

# EUROSCIENCE news34

EUROSCIENCE: THE VOICE OF SCIENCE IN EUROPE

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## A European Institute of Technology: would it serve Europe?

**EUROSCIENCE** has established an electronic mailbox to collect comments on the proposal of the European Commission to establish a European Institute of Technology (EIT) in order to present a **EUROSCIENCE** position. In fact, the underlying question is whether **EUROSCIENCE** should play an active role in promoting an EIT much as it has done in the case of the European Research Council (ERC).

Opinions, however, seem to be much more divided on the use of the Commission's EIT proposal. According to the Commission, Europe would need it to turn more R&D results into commercial opportunities, to concentrate resources, promote entrepreneurship and create new, better suited organisational models. The EIT performs post-graduate education, research and innovation in an integrated way. It would be a network-based organisation, led by a Governing Board to manage the central budget and select the "Knowledge Communities" for 10-15 years. The latter are partnerships in emerging trans- and interdisciplinary fields between existing top-level departments of universities,

research institutes or companies. These would cease to belong to their home organisation but become legally geographically dispersed parts of the EIT. The funding should come from public but, especially, also from private sources.

A web-consultation based on a questionnaire has been organised ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/eit/consult\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/eit/consult_en.pdf)) which shows the wide variety of responses. In fact such a consultation based on a very open questionnaire on an ill-defined subject, resulting in 741 responses mostly from individuals and in addition from most diverse organisations, should not carry any representative weight at all. It is said to be, on the whole, positive towards the EIT, but towards which EIT, if there is so much variety? Would 39 individual responses from Germany say anything about the views in Germany (other than people do not seem to be interested)? So let us ask some questions about the EIT proposal. Foremost on most scientists' minds is a conviction that a decentralised EIT is a contradiction in terms. And creating one physical EIT would perhaps be nice though it may take a considerable time, but

is hardly likely to tackle systemic weaknesses of the European university system such as fragmentation, lack of concentration or a perceived lack of real top quality universities. After all, there are many 'MITs' in the USA. Given the fact that Europe does have a number of very good universities, investing in the ERC, and maybe even establishing a few more European-level funding agencies, might be a better way to create a tier of top-level universities at par with the US top league. Is it realistic to expect substantial private funding if one knows that the average share of industry contracts in university research funding in Europe is the same, even slightly higher, than in the USA, while private foundations are lacking and the tax regime does not help very much? It seems there is already much political wrestling taking place; some members of the European Parliament have even established a committee to host the EIT in the EP building in Strasbourg after which the EP itself could give up its expensive double location. That some people seriously believe that the Bill Gates Foundation might jump in would seem to definitely pull the carpet from underneath the credibility of the Lisbon and Barcelona strategies. In short, time for a serious debate that will be continued at ESOF 2006 in Munich.

**Peter Tindemans,**  
Convener Science Policy  
Working Group  
[peter@tindemans.demon.nl](mailto:peter@tindemans.demon.nl)

## A Mystery Event at ESOF2006: The 'Chairmen's Session'

**ESOF2006 OF COURSE** (like many European Eagles) has two heads, namely Professor Wolfgang Heckl – our 'Local Champion' – and Professor Jean-Patrick Connerade, the **EUROSCIENCE** President. Unusually for European Eagles, they have decided to collaborate in organising a joint session at ESOF2006. What is the subject? They were rather coy about the detail, but it seems that it will bring together science, technology, history, politics, architecture and even... poetry. Well, can one believe that? Rumours were rife in Berlin and in Munich when the Programme and Steering Committees met. It was completely unclear what was afoot until (in an unguarded moment) one member of the Programme Committee (i.e. a reliable source) admitted over a glass of beer that she did know something more. It was (she let slip) quite possible that one of the Princes of Bavaria might also turn up for this session, and there had been talk of bringing in musicians connected to this event. There are actually three Herzogs known to us in Bavaria, so the question is: which one will come? The plot thickens, as they say.

**EC**

## WORKING GROUP ON OPEN ACCESS IN SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING

**THE WORKING GROUP** on Scientific Publishing was created in the wake of ESOF2004, where a symposium "Spreading the word" was devoted to some issues in science publishing. (See ES News and the proceedings).

In October 2005, it started its activity by preparing a new symposium for ESOF2006, centred on Open Access, entitled "Open Access – threat or blessing" (cf. Stevan Harnad's article below and the webpage).

In January 2006, wishing to increase our efficiency, we

started to work in 3 subgroups: Open Access Publishing (OAP), Open Access Archiving (OAA) and Open Access Copyright (OAC).

The first task of this last subgroup was generated by the parliamentary debate in France, over a new copyright law, intended to transpose the EU directive of May 2001. It should be recalled that, at that time, EUROSCIENCE was already taking part in the discussions surrounding the directive, writing to the European Commission and to members of the European Parliament while commenting on

the European Research Area project of Commissioner Philippe Busquin. The French draft for the new law was dominated by the music industry's problems about illegal downloading and, almost alone in the EU, set aside the exceptions for educational and research purposes. We published an opinion paper in the newspaper Le Monde, "La science c'est aussi de la culture" ("Science belongs to culture"), on line on the WG webpage as a warning about the risk of damaging research activities with regulations that are intended for other activities and that restrict the flow of information. Action was taken to inform lawmakers about these issues. We got valuable support from our German colleagues, through a declaration from the German group Aktionsbündnis fuer Urheberrecht in Bildung und Wissenschaft.

This declaration has been communicated to French Parliament members. We are proud of initiating a common European action, fulfilling the purpose of EUROSCIENCE.

Still, the debate goes on in France, the majority of the Assemblée Nationale followed the government and did not take account of science needs, refusing to establish exceptions for free downloading and free photocopying for science and education purposes. We hope the Senate will be more receptive to our arguments.

European scientists have a lot of ideas to express for improving scientific communication. Join us!

**Pierre Baruch**

[pierre.baruch@wanadoo.fr](mailto:pierre.baruch@wanadoo.fr)

**Hélène Bosc**

Convenor of the working group on Scientific Publishing  
[hbosc@tours.inra.fr](mailto:hbosc@tours.inra.fr)

## Open Access – threat or blessing?

**THERE ARE 24,000** peer-reviewed research journals worldwide today, publishing 2.5 million articles per year. No research institution can afford all or most of the journals its researchers may need. Hence all articles are losing potential research impact (usage and citations).

Recent findings show that articles whose authors supplement subscription-based access by self-archiving their own final drafts free for all ("Open Access", OA) on the web are downloaded and cited twice as much across all disciplines analysed so far.

Citation counts are robust indicators of research performance; self-archived research has a substantial

competitive advantage, yet only 15% of the 2.5 million articles published annually are being spontaneously self-archived worldwide today.

