

EUSJA

EUROPEAN UNION OF SCIENCE
JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATIONS

Good news from EUSJA President's Letter

Digital tools are invading newsrooms. These tools are essential for any journalist. There is now a promise for a modern network across Europe. This is needed to help save science journalism from perishing amid mainstream journalism.

The year 2015 was good for EUSJA. We were able to attain many important goals. The board met twice face to face: in Stockholm (March) adjoining the General Assembly 2015 and during the World Science Forum in Budapest (November). We also had several meetings by Skype. Board members do not receive salaries or fees for their work. This important decision has been approved now twice by the board to underline the important principle: those elected should avoid conflict of interest.

I am especially happy to say that EUSJA has managed to consolidate the Strasbourg office. Our executive secretary Johanne Martinez-Schmitt has given our organisation a reliable point of contact and professional administration. In the last year we have finalised three new EU projects (NUCLEUS, Nano2all and Steamed), and another three are in preparation. One of these six, NUCLEUS, will activate discussions on media ethics and the ethos of journalism. The NUCLEUS network will also improve and intensify EUSJA's internal communications.

One of the highlights of the year was the European Conference for Science Journalists. The ECSJ was organised in collaboration with EUSJA and the Club of Hungarian Science Journalists. Many thanks are due to István Palugyai, president of the ECSJ2015 and emeritus president of EUSJA.

The ECSJ2016 will be held in Manchester, UK, on 23 July 2016, the day preceding the official opening of EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF). EUSJA will organise ECSJ2016 in collaboration with the Association of British Science Writers. The conference venue will be Manchester Central at the very heart of the city. Apart from the European conference, EUSJA has also prepared both a session and a 45th anniversary seminar for this biggest science event of the year in Europe. ESOF will bring together 4,500 scientists, educators and journalists from 90 countries.

EUSJA's General Assembly will meet in Strasbourg, France on 19 March 2016. This is an election year, because my two years are done. A vice president, honorary secretary and honorary treasurer will also be elected.

EUSJA will be 45 years old in 2016. It is time to meet our old and new friends, make history and continue to speak for quality science journalism. In changing times EUSJA must change, too. Re-inventing EUSJA has been a strategy for that transformation.

I wish you all every success in your work.

**Satu Lipponen,
EUSJA president**



Some of the group on the study tour in Budapest © 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval



*Satu Lipponen speaking at the 2nd ECSJ,
© 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval*

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SCIENCE JOURNALISTS AND RRI

EUSJA's participation in NUCLEUS (New Understanding of Communication, Learning and Engagement in Universities and Scientific Institutions) was launched at the 2nd ECSJ in Budapest on 3 November. This EC project, led by Rhine-Waal University, Germany, deals with issues such as ethics, open access, sustainability, social inclusion and gender bias, and is part of an Horizon 2020 project on Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI).

The EC defines RRI as: "a process in which all societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers and businesses) work together during the whole research and innovation process in order to align... outcomes to the values, needs and expectations of European society," according to NUCLEUS Work Package Leader Pdraig Murphy, of Dublin City University, Ireland.

"The objective of the four-year project is to see how research intensive institutions like universities can connect to various 'cells' in society that are stakeholders in RRI, such as econom-

ic agencies, civil society, policymakers and media," said Dr Murphy. "The question of how the reporting of science can be done in a responsible manner is clearly of interest, and one way in which EUSJA's science journalists can help is by kindly completing a short survey on the way they work."

The questionnaire is located at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RRI_journalism

Questions include: is your role one of a 'conduit' of scientific information or is it more investigative? How is your time divided between journalism tasks and promotional activities?

The closing date is 10 March and the results will be disseminated by May 2016.

By completing a survey, science journalists can advance understanding of how Responsible Research and Innovation can best be done

REPORTS FROM THE 2ND ECSJ

The 2nd European Conference of Science Journalists (ECSJ), held in Budapest in November, was presented in five high-powered panels. A session on science journalism in society was followed by one on the specific problems of communication of infectious diseases (particularly Ebola). Later that day the assembly turned its attention to the role of science journalists in the climate debate. In between, a new EUSJA network called NUCLEUS (New Understanding of Communication, Learning and Engagement in Universities and Scientific Institutions) was launched, and suggestions for ways in which journalists can take an entrepreneurial approach to their work were discussed.

