Report from the Scientific Programme Committee 21st ECNP Congress, 30 August - 3 September 2008, Barcelona, Spain

Sven Ove Ögren, Sweden, chair

It is a great pleasure to give my impression as chair of the Scientific Programme Committee (SPC) to the 21st ECNP Congress in Barcelona. As in the last two years, the congress attracted a large number of delegates (close to 7400) who filled the lecture rooms from morning to late afternoon throughout the congress. I was delighted to notice that the three plenary lectures attracted such a large audience. It was satisfying to see that the number of people wishing to attend a particular symposium was overall very high. In addition, the audience has been very active. I was particularly impressed by the lively discussions and strong involvement of the delegates. The lay-out of the congress venue allowed the participants to encounter each other frequently thereby creating additional possibilities for interactions.

The major aim of the SPC is to create a high quality scientific programme with a balanced mix between basic/clinical science and applied clinical developments. Another important aim is to report on new and exciting breakthroughs within the field of neuropsychopharmacology. I think that the 21st ECNP Congress, in an excellent manner, managed to fulfil both these aims. This achievement depends to a large extent on the input from young scientists within Europe. I think the congress gave a good impression of the high quality of research performed by European scientists within Europe.

The three plenary lectures were held just before the ECNP Congress and participation is by invitation only. The TEMs have become very successful and we are grateful for the input from all the participants and the additional work done by the coordinators. One of the output requirements for the TEMs is to submit a symposium proposal for the next ECNP Congress. In Barcelona four symposia have been submitted by the TEMs from 2007. I am looking forward to the contribution of the TEMs 2008 for the 22nd ECNP Congress in Istanbul.

Our knowledge of brain mechanisms of relevance for health and disease is rapidly increasing. In the preclinical Breaking News symposium recent scientific achievements have been presented. The lectures in the clinical Breaking News symposium were of high level, but there is a need for more translational approaches.

Summing up, the ECNP Congress in Barcelona was undoubtedly a great success measured by any criteria. I am convinced that everyone attending the congress feels that he or she has learned many new interesting things which captivated one’s scientific curiosity and made the ECNP Congress a great success.

Finally, I would like to express once more my thanks to all contributors, and in particular the ECNP-Office, who made the 21st ECNP Congress such an overall success.

Call for symposia proposals for the 23rd ECNP Congress, 28 August - 1 September 2010, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The Scientific Programme Committee (SPC) is inviting you to submit a symposium proposal for the 23rd ECNP Congress.

For details on the requirements for the proposal and the selection criteria handled by the SPC please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu.

The deadline for submission is 31 March 2009.

22nd ECNP Congress: Submission of papers is open

The Scientific Programme Committee invites delegates who intend to present a poster to submit the corresponding paper.

The paper will be reviewed for presentation and publication. A paper that is not published can still be accepted for presentation.

The deadline for submission is 31 March 2009.

For instructions on preparation of papers and further information please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu.
The way you and your team combine results from so many different techniques into one complete (clinical) picture seems to be an example of ‘real’ neuropsychopharmacology. Are the (young) researchers working at your institute trained to become true neuropsychopharmacologists?

My group conducts research in genetics, gene regulation, morphology of neurons and neuronal circuits, as well as neuroimaging. This group is truly ‘European’ with scientists from different countries and scientific backgrounds with English as the working language. With respect to animal work, we generate new models of genetically modified mice and have established collaboration with a large number of national and international centres. With this collaborative effort we have a guaranteed flexibility of performance, and the training of ‘true’ neuropsychopharmacologists comes as a natural. The majority of our groups’ researchers stem from the fields of biology and psychology, whereas there is currently a lack of young physicians ensuring a direct link with the needs of the patients. It is difficult to get these young physicians interested in translational research, improving this current unsatisfactory situation is indeed one of my future goals.

What is your reaction to the quote in the summary of the nomination: ‘5-HTT has become a model molecule par excellence in cognitive, biosocial, and psychiatric neurosciences, clinical neuropsychologists are faced with a new wealth of genomic data and the potential for manipulating genes, and the question arises “What are the future challenges and limitations for determining the genetic influence on behavioural traits”? It is difficult to get these young physicians interested in translational research, improving this current unsatisfactory situation is indeed one of my future goals.

The future challenge certainly lies in the transformation of the flood of genetic data into the cellular neurobiology at the functional level. Individual genes exert very small effects, and an important question is how these small effects interact to lead to a phenotype. On the other hand, there is no concept to answer the question whether genetic testing for genes involved in a complex trait or behavioural disorders is predictive for moderating events across the entire lifespan such as developmental and adult neuropathology. Although the interindividual variability is huge and many different aspects are involved at a genetic level, the ultimate goal is to find the molecular basis that regulates behaviour. Here, we tear down the myth about the uniqueness of human behaviour but we also believe that individuals are unique in a fundamental way. This contrast makes the work for basic and clinical scientists extremely difficult.