Creating an Institutional Repository (IR) and encouraging researchers to self-archive in it is a good first step, but the only institutions that are reliably approaching a 100% annual self-archiving rate today are those that not only create an IR and provide library help for depositing, but also adopt a self-archiving policy requirement or mandate.

There is no need for any penalties for non-compliance. Two international, cross-disciplinary Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) surveys have found that 95%

of authors will comply. The four institutions worldwide that have adopted a self-archiving mandate to date – Southampton ECS (School of Electronics and Computer Science), University of Minho, Portugal, Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Australia, and European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) – have confirmed this.

All evidence to date is that institutional self-archiving co-exists peacefully with journal publishing. 93% of journals have already endorsed author self-archiving; only 7% of journals have not.

The ESOF2006 symposium on Open Access Self-Archiving will address ways of hastening the transition to 100% OA and its benefits to research, researchers, and their institutions. The leading institutions and activists will present their successful strategies and findings on the way to reach OA as quickly and reliably as possible.

**Stevan Harnad**

[harnad@ecs.soton.ac.uk](mailto:harnad@ecs.soton.ac.uk)

## DISTINCTION

**THE PRESIDENT** of the Republic of Chile has awarded the rank of Grand Officer in the Order of Bernardo O'Higgins to Claude Kordon, honorary President of EUROSCIENCE, for his support to imprisoned, dismissed or exiled Chilean scientists after the military coup which overthrew the legal Chilean government in 1973.

## Bringing the Full Power of Television to bear on Science Dissemination

As a prelude to the **ESOF2006 conference in Munich, a topic of major importance in engaging the widest European Public with science will be debated in a two day conference. This ESOF2006 event (EARTHWAKE) will take place on the Friday and Saturday 14 and 15 July 2006, kicking off ESOF2006 with one of the key themes of Science and the Media.**

Participants from the worlds of Television, Science and Technology, and Science Communication will discuss how general TV programming can draw much more effectively on the ever growing presence of science and engineering in all our lives. It will be a forward looking forum and will aim to arrive at concrete proposals both for new genres of TV programme and how catalytic support from the European Commission (and others) can help the agenda. Behind this agenda lies the fact that whilst European TV channels present many excellent science programmes, these preach largely to the converted and often to quite modest audiences. The large audience are to be found watching other genres of television, from News to Sport and Drama soap operas.

The discussions will be fuelled by some current success stories, from broadcasts and pilot audiovisual projects. There will be a particular focus on three areas: Television Drama (called "fiction" in many languages), Sport, and the Natural World (or wildlife). In addition, the impact of one topic on all genres of television will be explored, namely Space. The aim will be to illuminate the challenge from different standpoints and

bring the various professions involved into the forum so that practicalities become as strong a focus as the vision. Some key figures from Europe's TV Stations in the designated output areas will be invited, as well as from the creative professions in TV programme-making, from Science Communication and Science and Engineering itself. In a world where science and technology are making their impact in many different ways, the belief is that opinion needs to be mobilised on a broad front to find the best routes and mechanisms for adding science awareness and thinking to traditionally non-scientific TV departments. The challenge is as much about encouraging a change of culture within certain areas of broadcasting as it is about offering a window on new programme opportunities.

To ensure contact with current public perceptions, one of the six conference sessions will involve the general public, offering a chance to test some of the assumptions of the professionals and to elicit fresh insights into what can trigger public interest in television output. The plan is to attract a cross section of ages and backgrounds, and encourage non-specialists to attend as many of the other sessions as possible.

**Andrew Millington**  
pawsomni@globalnet.co.uk  
**Nick Larter**  
nickl@esptl.com  
**Brian Davies**  
brian.davies@sciencewords.demon.co.uk  
**Raymond Seltz**  
r.seltz@euroscience.ws

## EUROSCIENCE launches a poetry competition in partnership with the Andrea von Braun Foundation

**WHEN YOU BECAME A SCIENTIST**, did you have any regrets? Did you ever fancy yourself as a poet? Did you have to give up that dream to chase reality? All is not lost: registered participants at ESOF2006 can come up with a poem on any one of the themes of the conference and enter it for the Poetry prize (see the rules in the insert). There is real money to be won, with one cash prize of 300 euros in each of three possible languages.

If this event proves popular, we may continue it in future ESOFs, and maybe even expand it further and be more ambitious. So, remember, even if you don't win the prize this time round, by supporting the Poetry Competition, you are making sure there will be more chances in the future, and you are helping to broaden the horizons of the ESOF event.

Andrea von Braun Stiftung



### POETRY COMPETITION CONCOURS DE POESIE GEDICHTWETTBEWERB

A poetry competition will be held during the ESOF2006 Forum, **THE RULES FOR WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1 The poem may be written in any form, but should be no longer than 14 lines or verses, and should be about a subject related to any one of the sessions of ESOF2006 or its outreach programme.
- 2 The poem must be written and submitted by a registered participant of ESOF2006, who may not be a member of any of the three juries.
- 3 Submissions must be entirely in one language (English, German or French). There will be three separate prizes (of 300 euros each), one in each of these languages.
- 4 Poems should be posted into one of the three letter boxes located at the Conference Registration Desk before 12 noon on Monday 17th of July. No late entries will be considered.
- 5 The winning poems will be selected by a separate Jury for each language. The composition of the juries will be finalised at the Forum.
- 6 The winners will be announced before the close of the ESOF2006 Forum.
- 7 The poems of the winners and finalists will be posted on the ESOF2006 website, and may be used either by EUROSCIENCE or by the Andrea von Braun Foundation in any of their published material relating to the ESOF2006 Forum.

## Some reflections for the forthcoming ESOF2008

**ESOF 2008: Research and innovation as the new hallmark of Europe**



### THE EUROSCIENCE OPEN FORUM 2008

(ESOF 2008), to be held in Barcelona, wishes to make its contribution to placing research and innovation firmly at the centre of the key project for the future of the European Union. Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain, in two years' time, will be the knowledge meeting point for Europe, and ESOF 2008 aims to contribute to making scientific research and innovation the new hallmark of Europe.

Recent reflections on the role of the various agents in developing scientific and technological systems have led to the formulation of a model referred to as the triple helix. This model considers the academic world, the business world and the public sector as fundamental elements in science and technology systems. However, valid the model is, there are those who demand the inclusion of a more democratic component - namely, the incorporation of "society" itself - as yet another key agent in the helix, given that it is "society" which ultimately pays

for and benefits from private and public R+D efforts.

At present, we cannot be satisfied that the significance and social impact of science and technology efforts are fully appreciated. If science and technology are the key to progress in the 'Europe of knowledge', then these elements must be considered fundamental to economic and social advancement in Europe.

