



Guest editor

Matija Strlič

Symposium chairperson

Lucija Zupančič-Kralj

Dear Colleagues,

it is a particular pleasure to be able to offer you this issue of Acta Chimica Slovenica. Having been entrusted the role of the guest editor, and having coordinated the conference, based on which a good part of papers in this issue have been submitted, we feel privileged and grateful to all who contributed their work. The selection and reviewing process was no easy task, and much of the burden was carried on the shoulders of reviewers. We thank all who helped.

In the profusion of meetings, conferences and symposia, the 12th International Symposium on Separation Sciences in Lipica, Slovenia, September 27–29, 2006, was an undisputed success. The response from participants from predominantly – although not exclusively – Central Europe was extraordinary. Of the 192 registered participants, 59 came from Slovenia, 21 from Austria, further 21 from Czech Republic, 16 from Poland and the rest from all over the globe – from Argentina to Ireland. This was a pleasant surprise and demonstrates a real need for such meetings.

By all means, separation techniques are a mature line of analytical research and its steady progress is secured due to the demands of numerous industrial, research, environmental and clinical analytical laboratories. Separation techniques encompass not only chromatographic and other migration-based analytical techniques, but also sample preparation based on separation. We are pleased to present a review of this field in the issue.

The advances of separation techniques are based on constant development of both stationary phases and instrumentation. As evident from another paper, advanced knowledge is needed to understand the retention mechanisms, based on which optimisation of the separation can be attempted. Which ultimately leads to better quality work: more efficient separations, 'greener' analysis, lower detection limits and lower costs. This is undoubtedly an area where more work is needed.

The daunting numbers of analytical data generated nowadays often need to be complemented by chemometric methods, either in the preparation of experiments or in data evaluation – both steps are well demonstrated in several papers. The educational aspects are also covered in one of the contributions. Although rarely featured in

this journal, we feel that the promotion of good teaching practices through such papers is vital for a better recognition and advancement of any scientific field.

Apart from 19 papers based on Symposium presentations, further 15 'regular' papers are included, which makes it one of the most comprehensive issues of this journal.

Matija Strlič,
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