

Trimestrial Newsletter

Fall 2010 Issue

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Message from the FENS President

Inauguration at FENS Forum 2010 in Amsterdam



Sten Grillner,
FENS President 2010-2012

Dear friends and colleagues,

as FENS President I am delighted to take over the reins of offices for the next two years starting from the FENS Forum in 2010. I hope you all have enjoyed

the scientific feast in Amsterdam that extended over the vast landscape of the brain – from genes to behaviour and to the many diseases of the brain. An overwhelming amount of facts have been presented but also, and more importantly, fundamental new insights – insights that are often based on meticulous fact-finding - the food for hypothesis driven research.

For this feast I would like to thank all the FENS staff and officers, foremost Helmut Kettenmann, the former president of FENS, Dominique Poulain, Asla Pitkänen, Gerard Boer - the local conference general, and Pico Caroni -



head of the Programme Committee and many, many others...

During the two years ahead of the next meeting in Barcelona, the entire FENS organization will continue to work hard to improve the conditions within European Neuroscience. This is in particular with regard to funding, training and other measures at a European level and, at the same time, to do what we can to assist the 31 different national societies in their ambitions to improve funding at a national level. Not only funding is important but also the need to achieve sound systems for the evaluation of science – to work for the removal of simplistic measures like journal impact factors and alike that, in certain institutions in Europe and worldwide, dictate promotions and even salaries. Instead we should promote better, although perhaps more laborious ways, of evaluating the achievements of both young and more senior scientists. Another important task is to facilitate the utilization of bioinformatics in Neuroscience – this should become as important in our complex field that extends from gene to behaviour, as it has been in genetics and systems biology.

I am looking forward to my term of office from 2010 to 2012.

Message from past FENS President

A short reflection on my FENS presidency 2008-2010

Since these two years have passed by so rapidly, I have asked myself what we had accomplished during that time.



Helmut Kettenmann,
FENS President 2008-2010

One of the important advances was the development of strategic plans. For each of our activities, ranging from the Forum meeting to NENS, we developed a strategic plan where we outlined our long-term goals. This plan was worked out for the organization of the Forum meeting, for NENS, the FENS-IBRO School Programme and for other FENS activities. In particular, the FENS Forum will be differently organized in the future. We have selected a core Professional Congress Organizer (PCO) that will help us to select meeting sites that are both attractive and cost-effective. This implies that we are already planning the FENS meeting in 2016. It was rewarding to see that one of our new initiatives, the FENS Featured Regional Meeting, took off well in Warsaw. Thanks to the commitment of our Polish colleagues, this pilot project was a success and FENS will continue these activities. In the upcoming year the meeting will be in Slovenia and will involve the Alpine-Adriatic region.

Another important issue was the reorganization of committees responsible for communication and for the European Journal



of Neuroscience. We now have a Communication and Publication Committee that will oversee all forms of FENS presentations from layman to scientist. We hope that the FENS activities, therefore, will become even more recognized. A second new committee is the one for animals in research (CARE) which was established during the discussions that preceded the adoption of the new EU directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. This committee has two target groups: it will support researchers under attack and it will promote public education in matters related to the use of animals in neuroscience. Another new activity is the engagement of FENS in promoting neuroscience history projects. As a pilot project we have advertised grants for projects in European neuroscience history. Out of 9 applications we have selected 4. The topics range from cartoons in neuroscience to the publication of historic anatomical slides from Sherrington.

It was a great pleasure to see that FENS is continuously increasing its visibility and that it is recognized as an equal partner by the leadership of the Society for Neuroscience and by our Asian partners. One can really state that FENS has matured into a solid and stable organization and it is hard to believe that the neuroscience community in Europe could exist without it.

I wish FENS that the success continues.

Editorial by Jacques Epelbaum, Communication & Publication Committee chairman

Early 2009, when the President of the French society for neuroscience, proposed to nominate me for the FENS Communication & Publication Committee, (COMPUBCOM), my first reaction was to thank him, telling him that I was already well occupied.

Then I thought about it and decided to accept the nomination. Why? Because building up COMPUBCOM for FENS is a big challenge. Firstly, neuroscience is probably the only discipline in which scientists with backgrounds as different as those of a neuroanatomist, a bioinformatician or a psychiatrist have to communicate around a common scientific object: the brain. The challenge is even bigger for FENS members because of European cultural and linguistic diversity. One of the first tasks of COMPUBCOM was to visit national neuroscience society websites¹ and out of 29, only 12 used English as their first language (and 6 as their second one).

