



# EuCheMS

## NEWSLETTER

October 2007

## Young chemists' gateway to Europe

The idea of a young chemist's network around Europe sprang into action on 31 March 2007, in Berlin, where young chemist's representatives from 13 Chemical Societies within EuCheMS met to establish a European Young Chemists Network (EYCN). EYCN promotes interaction among chemists in European industry, academia, professional institutions and European government bodies. Through networking, young chemists contribute to the promotion of chemistry and to the development of European initiatives, including scientific programs in chemistry and molecular sciences as well as other scientific and technological areas.

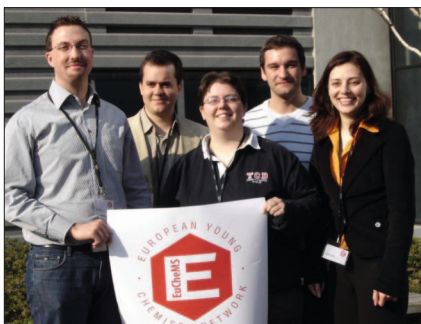
The aim of EYCN is to provide a platform within the EuCheMS framework where young chemists

- present their voice in science, education and politics. In particular, all areas involving chemistry will be considered;
- discuss features of common interest, generate and expand new ideas and initiatives to contribute to the future of science and the development of the European Society;
- network with each other to form a supportive community throughout Europe;
- forge new links between academics and industrialists.

In Berlin five young chemists were elected in the first Steering Committee of EYCN: Csaba Janáky (Chair, Hungarian Chemical Society, [janakycsaba@yahoo.com](mailto:janakycsaba@yahoo.com)), Emma Dunphy (Secretary, Swiss Chemical Society [emmadunphy@gmail.com](mailto:emmadunphy@gmail.com)), Jens Breffke (Public Relations, German Chemical Society, [breffke@web.de](mailto:breffke@web.de)), Maria-Cristina Todasca (Internal Communications, Romanian Chemical Society, [bmcrist@yahoo.com](mailto:bmcrist@yahoo.com)) and Juan-Luis Delgado (Treasurer, Royal Society of Chemistry of Spain, [jldelgad@quim.ucm.es](mailto:jldelgad@quim.ucm.es)).

Concrete initiatives of EYCN include:

- Creating a job/internship/exchange program-database, in order to establish a place for matching the needs of graduate and PhD students, post docs and



*First Steering Committee of EYCN.*

other European young chemists with the demand of industry and academic institutions,

- organising and promoting events to facilitate interaction among young chemists and with eminent scientists and senior business people,
- organising and assigning awards and scholarships for talented young chemists,
- forging links with the European Commission to encourage consultation on initiatives affecting young chemists,
- promoting collaboration with other young chemist's organisations.

One of our current projects refers to the Young Chemist Award. The 2008 European Young Chemist Award is intended to showcase and recognise the excellent research being carried out by young scientists working in the chemical sciences and will be presented at the 2nd EuCheMS Congress in Torino (see page 2). This award is intended to honour and encourage younger chemists whose current research displays a high level of excellence and distinction. Remuneration will be given by considering two career levels: the PhD level and the 35 years old level. For each level one Gold and two Silver Medals will be presented at a special Award Ceremony. Further detailed information will be published soon on the website of the conference.

Further contacts with young chemists are welcome! Please contact Cristina Todasca.

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## The EIT: 'How' not 'if'

The European Institute of Technology (EIT), or whatever it is finally named, will happen more slowly than originally intended. But too much political capital has been invested for it not to happen.

The Commission plans to establish the EIT on the model of the MIT, to link the three aspects of the 'knowledge triangle' – research, education and innovation. It will work through Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) including the private sector, and excellent teams from research bodies and universities. The aim is to speed up knowledge-transfer to boost innovation. But the proposal has run into trenchant criticism, forcing the Commission to water down its ambitions.

A Parliamentary hearing in May heard that:

- the proposal is too vague and provides no added value;
- the „innovation gap“ between the EU and the US is due to the amount spent on R & D;
- the 2.4 billion Euro foreseen for the EIT to 2013 is not a decisive boost in funding
- and the 308 million Euro core EU funding should be new money.

Despite this, Education Commissioner Jan Figel, charged with delivering the EIT, immediately insisted that the question was 'how' not 'if' the new body would be created, and even launched a call for KIC pilot projects at the end of June.

