

FROM THE PRESIDENT

ESCI: a society on the move

by Antonio E Pontiroli, president of ESCI

Dear members of ESCI,

We are now in the 31st year of life of ESCI; this is a year of great changes and I would simply like to summarise for you the most significant steps of last year and the most significant changes.

The last Annual Scientific Meeting in Interlaken was highly successful; the beautiful landscape, the usual friendly atmosphere, excellent science, and incredible number of participants all contributed to a great meeting. I think we are all indebted to Thomas Lüscher for his tremendous efforts in organising such a meeting within a very short period of time.

Alan McGregor left the position of Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal of Clinical Investigation after a significant five years experience. We should congratulate Alan McGregor for his achievements and welcome Jo Marx as the new Editor-in-Chief. He has new ideas on how to keep on increasing the impact of the Journal and benefits of the Journal to ESCI.

New council members were elected: Patrick Evrard, Edouard Battegay, Albert Gjedde and Michael Roden have been enthusiastically active in the Council, and the Council is more and more eager to work at its best. A word of thanks and appreciation goes to John Martin, the previous president, and to the leaving councillors in 1996, Laurence Galanti, Thomas Lüscher, Susanne Keiding and Christoph Gisinger for the time they devoted to a heavy task.

Finally I would like to thank Janine du Mosch-Poot, the Secretary of ESCI; without her help ESCI would not be as effective and healthy as it is.

New members are going to be elected during the next ASM, and the curriculum vitae of the candidates is presented in this issue of the newsletter.

The 1997 Annual Scientific Meeting will be held in Kiel, Germany. Together with the Council and with the local organisers I have visited the facilities, which are excellent. The scientific programme is very attractive, the workshops reflect the interdisciplinary attitudes of ESCI, and the invited speakers are outstanding. The 1997 Mack-Forster Award has a young winner this year, Dr Irene Virgolini from Vienna, Austria.

Europe is expanding, borders are collapsing, and ESCI is not different; in 1998 the Annual Scientific Meeting will be held in Cracow, Poland. I trust that the scientific programme, which is being prepared, and the unique atmosphere of Cracow will make the 1998 meeting a superb ESCI meeting.

In the future, the name of the Mack-Forster Award will be changed into 'ESCI Award for Excellence in Clinical Science'. Its funding is also to change, probably being less and less dependent on a single sponsor, and more and more dependent on funds raised within ESCI.

A new kind of partner appears: Professional Congress Organisations are highly effective in organising meetings and in keeping contacts with potential sponsors, a significant burden usually on the shoulders of the meeting organisers. The PCO that will help organise our meeting this year, is hoped to become a reliable partner also for future meetings.

ESCI is healthy, scientifically and financially, and we all want to make ESCI more and more important. To do so, we have to address directly and frankly the weak points. There have been problems, probably misunderstandings, with the phagocyte group. We are currently addressing these problems, and hope that they will be solved by the next Annual Scientific Meeting in Cracow. My deep feeling is that the future of science is not in small groups fighting each other, but in large groups of people working together to reach important goals.

Another point of concern is that during the last years, membership has not been increasing as we would like, and we realised that this lack of growth is due to a high turnover; many members join ESCI only for a limited period of time. We probably need to innovate or to improve the format of the Annual Scientific Meeting. ESCI is our Society, and each member should feel at home in ESCI, and do its best to build a better ESCI; I personally welcome all members willing to put forward ideas, innovations, criticisms and proposals.

I hope I gave you a good view of the important changes ESCI is going to make now and in the near future to improve its strength and its impact in the scientific community.

I look forward to meeting you all at our next Annual Scientific Meeting in Kiel.

MACK-FORSTER AWARD 1997

by Gareth Williams, councillor of ESCI

The Mack-Forster Award of the European Society for Clinical Investigation, now in its 21st year, is awarded annually to the nominee, under the age of 45 years, who has shown the most activity and success within the broad area of clinical science. The health of prizes such as this can be gauged by what has happened to previous winners; this Award would appear to have a good prognosis, as all previous holders have consolidated their positions as leaders in the field, and their qualities have been recognised on more than one occasion by the Nobel Prize Committee.