How do you look at the perceived lack of efficacy of antidepressants as reported in the press?

I think this form of reporting by the press is primarily doing a disservice to the patients by re-enforcing their confusion. The response of patients to antidepressants is highly individual and also relates to the personal relationship with the treating psychiatrist as well as other complementary components. The results are often highly artificial and far away from the therapeutic reality. Using common sense in conducting and assessing clinical trials, occasionally also using an open design in a ‘real life’ situation in a single study centre, as well as sensible information of the patient and in my opinion get us beyond the current dilemma.

You are a trained psychiatrist and psychopharmacologist, are you (still) involved in patient care?

Yes, I am. I am responsible for a ward of 21 inpatient beds. In general, two residents are at work on this ward for the day-to-day patient care. I teach clinical psychiatry but consider the official classification system for psychiatric disorders too narrow and not founded in neurobiology; it creates many problems for teachers with a translational view regarding training on the job.

Would you like anything to add to the above?

ECNP is a very fine organisation. The scientific quality of the ECNP Congresses has been increasing enormously over the years. I favour the low number of tracks and symposia very. Finally, the ECNP involvement in pertinent issues, such as ‘Society and Neurosciences’, is critically important.

For the report from the ECNP Award Jury 2008 see page 3.
ECNP has taken an environmental friendly initiative

From 2009 onward, ECNP has decided to no longer automatically include the paper copy of the congress supplement to the congress bag. By this initiative, ECNP wants to contribute to the preservation of natural resources. Participants who are really interested in having a paper copy of the congress supplement to ENP can still order it at a price of Euro 20 through the online registration form available on the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu. Please note that the published papers of the 22nd ECNP Congress can be found on the CD-Rom, included in the registration fee, and via the Congress Information System that will be available on the ECNP website six weeks before the start of the congress.

Call for applications ECNP Travel Award 2009

The best papers of young scientists in Europe, accepted for publication and presentation, will be awarded with the ECNP Travel Award. By this award ECNP aims to stimulate young scientists to participate at the ECNP Congress.

You may indicate your interest in applying for the ECNP Travel Award 2009 while submitting your paper for the 22nd ECNP Congress.

Call for applications ECNP Fellowship Award 2009

The ECNP Fellowship Award has been established to support the attendance of excellent young, i.e. not older than 40 years, MDs and PhDs in Europe at ECNP Congresses.

For further information please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu.
The deadline for submission of applications is 31 March 2009.

Young Scientists Award symposia at the 22nd ECNP Congress

Sven Ove Ögren, Sweden
chair Scientific Programme Committee

The name of the Hot Topics symposia for the ECNP Congresses has been changed into Young Scientists Award symposia, however, the content will remain of the same, scientifically high standard.

The history: Hot Topics symposia

At the 15th ECNP Congress in 2002, for the first time a Hot Topics symposium was organised in the preclinical track where young promising preclinical neuroscientists from renowned European institutes were invited to present topics ‘hot from the press’. Another successful Hot Topics symposium has been organised at the 16th ECNP Congress in 2003. The success has not only been the quality of the presentations itself but also the number of young scientists showing their interest in taking part in the ECNP activity. Based on the latter, the ECNP Workshop on Neuropsychopharmacology for Young Scientists in Europe was established. For more details on this meeting please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu. From there, the development evolved to select 16 young scientists, both from basic neuroscience and clinical neuropsychopharmacology backgrounds, on the basis of their presented posters or to participate in two Hot Topics symposia at the subsequent ECNP Congress.

The present: name change

Since the introduction of the Breaking News symposia at the 18th ECNP Congress, it has been noted that congress participants encountered difficulties in understanding the difference between these symposia and the Hot Topics symposia. To make a clear distinction, it has been decided to rename the latter symposia to Young Scientists Award symposia from the 22nd ECNP Congress onward. But rest assured only the name has changed!