Ministers recently agreed a compromise two stage proposal with two or three KICs (probably around energy and climate change issues) from 2009 to 2013, with more to come later.

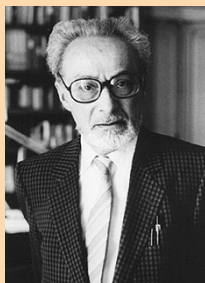
While MEPs then voted to endorse a re-named 'European Institute of Innovation and Technology' they say 'new money' must be found before they will give final approval. Finding a compromise looks difficult, but whatever happens seasoned Brussels observers still expect the EIT to get final approval before the end of the year and the first KICs to be working by 2009.

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## 20th anniversary of the death of Primo Levi

Primo Levi, chemist and writer, was born in Torino, Italy, on July 31, 1919 and died in the same city on April 11, 1987. During the twenty years since his death, Levi's international



fame has steadily grown, with a change in the quality of the appreciation by critics and readers alike. Levi acquired an international reputation with the translations of "Se questo è un uomo", his first book published in Torino in 1947. In December 1943, Levi and other partisans were captured by the Fascist militia, and – as a Jew – he was turned over to the Nazis. In his book, Levi recounts his agonizing experiences in Auschwitz with the detached objectivity of a scientist; he had survived working as a chemist in a Bunawerk. The English translation appeared in 1959 under the title "If this is a Man" (also titled "Survival in Auschwitz" in the United States). The German translation, eagerly awaited by Levi, appeared in 1961.

While Levi remains one of the greatest and faithful witnesses to the shoah, after the publication of "Il sistema periodico" in 1975 (translated as "The Periodic Table") he was increasingly appreciated as an outstanding science writer. This book focuses on Levi's long career as an industrial chemist and describes the struggles and small triumphs that make up the everyday life for most scientists and technicians. In the last pages, Levi speaks about his literary intentions: "In this book I have deliberately neglected the grand chemistry, the triumphant chemistry of colossal plants and dizzying output. (...) I was more interested in the story of the solitary chemist, unarmed and on foot, in human terms, which with few exceptions has been my own fate."

*Luigi Cerruti*

## 2nd European Chemistry Congress

The 2nd EuChemS Chemistry Congress „Chemistry: the Global Science“ will take place in Torino (Italy) from 16 to 20 September 2008, co-organised by EuChemS and the Società Chimica Italiana (SCI) as hosting society. It is a very important event for all European societies of chemistry and a large participation of members is expected from universities, industry, and both public and private institutions for research and analysis.

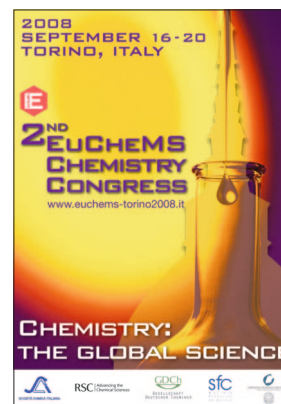
To encourage participation of young scientists, the Local Organising Committee will provide lower fees and low cost accommodation.

The Congress follows the very successful 1st EuChemS Congress, held in Budapest in August 2006, and the Scientific Programme will maintain the same structure. It will be organised in common sessions, with plenary lectures given by outstanding scientists, and in 6 parallel sessions (18 symposia), focusing on important areas of chemistry. The special topic symposia will include keynote lectures and topic lectures, as well as oral and poster communications, selected on the basis of abstract

submission. All posters will be exhibited during the whole congress, and their presentation and discussion will take place every day during lunch time and in the late afternoon.

Each evening, a special common session will be devoted to the presentations of the finalists of the 2008 European Young Chemist Award Competition. A panel of judges will then select the award winners.

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## The ERA-Chemistry network

National research funding bodies are not well prepared to support transnational cooperation, but are in fact more inclined to hinder them. Supranational bodies usually favour big networks, which in many cases will not meet the needs of researchers. The European Research Council is prepared to finance excellence throughout Europe, but at present solely by competition of individuals. There is an urgent need to back up this programme by financing excellent cooperation of transnational groups of researchers.

ERA-Chemistry is a pan-European research-funding network in science-driven chemistry within the ERA-NET scheme of the European Commission (ERA stands for the European Research Area). The network actually consists of 14 national research funding bodies from 12 European countries as full members and of seven more national

research councils as associated partners. ERA-Chemistry encourages European chemists to initiate and reinforce transnational cooperation in joint research projects.

