG continue to offer this contest, or should individual countries have their own?
- Or should ESHG put our effort into DNA Day activities other than the essay contest?
- Could there be a coordinator to promote/ foster this in each country?
- How to improve participation at the level of the teachers/schools?
- How can ESHG help national societies promote DNA Day?