Together with Dr Dennis Murphy and his co-workers from the NIH, Klaus-Peter Lesch started to examine the role of 5-HTT in emotional regulation in the early 1990s. 5-HTT fine-tunes 5-HT transmission at the synapse since it removes the transmitter from the synaptic cleft. 5-HTT is known to have a critical role in the mechanisms of action of antidepressant drugs since most antidepressant drugs and in vivo and in vitro reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) act on this reuptake site. The collaboration with Dennis Murphy and his group led to pioneering discoveries on the role of gene polymorphisms associated with personality traits, response to psychotherapeutic drugs and nerve psychiatric disorders. A particularly important finding (published in Science, 1996) relates to the discovery of an association between anxiety-related traits with a polymorphism on the promoter of the gene which encodes 5-HTT. Several fundamental papers Klaus-Peter Lesch and his group demonstrated the functional consequence of the polymorphism at the 5-HTT promoter which results inter alia in variations in 5-HT neurotransmission. Thus, the short (S) promoter variant of the gene which encodes 5-HTT is associated with anxiety-related traits with a polymorphism in the promoter of the gene which encodes 5-HTT. In several fundamental papers Klaus-Peter Lesch and his group demonstrated the functional consequence of the polymorphism at the 5-HTT promoter which results inter alia in variations in 5-HT neurotransmission. Thus, the short (S) promoter variant of the gene which encodes 5-HTT.

The above described research paradigm has recently been extended to complex human phenotypes including e.g. social interaction and emotion regulation showing a broad role of the 5-HTT gene in the modulation of complex human behaviour. Klaus-Peter Lesch is currently investigating the neuronal and molecular pathway modulated by 5-HTT genetic polymorphisms and how they relate to psychopathology. This research, based on integration of behavioural genetics and cognitive neuroscience, will open up a deeper understanding of the complexity in human behaviour and how this relates to gene-environment interactions.

In summary, because of his pioneering and creative scientific achievements, Klaus-Peter Lesch is one of the pre-eminent researchers in the field of neuropsychopharmacology.

For further information please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu.
The deadline for submission of applications is 31 March 2009.

The ECNP Neuropsychopharmacology Award has been established to recognise distinguished research in neuropsychopharmacology and closely related disciplines. This year’s prize recognises contributions in clinical research, and the awardee is Klaus-Peter Lesch, Professor of Psychiatry and Psychobiology at the University of Würzburg, Germany. The award jury has based its decision on Prof. Lesch’s pioneering and innovative research on a polymorphism in the promoter of the serotonin transporter gene and his subsequent discoveries of the importance of this finding for personality disorders and a number of psychiatric disorders.

Klaus-Peter Lesch received his undergraduate training at the Medical school during 1977-1981 and his postgraduate education at the University of Würzburg. He received a fellowship at the National Institute of Health (NIH), Bethesda, USA 1990-1992 and his certificate in psychotherapy and psychiatry at the University of Würzburg. Klaus-Peter Lesch has published more than 260 original papers, most of them in high-ranking scientific journals. He is one of the most cited researchers in the field according to the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) and he has received several international prestigious awards and distinctions.

The research of Klaus-Peter Lesch has been focused on basic and clinical neuropsychopharmacology and molecular genetics. A major theme in his studies is the role of the brain serotonin (5-HT) system in disorders of attention, emotion regulation and cognition. The work has led to important discoveries on the neurobiology of the 5-HTT and in the modulation of complex human behaviour. Klaus-Peter Lesch has elucidated the role of altered intraneuronal signalling as well as interneuronal interactions in various phenotypes. These findings have increased our knowledge on the mechanisms underlying the pathophysiology of neuropsychiatric disorders and have given indications of potential new pathways which could be targeted by drug treatments. An important aspect of this research is based on the development of relevant preclinical models in mice. Klaus-Peter Lesch and his group have been the first to generate mutant mice deficient in 5-HTT and tryptophan hydroxylase 2 (TPH2).

The ECNP Fellowship Award has been established to support the attendance of excellent young scientists in Europe, accepted for publication and presentation, at the ECNP Congress.

You may indicate your interest in applying for the ECNP Fellowship Award 2009 while submitting your paper for the 22nd ECNP Congress.

For further information please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu.
The deadline for submission of applications is 31 March 2009.

Call for members to propose a brainstorming session at the 22nd ECNP Congress

If you are interested in running one of the brainstorming sessions at the 22nd ECNP Congress, please visit the members site at the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu for further information.

The deadline for submission is 31 March 2009.
The Netherlands, editor

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If you would look back at the past 40 years of your involvement in brain research, what do you consider for yourself the most interesting discovery/research? It is in 1959, whilst writing up a review article on the inhibitors of monamine oxidase, that I had taken the decision to devote myself to research in a new domain: neuropharmacology. I had discovered the remarkable work of Julius Axelrod and of his collaborators on the identification of norepinephrine in peripheral tissues, as well as Arvid Carlsson and his colleagues’ first article that demonstrated that large quantities of dopamine were present in the striatum and consequently suggested that this precursor of norepinephrine was very likely a chemical mediator of the central nervous system. The idea came to me of synthesizing radio-active dopamine forms from Tyrosine-C14, and developing a technique to inject the isotope directly into the cerebral ventricles to bypass the blood-brain barrier and thereby directly deliver dopamine-C14 into the brain. I was hoping the radioactive amine would be taken up by midbrain dopaminergic neurons and consequently facilitate the study of its metabolism and modulation by certain psychoactive substances. The first results of this study were published in 1962 in the “Comptes Rendus de l’Académie des Sciences”. A year later, in the same journal, I published my first results on the cerebral metabolism of the newly available tritiated noradrenaline.

