



## Press Information

### **EHC26 Interview with the congress presidents**

## **‘Transforming Challenges into Solutions’ – International Congress on Headaches and Facial Pain**

**Lisbon (ka).** Headaches can be very diverse and pose a particular challenge. Experts from all over the world are meeting at this year's EHC25, the 19th European Headache Congress, from 3 to 6 December in Lisbon. At the CCL, Lisbon's congress centre, they will discuss new scientific findings on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of headaches and migraines, as well as important issues in headache medicine and the future of this field. There will be high-calibre plenary sessions with topical debates, interactive teaching sessions, forward-looking updates and interesting poster presentations. Conference chairs Prof. Raquel Gil-Gouveia, Neurologist, Hospital da Luz, Lisbon, Portugal, and Dr Christina Deligianni, Neurologist, Athens Naval Hospital, Athens, Greece, provide insights into the main topics and highlights of this unique event in the field of headaches.

***Over four days, leading international experts will come together to share new findings. “Turning challenges into solutions” – how can EHC2025 contribute to this? What will be the main areas of focus?***

**Prof. Raquel Gil-Gouveia:** Over the four days, the meeting is designed to move from mechanisms to practice, always keeping the patient perspective in view. We start with advances in basic science, in biomarkers, trigeminal pain pathways and neuroinflammation, and connect these directly to clinical decision-making in migraine and other headache disorders. The programme also gives dedicated space to special populations such as children, women across the reproductive life cycle, and patients with comorbidities.

A strong feature this year is the very active focus on *treatment evolution*. We have updates on gepants, monoclonal antibodies, neuromodulation and new conversations on treatment strategies, when to switch, and how to define meaningful treatment goals, including the discussion on whether we should be aiming for zero pain.

The meeting also highlights conditions that remain challenging, such as cluster headache, post-traumatic headache, vestibular migraine, trigeminal neuralgia, and headache-sleep interactions. Sessions on sex differences, diet, weight, and the microbiome show the broadening scope of the field beyond traditional pharmacology. In addition, the programme is supported by a rich set of industry-supported sessions that are not purely product-focused, but structured around clinical dilemmas, case-based learning, and real-world application.

There are also “Meet the Expert” discussions, hands-on procedural teaching, and methodology sessions aimed at supporting both early-career and senior clinicians and researchers.

## **Congress Co-Chairs**

**Prof. Raquel Gil-Gouveia**  
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**Dr. Christina Deligianni**  
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## **Scientific Organiser**

European Headache Federation  
<https://www.ehf-headache.com/>

## **Venue**

### **CCL–Lisbon Congress Centre**

Praça das Indústrias 1  
1300-307 Lisboa, Portugal

## **Congress Organisation**

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And importantly, we received over **700** abstract submissions this year. Most of these will be presented across more than 19 poster sessions, which truly form the *heart and soul of the meeting* — a space where young and experienced researchers can connect, exchange ideas, and build collaboration in a very open and dynamic way.

So overall, the programme connects cutting-edge science, practical clinical care, and meaningful community-building, all with the aim of improving outcomes and quality of life for people living with headache.

**Dr Christina Deligianni:** The 2025 European Headache Congress in Lisbon brings together the entire spectrum of our field — from molecular research to holistic, patient-centred care. Under the theme “*Transforming Challenges into Solutions*,” the focus is on translating complexity into actionable progress.

What stands out this year is the strong *translational* focus. We are connecting the dots between fundamental mechanisms and practical, patient-centered care. The idea is to make sure that new discoveries lead directly to better outcomes for the people we treat every day.

Equally important is our focus on *integration*. Headache disorders are rarely isolated; they intersect with sleep, mood, hormonal factors, and lifestyle, diet, microbiome, weight. And also focusing on special populations. By involving experts from related fields, we’re shaping a more holistic and specialised approach to prevention and management.

And finally, EHC2025 gives space for emerging voices. The participation of early-career clinicians and researchers is vital—they bring new ideas, digital innovation, and the energy needed to keep the field dynamic and forward-looking.

This congress is unique because it **brings together the full spectrum of headache medicine**, from basic science and translational research to clinical practice and innovative treatments. The programme is designed to **address the most difficult and controversial topics**, challenging participants to think critically and engage with real-world dilemmas.

It also emphasizes **multidisciplinary collaboration**, joint sessions, and interactive formats that foster **active learning and discussion** rather than passive listening. For me, what is particularly exciting is that **new data and studies presented here will inspire us** and guide our work in the right direction for the future.

***Medicines for treating migraine are constantly being improved. Are there already findings on new migraine medications that target the CGRP signalling pathway? Will new data on migraine prophylaxis be presented?***

**Prof. Raquel Gil-Gouveia:** Yes, there is quite a lot happening in the area of migraine medicines that act on the CGRP pathway. These therapies are no longer experimental, they are now part of routine clinical practice in many countries, but the field is still evolving very quickly. What we are seeing now is a shift from simply proving that these treatments work, to understanding *how to use them well*: in which patients, at which moment in the disease course, and how to integrate them with other preventive strategies.