We currently live in a context in which there are substantial difficulties in achieving a consensus in relation to European integration. A vision that is common or that at least converges is crucial for the future of the 25 member states of the European Union, in view of the strong scientific and economic competition provided by North America, Japan and Asia, and, bearing in mind that social progress ultimately depends on science and technology.

Scientific research and technological innovation can furnish the backbone for definitive European integration. Implementation of the EU Lisbon strategy and the Barcelona goals requires the wholehearted support of the public for R+D. Such support will ultimately result in a transparency of information and a raised awareness that will help overcome the distance that separates Europe from its competitors.

The reformulation of the triple helix to include society broadens the concept of science and technology to include all the elements that contribute to added

value. With this new model to underpin progress in a European society based on knowledge, Europe will gain competitiveness through research and innovation, always bearing in mind the benefits accruing to society. The time has come, therefore, to "democratise" the triple helix.

ESOF is an event that highlights European achievements in the whole spectrum of science and technology. ESOF is both an open forum for the discussion of science and technology-related themes and a showcase for European and international research. For researchers, scientists, and the public in general, ESOF acts as a platform for exchanging opinions and for debating the challenges and social repercussions of world scientific and technological advances. The high quality of issues and speakers at the first ESOF and now at ESOF2006 in Munich (check the ESOF2006 programme at [www.esof2006.org](http://www.esof2006.org)) guarantees the interest of the public and we have to build on this.

The ESOF organisation develops and maintains contacts with associations, professional bodies, industry and other agents essential to progress both in Europe and in the rest of the world. In the political arena, it facilitates transparent and honest consultation between researchers and those responsible for political decision-making in the scientific field; it also provides a forum for the expression of opinion by society. Both these goals are considered essential for defining an evidence-based scientific and technological policy.

Multidisciplinarity is one of the most relevant features of ESOF, which represents knowledge areas as varied as the humanities, nuclear physics and astronomy, but also other sectors such as politics and journalism. In general, however, ESOF is aimed at all those interested in science and technology. With a view to improving awareness of science, one of the original features of ESOF 2008 will be an

open public meeting in which to debate the burning topics that affect the frontiers of knowledge. This major European science meeting (some call it - rather appropriately - an 'assembly') is typically accompanied by an extensive programme of activities aimed at communicating science. In 2008, this will represent both a challenge and an opportunity for Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain, as privileged hosts of a forum that - as befits science and technology - will leave its mark on the future.

Research and innovation may well provide the framework for a common European vision for which ESOF 2008 aims to be the platform. Such a vision can only be achieved by showing the world the strength and successes of the European science and technology sectors. This requires a public acknowledgment of the achievements of European companies that are leading technology developers and which provide an impulse for social progress that is equivalent to that provided by public sector enterprises (universities, research centres, etc.).

Multidisciplinarity, proximity and an open focus - all aimed at revealing the frontiers of science and technology - will be the key elements in the ESOF 2008 contribution to European unity leading to a re-definition of the principal actors in Europe's science and technology system.

ESOF 2008 will be held in Barcelona in the month of July and will be coordinated by the Catalan Foundation for Research and Innovation (FCRI). Broadly supported by the Spanish and Catalan governments and by bodies based in and around Barcelona, the ESOF will convert Barcelona in July 2008 into an international meeting point for science.

### Enric Banda

Catalan Foundation for Research and Innovation (FCRI)  
Chairman ESOF 2008  
[enric.banda@fcr.es](mailto:enric.banda@fcr.es)

“We are all excited now about attending ESOF2006 in Munich” **Enric Banda** says.

“Don’t miss it but you can also plan your visit to Barcelona in July 2008 which, also, will be an event not to be missed...”

In July 2008, Barcelona will host the 3rd edition of the EUROSCIENCE Open Forum (ESOF 2008). Barcelona was chosen as the location over a number of other candidate cities in a decision taken by the EUROSCIENCE Board last December. The Catalan Foundation for Research and Innovation (FCRI) will organise and manage the event following the presentation of its candidature in Strasbourg on 7 November last.

The FCRI has managed to mobilise the support of a number of government and socio-economic bodies for the project and has put together a Local Promoting Consortium to host the event. Participants include: the Generalitat of Catalonia (Dept. of Universities Research and the Information Society, Dept. of Labour, Industry and Tourism, Dept. of the Economy and Finance; Dept. of Health; Dept. of Culture, and Dept. of the Environment and Housing); Barcelona City Council; Spanish government ministries (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Science and Industry, Ministry of Tourism and Trade); the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC); the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT); the Confederation of Scientific Societies of Spain (COSCE); the Institute of

Catalan Studies (IEC); the Royal Academy of the Sciences and Arts of Barcelona (RACAB); the Catalan Radio and Television Corporation; the Catalan Association for Scientific Communication (ACCC); the Catalan Council for Scientific Communication (C4); and Caixa de Pensions and Caixa Catalunya.

At the local level, the Chamber of Commerce of Barcelona, and at the international level, the European Science Foundation (ESF), have recently offered their support. Many other organisations and companies are expected to become involved in the future.

The ESOF 2008 Programme Committee will focus on some 20 major themes in the definitive programme of events, to be selected from among the proposals made by individuals or groups, whether researchers, journalists, politicians, experts or other agents interested in science and technology. These proposals will centre on the social focus of science and its repercussions and its influence on the ordinary lives of the people.

It is now possible to sign up online ([www.esof2008.org](http://www.esof2008.org)) for regular updates and news of ESOF 2008.

## INVITATION TO SUBMIT BIDS TO HOST ESOF2010

**EUROSCIENCE** has initiated the EUROSCIENCE Open Forum meetings which are the European meeting place for scientists, science teachers, media, politicians, industry and the public at large on issues of science and technology, society and policy.