The subsequent most important aspects for me have been my contributions to the sixties and seventies to the development of insight in and identification of the metabolism of the catecholamines (CA) and the identification of the location of the CA neurons in the rat brain. In particular the identification of the mesencephaloprefrontal complex neurons has had a large impact on our understanding of CA related disorders of the brain such as Parkinson’s disease and schizophrenia. Follow-up research has been focusing on the significance of presynaptic receptors, plasticity of the CA system, glutamate, both astrocytes and microglia, and of GAP junctions.

You have played an important role in the Collège de France. What exactly does this institution stand for? Collège de France is a special institute not related to any university. It was established in the 16th century to serve as counterbalance to the very strict university of the Sorbonne. Its initial goal was – and still is – to promote learning at the cutting edge of research, to teach new areas of knowledge and to favour interdisciplinary exchanges. The Collège de France is organised by 52 chairs, ten of which are currently held by foreign professors, covering the whole range of disciplines: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, archaeology, literature, linguistics, orientalism, philosophy, social sciences, etc. These are not permanent: the Collège de France enjoys not only considerable freedom in its teaching and research activities but can adapt to the progress achieved in all fields of knowledge. The requirement for teaching is not large, 20 hours a year to be divided equally over colleagues’ and Collège de France experience, I have been asked by the government to participate in a jury of 7 members to evaluate the government’s proposals to develop scientific areas, i.e. university campuses, in the urban area of 10 major cities in France. Quite a challenge, I can tell you!

When Mitterrand was elected as president of France, he introduced many changes for France and also expected the Collège de France to change. Because during my time as member of the Collège de France, I frequently addressed the need for renovation not only of the building but also of the institution Collège de France itself, I seemed to be the likely choice for president of the Collège de France at that time.

Another aspect that lies close to my heart is the following. When the head of an INSERM Unit retires, the Unit is closed. I think it should be possible for the good people to apply for a stay of four years to establish their own group, with the possibility of an extension for another four years. All of this is of course not an over-night project. A lot of the initiatives are still under construction, most of them now headed by my successor. I am still involved in the renovation of the buildings.

Are you still active in the scientific arena? No, that book is closed. I retired in 2006. However, as a follow-up on my vast scientific and Collège de France experience, I have been asked by the government to participate in a jury of 7 members to evaluate the governmental proposals to develop scientific areas, i.e. university campuses, in the urban area of 10 major cities in France. Quite a challenge, I can tell you!

When you were awarded to the 2008 ECNP Lifetime Achievement Award: Jacques Glowinski, France

Jacques Glowinski was born in Paris, France on 30 August 1936. Currently he is active in overseeing the finalisation of the renovation of the buildings of the Collège de France and in a jury for the governmental plans for promoting scientific areas in 10 major cities in France. Jacques Glowinski is married and has one child.

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The ECNP Lifetime Achievement Award was established in 2005 by the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology and is presented biannually in the recognition of an individual who has made innovative and lasting contributions to the area of neuropsychopharmacology on a national and/or international level.

The recipient of the ECNP Lifetime Achievement Award this year is Jacques Glowinski, Professor at Collège de France, Paris. Professor Glowinski has a long and distinguished career as a scientist, as a teacher and as an administrator at high levels. During 2000-2006 he served as President, i.e. Administrator of Collège de France, one of the most prestigious research institutions in the world. He has numerous national and international honours, for instance Professor Glowinski is Commander of the National Legion d’Honneur. The ECNP Award Jury has recognised his pioneering research on the neurochemistry and function of brain monoamines, and his outstanding leadership in European neuropsychopharmacology, which has inspired generations of scientists.

Jacques Glowinski received his university diploma at the Institute of Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy in Paris in 1960 and graduated in Natural Sciences in 1968. From 1961-1962 he was associated with the Institute Pasteur and left in 1963 for post-doctoral studies at NIMH in Bethesda, USA. Jacques Glowinski returned to France in 1965, and in 1966 he became director for the newly created group Biochemical Neuropharmacology at Collège de France, as a part of General Neurophysiology under its director Professor A. Focas. In 1969 he became Maître de Recherche at INSERM, and in 1974 Director of an INSERM Unit. In 1982 Jacques Glowinski joined Collège de France as Professor and Chair of Neuropharmacology. He was appointed Vice-President of the Professorial Assembly at Collège de France in 1991 and became its Administrator in 2000.