¹ Since we are on websites, did you know that in March 2010, out of 29 national societies, only 8 did display the FENS logo on their web front page, 4 did not display any information about FENS and 4 did not have a website. Since then, letters were sent and things have considerably improved. The logo is now present on 18 front pages and links are provided on 28 out of 31 websites (a new national society, the Icelandic society for Neuroscience, has joined FENS and a former one developed a website). However, 9 societies still do not provide the FENS logo on their web front pages...

So we encourage those who have not done it as yet to put the FENS logo and to link on the FENS web front page. If you need some help for that, you can get in touch with Kiki Thermos. Please let us know.





To constitute a new FENS committee is a long process. Nominated candidates must be elected by the Governing Council and this was done at the end of 2009.

Since January, COMPUBCOM is complete. It is composed of five members and each takes charge of specific tasks :



Erwan Bezard, Bordeaux, France
(erwan.bezard@u-bordeaux2.fr)

His research interests are Parkinson disease, physiology, functional anatomy, behaviour, and experimental therapeutics. His main task is to work on improving the FENS graphic chart.



Paola Bovolenta, Madrid, Spain (bovolenta@cajal.csic.es)

Her research interest is aimed at defining the molecular mechanisms that control the early development of the vertebrate nervous system. She is in charge of communicating with the Schools Committee.



Jacques Epelbaum, Paris, France
(jacques.epelbaum@inserm.fr)

He is a neuroendocrinologist by training and he works on neuropeptide physiology and some of their pathological relevance. He chairs the committee and edits the newsletter you are currently reading.



Flavio Moroni, Firenze, Italy
(flavio.moroni@unifi.it)

He works in the field of excitatory neurotransmission and neurotoxicity. He has developed clinical protocols for the treatment of acute and chronic intoxication (mushroom or cyanide poisoning; drugs of abuse). He is in charge of communicating with the NENS and CARE committees.



Kyriaki (Kiki) Thermos, Iraklion, Greece
(thermos@med.uoc.gr)

She investigates new neuroprotective agents and putative therapeutics in ischemia induced retinal neurodegeneration. She is in charge of communicating with national and monodisciplinary societies.



The main tasks of COMPUBCOM are to analyse, propose and implement a communication & publication policy for FENS. This includes all existing or potential publications, electronic or not, produced by FENS administrative offices and all FENS committees. Such a policy must provide a bidirectional linkage towards the FENS constituency (individual scientists, FENS committees and programmes & member societies) but also towards the FENS partners (other scientific societies, European institutions, Public at large).

Our main goal is to improve (implement for some of you) a bidirectional stream of information between FENS and each of the above cited partners.

We would also like to ask societies on a regular basis for more scientific highlights - presentations to be changed on website - with a short title, 500 words max + 1 figure - short 5-10 mins videos. Paola and Kiki are collecting this information from each society's president (and/or the corresponding member that they nominated). The first one can be consulted on the FENS website at :

<http://fens.mdc-berlin.de/shoty/?action=show&id=39>

Once collected, these videos will constitute a database for the press and the general audience and help us to build a European network (policy makers, news & media or website -Itunes-) to which we can send regular neuroscience news.

One of our first decisions was to publish a Newsletter with a trimestrial periodicity. Until now, FENS communication passes through many channels (FENS news, FENS job Market

EJN eToc, NENS newsletter, Schools newsletter, Did you know that, ...). Though most of these missives are necessary, we believe that a broader communication medium (in the spirit of the Society for Neuroscience Neuroscience Nexus) had to be launched.

This Newsletter will be what you make of it. We are counting on you to send us information about your societies, and free opinion articles on any aspects of European Neuroscience.

A few words on the content of this first issue. You will find a message from the President and one from the former President. We have asked all FENS committees to present themselves and we begin with the NENS and CARE committees. Finally, we announce the upcoming FENS Featured Regional Meeting then come back to the brilliant success of the 7th FENS Forum in Amsterdam 2010 and end with the future with some information about the 8th FENS Forum in Barcelona 2012.

In conclusion of this first editorial, I would like to remind you that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers".

Please use it !