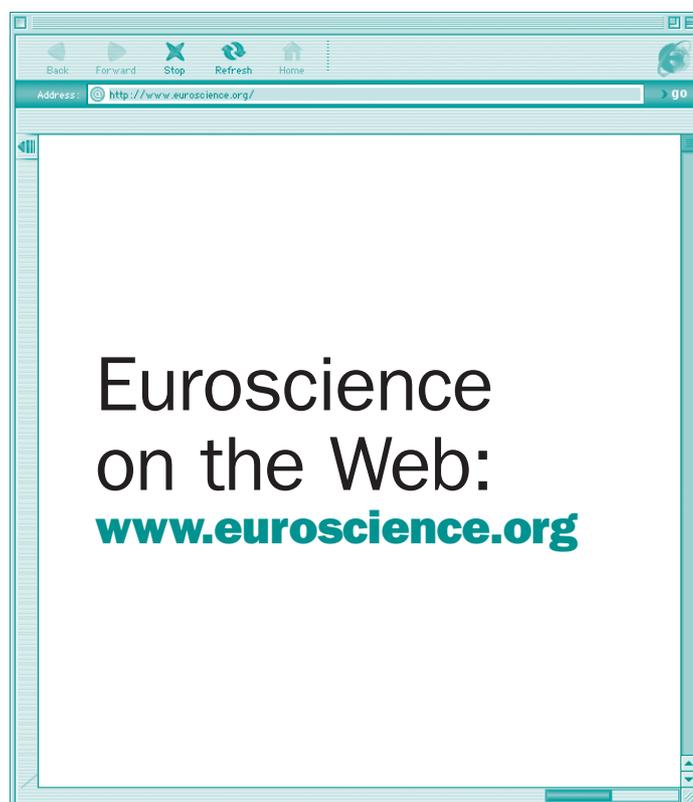
The first successful ESOF meeting took place in Stockholm in August 2004. The second will be held in Munich in July 2006 (<http://www.esof2006.org>) and the selection of Barcelona for ESOF2008, following a strong competition with Naples and Genoa, has just been announced. EUROSCIENCE now invites

formally cities, regions, countries or local, regional or national consortia to submit bids to host ESOF2010.

Bids should be received, at the latest on the 15 November 2006, at the EUROSCIENCE office in Strasbourg. A decision on where to host ESOF2010 will be taken by the 1 February 2007.

More information on <http://www.euroscience.org/ESOF/esof2010.htm>

**Peter Tindemans**  
Chair ESOF Governance  
Committee  
[peter@tindemans.demon.nl](mailto:peter@tindemans.demon.nl)



## Declining student interest for S&T studies: trends, factors, and solutions

### THE EVOLUTION OF STUDENT

enrolments in science and technology (S&T) at various levels of the educational system has been an issue of considerable interest in many OECD countries over recent years, as economies are increasingly driven by complex knowledge and advanced cognitive skills. Indeed, in Europe, fulfilling the Lisbon agenda would require a large increase in S&T-trained students. The OECD Global Science Forum has just completed a two-year study on this issue, based on the work of a Working Group composed of experts from 16 countries and from the European Commission. Statistical data on student enrolments and graduation rates submitted by 19 countries were analysed together with information on factors contributing to possible declining interest, and solutions attempted in different countries, and the preliminary findings were debated during a concluding international conference in Amsterdam on November 14/15, 2005.

Three major conclusions can be drawn from this work:

### ONE

**Contrary to what is sometimes claimed, S&T student numbers have been increasing in real terms in recent years, but decreasing in relative terms.**

Most OECD economies have experienced a large increase in the number of students in higher education over the last 15 years. As a consequence, the absolute number of students in S&T fields shows an overall increase, but the proportion of S&T students has steadily decreased during the same period. This drop in relative terms is the result of the large

increased number of students in non-S&T disciplines. However, it is important to stress that the situation is highly heterogeneous between countries and disciplines. Some areas, such as mathematics or physical sciences, show particularly worrying trends, with drops in absolute numbers of S&T university graduates reaching 20-50% over the last 10 years in countries such as France or Germany. On the other hand, life science and engineering are much better off.

What will be the consequences of the current trends? As the number of higher education students will soon reach a plateau and since many European countries will face demographic challenges, a continuing drop in relative terms may soon become a fall in absolute numbers.

### TWO

**Women are still strongly under-represented in S&T studies.**

Although the number of female students in tertiary education has increased more rapidly than that of males, the proportion of women choosing S&T studies still remains below 40% in most OECD countries. The choice of disciplines is highly gender-dependent and fields of study such as engineering or computing sciences are largely male-dominated. These choices may be linked to the negative pressures and external expectations affecting female students. Persistent stereotypes weigh heavily on female student choices throughout their education curriculum, a phenomenon that can also similarly affect students from minority groups.

Since increasing the number of female students appears to be the most obvious way to increase the overall number of S&T students, governments should actively promote equal opportunity, and should adopt policies to eliminate negative stereotypes. An interesting result is the proportion of female students in life sciences (this is also true for health studies), which is above 50% for all the countries analysed. Such results show that female students are willing to study science provided some specific criteria are met, – a good lead to follow for the other disciplines.

### THREE

**Student choices are mostly affected by their image of S&T professions, the content of S&T curricula and the quality of teaching.**

Student decisions about study and career paths are primarily based upon interest for a particular field, and on their perception of job prospects in that field. Educational content and curricula play an important role in raising and maintaining young people's interest in S&T. Positive contacts with science and technology at an early age can have a long-lasting impact. On the other hand, negative experiences at school, due to uninteresting contents or poor teaching, often have a very detrimental effect on future choices. Governments and appropriate institutions should therefore provide adequate resources for teacher training and pedagogy. Indeed, S&T disciplines are usually perceived as difficult, and results achieved by students are frequently used to select students, which generates anxiety

among students and parents. It requires good pedagogic skills to overcome these hurdles, and to convey the enormous intrinsic value of S&T and the merits of S&T careers. However, S&T teaching staff is often recruited on the basis of competence in their specific subject, not in teaching per se. Flexible, more attractive curriculum structures with updated S&T contents should also be devised as S&T fields face increasing competition for good students from new, trendier subjects in higher education.

Lastly, accurate knowledge about S&T professions and career prospects are key elements of orientation, but are currently fraught with stereotypes and incomplete information. For instance, career prospects should not be restricted to that of the research area only. The provision of accurate information is therefore an important aspect of any policy that is aimed at increasing the attractiveness of S&T studies and careers. This entails not only information provided to students (by teachers, career advisors etc.) but also interactions between all the stakeholder communities (education, scientists, business etc.).

More information:

<http://www.oecd.org/sti/gsf>

**Frédéric Sgard**

[frederic.sgard@euroscience.ws](mailto:frederic.sgard@euroscience.ws)



Frédéric Sgard is Vice President of Euroscience. He was the convenor of an international conference on the subject of the present article which was sponsored by the OECD

## A Parable

It was a fact. The economy was stagnating. First, one Government noticed it, then another, until eventually all twenty-five agreed. What should be done? On the other side of the pond, all seemed so well, but of course there were so many more truck drivers over there. «Never mind, they said, we will simply train more of them, and our economy will improve as surely as night follows day. In fact, we will train so many that our countries will become the most advanced in the world by 2010». Some muttered that no money was available to improve roads, or buy more trucks, or even to

increase the petrol supply. But what of that? «The economy, they said, is based not merely on trucks, but rather on the knowledge of the drivers». Unfortunately, there was still a shortage of trainees. Nobody seemed interested in driving trucks. Training schools stood empty, even when tuition fees were increased. «Well, said the experts, we have done all we can. If the people won't listen to us and train to become truck drivers, then it is their fault the economy is doing badly, not ours.»