Jacques Glowinski has a research career spanning over more than 40 years. During this period he has carried out pioneering research documented by close to 650 publications in scientific peer-reviewed journals. Among his major contributions are the discovery and characterisation of cortical dopamine neurons in the early 1970’s. This finding is, of course, of major importance for the DA hypothesis of schizophrenia, which until then was focused on the striatal DA system. Later studies focused on the nigrostriatal DA system, especially the striatal compartments (striosomes versus matrix) and the role of compensatory mechanisms after partial inactivation of nigro-striatal DA neurons. The studies have important implications for DA neuronal mechanisms underlying progression of the neurodegenerative effects of DA neurons. By the use of biochemical techniques his group was the first to discover and characterize vertical DA neurons in the early 1970’s. This finding is, of course, of major importance for the DA hypothesis of schizophrenia, which until then was focused on the striatal DA system. Later studies focused on the nigrostriatal DA system, especially the striatal compartments (striosomes versus matrix) and the role of compensatory mechanisms after partial inactivation of nigro-striatal DA neurons. The studies have important implications for DA neuronal mechanisms underlying progression of the neurodegenerative effects of DA neurons. By the use of biochemical techniques his group was the first to discover and characterize vertical DA neurons in the early 1970’s. This finding is, of course, of major importance for the DA hypothesis of schizophrenia, which until then was focused on the striatal DA system. Later studies focused on the nigrostriatal DA system, especially the striatal compartments (striosomes versus matrix) and the role of compensatory mechanisms after partial inactivation of nigro-striatal DA neurons. The studies have important implications for DA neuronal mechanisms underlying progression of the neurodegenerative effects of DA neurons.

Besides his many outstanding scientific achievements, Jacques Glowinski has played a key role as a leader and a role model for generations of scientists. He established a ‘French school’ of research in neuropsychopharmacology, which has inspired generations of scientists.

New name: ECNP Consultation Meeting

The name of the ECNP Consensus Meeting has been changed into ECNP Consultation Meeting.

The ECNP Consultation Meeting is scheduled for 29–30 August 2008, Barcelona, Spain.

The topic of the meeting is: ‘Biomarkers and experimental medicine in developing new treatments in neuropsychopharmacology’. The provisional programme and the online registration form are available on the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu.

The renewed ECNP website pages for members now also offer the possibility to pay the membership fee by credit card (Visa, Eurocard or Visa card) via a secure connection.

To access the ECNP website pages for members please visit the ECNP website www.ecnp.eu, click ‘to member pages’, and log in with your personal username and password. Please select ‘online payment’ on the left hand side menu and you will see an overview of your open membership fee including the possibility to make the online payment.

The ECNP website www.ecnp.eu has been changed into ECNP Consultation Meeting. The 2009 ECNP Consultation Meeting is scheduled for 29–30 August in Nice, France.

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ECNP Targeted Expert Meetings 2008

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 Jacque...
Neuropsychopharmacology in Estonia
Jaanus Harro, Estonia
chair Local Advisory Committee 10th ECPN Regional Meeting

The University of Tartu (Dorpat) was founded in 1632 by Gustav II Adolf, King of Sweden, and after its closure during the armed conflicts between Sweden and Russia, reopened in 1802 by the Russian Czar Alexander I. In the nineteenth century the language of instruction was German. Owing to this fact Tartu can claim having been the cradle of experimental pharmacology, as Rudolf Buchheim opened here his laboratory in 1847 and converted materia medica, in which medicines were described in alphabetical order, into science of pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics based on principles of chemistry and physiology.

Buchheim’s successor, Oswald Schmiedeberg carried the Tartu tradition in 1872 to Strassburg. Paraphenically, Bernhard Neisser, Professor of Internal Medicine, made a similar career decision at the same time, and in 1873 they together began to publish what is now considered the first journal of pharmacology and that presently bears their names: Naunyn-Schmiedeberg’s Archives of Pharmacology. While Schmiedeberg experimented extensively with several drugs acting on the central and peripheral nervous system, most notably with muscarine, this pioneering development in pharmacology had no contemporaneous focus. But this was the era of keen interest of Emil Kraepelin, who became professor of psychiatry and later director of the psychiatric hospital in Tartu. He continued studies on effects of caffeine and alcoholic intoxication on mental functions that he had started in the laboratory of Wilhelm Wundt.

Two world wars later, modern neuropsychopharmacology in Estonia cannot claim a direct connection to these historical events. It may be worth considering, though, that the historical atmosphere persisted as the psychiatric clinic of Kraepelin with a laboratory of clinical psychopharmacology, his laboratories at the Institute of Physiology, and most notably the Department of Pharmacology of Buchheim and Schmiedeberg were all still in their original use until the end of twentieth century. The author of this text has had the privilege to carry out psychopharmacological experiments in all of these places.