This year's recipient shows every sign of continuing the distinguished tradition of the Award. Dr Irene Virgolini, specialist in Nuclear Medicine and Internal Medicine at the University of Vienna, was selected from a highly competitive shortlist of nominations. Dr Virgolini has demonstrated great versatility and motivation in applying the techniques of nuclear medicine to identify and answer a range of challenging questions in several different areas of clinical medicine. She has successfully combined the attributes of a true scientist with the skills of a physician, and is one of the few people in her discipline who has managed to bridge the gap between the laboratory bench and the patient's bedside.

Dr Virgolini's research career has diversified considerably since it started with an MD in Vienna on prostanoid receptors in the thyroid. She is perhaps best known for developing novel imaging ligands capable of localising gut tumours so small that they can even evade the surgeon's fingers at laparotomy. This work was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, in a paper that can truly be regarded as seminal, in that her methodology is now widely used throughout the world. She has also developed selective radioligands for hepatocytes that can not only visualise the liver but can also be used to measure its functional activity and to follow the evolution of diseases such as cirrhosis and hepatitis. In a remarkable feat of lateral thinking, Dr Virgolini has also applied the principles of receptor imaging to study the dynamics of LDL binding to its receptor, both *in vitro* and *in vivo*. Overall, Dr Virgolini has fulfilled all of today's increasingly stringent criteria for a successful scientist, with a prodigious output of publications generated by a world-class research group which she has built up herself and sustained with a steady flow of external funding.

Dr Virgolini's work has already be recognised by numerous invitations to speak throughout the world and by several national and international prizes, including the major award of the European Associa-



Dr Irene Virgolini

tion of Nuclear Medicine (twice).
WHO guidelines on the application of nuclear medicine to oncology.

She has achieved all this at remarkably (indeed, almost indecently) young age: her nomination was approved by the ESCI Council just a few days before her 34th birthday. She is also the youngest ever member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, and a member of the Task Force which is drawing up
It is therefore with great pleasure that the Council of ESCI announces that Dr Irene Virgolini is the winner of the Mack-Forster Award 1997, and we look forward to what promises to be an exciting, informative and enjoyable lecture in Kiel on Friday 21st March 1997.

THE EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF CLINICAL INVESTIGATION HAS MOVED TO UTRECHT

by Jo J M Marx, Editor-in-Chief EJCI

In April 1991, during the 25th Annual Meeting of the European Society for Clinical Investigation, I retired as honorary secretary and treasurer of the Society, after five years in Council. During this meeting it was decided to delete all age limits for membership of Society and Council. It was felt that the ESCI, as the only genuine and general European society of scientists in the broad field of medical and related biological investigation had matured. The Journal is a few years younger, and published in 1991 its 21st volume with a total of 648 pages in six bimonthly issues. Also the Journal has matured since. Under the enthusiastic and stimulating guidance of Alan McGregor the Journal flourished as never before, becoming a monthly journal with 1196 pages of text, an increasing impact factor, a much more attractive cover, and many excellent original papers, reviews and editorials. The refereeing became more efficient, using a combined system of scientific editors and expert referees, which enabled the editor to take well-motivated decisions on publication of manuscripts, which is not easy as the Journal covers the complete field of clinical science. In the 1991 issue of this newsletter, Alan McGregor expressed his hope that all medical scientists in Europe would feel this journal to be an



from left tot right:
 Hein A Koomans, Jo J M Marx, Jan P Neijt,
 Jos M Sperna Weiland, Hans C Clevers

attractive home for their best work, by which this European journal would be able to compete with the best journals in North America. To achieve this was not an easy goal, especially considering the minor investments in staff and finances if compared with potential targets like the Journal of Clinical Investigation or Nature Medicine. Regarding the limited financial means, allocated to this Journal, Alan McGregor and his co-workers, in particular Yvonne Hanscombe, have done a superb job. To meet their high standards will not be easy, but it is a challenge for the new crew in The Netherlands. It should be realised, however, that editors of this journal are not elected because they have much spare time or because they are attracted by a salary according to their professional standards. Despite this lack of investment in professional editorial personnel, as well by the ESCI as by Blackwell Science, I hope that we will be able to produce an attractive journal of which the scientific quality will continue to increase.