JPC

## IMPORTANCE OF MINORITY LANGUAGES EUROSCIENCE SUPPORTS THE RESOLUTION FROM EASA

### Protect Variety

Cultural pride, diversity and historical awareness are the pillars upon which the future of Europe rests.

- 1 Linguistic diversity is an essential element in maintaining cultural heritage in Europe. This highlights the importance of all European minority languages.
- 2 Preserving European culture and traditions helps to maintain openness towards the outside world and safeguard interest for continually renewed knowledge.
- 3 Active national and EU language policy will endorse the cultural richness of European societies and result in culturally proud European citizens.

Individual EU member states must allow for specific and regional cultural diversity in their respective countries. The steady decrease in the use of European minority languages must be reversed before they become extinct.



**ACADEMIA SCIENTIARUM  
ET ARTIUM EUROPAEA  
EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF  
SCIENCES AND ARTS  
EUROPÄISCHE AKADEMIE DER  
WISSENSCHAFT UND KÜNSTE  
L'ACADÉMIE EUROPÉENNE  
DES SCIENCES ET DES ARTS**



## A VIEW FROM AFRICA

**I AM AN AFRICAN** (Burundian) and I am a EUROSCIENCE member because I appreciate your activities and your ambitions. I am very happy to see and to know how EUROSCIENCE is participating in science development in Europe and is the voice of science in Europe.

I know that EUROSCIENCE brings people together and that this also includes African scientists. I hope that I, and others, will be able to collaborate and contribute some ideas and,

even more, recommendations, together, to develop a plan for the future.

In my country, Burundi, the government is investing to support education in primary schools and to provide academic training that encourages professors, doctors and students to pursue a research career in science. Many of these people will probably leave the country for better research opportunities in other countries such as the USA or Canada but they may also

return because work opportunities are also good.

As for myself, I have finished my university studies at the University of Burundi in the Faculty of Biological Sciences with a "diplome de licence en sciences biologiques" with distinction. I have now created an "association des chercheurs" (researchers) on medicinal plants (ACPM) which is supported by the government of Burundi and which was funded as from September 2005. This association of scientists aims to collect and to discover medical plants in Burundi and in the great lakes countries ("pays des grands lacs"). These medical plants will help biomedical research and I will report to EUROSCIENCE about our discoveries, and hope that there will be other EUROSCIENCE members with whom I can compare my results in order to identify varieties of interest for biomedical research. We also relate our biological findings to recent natural disasters and ethnic conflicts in our region.

As young as our association we have assembled a few instruments for research and some computers. Of course such endeavours need funds and we are seeking financial support, especially from charitable donations. We also want to collaborate on a wide basis with European scientists and collaboration, formation of scientists.

We hope to be able to participate in EUROSCIENCE Open Forum (ESOF2006) in order to have a face to face dialogue with other Europeans scientists.

I finish by encouraging European researchers (especially from EUROSCIENCE) to work in this interesting region of Africa, now that the war is over and there are favourable conditions which can attract European researchers. You will certainly have a warm welcome when you come here.

**Aimé Ndikuriyo**  
bisu\_ndikuriyo@yahoo.fr

## A letter to the editor of Euroscience News

**WE, SCIENTISTS**, create, provide and judge the science presented to journals. While we are not paid by the publishers, we pay to get access to this science.

Publishers, concentrating more and more journals within a few companies, use their oligopoly to charge more and more and earn tremendous amounts of money. They use a snobbism about impact factors and the tyranny this exerts on the career of young scientists.

We can dilute this power in a simple way. Open access is the only answer. Whenever I have to

choose one reference out of several, From now on, I shall choose a reference to a paper that I and my readers can access freely on the Internet PubMed. If we all do that, we shall push the impact factor of those journals (printed or not) which do not grudge us.

**Roland Pochet**, ULB  
[rpochet@ulb.ac.be](mailto:rpochet@ulb.ac.be)

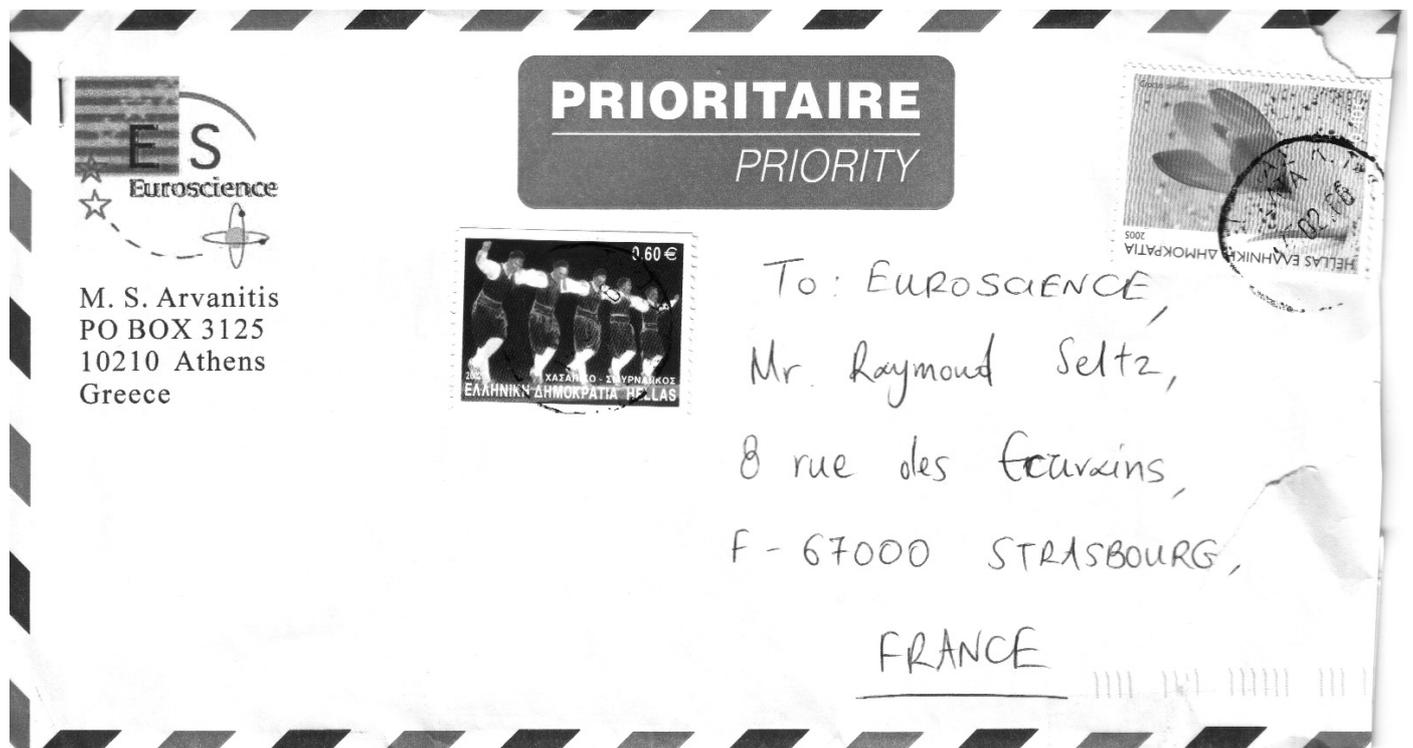
**Please send letters on any topic of relevance to Euroscience to the Editor, ES News, Strasbourg, office@euroscience.ws**