During the early period of the psychopharmacological revolution, the influential professor of psychiatry in Tartu, Juri Saarm, clearly recognised how important the emerging discipline of neuropsychopharmacology will become, and took the necessary measures. It was only upon the return of Lembit Allikmets from the laboratory of Sërgii Antsiškov in St Petersburg in 1965 when the neuropsychopharmacological branch of research truly emerged. Lembit Allikmets first served as a researcher and subsequently as head of a laboratory of experimental pathology and pharmacology, and thereafter since 1973 as professor and chairman of the Department of Pharmacology. He became the single founding father of the Tartu school of psychopharmacology, it was in his department and in the laboratory of experimental and clinical psychopharmacology co-directed by the Departments of Pharmacology and Psychiatry, that all classes of psycho- and neuroactive drugs were studied. Besides behavioural, biochemical and clinical investigations on antipsychotics, antidepressants, tranquillisers and antipsychotic substances, studies of more fundamental nature such as on anxiety-producing drugs and neurotoxins, and psychopharmacology of aggressive behaviour and addiction have been fostered.

With Allikmets in the lead, the Estonian traditionally broad-based pharmacology found its way into ‘psychopharmacology’, but all one must be aware of the Estonian Society of Pharmacology are, or have been, active in neuropsychopharmacology. Estonian Psychiatric Association with its Biological Psychiatry Section is its large partner in sponsoring relevant research and education. During the reign of Allikmets, Estonian pharmacologists and psychiatrists established the tradition of large, international congresses every few years. While in the 70s and 80s the international ties were unstable and travel severely restricted for obvious reasons, Tartu hosted the ‘All-Un Union’ meetings that gathered hundreds of scientists from all over the former Soviet Union. The last in this series, in 1986, became too large for the remotely located Tartu and took place in the Tallinn Olympic Swimming Centre, a reminder of the Olympic Regattas of the Moscow Games that had been held in Tallinn. Truly international was the 2nd Baltic Meeting on Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology, in 1990. Tartu held somewhat smaller but high profile meetings in 1995 and 2001. In 2006 Tallinn hosted a regional conference of CINP with 350 participants. All this witnesses the networking ability of Estonian pharmacologists and psychiatrists, and the extent of international collaborations, but also the original contributions made here.

Small can be beautiful: there is just one professorship in pharmacology and one in psychiatry in Estonia, but several research groups pursue to a smaller or larger extent the research questions in common with neuropsychopharmacology or use neuropsychopharmacological methods that have emerged at several other departments of the University of Tartu. The most significant of these are at the Departments of Chemistry, Physiology, and Psychology. Neurobiology with relevance to neuropsychopharmacology is now also emerging at the Tallinn University of Technology and the University of Tartu. Today psychopharmacology and the broader neuroscience community in Estonia are studying depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and neurodegeneration at both clinical and animal modelling level. Molecular genetic tools such as genetically modified animals, genome wide expression studies using RNA microarrays, genome wide association studies as well as candidate gene approaches, the latter often with focus on gene-environment interactions, have been added to the traditional in vitro screens and in vivo models. All can be done with present-days tools such that pharmacology is in some decline after its brief in the 90s when Estonian’s research internationally was very high. However, this is deceptive and largely caused by changes internationally was very high. However, this is deceptive and largely caused by changes

As one of the founder members of European Brain Council (EBC), ECPN is proud to let you know that her past-president, Julian Mendlewicz has been elected president of EBC. Below you will find his maiden introduction published in EBC’s latest newsletter

An update on the European Brain Council
Julian Mendlewicz, Belgian, president

The European Brain Council (EBC) came into being in March 2002 as a non-governmental organisational formation that brings together stakeholders in the field of brain research and brain diseases in Europe. Since then, it has succeeded in creating a dialogue between those different stakeholders – between basic and clinical neuroscientists, between neurologists, neurosurgeons and psychiatrists, between patients, carers and doctors, and between industry and consumers – groups who have not always seen eye to eye. The proof that EBC has succeeded in achieving, and perhaps more importantly, maintaining that dialogue lies in the many projects it has undertaken in the last six years. The credit for these goes in large part to Joe Olesen, who presided over the EBC Board from its inception until this year, and to all those who served as its officers in that time.

