

ESASO Intermediate Cataract & Ocular Surface Course

29 - 31 October 2026

Timisoara (Romania)

ESASO Scientific director: Mario Romano

Course Scientific coordinators: Vito Romano and Mihnea Munteanu

Level: Intermediate

Duration: 2.5 days

Language: English

Scientific Rationale

Cataract surgery has rapidly evolved from a standardised procedure to a highly personalised intervention, where surgical planning, ocular surface optimisation and complication management are essential to achieving excellent visual outcomes. Surgeons at the intermediate level often face patients with subtle corneal irregularities, dry eye disease, small pupils or early zonular weakness—conditions that significantly influence both biometry accuracy and intraoperative stability.

This course provides an integrated approach that combines modern cataract techniques, practical management of ocular surface disease, and hands-on wet lab training. Through case-based learning, innovation updates and supervised surgical simulations, participants will strengthen their confidence in managing non-basic cataract cases and improve the safety and precision of their surgical practice.

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ESASO Foundation

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Key Features

- Balanced programme (≈40% theory, 40% wet lab, 20% interactive)
- Integration of ocular surface and innovation topics without losing cataract focus
- Highly practical: each lecture includes cases or videos
- Wet lab
- Suitable for intermediate-level surgeons preparing for complex cataracts

Participant Profile – Intermediate Cataract Course (Short Summary)

This course is designed for young ophthalmologists aged 28–35 who have already gained initial experience in cataract surgery and wish to advance their skills and confidence.

Ideal participants have:

- Performed 30–80 cataract surgeries as primary or supervised surgeon
- Basic familiarity with phacoemulsification steps and standard IOL implantation
- Initial exposure to small pupils, early zonular weakness, and simple complications
- Awareness of how ocular surface disease affects biometry and surgical outcomes
- Ability to interpret topography/biometry and plan straightforward cases
- Motivation to improve decision-making, management of non-basic scenarios, and practical technique

Perfect for final-year residents, young consultants, and early-career surgeons progressing from basic phaco proficiency to intermediate surgical autonomy.

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Thursday 29 October 2026

Understanding and Managing Challenging Cataracts

13:30 - 14:00	Registration & welcome	
14:00 - 14:10	Welcome: Introduction of course structure and learning objectives	Mihnea Munteanu
14:10 - 14:40	Modern cataract surgery: decision-making and innovation Overview of current surgical paradigms, device innovation, and AI tools for preoperative planning	Emil Ungureanu
14:50 - 15:10	Small pupil and zonular weakness: how to plan and execute safely Practical algorithms and tips for managing small pupil, floppy iris, and zonular laxity	Emil Ungureanu
15:10 - 15:40	Managing cataract in patients with corneal opacity or irregular cornea Case-based lecture with video support	Paolo Fogagnolo
15:40 - 16:00	Interactive Q&A	All Faculty Panel
16:00 - 16:30	Coffee break	
16:30 - 17:00	Posterior capsule rupture: prevention and first steps in management How to recognise and act early, with intraoperative video	Bogdan Galan
17:00 - 17:30	IOL strategies: monofocal, EDOF and toric options Choosing the right IOL in intermediate-level practice	Paolo Fogagnolo
17:30 - 18:00	Discussion & Q&A Wrap-up of Day 1	All Faculty Panel

Friday 30 October 2026

From Surface to Surgery: Linking Ocular Surface and Cataract

	Ocular surface and dry eye: why it matters before cataract surgery	
09:00 – 09:30	The impact of tear film instability on biometry and visual outcomes	Sinziana Istrate
09:30 – 10:00	Managing ocular surface disease in surgical patients Practical approach to diagnosis and optimisation pre-surgery	Giulia Coco
10:00 – 10:30	Innovative diagnostics: topography, interferometry and AI tools Demonstration-based lecture on integrating modern imaging	Andrei Filip
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 -11:45	Complicated cataract scenarios: case-based discussion Group work on surgical planning and complication avoidance	Bogdan Galan
11:45 – 12:45	Interactive Quiz: “What would you do?” Case quiz and clinical decision-making	All Faculty Panel
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch Break	
	Wet Lab – Advanced Phaco Techniques Model: porcine/synthetic eyes.	
14:00 – 18:00	Practice: Phacoemulsification, iris hooks and rings, anterior vitrectomy, IOL insertion, management of OSD-related corneal sensitivity issues.	All Faculty Panel

Saturday 31 February 2024
Integrated Management & Complication Prevention

09:00 – 09:30	Cataract surgery in post-LASIK or irregular corneas	Andrei Filip
09:30 – 10:00	From Dry Eye to Dysphotopsia: postoperative visual quality Discussion on patient satisfaction and optical phenomena	Sinziana Istrate
10:00 – 10:30	Video Session: Learning from complications Real surgical cases and group analysis	All Faculty Panel
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 – 11:45	Corneal oedema and DED flare-ups: management in early postoperative phase Pharmacologic and mechanical solutions	Mihnea Munteanu
11:45 – 12:30	Case Roundtable & Take-home messages Participants discuss lessons learned and key surgical principles Participants are encouraged to bring their own cases to discuss	All Faculty Panel

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