The editors who will be responsible for the production and the quality of the European Journal of Clinical Investigation for the next five years are shown on the above picture, that some of you may have seen already in the January issue of the Journal. Let me explain who they are (from left to right): Hein Koomans (associate editor), professor of nephrology, head of the Department of Nephrology. Hein is a former secretary-treasurer and vice-president of ESCI. Jo Marx (editor-in-chief), professor of medicine, head of the Medical Policlinic; former secretary-treasurer of ESCI. Jan Neijt (associate editor), associate professor of medicine; also the computer brain among the editors.

Jos Sperna Weiland (secretary), the soul of the editorial staff and the person who will chase all editors who are late in returning the manuscripts. Hans Clevers, professor and head of Immunology. All editors are employed by Utrecht University and the University Hospital Utrecht.

Although we highly admire the achievements of Alan McGregor, we have introduced some changes to modernise the Journal and to further improve its quality. At this occasion some points will be emphasised.

- 1 Even more than before we strive to publish original papers of the highest quality pertaining to all aspects of the biology, physiology and mechanisms of human disease. This includes all types of research on humans or *in vivo* and *in vitro* models for human health and disease. Articles that are otherwise scientifically sound may be rejected if they are felt to lack novelty.
- 2 Types of articles: invited or submitted reviews, editorials and commentaries, original manuscripts as regular papers or rapid communications, short letters to the editor. All manuscripts, also invited papers, will be peer reviewed.
- 3 Authors are requested to suggest at least three expert reviewers, who must be professionally completely independent from the authors. The scientific editors are, however, free to ask any referee they feel to be an expert.
- 4 From January 1997 the Journal will be published on the Internet, complete with all figures. A regular, an Internet or a combined subscription is available.
- 5 Accordingly, all final versions of accepted papers must be offered on disk. This will also expedite the time between acceptance and publication and reduce printing errors in proofs.
- 6 Abstracts of all accepted papers are available by E-mail. The abstracts are sent each month by E-mail to all subscribers to this free service.
- 7 On the World Wide Web links are made between the European Journal of Clinical Investigation and many relevant web sites.

I sincerely hope that you, as members of ESCI, will continue to support the Journal. It is of mutual interest to the Society and the Journal that its quality improves. To achieve this, you should more then before submit your best work. Only by doing this the impact factor will further increase, enabling us to compete with the top American journals.

SUMMARY SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME 31ST ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING

Kiel (Germany) 19th - 22nd March 1997

■ WEDNESDAY 19TH MARCH 1997

15.00 - 19.00 registration
evening welcome reception (see registration confirmation for details)

■ THURSDAY 20TH MARCH 1997

08.30 - 08.45 Opening ceremony of the 31st Annual Scientific Meeting
U R Fölsch (Kiel, Germany)
A E Pontiroli (Milan, Italy)

08.45 - 09.30 **Bristol-Myers Squibb Update Lecture**
'Telomerase and non-telomerase driven tumour immortality'
R Parwaresch (Kiel, Germany)

09.45 - 12.30 **workshops (11.00 - 11.30 coffee break):**
2: Assessing the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of neuropsychopharmacological agents
3: Platelet activation
4: Gene therapy for atherosclerotic vascular diseases of kidneys and other organs
5: Molecular bases of coronary artery disease
7: Body composition in clinical practice
8: Steroid receptors: from molecular biology to clinical medicine

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch and poster viewing

14.00 - 14.45 **ESCI Council Update Lecture**
'Single molecule analysis in clinical medicine. New tools in diagnostics at the molecular level'
R Rigler (Stockholm, Sweden)

15.00 - 17.30 **workshops (16.00 - 16.30 coffee break):**
3: Platelet activation
4: Gene therapy for atherosclerotic vascular diseases of kidneys and other organs
5: Molecular bases of coronary artery disease
8: Steroid receptors: from molecular biology to clinical medicine

17.30 end of Thursday's programme

■ FRIDAY 21ST MARCH 1997

08.30 - 09.15 **Merck, Sharp & Dohme Update Lecture**
'Genetics of NIDDM: from the genes to clinical abnormalities'
P Froguel (Lille, France)

09.30 - 12.30 **workshops (10.45 - 11.15 coffee break):**
1: Pathophysiology of monocytes and macrophages
3: Platelet activation
6: Determinants of arterial thrombosis
8: Steroid receptors: from molecular biology to clinical medicine
13: Pancreatic neoplasias: molecular genetics and therapeutic strategies