Animals in Research

CARE action in 2011



Roberto Caminiti,
Chair Committee on Animals
in Research

In 2010 FENS created the Committee on Animals in Research (CARE). This new creature has several goals. The first is to advise FENS on the responsible and

humane use of animals in neuroscience research. The second is to promote public education in matters related to the use of animals in neuroscience. The third is to resist the arguments of those groups which are attempting to end the use of animals in research, and to provide support to researchers under attack from such groups, and to respond to the media when animal research is questioned. To broadcast these themes, in 2011 *CARE workshops* will be organized at the meetings of several national neuroscience societies that are part of FENS, as well as *CARE lectures* will be offered at the courses that are part of the Programme of the FENS-IBRO European Neuroscience Schools. Furthermore, thanks to a coordinated action with the Network of the European Neuroscience Schools (NENS), both CARE lectures and workshops can be organized at academic institutions having PhD programmes in neuroscience affiliated to NENS.

The new EU Directive on the use of animals in scientific procedures was approved by the EU Parliament on September 8th, 2010, and each EU member State will have to enact new legislation in keeping with the Directive within two years of its adoption by the EU. CARE will monitor the development of legislative change within the different Member States.

To better achieve this goal, all national neuroscience societies that are affiliated to FENS are creating national CAREs (CARE-France, CARE-UK, etc.) so as to form a European network that can contribute to the efficient implementation of the Directive and to provide expert advice on animal research issues to all scientists that will be involved in the legislative process in their own countries.

FENS Committee on Animals in Research (CARE)

Committee Members:

Roberto Caminiti, Italy (Chair)

(roberto.caminiti@uniroma1.it)

Carmen Cavada, Spain

(carmen.cavada@uam.es)

Klaus-Peter Hoffmann, Germany

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Guy Orban, Belgium

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Stefan Treue, Germany (treue@gwdg.de)

Krzysztof Turlejski, Poland

(k.turlejski@nencki.gov.pl)





FENS Featured Regional Meeting 2011



FENS and SiNAPSA, Slovenian Neuroscience Association, are announcing the SiNAPSA Neuroscience Conference 2011 (SNC'11) Central European FENS Featured Regional Meeting

You are cordially invited to the next FENS Featured Central European Meeting: SiNAPSA Neuroscience Conference 2011 (SNC'11) in Ljubljana, Slovenia, September 22 - 25, 2011.

The meeting is organized by a consortium of neuroscientists from SiNAPSA, with colleagues from Trieste, Italy, and Zagreb, Croatia.

We aim to make the SNC'11 an excellent opportunity for networking and future collaborations in the region and beyond. With its outstanding plenary speakers, diverse thematic symposia, satellite meetings and the accompanying special events devoted to neuroscience education and promotion, SNC'11 will be a hub of European neuroscience in 2011.

Visit <http://www.sinapsa.org/snc11> for details on the programme, venue, key dates, and online application forms.

We hope to see you at the SNC'11, a Central European FENS Featured Regional Meeting in **Ljubljana, September 22 - 25, 2011.**

The Network of European Neuroscience Schools

The Network of European Neuroscience Schools (NENS) brings together 157 affiliated schools from 27 European countries. The Network was founded in 2003 and since 2005 it is a part of FENS. The goals of the Network are to (1) promote high standard structured PhD and Master's degree programs in neuroscience, (2) foster exchange and mutual support between schools, and (3) increase opportunities for young neuroscientists to exchange training programs.



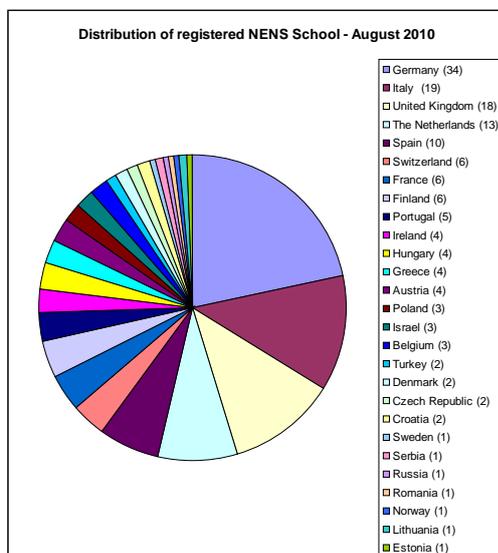
Map with location of NENS Programmes

To this end, NENS organizes an annual meeting of the coordinators of the participating schools to stimulate collaborations and identify projects that would support the development of the schools' programs. NENS plans to promote along with non-European federations the exchange of students during their graduate training.