"It was a powerful showing of revitalised and reunited European science journalism," wrote EUSJA's honorary secretary Wolfgang Goede – see www.eusja.org/new-unity-found-in-a-rough-environment. His account of the conference panels is highly detailed.

The Sumest Budapest cover © Science Spin

Another useful angle on the 2nd ECSJ is given in a new on-line publication called 'Sumest – The Budapest Report', written by Tom Kennedy from the Irish Science & Technology Journalists' Association, who was the commentator on the panel dealing with science journalism in society. This report, on

http://issuu.com/spin35/docs/sumest_1budapestreport, carries 13 pages on the conference and eight pages on the associated study tour that took place the following day.

Among the tour topics were the downsides of living longer, and data storage. Wolfgang Goede also wrote a detailed account of the study tour, and posted it on www.eusja.org/figures-which-blow-your-mind.

When you have studied the two reports on the EUSJA website and read Sumest, your appetite may be whetted for the 3rd ECSJ – so save the date, 23 July 2016 in Manchester, UK.



President of the World Federation of Science Journalists Curt Brainerd ©2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval

Dominique Leglu (France) and Tom Kennedy (Ireland) © 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval

From left, Satu Lipponen (EUSJA president), Oliver Lehmann (Austria) and Connie St Louis (United Kingdom) © 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval

THOUGHTS AFTER THE 2ND ECSJ

By István Palugyai, EUSJA president emeritus, honorary life president TÚK, and Hungarian national delegate



István Palugyai in the conference building © 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval

It is a great honour if, twice in his life, somebody can organise a big international science journalist conference. I had such a major opportunity because in November I was able to greet the participants of the 2nd European Conference of Science Journalists as President of the event in the historical room of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

This building had earlier helped a lot in another, more indirect way, to bring about this conference. In 1997, in that building I met by chance one of the officials of UNESCO who had come there as part of the preparations for the World Conference on Science that was held in 1999 in Budapest. The story goes back further: I had met that same gentleman for the first time seven years previously, in 1992, in Tokyo during the first World Conference of Science Journalists (WCSJ). Since that time nobody had organised another conference and it occurred to me that as a satellite event of the World Conference on Science we could organise the 2nd WCSJ, creating a tradition. The UNESCO man thought it was a good idea, and UNESCO agreed to support a conference like the first one in Tokyo.

Thus it began: we held the conference and in the closing document, the Budapest Declaration, for the first time the term 'World Federation of Science Journalists' appeared. Its creation became a goal. As we know, after four years it happened and today the WFSJ is a big, professional, global organisation. Last year the WFSJ organised the 9th WCSJ in Seoul.

In between, science journalism has undergone major changes. In 1999 the internet was still very young and today most news hits the young generation through Facebook. The new challenges require new solutions because people are interested in information of science and technology today as well. This knowledge has to be delivered to them somehow and the tasks of science journalists are not fewer but greater.

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In 2014 our Danish colleagues, together with EUSJA, organised the 1st ESJC as a satellite event of the largest multidisciplinary European science conference, the EuroScience Open Forum in Copenhagen. It was suggested there that it would be good to continue, and that, along the lines of the 1999 event, the 2nd ECSJ could be organised in Budapest as a satellite event of the World Science Forum (which had evolved from the World Conference on Science).

Well, this took place and the occasion was not only the almost-45th anniversary of the foundation of EUSJA, but the Hungarian Club of Science Journalists (TÚK) celebrated its 25th anniversary as well.

In 1990, our Club had been the first from the eastern European countries to join EUSJA, and since then we have played an active role in our Union. In Hungary we have organised several events, conferences and visits, even EUSJA study trips. We award prizes such as 'Scientist (who communicates science actively) of the Year'. We have organised training courses for young journalists as well science cafés. Our membership is stable at around 50-60 people, including not only active journalists (because both the country and the market are small) but also people who are active in science communication.

I think the 2nd ECSJ was fairly successful and that Budapest has again contributed to the further development of science journalism and to strengthening the image of EUSJA in this difficult time.