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch and poster viewing

12.30 - 13.00 Annual Business Meeting ESCI (members only)

14.00 - 14.45 **Lecture Mack-Forster Award 1997**
'VIP and somatostatin receptor scintigraphy'
I Virgolini (Vienna, Austria)

15.00 - 18.00 **subspecialty poster sessions (16.15 - 16.45 coffee break)**

15.00 - 16.15 **I Chaired Poster Discussions** (at poster site)
Cardiovascular Medicine
Diabetes/Metabolism/Lipids
Endocrinology
Gastroenterology/Liver
Haematology/Oncology
Nephrology/Hypertension
Neurology
Respiratory Medicine
Rheumatology/Immunology

16.45 - 18.30 **II Oral Presentation of Selected Subspecialty Posters and Presentation of Bristol-Myers Squibb Poster Awards 1997**

18.30 evening end of Friday's programme
official congress dinner (see registration confirmation for details)

■ SATURDAY 22ND MARCH 1997

08.30 - 09.15 **Renold Memorial Lecture**
'Genetically modified cells in tumour therapy'
A Lindemann (Freiburg, Germany)

09.30 - 12.30 **workshops (10.45 - 11.15 coffee break):**
1: Pathophysiology of monocytes and macrophages
3: Platelet activation
6: Determinants of arterial thrombosis
9: Hepatitis C - the silent epidemic
10: ATP-sensitive potassium channels
11: Transplantation
12: Molecular pathology, molecular genetics and prevention strategies of breast cancer

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 17.00 **workshops (15.15 - 15.45 coffee break):**
6: Determinants of arterial thrombosis
11: Transplantation
12: Molecular pathology, molecular genetics and prevention strategies of breast cancer

17.00 end of the meeting

■ IMPORTANT ADRESSESS

Congress Venue

Auditorium Maximum of the
Christian-Albrechts University
Corner of Olshausenstrasse/Westring
D-24098 KIEL, GERMANY

Local Organisers

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Congress Office

(registration, accommodation, travel, social programme)
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32nd ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING IN CRACOW, POLAND

by *Ryszard J Gryglewski, local organiser*

The next Annual Scientific Meeting of the European Society for Clinical Investigation will be held, for the first time in this part of Europe, in Cracow, Poland, from 16th - 20th April 1998.

This place was chosen to encourage an alliance between Western, Central and Eastern European medical researchers within the frame of our Society. Cracow is an ancient capital of Poland (*Cracovia totius Poloniae urbs celeberrima*) where in 1364 the Jagiellonian University was founded by the King Casimirus the Great. Nicolaus Copernicus, the Astronomer, studied at the medical faculty of our university. The Academy of Sciences and Arts was established in Cracow during the reign of the Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph. The city is full of historical monuments, and it is located at a distance of 10 km from a thousand-years old Slat Mine at Wieliczka with its famous Crystal Chapel, and at a distance of 100 km from High Tatra Mountains.

Cracow is easy to reach by air, train or car from anywhere in Europe. All congress auditoria are arranged in the centre of the city at a walking distance from each other. The programme will be constructed in such a way so as to avoid overlapping sessions on similar subjects. Invited lectures, a variety of symposia and workshops will be harmonised with a network of short oral presentations and poster exhibitions.

The traditional high scientific standard of the Annual Scientific Meetings will be sustained, however, we also want to enrich it with a selection of the best out of Central-Eastern Europe achievements in many fields of medicine. Let us try to have a unifying meeting of European Clinical Investigators, similar to that which was held in Cracow 364 years ago when the Emperor Charles IV, four kings, nine princes from Western and Eastern Europe and their large courts. We cannot afford to offer a golden set of spoons to each participant of our meeting as it was in 1364, but we can assure you about the traditional hospitality you will meet in Cracow. 'Do zobaczenia' in Cracow in April 1998!

NEW COUNCILLORS 1997

The council would like to propose Heinrich Schulte (Hamburg, Germany) to succeed Tjerk de Bruin (Utrecht, The Netherlands) as the new honorary secretary-treasurer of ESCI from end of March 1997. For vice-presidency, Tjerk de Bruin (Utrecht,

32nd Annual Scientific Meeting EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR CLINICAL INVESTIGATION 16th-20th APRIL 1998, Cracow (POLAND)



Local Organizer:

Professor Richard J. Gryglewski M.D., h.c. D.sc.
Chair of Pharmacology
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The Netherlands) and Krzysztof Sladek (Cracow, Poland) are proposed.