Among the EBC’s greatest successes to date has been the fact that it has produced a model for European countries. National Brain Councils (NBCs) based on the EBC model now exist in five countries – Slovenia, Belgium, Hungary, Norway and Italy – and the European Action Networks (EANs) are promoting brain research in nine others, while they explore their own potential for evolving into NBCs. In this way, the EBC has begun to build a pan-European network of organisations, all of which share the same goals, and is building support from the bottom up as well as from the top down. It will continue to promote the establishment of EANs and NBCs in the remaining European Union (EU) states.

Top-down pressure is important too, of course, and in order to impress policymakers in Brussels and in the national capitals, we must have data – notably health economic data, which show in black and white the scale of the problem Europe faces in terms of brain disease, and the necessity for more information, resources and training. To that end, the EBC has commissioned and seen published three major studies: Size and Burden of Disorders of the Brain in Europe*, the Consensus Document on European Brain Research, and Resource Allocation to Brain Research in Europe. Further efforts are needed to collect reliable data on all diseases of the central nervous system (CNS), particularly in children, adolescents and the elderly.

Among the other important initiatives in which the EBC has participated is the Innovative Medicines Initiative, which promises that over the next seven years, the
Other impressions from the 21st ECNP Congress, 30 August - 3 September 2008, Barcelona, Spain

Participants’ points of view and suggestions for improvement

Antonio Carobrez, Brazil
“It is the second time that I participate at the ECNP Congress. This year the congress offers a better balance between clinical and basic science, in comparison to the ECNP Congress in Amsterdam in 2005. Nevertheless, for me the ECNP Congress is still too clinical oriented. Considering that within neuropsychopharmacology basic neuroscience and behaviour are important aspects, I would expect the ECNP Congresses to be more focused on basic and behavioural neuroscience.”

Suggestions:
- to promote ECNP Congresses in universities, research institutes, hospitals in order to stimulate the participation of delegates from basic neuroscience
- to attract exhibitors from basic neuroscience

Dragana Josifovic-Kostic, Serbia
“I found the content of the symposia excellent. There were too many interesting symposia at the same time. It was difficult to choose which one to attend. However, I felt a large gap between basic neuroscience and clinical science.”

Suggestion:
- to offer the possibility to buy a video, audio tape, or slides of the symposia

Sergio Tomaselli Marzano, Italy
“I have participated at many ECNP Congresses. The choices of the scientific programmes are well balanced. The symposium that I liked most was ‘S06 - Endophenotypes and spectrums in obsessive-compulsive disorder’. The congress venue is very favourable and the congress is very well organised. I feel efficient. People are well informed and kind”.

Craig Wilson, Australia
“The symposia about dementia were all about Alzheimer’s dementia and have ignored other demen- tias such as vascular dementia. In general, the ECNP Congress is well organised but I consider the break- during lunch time too long and the food offered repetitive”.

Suggestion:
- to offer more about physical treatment, e.g. ECT

Award winners 2008

ECNP Neuropsychopharmacology Award
Klaus-Peter Lesch, Germany

ECNP Lifetime Achievement Award
Jacques Glowinski, France

ECNP Fellowship Award
Sagik Bhattacharya, United Kingdom
Antonio Draghi, Italy
Elizaveta Domnitch, Israel
Marcella Solinas, France
Elena Zhuravliova, Georgia

ECNP Poster Award
P.2.d.021 Elizalde Domnitch, Israel
P.1.e.016 Alia Femenia, United Kingdom
P.8.b.002 Andrea Gonzales, Canada
P.6.c.005 Gerry Jager, The Netherlands
P.1.f.001 Janusz Kobyaszcz, Poland
P.4.b.007 Eva Mikacs, Hungary
P.2.e.005 Henrietta G. Rius, The Netherlands
P.7.a.004 Jung Mi Seo, South Korea
P.3.b.006 Agnieszka Szulc, Poland
P.5.e.019 Pilar Lopez-Garcia, Spain

