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Authors: Tiziano Barbui, Alessandra Carobbio, Guido Finazzi, Alessandro M. Vannucchi, Giovanni Barosi, Elisabetta Antonioli, Paola Guglielmelli, Alessandro Pancrazi, Silvia Salmoiraghi, Pio Zilio, Cosimo Ottomano, Roberto Marchioli, Ivan Cuccovillo, Barbara Bottazzi, Alberto Mantovani, and Alessandro Rambaldi

Information about the contributions of each person named as having participated in the study

1) **Guarantor(s)**, i.e., person(s) who is (are) responsible for the integrity of the work as a whole:
• Tiziano Barbui

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2) Authors who participated in the **conception of the study**: Tiziano Barbui, Alessandro M. Vannucchi, Giovanni Barosi, Alberto Mantovani, and Alessandro Rambaldi

3) **Design & Methods**. The following authors were responsible for specific investigations (please detail):

- Alessandra Carobbio was responsible for statistical methods
- Elisabetta Antonioli, Paola Guglielmelli, Alessandro Pancrazi were responsible for collecting clinical data
- Silvia Salmoiraghi, Pio Zilio, Cosimo Ottomano, Ivan Cuccovillo and Barbara Bottazzi were responsible for collecting laboratory data

4) **Results**. The following authors were responsible for specific portions of the results, including figures and tables (please indicate the person responsible for each figure and each table):

- Alessandra Carobbio, Guido Finazzi, Roberto Marchioli and Tiziano Barbui were responsible for Table 1
- Alessandra Carobbio, Guido Finazzi, Roberto Marchioli and Tiziano Barbui were responsible for Table 2
- Alessandra Carobbio, Guido Finazzi, Roberto Marchioli and Tiziano Barbui were responsible for Table 3
- Alessandra Carobbio, Guido Finazzi, Roberto Marchioli and Tiziano Barbui were responsible for Table and Figure in the On-line Appendix

5) **Writing the manuscript**. The following authors were responsible for writing the manuscript:

- Tiziano Barbui, Alessandra Carobbio, Guido Finazzi, Alessandro M. Vannucchi, Giovanni Barosi, Roberto Marchioli, Ivan Cuccovillo, Barbara Bottazzi, Alberto Mantovani, and Alessandro Rambaldi were responsible for revising the drafts and writing the final version of the paper

6) **Contributors Listed in Acknowledgments**: NA