

Professor Rajko Kusec, MD, PhD
Consultant hematologist
Department of hematology
Dubrava University hospital
University of Zagreb School of medicine
President of Croatian society of haematology

I was born and I practice hematology in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, a historical, today modern and vibrant city that celebrated its 900-th birthday recently. My parents were chemists, but I think I knew relatively early that I was going to study medicine. So I did, at Zagreb University and after finishing my residence and fellowship in internal medicine I left to Vienna for postgraduate study in hematology at Medical university, department of hematology and hemostaseology. This was very important experience where, besides the clinic, I was introduced to molecular hematology, something which is part of my professional activity in form of molecular diagnostics today. Another important and interesting aspect of understanding hematological disorders, particularly neoplasms, was opened to me at University of Oxford at Haematology research unit of Nuffield department of medicine. Hunting for candidate tumour suppressor gene(s) in the deleted region of long arm of chromosome 5 in MDS was a unique perspective for a clinician! I eventually returned home and since then I am active as clinical hematologist that also supervises molecular hematology diagnostics at University hospital Dubrava and, as professor of internal medicine at Zagreb School of medicine, I teach undergraduate and postgraduate students. When thinking of myself as a physician, medical professional and a person who had opportunity to experience different but complementary levels of hematology I can say that through all this I became more aware of the challenges and complexity of blood diseases. Through this unique "journey" I had privilege to encounter many interesting people, made many true and lasting friendships and also retained international connections resulting in collaborations and projects in hematology, particularly in myeloid neoplasms. Through my "case". I may suggest that it is visible that interconnecting, exchanging ideas and experiences, will move us all forward in our mission of being better doctors for our patients!