

Dear Professor Brosens, Dear Dr Puttemans,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Approaching the conclusion of the Fourth European Congress on Endometriosis, it is my great pleasure now to announce another highlight: the presentation of the Carl-von-Rokitansky Prize of the Scientific Endometriosis Foundation 2018.

There are three special aspects to this presentation:

First, the prize originates from an idea of Professor Peter Oppelt, who is also responsible for this outstanding conference – a welcome occasion to express our gratitude to him.

The prize is awarded to persons in consideration of their outstanding lifetime scientific and clinical achievements in the field of endometriosis. The winners are elected from a list of candidates by the board of the foundation in agreement with the president of the respective congress. The first laureate was Paolo Vercellini in 2013, followed by Lilo Mettler and Jörg Keckstein.

Second, the prize is named after the pathologist Carl von Rokitansky, who lived and worked here in Vienna and was the founder of the “Second Viennese School in Medicine” – there is also a Second Viennese School of Music, of course. This group of clinicians and scientists also comprised such venerable personalities as Theodor Billroth, Friedrich Schauta and Ernst Wertheim. In 1860, Rokitansky presented a scientific paper „Ueber Uterusdrüsen-Neubildung“, which translates to „On the *de novo* Formation of Uterine Glands”. This is regarded as the first description of endometriosis that fulfill modern standards of scientific morphology.

Thus, we have come together in a particularly befitting place for this award presentation.

Third, the prize, for the first time, is not awarded to an individual, but, following Professor Brosens’ proposal, to his entire group. I must say, I am highly impressed about this generous and modern understanding of team work.

The group works at the University of Leuven in Belgium where Professor Brosens is emeritus professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the Faculty of Medicine, Catholic University of Leuven. In the 1960s, he started his scientific career as a research fellow at the Royal Hammersmith Hospital. Back then, he worked on the placental-endometrial interface and it is not difficult to imagine how this subject led him to the pathogenesis of endometriosis. In 1975, he was appointed as full professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Leuven, and there he founded the Centre for Reproductive Medicine. Out of a total of over 500 publications and dating back to 1966, PubMed lists 97 publications, amongst them 21 reviews. 45 publications are co-authored with Patrick Puttemans. Further, Professor Brosens is the author of 15 book chapters and one book. In 1992, he was, together with Jacques Donnez, President of the 3rd World Congress on Endometriosis in Brussels. He is an *ad eundem* Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and holds honorary memberships in several renowned medical societies.

And now, I would like to call Professor Brosens and Dr Puttemans to the stage – as representatives of the entire working group at Leuven.