## NEWS FROM GREECE

**IN GREECE** we are working hard to establish a local section. It has been a full year, trying mostly to establish a healthy organization which would, in a short period of time, act for the good of science and the dissemination of innovation results to the Greek society. We believe that we have succeeded and now we continue with a greater momentum in order to spread the word; science is for everyone. Apart from other activities, we participated at the European Forum for early career researchers, the Science and Society forum 2005 and at the "Communicating European Research" which has been held in Brussels during November of 2005. We have selected, after exams, 5 students from Greek schools who participated at the X-lab of the Göttingen University. Since May 2005, we have joined the European network SINAPSE. Moreover, a new series of

"Science cafes" began from October 2005, in cooperation with the British Council of Athens and the Institut Français d'Athènes. Two science cafes have been held; the first focused on women in science and the other on the metropolitan sustainability. Three scientific cafes will be held during the first semester of 2006 in cooperation with the British Council in the form of web conference with speakers from Turkey, Russia and Serbia. In the framework of our workgroup MFD, we run the project "Accessibility to Knowledge" funded by the EU and the General Secretariat of Youth, under the Youth Programme. This project actually counts the degree of accessibility of the universities in the area of Athens for people with disabilities. The project was accomplished in February 2006 and has attracted unexpected publicity. At last, we have successfully accomplished the FARE 2005 project in Greece and we are getting ready to organize an international geophysical conference during 2007.

**Michael S. Arvanitis**  
[micar98@ath.forthnet.gr](mailto:micar98@ath.forthnet.gr)





By Lodewijk Woltjer, EDP Sciences, Les Ulis, 2006-03-19  
ISBN 2 86883 813 8  
Price: 35 euros

**THE BOOK BY** Lodewijk Woltjer (preface by Philippe Busquin) relates the remarkable works represented by the building of astronomy as a European endeavour from about 1975 till 2005.

L. Woltjer is one of the major actors of this development, since he was operational in two of the European large infrastructure intergovernmental organisations: first, he was director of ESO (European Southern Observatory) and later chairman of the

Scientific Advisory committee at ESA (European Space Agency) – which prepared the Horizon-2000 Plus long term plan for space research up to 2015. He is also a founder member of EUROSCIENCE. All along the book, which tells a story which he has lived, he shows himself as a dedicated European, true innovator and top manager, but also continuously pondering over the limitations created by the existence of national states in Europe and by the uncomfortable but inevitable relation with the United States of America.

Therefore, this book succeeds in offering several topics: an extensive inventory of the new installations which were built on the ground and in space during the period, an argued view of the future instruments (since astronomy is a discipline well used to long term planning), a presentation of the impressive results obtained in the last years by a science which has reached maturity, and finally a reference handbook of science policy.

As regards this last aspect, the personal positions of the author are clear and robust. He pleads for Europe's self confidence in scientific research, an attitude which, in astronomy, can legitimately rest on success

(the largest ground-based telescope in the world, a 20 year space programme practically without failure). He wants Europe not to be the junior partner of the USA. He defends the idea that there exists an independent European launcher capability. He criticizes the waste of money without return placed in the Space Station. In general, he trusts the capabilities of European researchers.

However even if astronomy is the science of heavens, its advancement takes place on the earth. L. Woltjer has experienced all the tricks which crop up in any political negotiation with governments and major funders in Europe. He knows that Europe's decision-making is slow and that during the discussion process committees may be conservative and often loose perspectives. Often national (technological or industrial) interests and competition between communities inside astronomy end up torpedoing European projects. Delays pile up.

L. Woltjer gives the cost of each project and presents the way each was implemented. He tells us that 42% of the total astronomy spending in Europe is europeanized and optimistically claims that the European

Research Area already exists in astronomy, due to numerous collaborations, apart from the use of common instruments.

The questions of manpower and funding are also addressed. Country by country the research population and funding are studied and the cost of an astronomer is evaluated. The fate of postdocs remains worrying. An interesting chapter, a model of methodology, is devoted to publications. The author produces a set of graphs which exhibit the productivity of European astronomy in comparison with the USA and Japan, the productivity of each country and the evolution of publication rate with time. One is pleased to learn that with a prolific number of instruments, European astronomy does well and has reached equality in number of publications with the US since 1997.

No situation can be totally rosy, and problems are also displayed. But the book by L. Woltjer, with its blend of enthusiasm and of realism, shows that there is a vast advantage for a discipline to fight for promoting leaders, not only great scientists but also vigorous and far seeing managers.

**Françoise Praderie**  
[francoise.praderie@obspm.fr](mailto:francoise.praderie@obspm.fr)

## A new Euroscience Local Section is born

**THE EVENT** took place on March 21, 2006 at "Au Tonneau de Diogene" in Grenoble within the framework of a 'science cafe' on the status of nanoscience.

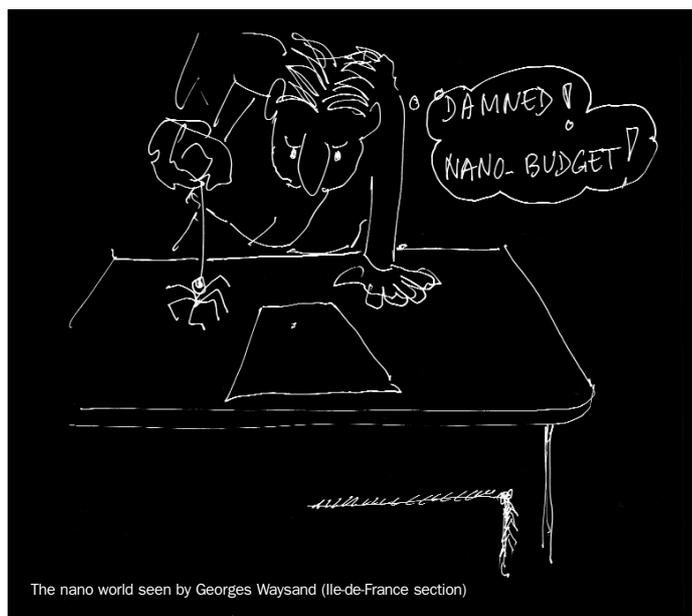
Michel Belakhovsky, the founder of the section, was supported by more than 50 friends and future members.