At this meeting, there will be new data presented that speak directly to these questions. If you look at the programme, you’ll notice sessions dedicated to guiding

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**Dr Christina Deligianni:** Artificial intelligence is certainly one of the most promising frontiers in headache medicine. It can already help us handle the growing amount of patient data generated by digital diaries, wearable devices, and clinical records. In the *relevant* session, we will have the opportunity to see how such data can reveal specific patterns — for example, links between sleep, stress, hormonal cycles, or environmental factors — that may precede a migraine attack. Used correctly, AI could **significantly improve diagnosis, detect individualised trigger patterns**, and ultimately **optimise treatment strategies** by tailoring prevention and acute management to each patient's profile. That said, its use must still be approached with **scientific caution**. Predictive tools require thorough validation and should complement, not replace, clinical expertise. We must also ensure transparency, data security, and patient understanding before integrating these technologies into everyday practice. Moreover, the **new studies and fresh ideas** presented at this congress will be invaluable. They will help guide us and **inspire our work** to develop evidence-based, innovative strategies for the future of migraine care.

***The congress offers a comprehensive and diverse programme for practising doctors, researchers and all healthcare professionals in this field. Which topics do you consider particularly important? What are your personal highlights at the congress in Lisbon?***

**Prof. Raquel Gil-Gouveia:** Yes, the programme this year is particularly rich and very well thought out. What I really appreciate is how it reflects the *full spectrum* of headache medicine, from fundamental mechanisms to day-to-day clinical decisions and the broader organisation of care. We address the key themes shaping our field: hormonal influences, pain mechanisms, biomarkers, inflammation, neuromodulation, treatment outcomes, and how to combine preventive strategies in a personalised way. We have a very strong basic science component this year, as many sessions are designed in a *translational format*, meaning you will hear a basic science perspective and a clinical interpretation side-by-side. This allows us to connect mechanisms directly to treatment decisions, which is exactly where the field is heading. Another highlight is that we have joint sessions with other societies, including colleagues from stroke, sleep medicine, and pain societies. This is extremely important because migraine rarely exists in isolation. These shared sessions allow us to address comorbidities and overlapping mechanisms in a more integrated way, something essential in real-world care. And the format of the sessions is also worth mentioning - in many of them, you'll hear top international experts speak, followed by oral abstract presentations on the same theme. This gives a platform to newer researchers and brings in fresh perspectives. It's a model we've used before in our congresses, and it works extremely well to keep the field dynamic and forward-looking. And of course, we cannot forget the poster sessions! We also have something a bit different this year: a Parliamentary Debate session. It's a more interactive, lively discussion format, and I really encourage everyone to attend and participate.

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So, overall, the programme is comprehensive, interconnected, and truly reflective of where headache medicine is going next, scientifically, clinically, and collaboratively. It will be serious in content, but also genuinely enjoyable — I think it's going to be *a lot of fun*.

**Dr Christina Deligianni:** This year's congress is rich in both scientific rigour and clinical relevance. For me, one of the greatest strengths of this congress is its *balance*—between science and practice, between established experts and emerging voices.

I'm particularly looking forward to

**The Translational and Basic Science sessions**, which bring molecular discoveries closer to therapeutic application — particularly those addressing neuroinflammation and glial signalling.

**The Joint Sessions on Headache and Stroke, and Headache and Sleep**, reflecting our growing understanding of comorbidity and systemic links — from vascular risk to circadian biology, and also the joint session of pain.

To the sessions on comorbidities and integrated care, **on special populations, and definitely sessions focused on gender, sex and hormone related headache differences**

**The Teaching courses** which provide invaluable opportunity on hands-on training for clinicians, and specialised learning for scientists from the experts on the field.

The “Meet the Expert” sessions offer a fantastic opportunity to share clinical experience, learn from one another, and discuss practical challenges that we all face in our daily work.

I look forward to the interactive debate sessions with provocative and challenging topics, the FHE sessions that engage young scientists, making this a truly dynamic and comprehensive program. And of course, the poster sessions always bring an inspiring energy—so many researchers presenting innovative work and building connections that shape the future of our field.

***Thank you very much for the interesting interview!***

**Informationen** and the conference program can be found at [headache-congress.org](https://www.headache-congress.org)

*This press release is approved for publication. Please send us a copy if you reprint it.*

**Media representatives** are cordially invited to attend the congress! We look forward to your coverage. We will be happy to arrange interviews for you. Accreditation is available via the congress website or directly via the press contact.

#### Background:

This high-profile specialist conference is organised by the European Headache Federation (EHF) to a high scientific standard. Since its foundation in 1992, this non-profit organisation has been committed to improving the quality of life of headache patients in Europe. The EHF is committed to raising awareness of headache disorders and their impact among governments, healthcare providers and consumers across Europe. For more information about the EHF, please visit <https://ehf-headache.org/>

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