ERA-Chemistry will continue conducting transnational topical thematic calls for proposals, and organising strategy workshops and Flash Conferences. Currently, the biggest challenge is to organise and finance transnational cooperation in chemistry without thematic restriction in a continuous manner. We will reinforce contacts to neighbouring chemistry-related ERA-NETs, to the European Technology Platform SusChem (Sustainable Chemistry) and to EuChemS in order to establish a durable European Research Area in chemistry.

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## Foundation of the Working Party on Inorganic Chemistry

The first meeting of the EuCheMS Working Party on Inorganic Chemistry took place at the 5th of July 2007 in Vienna. Beside representatives from 13 European countries (Katsaros, chair, Greece; Mertis, Greece; Mrozinski, Poland; Drabic, Slovak Republic; Herbst, Denmark; Frumar, Czech Republic; Meyerstein, Israel; Reedijk, Netherlands; Lavigne, France; Oro, Spain; Calhardo, Portugal; Aresta, Italy; Munari, Italy; Kickelbick, Austria; Edwards, UK) Germany was represented by the Wöhler Vereinigung für Anorganische Chemie. The working party is planning to achieve the status of a division within EuCheMS in the near future in order to enforce important areas of inorganic chemistry, e.g. coordination chemistry, solid state and materials chemistry,



main-group chemistry, and metal-based homogenous and heterogeneous catalysis. At the same time joint activities with other divisions, like those of Chemistry and Life Science or Organometallic Chemistry, are welcome. The next meeting of this working party will be parallel with the 2nd EuCheMS Congress in Torino (see page 2).

*Claudia Wickleder  
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### Working Party on Organic Chemistry targets Division status

In May 2007 the EuCheMS Executive Committee appointed Jay Siegel (Zurich) head of the working party (WP) on Organic chemistry. Already 22 member societies have signed on, two more than nominally needed for division status. The WP will have its first meeting in early Autumn, just ahead of the EuCheMS General Assembly meeting in Frankfurt. Attaining division status is a key objective. In addition to functions such as organising EUCHEM associated conferences, the Organic division plans to take a lead role as liaison to the ACS, CCS, and Austral-Asian societies.

Present WP membership includes: Marko Mihovilovic (Vienna), Annemieke Madder (Ghent), Martin Kotora (Prague), David Tanner (Lyngby), Ari M. P. Koskinen (Helsinki), Joëlle Prunet (Palaiseau), Stefan Bräse (Karlsruhe), George Kokotos (Athens), Ben Feringa (Groningen), Péter Mátyus (Simmelweis), Nick Gathergood (Dublin), Ilan Marek (Technion), Paolo Scrimin (Padua), Lise-Lotte Gundersen (Oslo), Jacek Skarzewski (Wroclaw), Artur Silva (Aveiro), Rado Markovic (Belgrade), Antonio Echavarren (Tarragona),

Christina Moberg (Stockholm), Jay S. Siegel (Zurich); Metin Balci (Ankara), Veronique Gouverneur (Oxford).

*Jay Siegel, jss@oci.uzh.ch*

### Division of Analytical Chemistry

Analytical Chemistry is more than an arsenal of wonderful techniques, in the same way as Inorganic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry are not merely collections of sophisticated reactions. The implementation of this basic fact into the curricula is a continuing major activity of the Division of Analytical Chemistry (DAC) Study Group "Education" (Chair Reiner Salzer). The Education Study Group has developed "Eurocurriculum II for Analytical Chemistry", available at [www.dac-euchems.org](http://www.dac-euchems.org), under "Reports" and "Education". A broad audience regularly discusses educational issues during dedicated symposia organised by the Study Group; the next will be during EUROANALYSIS XIV, 9 to 14 September 2007. The topic is "How we assure quality in teaching". Contributors are coming from the USA, Russia and various EU countries.

## On the centennial of the Hungarian Chemical Society

To commemorate the date of foundation of the Hungarian Chemical Society (HCS) on 27 June 1907, the past president Alajos Kálmán and the new president Péter Mátyus jointly unveiled a memorial table on the facade of a classicist palace in the Akadémiai Street of Budapest, placed symmetrically with a marble table which marks the birthplace of the Nobel-Laureate George Hevesy and facing the mansion of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS).