Since 2007, NENS awards stipends to young doctoral students for exchange between the labs of NENS-affiliated schools to support

short visits aimed at acquiring a skill or technique needed for their project. Since the beginning of the program 41 stipends have been awarded. There are 2-3 calls per year which are announced on the FENS website.

NENS plans also to set up a Job Fair during the next FENS forum to facilitate contacts for students with laboratories or institutions planning to hire young neuroscientists. Finally, NENS closely collaborates with the new FENS CARE committee to promote education and awareness by doctoral students of the multiple issues related to animal experiment in neuroscience research. More detailed news on the NENS activities are available on the website and will be regularly published in separate monthly newsletter distributed via the coordinators of the NENS affiliated doctoral programs.



Statistics on countries of NENS programmes

FENS Forum 2010 Amsterdam – large for quality, not too small (or too big) for exchange



Wonderful weather and Dutch rain that did not come, supported the neuroscience ambience of the 7th FENS Forum of Neuroscience which took place, from July 3-7, 2010, in the RAI Convention and Exhibition Center of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The Forum, hosted by the Dutch Neurofederation, was a big success. An attendance of 6214 persons, 323 speakers in 91 plenary, award-winning and symposium sessions, and 3741 participants presenting a poster in one of the 7 sessions, made this meeting an important event for European neuroscience. More neuroscientist than ever before visited the meeting, and they came from all over the world.

The spatial RAI Center offered to organize the poster area around a center of the commercial exhibition and its central meeting point with internet, catering and sitting spots al-



ways nearby, and all in one hall. The 2 hours of author-at-the posters in the twice daily sessions therefore became lively and pleasantly crowded science exchange periods, a main goal for the Forum. Eight lecture rooms were available among which a theatre with 3200 seats, the plenary lecture room, all within close distance of the main poster and exhibition hall. An ideal setting for exchange and to meet already known and not yet known colleagues. This is also what companies recognized as 139 of them had a booth in the exhibition.

The meeting was officially opened by Willem Hendrik Gispen, the first president of FENS in 1998, who retraced the growth of the FENS in this 12 years and stressed the importance of having an European neuroscience community that has a face and a voice to the public and the politicians. After a performance of the famous Dutch entertainer Freek de Jonge ("... and the spider was sucked away whenever he tried to reach his goal as he was housed in the tube of a vacuum cleaner" illustrating the frustration not to reach results in science so easily), the Forum was scientifically opened with a plenary lecture by Roger Y. Tsien (La Jolla, USA), Chemistry Nobel prize winner in 2008, for an audience of 2900 persons. He presented an appealing new option for neurosurgery based on fluoro-labelling of living cells. Specific labeling by green and red fluorescent compounds of tumor and healthy neuronal tissue, respectively, would allow precise and fine dissection of tumor tissue in the complexity of nervous pathways in the nervous system.

All plenary lectures, on the early morning and late afternoon, were enthusiastically received for their very didactic presentations. Who will

forget, for instance, the entertaining lecture of Michael Tomasello (Leipzig, Germany) on the second day showing us a full comparison of human children and monkeys in many behaviors but luckily enough also pointing out that human beings could behave more socially (at least a capacity we have prominent in our early years...). Or the fantastic survey of the cortical development as colorfully presented by Oscar Marin (Madrid, Spain), branding this knowledge in your own cortex. Special lectures, scheduled between the morning and afternoon poster sessions, also attracted a lot of interest with attendances up to 1200 listeners. Finally the parallel symposia, each morning and afternoon, reviewing and discussing the current state-of-art in the many fields of neuroscience were very much appreciated according to the answers of the questionnaire about the meeting. Taken together, this showed that the FENS Forum has grown in quality of science but is still not too big in finding and meeting colleagues within your field and make new colleagues in other fields as well.

The FENS Forum not only had an opening reception with food, drinks and entertainment, but also presented a "Jump the FENS" party of Monday evening and night that many will not readily forget. Music of different styles ranging from classic to jazz, and from electronic to pop, stand-up comedy and a film was displayed in the rooms of the famous 'Melkweg' in downtown Amsterdam. The "Melkweg" was visited by about 2900 dancing Forum participants till the early hours of Tuesday July 6. It emphasized the cultural atmosphere of the city of Amsterdam, a city that without doubt was a great environment for the attending neuroscientists. Distances between RAI Center and 17th century histori-





cal center of the town and its museums were short, and streets were full of daily life all day and night.