Roger Maynard, president of the "Société Française de Physique", Georges Waysand, member of the

ES Board and convenor of the Ile-de-France section and Raymond Seltz, Secretary General of EUROSCIENCE acted as patrons of the new section.

The science cafe tackled many aspects of the growing nanoworld, nicely introduced into public debate by Roger Maynard from a physicist's perspective, and Dominique Vinck for the socio-economic dimension: nanosciences in a world wide competition, social implications of nanotechnologies in public health, individual freedom, etc... as well as the corresponding budget priorities in national and European science programmes.

**Michel Belakhovsky**  
[michel.belakhovsky@numericable.fr](mailto:michel.belakhovsky@numericable.fr)



The nano world seen by Georges Waysand (Ile-de-France section)

# EUROSCIENCE DAY AT ESOF2006

17 JULY 2006,  
8:30 TO 18:30

## THE FORUM AM DEUTSCHEN MUSEUM, ROOM "TERRA"

**THESE EVENTS** are open to all participants of ESOF:

**9:00 – 10:30**  
"Hands-on Science"

Part I – Presented by the Léman Section (45min) by Didier Raboud

Part II – Presented for the South-East European Sections by the Serbian Section (45min) by Stevan Jokić

**10:30 – 11:00**  
"Benchmarking Russian Science and Technology Productivity"

by Professor Irina Eliseeva (Director of Sociological Institute of RAS in St Petersburg)  
In the Chair: J-P Connerade

**11:00 – 11:30**  
Coffee Break

**11:30 – 13.00**  
"Higher Education and Research"

Part I – The Bologna Process and its impact on European University research (45min) presented by Vsevolod Borissov (Russian Section) and Radu Damian (Romanian Section)

Part II – "How the Lisbon-Barcelona goals affect the Marie Curie Programme" (45 min) presentation from the European Commission (by Alex Quintanilha)

**13:00 – 14:00**  
Lunch Break

**14:00 – 15:00**  
"Is Euroscience actually building the European Research Area?"

Guest Lecture by Enric Banda (former General Secretary of the ESF)

Lecture based on a proposal received from Nelly Didenko of the Russian Section  
In the Chair: Nelly Didenko

**15:00 – 16:30**  
"Structuring the Euroscience Prize for Young Scientists"

Presentation by Didier Raboud (Léman Section) and Frédéric Sgard (Ile-de-France Section) followed by a general debate with the audience.  
In the Chair: Robert Klapisch

**16:30 – 17:00**  
Coffee Break

**For Euroscience Members:**  
17:00 – 18:30  
General Assembly of Euroscience

**18:30**  
Close (J-P Connerade)



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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE EUROSCIENCE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### THE EUROSCIENCE GENERAL

Assembly will take place on 17 July 2006 from 17:00 to 18:30 hrs, just after the EUROSCIENCE Day.

The General Assembly is composed of all EUROSCIENCE members with the right to vote. Besides the usual legalities such as report from the President, report from the Secretary General and report from the Treasurer, the following items will be on the agenda:

- revised statutes of EUROSCIENCE
- endorsement of the new Governing Board. The new Governing Board will have been elected by the EUROSCIENCE members by email prior to the General Assembly.
- discussion on the EUROSCIENCE project "City of science"

### Why new statutes?

- EUROSCIENCE has now almost ten years of experience in working with the mechanisms and rules laid down in the Statutes. This experience suggest improvements and changes in several areas.
- There is a need to clarify responsibilities of the General

Assembly, the Governing Board, the Executive Committee (in the current Statutes this is called the Office) and the various officers, such as the President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer.

- The current structure puts the President in a very prominent position. Whereas in practice the President does play of course a crucial role, it is better to define her or him as one of the officers and as chair of the two main bodies of the association EUROSCIENCE, namely the General Assembly and the Governing Board.
- We have created some new structures, ESOF being a very important one, that needs anchoring in our Statutes.
- Many also felt a need for simplification, for example as regards the objectives, membership categories or two types of General Assemblies.
- Perhaps more consistently than previously an attempt has been made to distinguish between what needs to be in the Statutes, which have to be approved, and implementation arrangements, for which the Governing Board should adopt Rules of Procedure.

A full agenda will be emailed to you in time before the General Assembly.

## Fruitful returns induced by the Rammal Award

**THE 2004 RAMMAL PRIZE** has been awarded to Georges Bahr, a microbiologist from Lebanon, by a special Board under the auspices of EUROSCIENCE (See EUROSCIENCE News, No. 32). The event attracted wide media coverage in Lebanon. During a ceremony organized in his honor by public authorities, local entrepreneurs suggested that Dr Bahr should take this opportunity to plan for a new research Institute.

The laureate took immediate action and drafted a plan for a Lebanese Institute for Biomedical Research. The concept associates three research departments with three facilities offering modern medical services: a vaccination Centre, a diagnostic Centre including cutting edge molecular techniques, and confined culture booths allowing the identification and investigation of potentially dangerous microbes (no device of this kind exists as

yet in the Near East outside Israel). The services should contribute in part to the self-financing of the research activities of the Institute, which will focus on microbiology, immunology and oncology. The Institute has been granted a piece of land in the area of Tripoli, in northern Lebanon, and the donation of a building is under negotiation. Funding will be secured by industrial sponsors, public institutions and non-governmental organizations which have already made specific commitments. The Centre will also be equipped to train graduate and post-graduate students from two neighbouring universities (the Lebanese University of Tripoli and Balamand Medical School, a private university where Dr Bahr has a teaching position). Its operation will be evaluated by an international steering committee.

The Institute envisages to develop international partnerships and cooperation, for instance with the Pasteur Institutes in France where Bahr worked as a post-doc and the French Academy of Sciences (which is contributing to the establishment of a newly created Lebanese Academy).

Dr Bahr is particularly keen to explore new scientific partnerships in Europe. Members of EUROSCIENCE who have suggestions in this respect, or who are interested in other aspects of the operation, can contact him at [georges.bahr@balamand.edu.lb](mailto:georges.bahr@balamand.edu.lb).

Developments described above show that the award of the Rammal prize can have far-reaching consequences despite its relatively modest dotation.

**Claude Kordon**  
[kordon@necker.fr](mailto:kordon@necker.fr)

## THE RAMMAL AWARD 2005 REWARDS A PHYSICIST FROM MOROCCO

**BY UNANIMOUS DECISION** of its expert panel, the Rammal Award for the year 2005 will be awarded to Professor El Hassan

Saidi, professor at the University Mohammed V-Agdal, Rabat.