The Centennial started symbolically with the 1st European Chemistry Congress organised by the HCS in last August in Budapest and reached its zenith in the medieval town Sopron in Western Hungary, where a Centennial Conference was held from May 29 to June 1. On the afternoon of first day the conference celebrated the 100th anniversary of the foundation in the presence of 800 chemists, engineers, teachers and numerous foreign guests. After the opening words of the HCS president, EuCheMS president Giovanni Natile addressed the conference followed by the greetings of the Mayor of Sopron, the Rector of the Western University of Hungary and the Vice-President of HAS. After the presentation of various awards and memorial medals Attila Pavláth (ACS president in 2001) and George Fráter (Swiss Chemical Society president) – both born in Budapest – celebrated the event with jubilee lectures.

The conference, incorporating the 1st Joint Czech-Hungarian-Polish-Slovak Conference of Thermo analytical Chemistry, was closed by a lecture of president-nominee Péter Mátyus, who was awarded the 1st Náray-Szabó prize of the Society in 2007.

*Alajos Kálmán, akalman@chemres.hu*



*Alajos Kálmán(left) and Péter Mátyus*





## EuCheMS Lecture 2007

EuCheMS was represented by Wolfram Koch at the opening ceremony of the SFC congress on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Société Française de Chimie on 16 July in Paris. He congratulated the SFC on behalf of EuCheMS and presented the award certificate to Stephen Ley (on the right), who delivered the 2007 EuCheMS Lecture at the congress.

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## New newsletter coordinator

Karin Schmitz follows Alexander Lawson as newsletter coordinator. She studied chemistry at the Technical University of Darmstadt and received her first degree (Diplom-Ingenieur) in 1989. She proceeded with postgraduate studies in solid-state chemistry and earned her PhD in 1993. Then she left university and worked as freelance technology writer for several magazines and broadcast stations. In 1995 she joined the GDCh headquarters. Since 2003 she is Director of the career service and the job advertising section of the member's magazine of the GDCh. Karin Schmitz is author of a textbook on employment and career.

Contact: K.Schmitz@gdch.de



## Events 2008

### 15 – 17 May, Cavtat, Croatia

4th CEFood 6th PBN (4th Central European Congress on Food (CEFood), 6th Croatian Congress of Food Technologists, Biotechnologists and Nutritionists (PBN), originally scheduled for 9 – 11 April 2008), [www.pbn.hr/CEFood2008/](http://www.pbn.hr/CEFood2008/)

### 6 – 9 July, Istanbul, Turkey

9th European Conference on Research in Chemical Education, [www.ecrice2008.org/](http://www.ecrice2008.org/)

### 1 August, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

4th EUCHEM Conference on Nitrogen Ligands

### 16 – 20 September, Torino, Italy

2nd EuCheMS Chemistry Congress, [www.euchems-torino2008.it](http://www.euchems-torino2008.it)

## 3rd European Chemistry Congress 2010

Nuremberg will be the place to be for chemists in late summer 2010. The decision of the German Chemical Society (GDCh), commissioned by EuCheMS to organise this landmark event, received resounding approval from the EuCheMS executive committee during its last meeting in Brussels. The venue will be the Congress Centre Nuremberg on 29 August to 2 September 2010. A web site is under construction ([www.euchems-congress2010.de](http://www.euchems-congress2010.de)). François Diederich from the ETH Zurich has already agreed to chair the scientific advisory board, and a local organising committee will be established by the end of 2007.

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## Benefit for EuCheMS members

Members of all the Societies belonging to EuCheMS are entitled to visit all the congresses, schools, courses, workshops etc., organised by the Società Chimica Italiana (SCI) at reduced registration fees. This was decided at the last meeting of the Consiglio Centrale del-

la Società Chimica Italiana in May 2007. The corresponding benefit is extended to the members of the SCI that take part in the events organised by other EuCheMS Societies, e.g. RSC, GDCh, and SCF.

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## EuCheMS General Assembly

By invitation by the three Frankfurt-based EuCheMS member organisations (Deutsche Bunsen-Gesellschaft für Physikalische Chemie, DECHEMA and Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker), the 2007 EuCheMS General Assembly together with a meeting of the Executive Committee and other EuCheMS bodies will take place at the offices of GDCh and DECHEMA in Frankfurt on October 4 and 5. Presidents and other representatives of the almost 50 EuCheMS members will convene to discuss issues relevant to the Association, including the future policy strategy, the budget for the upcoming year and the planning for the 2008 EuCheMS congress in Torino. A highlight of the meeting will be the election of the new EuCheMS President-Elect who will assume office as EuCheMS President in 2009.

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## EuCheMS Newsletter

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