Many organizations, institutes and societies took advantage of the Forum 2010 to plan interest group socials and business meetings, all promoting liveliness. Special to mention are the FENS IBRO Alumni party on Tuesday evening in music center Odeon, and the exclusive FENS presidential dinner in Grand Hotel Krasnapolsky on Monday evening, both in downtown Amsterdam.

Many details of the successful events of the FENS Forum 2010 can still be found on its website, including all abstracts and press releases. Go to <http://forum.fens.org/2010> for more information. Interested in the pictures of the Jump the FENS party? Have a look at its Facebook site http://www.facebook.com/photo_search.php?oid=218905022441&view=all.

And do not forget, the Barcelona Forum in 2012 will undoubtedly offer you the same quality neuroscience meeting and this time the Netherlands will win the World cup!



Gerard J. Boer
Chair Local Organizing Committee Amsterdam

A few numbers about the 7th FENS FORUM AMSTERDAM:

6214 participants: 42% students, 27% junior scientists, 24% senior scientists, 7% others.

383 chairpersons and speakers for: 9 plenary lectures, 10 special lectures, 9 special events, 7 technical workshops and 56 symposia.

Remarkably few speakers' changes: **no changes or cancellations for plenary or special lectures** and only 12 changes in symposia (among which 1 symposium with 2 changes), 1 workshop with 2 changes, 2 special events (among which one with 3 changes!!)

4224 abstracts submitted - 174 cancelled = 4050 valid and 3741 for poster presentations for a very well balanced programme (see table).

	Invited speakers		Poster abstracts		Total	
Development	51	16,09%	414	11,09%	465	11,48%
Excitability, synaptic transmission, network functions	75	23,66%	873	23,39%	948	23,41%
Disorders of the nervous system	62	19,56%	1031	27,62%	1093	26,99%
Sensory and motor systems	41	12,93%	487	13,05%	528	13,04%
Homeostatic and neuroendocrine systems	14	4,42%	200	5,36%	214	5,28%
Cognition and behaviour	54	17,03%	651	17,44%	705	17,41%
Techniques, history and teaching	20	6,31%	77	2,06%	97	2,40%
Total	317	100,00%	3733	100,00%	4050	100,00%

This demonstrates a very high rank of satisfaction among participants.



FENS Forum of Neuroscience in Barcelona – an unforgettable experience

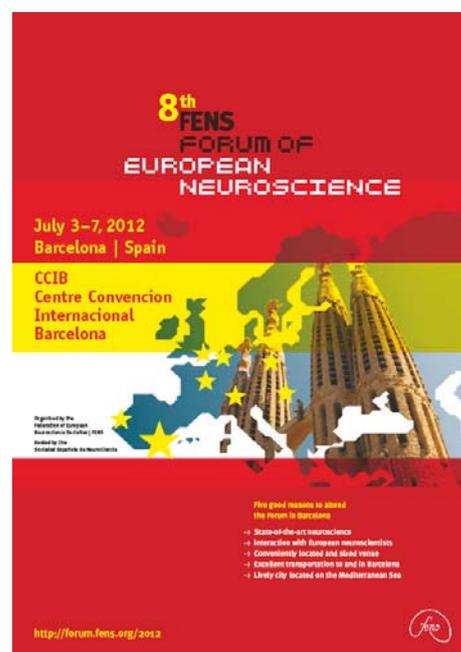
The Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS) has chosen Barcelona, Spain, to host the 8th FENS Forum of Neuroscience. This is the largest international neuroscience meeting in Europe, involving all neuroscience societies members of FENS. A dense programme of plenary lectures, special lectures and symposia as well as a series of poster sessions has become the standard of the FENS Forum, which has become increasingly attractive for neuroscientists all over the world. Its attendance has steadily grown and the expectation is of around 7,000 attendants at the upcoming Forum in Barcelona 2012.

A new vision for the FORUM

During the last year, FENS has changed the organizational aspects of the Forum. From now on, the Forum is organized directly by FENS. However, FENS wants to maintain the active participation and involvement of the local societies at every venue and, to this end, a new scheme of tasks had to be developed. The new organizational scheme gives the local member society the opportunity to increase its visibility and involvement in scientific and social activities, and provides a local flavour to the Forum. In Spain, the Spanish Society for Neuroscience (SENC) will be the host of the 8th FENS Forum, and has established a Host Society Committee (HSC) consisting of a committed group of prestigious Spanish neuroscientists who are intensely working on the local organization and on the development of the new Forum scheme.