ECNP Travel Award
P.6.f.002 Silke Behrendt, Germany
P.6.d.008 Nadia Benchaya, France
P.2.d.010 Letizia Bonisi, Italy
P.3.a.007 Daniele Carlini, Italy
P.2.e.016 Alessandro Del Debbio, Italy
P.1.e.040 Glenn Damonte, The Netherlands
P.1.d.010 Aram El Khoury, Sweden
P.1.e.032 Tiziana Fontana Carroli, Spain
P.3.a.016 Alia Femenia, United Kingdom
P.2.d.016 Maria Sahel Garcia-Gutierrez, Spain
P.2.e.021 Carolina Garnier, Spain
P.2.d.003 Moritz Galas, Israel
P.1.e.018 Daniel Haggery, United Kingdom
P.1.a.023 Sanja Hoffmann, Germany
P.1.f.001 Karl Jakob, Estonia
P.6.c.005 Gerry Jager, The Netherlands
P.2.d.011 Maciej Kummer, Poland
P.1.e.014 Luis Llado Pollet, Spain
P.6.a.009 Giovanna Marinosci, Italy
P.1.d.027 Carmen Manouilth, Italy
P.4.b.007 Eva Mikacs, Hungary
P.1.f.002 Monica Neguruta Lopez, Spain
P.6.a.010 Jelena Nestic, United Kingdom
P.4.b.009 Agnes Nicos, Germany
P.6.e.005 Rosanna Peggini, Italy
P.1.b.016 Andrea Papadopoulos, United Kingdom
P.2.e.003 Adele Piovano, Italy
P.6.e.007 Alfonsa Ramon-Migeda, Spain
P.1.e.007 Benjamin Rothberg, Israel
P.2.e.015 Henrietta G. Rius, The Netherlands
P.1.b.004 Noemi Santan, Spain
P.6.e.013 Artur Schuhmann, The Netherlands
P.2.g.011 Zobin Sabol, Hungary
P.6.f.005 Guzel Taz, The Netherlands
P.3.e.001 Elisaveta Sikova, Belgium
P.6.c.008 Tim Williams, United Kingdom
P.1.e.015 Veronica Witte, Austria
P.6.e.009 Agnieszka Zak-Modlik, Poland
P.3.e.005 Nabiha Zidicovic, Serbia

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Calendar of ECNP Meetings

ECNP Congresses

12 - 16 September 2009
28 August - 1 September 2010
3 - 7 September 2011
13 - 17 October 2012
5 - 9 October 2013

22nd ECNP Congress, Istanbul, Turkey
23rd ECNP Congress, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
24th ECNP Congress, Paris, France
25th ECNP Congress, Vienna, Austria
26th ECNP Congress, Barcelona, Spain

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ECNP Workshop on Neuropsychopharmacology for Young Scientists in Europe

Recent topics:
• Molecular neuropsychopharmacology
• Behavioural pharmacology
• Clinical neuropsychopharmacology

5 - 8 March 2009, Nice, France
Variable topic → Addition: towards new drug targets

4 - 7 March 2010, Nice, France
Variable topic → Bipolar disorders: towards new drug targets

ECNP Consultation Meeting

8 - 10 March 2009, Nice, France
Topic:
• Biomarkers and experimental medicine in developing new treatments in neuropsychopharmacology

7 - 9 March 2010, Nice, France

10th ECNP Regional Meeting

23 - 25 April 2009, Tallinn, Estonia

For further information:
website: www.ecnp.eu
e-mail: tallinn2009@ecnp.eu

ECNP - EPA Seminar in Neuropsychopharmacology

28 - 30 May 2009, Częstochowa, Poland

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Meeting national societies

Austrian Society for Neuropsychopharmacology and Biological Psychiatry
11th Annual Meeting
19 - 21 November 2009, Vienna, Austria
Information: www.agnp.at

German Association of Neuropsychopharmacology and Pharmacopsychiatry
26th Symposium
7 - 10 October 2009, München, Germany
Information: www.agpn.de

Scandinavian College of Neuro-Psychopharmacology
30th Annual Meeting as a joint meeting with the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology
27 - 29 April 2009, Copenhagen, Denmark
Information: www.ecnp.dk

Swiss Society of Biological Psychiatry
Annual Meeting as joint meeting with the Swiss Society of Sleep Medicine, Sleep Research and Chronobiology
25 - 26 March 2009, Bern, Switzerland
Information: www.ssbp.ch

Meetings related organisations

2nd European Brain Policy Forum: a focus on depression and the European society
25 - 26 February 2009, Brussels, Belgium
Information: www2.kenes.com/ebrf/pages/home.aspx

2nd Göttinig Meeting of the German Neuroscience Society
25 - 29 March 2009, Göttinig, Germany
Information: www.ngt-goeitnig.de/2009

15th Update in Psychiatry
4 - 5 June 2009, Vienna, Austria
Information: www.update-europe.at

1st World Congress on Controversies in Psychiatry
18 - 21 June 2009, Berlin, Germany
Information: www.comtcmed.com/copy

Eight International Conference on Bipolar Disorder
25 - 27 June 2009, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
Information: iraehmek@upmc.edu

XXIVth International Symposium on Cerebral Blood Flows, Metabolism and Function & 28th International Conference on Quantification of Brain Function with PET
29 June - 3 July 2009, Chicago, USA
Information: www2.kenes.com/brain/pages/home.aspx

3rd International Forum on Mood and Anxiety Disorders
4 - 6 November 2009, Vienna, Austria
Information: www.ssbp.ch

7th FENS Forum of European Neuroscience
3 - 7 July 2010, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Information: forum.fens.org/2010

ECNP Matters

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