« It is a great honour if, twice in his life, somebody can organise a big international science journalist conference. »



István Palugyai (Hungary) and Martin Schneider (Germany) in deep discussion © 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval



The audience at the 2nd ECSJ © 2nd ECSJ, photo by Jorge de Reval

THIRTY YEARS OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATIONS FROM ALL ANGLES

By Salla Nazarenko, Finnish Association of Science Editors and Journalists (FASEJ)

The 30th anniversary of the Finnish Association of Science Editors and Journalists (FASEJ) in Finland was a party that in many ways demonstrated the nature of the organisation. It combined a seminar themed 'Back to the Future' that involved futurologists, forecasting professionals, media experts, journalists and scientists with an informal celebration and party – and excited official and unofficial discussions about the future of science and the role of communications in it.

FASEJ was established in 1985 in the historical premises of the House of Estates in Helsinki. From the very beginning it was clear for the 34 people that decided to put up the association that it would not be a professional organisation – after all, the Union of Journalists has a membership of over 90 per cent of journalists in Finland – but an association that promotes and advocates scientific communication in all forms.

This was a radical idea at the time. In the 1980s the boundaries between journalists and representatives of scientific publications, not to mention communications officers, were still very much visible. Back in 1974 journalists working for scientific publications tried to build their own association: however, it took another eleven years to register one.

The establishment of the association came at a moment when science in Finland took a giant leap from the chambers of the universities towards society as a whole. The first popular scientific magazines were born and two science centres were established in Finland.

The most famous one, Heureka, is both the arena for the 30-year-anniversary celebrations and the work place of the current President of the Board of FASEJ. Mikko Myllykoski works as the Experience Director of Heureka. An historian by education, he started working for Heureka as an exhibition co-ordinator in 1990. Today he is in charge of events and learning programmes as well as the planetarium of Heureka. How does he find time to chair FASEJ as well?

"I have been a member for years, but after the World Congress in Helsinki in 2013 I was asked to become a candidate for the board. Actually I find volunteering for FASEJ professionally very rewarding. Most of my colleagues, science centre professionals, work abroad, so FASEJ gives me a place for professional networking here in Finland. FASEJ is a home of many new projects and ideas," Myllykoski says.

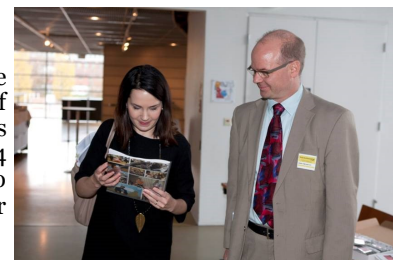
Today FASEJ has over one thousand members. According to the secretary general, Ulla Järvi, one third is professional journalists; one third consists of members of editorial boards of scientific publications; and one third is science communications and press officers of universities. Among the members there are also people representing civil society organisations, science educators, university teachers and others.

The board consists of nine people representing the whole spectrum of science communications from public broadcaster YLE to freelance writers.

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The everyday work of FASEJ concentrates on education, scholarships and grants. This is thanks to the peculiarities of the Finnish copyright system. Kopiosto, the agency in charge for copyrights, redistributes compensations for copyright use to its member organisations, FASEJ being one of them. The annual budget of FASEJ is around 350 000 euro; most of it returns to the members in the form of grants, education events and scholarships.

Strategically FASEJ defines its role as 'promoting scientific understanding and critical thinking as a strong initiative-taker within the network of scientific communication,' and also promoting open knowledge and freedom of speech.



Finland's Minister of Education Sanni Grahn-Laasonen (on left), who has a journalism background, visited FASEJ's 2nd national Science Communication Congress. The President of the association, Mikko Myllykoski, welcomed her to the Heureka science centre, where he works as an Experience Director © FASEJ, photo by Adolfo Vera



Heureka science centre's Senior Inspirer Harri Montonen offered a most entertaining science show to the audience of FASEJ's 30th anniversary reception in October © FASEJ, photo by Adolfo Vera



Professor emeritus Paul Fogelberg was the first president of FASEJ. Because of his enthusiasm and strong vision, FASEJ is open to all professionals working in the field of science communication © FASEJ, photo by Adolfo Vera

WHICH SCIENCE DEBATE? *There is an inflation of science debates. Make sure you go for the right one!*

By Wolfgang C. Goede, EUSJA honorary secretary and Hanns-J. Neubert, EUSJA president emeritus

The Paris Climate Summit COP 21 was hailed as a breakthrough, a first step into a new era of decarbonisation. There was a multitude of voices demanding this – and one of them was perhaps the appeal: “Stop the Climate Experiment!” This was the result of a science debate, held in Munich in late October and organised by TELI. (Both authors are members of the TELI board – Ed.)