Besides the organizational support and financial fundraising, the host society is

now responsible for the initiation and management of a specific socio-scientific programme, with events directed towards the public, students or scientists, promoting neuroscience awareness or training, as well as for cultural and social events, and the proposal of satellite scientific events. In addition, the host society is entitled to participate in the preparation of the main scientific programme within the FENS Forum Programme Committee, including one Host Society Special Lecture.



Young Investigator Scientific Programme

In Barcelona we will have an outstanding programme of satellite scientific events and a Young Investigator Scientific Programme that is designed to promote educational and training aspects and contacts with local laboratories and scientists in coordination with the NENS committee of FENS (Network of European Neurosciences Schools). Since one important goal of FENS is to foster neuroscience education, we are encouraging the involvement of undergra-





duate and graduates students in the Forum. The HSC Young Investigator Scientific Programme will include 2-3 week short-stays in local/national laboratories that will be announced on the FENS Forum website, and will allow visits to laboratories in the host region for young investigators participating in the Forum to get familiar with the environment, facilities and techniques in different fields of brain research, that will favour future exchanges and networking. During the Forum, a Meet-the-Expert lunch, will be designed to facilitate the interaction of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows with senior lecturers, or the FENS Job Market and Job fair will provide information about employment opportunities and opportunities to contact employers and applicants through the Job Market Service. Also, after the great success of the Amsterdam "Jump the FENS", the Spanish association of Neurosciences Young Investigators is taking the challenge of having the best JTF event ever. This will include a Neuro-Rock contest among the scientists, a Neuro-Photo contest.

Social and public awareness activities

Other activities promoted by the Host Society Committee will be directed to *science and society* communication, such as an amazing brain awareness programme that will run during the whole year, but also activities for local/national decision-makers, scientific journal editors and for the media. These promotional activities are an important part of the Forum in the domain of public relations and the visibility of neuroscience not only in Spain but also in the EU.

The social programme is the opportunity

for the HSC to give the Forum a special flavour to be remembered, and to promote knowledge of the local culture. Barcelona is an ideal place to host the FENS Forum, for several reasons including its long-standing scientific tradition, its history of promoting interaction between science and society. Barcelona has been able to preserve the best architecture of its past, while building new architecture characteristic of each era. This is why it can now offer a matchless range of venues for different satellite and social events. From a Royal Palace set among romantic gardens, to the exquisite, rationalist pavilion designed by Mies van der Rohe, from the Liceu Opera House and Palau de la Música concert hall, in the heart of the city, to a stately country house on the city outskirts. Barcelona offers these and many more unusual spaces, as well as the usual conference centre, hotels and restaurants, which can host receptions, banquets and parties from small groups to several thousands. Moreover, strong connections with the Institute of Culture of Barcelona have allowed us to offer a unique cultural venue, with free museum visits, and very convenient prices for cultural activities to the attendants.

Barcelona: the Mediterranean charm

The city combines historical and innovative trends and is the home of many scientific and cultural institutions. Barcelona offers not only the best suitable facilities but also the warmth and friendship of the Mediterranean character. The city has undergone a huge process of renovation during the past years and has become one of the most attractive destinations in Europe for its architecture and cultural life.





Barcelona has excellent congress and tourist facilities and very good communications with most European countries. The Forum will be held in one of the largest exposition and conference centers in Europe, the Barcelona International Convention Centre - CCIB (2004) with impressive views of the beach and a very convenient location. Two buildings of great architectural value, the Convention Centre designed by the architect José Luís Mateo, and the Forum Building by Herzog & De Meuron, with a total area of over 100,000 square meters, form the CCIB. The new Natural Sciences Museum of Barcelona, which will open next door, in 2011, and host most of the Science and Societies activities, which together with the gardens and the beach, will provide an ideal context for this Forum. For those who love Spanish fashion and food, shops and restaurants nearby and in the town center will satisfy the most sophisticated taste. For those who will decide to spend their holidays in Spain, easy connections are available from Barcelona to any region, and a great programme of cultural gastronomy and wine tours have been designed at very convenient prices.



Mara Dierssen ,
Chair Host Society Committee

Trimestrial Newsletter

Fall Issue 2010

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