El Hassan Saidi, 49, has published extensively in theoretical and mathematical physics in areas such as superstring theory, supersymmetry and gravitation, interacting strongly for more than twenty years with the International Center for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste. In 1988 he was awarded the Abdus Salam Prize for Scientific Creation in Morocco. In Morocco Saidi created a High Energy and Mathematical Physics research group in 1990, which subsequently became the Laboratoire de Physique des Hautes Energies (LPHE) of the University of Rabat, of which he is

presently Director. This group has made original internationally recognised contributions in the areas of critical phenomena, field theory, particle physics, strings and branes. A major aspect of LHPE's mission is the training of young PhD students in modern science and through this has contributed to the building of a scientific capability in Morocco and the region.

Saidi has been extensively and actively engaged in both the promotion and dissemination of science in Africa, and in the promotion of scientific cooperation between many Mediterranean countries. He has co-organised regional scientific meetings and workshops that have brought

together researchers from all Mediterranean shores, and has co-ordinated the organisation of Arab Scientists visiting ICTP. In 2000 Saidi created the African Centre for Basic Science and Technology (ACBT). One of the steps toward the concretisation of ACBT has been the creation of the African Journal of Mathematical Physics, of which Saidi is editor in chief. Saidi has also worked to disseminate science to the general public in Morocco through initiatives such as the review journal *Courrier Scientifique Universitaire*.

The award ceremony will take place during the EUROSCIENCE Open Forum 2006 in Munich.

## EUROSCIENCE CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR RAMMAL AWARD 2006

**THE RAMMAL AWARD** created in memory of the great Lebanese physicist Rammal Rammal (1951-1991), is awarded each year to an outstanding personality of strong scientific stature who, through his or her life and activity in a Mediterranean country (whether in fundamental or applied research, teaching, or the integration of knowledge), has elevated the level of scientific

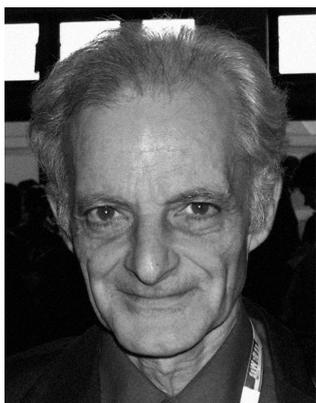
exchanges in this part of the world.

Scientists of all disciplines may suggest names of nominees. Active scientists from any disciplinary background, including exact sciences, social sciences and humanities, are eligible. Organisations supporting similar objectives are also eligible, as well as self-candidacies. Short

presentations and contact of possible candidates should be sent (preferably via Email) to:

**Dr. R. Lestienne**,  
30 rue du Ranelagh,  
75016 Paris,  
[remy.lestienne@snv.jussieu.fr](mailto:remy.lestienne@snv.jussieu.fr)  
Before August 1st, 2006

# Thank you, John!



## WE ARE SORRY TO REPORT

that John Lagnado has resigned as the (voluntary) Editor of ES News from January 2006 onwards, but happy to say that he is moving on to other pastures. Surely, all the members of EUROSCIENCE will want to wish him well.

The main reason for his decision are his heavy commitments elsewhere, in particular in managing and developing the archives of the Biochemical Society, as he explains:

**"In 2000 I became the Honorary Archivist of the UK Biochemical Society – an activity which increased in scope, especially after I managed to secure external grants to support my work as archivist, to the extent**

**that last December, I had reluctantly to resign from ES News. For the same reason, I gave up teaching final year students at my university (molecular cell biology) last year, having taught these courses since my 'official' retirement from the university seven years ago.**

**Apart from working for the UK Medical Research Council for 4 years, a highlight of my career was when I was Professor of biochemistry at the University of Zambia medical school from 1979 to 1983, on leave from the University of London. I'm convinced that Euroscience should continue to maintain links with science outside Europe, eg Africa and India."**

The first ES Newsletter published under John's aegis was ES News No. 21 in Autumn 2002. In the following years, all attentive readers could see how the newsletter further evolved in content and design, thanks to John's commitment.

The ES Newsletter plays a vital role in our association's life. It reflects the enormous potential of ideas within EUROSCIENCE, and communicates the wide variety of our activities to our members and to everybody

interested in EUROSCIENCE. It provides feedback and stimulates new initiatives at the same time. John successfully nurtured this essential part of EUROSCIENCE, contributing enormously to the liveliness and excitement of our association. As John himself says :

**"Editing ES News was a steep**

**seriously consider John's appeal. We would like to thank John for his commitment and for the sterling work he has done for EUROSCIENCE. We are happy that he will stay with us as an active member and we wish him all the best for the future. Let's hear what he says himself about his future plans :**

**"I did this (ES News) with increasing pleasure for just over 3 years – a very stimulating experience"**

**learning curve for me, 'mentored' by John Finney and Françoise Praderie and no doubt profiting from my experience with The Biochemist, the magazine of the UK Biochemical Society. I did this (ES News) with increasing pleasure for just over 3 years – a very stimulating experience which allowed me to make acquaintance with a wide spectrum of interesting people and to widen my horizons.**

**I have strived to produce something attractive and useful as Editor of some 15 issues, and I owe a great deal to our designer Nick Vincent and to members of the Board, past and present, for their generous support. But I do not feel I am able to continue to devote the time and energy this task requires. New blood is needed!"**

Currently, as an interim solution, Julia at the ES office in Strasbourg is taking care of the Newsletter. However, every ES member who aims to serve on the next Governing Board should

**"I will be re-launching our programme of videotape interviews of eminent biochemists, as well as preparing a web-browsable catalogue of our extensive collection of hard copy material. This collection, I'm pleased to add, now includes my recent acquisition of Fred Sanger's (double Nobel prize winner) complete set of lab notebooks (1943-1980)."**

All this sounds extremely interesting – Dear John, we are counting on a detailed report from you for one of the next editions of ES News ! Editors and former Editors of EUROSCIENCE News do lead interesting lives...

## JPC & RS

**THE NEXT EDITION OF EUROSCIENCE NEWS WILL BE ESPECIALLY DEDICATED TO THE EUROSCIENCE OPEN FORUM 2006.**

**IDEAS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME!**

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CONTACTING EUROSCIENCE: RAYMOND SELTZ, 8 RUE DES ECRIVAINS, F-67000 STRASBOURG, FRANCE. TEL: +33 3 88 24 11 50; FAX : +33 3 88 24 75 56; EMAIL: OFFICE@EUROSCIENCE.WS.

**Copy for the next issue should reach the editor, preferably by email to [julia.epp@euroscience.org](mailto:julia.epp@euroscience.org), by 31 May 2006**