Hereunder you will find the summarised curricula vitae of the candidates nominated for councillorship. The councillor that will resign in 1997 is Gérard Friedlander (Paris, France). As usual, you can choose between the two candidates per country on the enclosed ballot paper. The ballot paper should be returned **immediately** to the Central Office of ESCI. You will find the exact instructions on the ballot paper. A simple majority vote will be decisive in each case.

Jérôme Rossert is 38 years old, and graduated in medicine in 1988 at the Pierre and Marie Curie University of Paris (nephrology and internal medicine). He thereafter became Assistant Professor of Nephrology at this university. In 1992 he completed

his PhD thesis (immunology) at the Pierre and Marie Curie University of Paris, on cellular mechanisms responsible for drug-induced autoimmune diseases. Between 1992 and 1995 he was Post-doctoral Fellow and then Research Associate at the Department of Molecular Genetics at the University of Texas, Houston TX. During this period of time, he studied the regulation of type I collagen genes, and identified cis-act-



Jérôme Rossert

ing elements responsible for the expression of these genes in different cell types, and in particular in osteoblasts. In 1996 he joined the Department of Nephrology and the Research Unit at Tenon Hospital in Paris and was appointed Associate Professor of Nephrology at the Pierre and Marie Curie Hospital of Paris. His research activities focus on molecular mechanisms for the activation of type I collagen genes in fibroblasts during embryonic development and during fibrotic diseases.



François Vrtovnik

François Vrtovnik is 32 years old, and graduated in medicine in 1992 at the University of Lille (Nephrology). He thereafter joined the Research Unit in Renal Physiology and Physiopathology in Bichat Hospital in Paris, and studied the cellular mechanisms of autocrine/paracrine regulation of proximal tubule cells. In 1994 he completed his PhD thesis at Denis Diderot University of Paris (Physiology) on the effects of membrane lipid, glucocorticoids, and vitamin D on renal proximal sodium-phosphate cotransport activity.

In 1994 he joined the Department of Physiology at Bichat Hospital and was appointed assistant at Denis Diderot University of Paris. His research activities now focus on the tubular mechanisms of renal disease progression, and on the role of mevalonate-derived products in these phenomena.

FUTURE ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

1997, 19th - 22nd March

Kiel, Germany
local organisers: Prof Dr U R Fölsch and Dr Chr Löser (Kiel, Germany)
(nb. see programme summary in this newsletter!)

1998, 16th - 20th April

Cracow, Poland
local organisers: Dr R J Gryglewski, Dr W Uracz and Dr K Sladek (Cracow, Poland)
(nb. see announcement in this newsletter!)

1999, 7th - 10th April

Milan, Italy
local organiser: Prof A E Pontiroli (Milan, Italy)

2000, 17th - 20th May

Aarhus, Denmark
local organiser: Dr S Keiding (Aarhus, Denmark)

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Society is open to any person, irrespective of age, who has accomplished meritorious original investigation in clinical or allied sciences. Membership of ESCI includes the following benefits:

- subscription to the European Journal of Clinical Investigation (please note that the membership fee of Dfl. 195.- is half the normal subscription price!).
- reduced registration fees during our Annual Scientific Meeting.
- preference at awarding travel grants to enable you or your colleagues to come to the Annual Scientific Meeting.
- possibility to apply for the yearly Mack-Forster Award for Clinical Research.

In addition, young scientists can apply for junior membership with a reduced membership fee. Eligibility:

- Any young scientist under the age of 30 can apply for junior membership of ESCI.
- Junior membership is for a maximum of three (3) years.
- Junior members receive the European Journal of Clinical Investigation and have the same financial benefits as full members.
- Junior members are not allowed to vote during the Annual Business Meeting and are not eligible to any office.
- Junior members can apply for full membership at any time.
- Junior members pay a membership fee which is about 40% lower than the full membership fee.
- If junior members do not fulfill the requirements for full membership within the period of three (3) years, their membership will be terminated.

Applications, both for full and junior membership can be sent to the Central Office. Application forms can be obtained from the Central Office.

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