The fact that TELI addressed climate change and the role of the economy in Munich's International Press Club, with many experts and influencers present, resulted in substantial media coverage. This contributed to the voices that successfully demanded a fundamental change in climate politics in Paris.

“Science debates have become fashionable because they seem to suggest real participation of the public.”

In practice, many of them are organised by government agencies and research bodies, old school and top down, basically aimed at enlisting public support for decisions that have already been taken: if you want, just to obtain alibis.

The TELI Science Debate, invented at the 80th birthday of the German science writers in 2009, works strictly from the bottom up. It tries to gather all stakeholders around a scientific or technological issue, including the citizenry, civil society and NGOs, as equal participants, at eye level with scientists, politicians and economists.

To depict the difference from conventional top down debates, this one may be called ‘Science Debate Incl.’ (for inclusive). It does not operate in the end-of-pipe modus, but in the beginning, start-of-pipe, when structures are being laid. It's not only a true democratic tool, but also a journalistic one, because such debates generate access to other opinions, produce more relevant results, and give science and technology a whole new spin.

EUSJA rolled out this type of debate first at ESOF Copenhagen 2014. It resulted in the Copenhagen Declaration, well recognised by the European Commission, which called for the labelling of nanoparticles in all products. For ESOF 2016 Manchester, an EUSJA Science Debate about e-health and the flood of related apps was approved. Come and check it out!

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 Science Debate Incl. Philosophy: http://www.pcst-2014.org/pcst_proceedings/artigos/wolfgang_c_goede_workshop.pdf

EUSJA News, Christmas 2008, editorial (p.2)

EUSJA News, Autumn 2010, editorial (p.1), Science debate goes European (p.8)

Discussing science debates on the EUSJA portal: <http://www.eusja.org/tag/science-debate/>



Climate Science Debate: It's the economy, stupid! Experts and public are equal and at eye level © W.C. Goede

IS THERE A 'NEW WAY' OF ENVIRONMENT AND SCIENCE REPORTING?

By Ricardo Garcia, Portuguese Science and Environmental Reporters Association (ARCA) delegate

“What does the future reserve for our profession?”

The issue is unfortunately cyclical and comes up in any journalists' gathering. What does the future reserve for our profession? Or else: what is our craft like at present? This was the subject at the centre of a conference in Brazil, last October, about environmental journalism. I was asked to do a presentation on the 'new way' of environmental reporting. I was puzzled: is there a new way?

In a sense, yes, there is. Technology has always changed our profession. But now a transformational part of this evolution comes from the demand side and not only from the supply side. Social media and mobile devices are changing the way news is accessed. People don't read more than a couple of paragraphs, they want more videos and 'fun' stories, and they rely on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp to get to news.

It is a mutation we cannot control. And as a corollary, this is changing the way we produce news, the timing of its delivery, the subjects we cover and the kind of media we use.

I mentioned, for example, the 'page views tyranny'. We now tend to report on everything that is viral, no matter the relevance. And we also want our news stories to become viral. In an era of job losses and shrinking revenues from advertising, having a big online audience is essential to a news organisation's survival and – we must not underestimate it – to our own ego.

What do we do then? Should we give up the long, deep, interpretative stories that made journalism a trusted gatekeeper of reality?

No, we shouldn't. The main tools of journalists are still our basic senses and our brain, regardless of all the technology we have at our disposal – and we should use it.

I was happy to have seen, three months before the conference, the eagerness of young Brazilian reporters in a course I taught there on sustainable development and climate change – issues bound to be dull and boring, specially the first one. It showed me that the new entrants in the profession are keen to deepen their knowledge of environment and science issues, regardless of any 'new way' of reporting. That is comforting.

TEN COMMANDMENTS—IF YOU WANT TO BE READ

By Wolfgang C. Goede, EUSJA honorary secretary

There has never been more science to write about, but alas! never less money to earn from science writing. This digest may help new entrants to science journalism to produce more relevant content and sell it better.

1. Title: What's your goal, Stockholm or Madrid? Become clear into which direction you want to proceed. Play around with an *intriguing* headline.
2. Homework: Dig into facts and figures. Watch out for an endless sea, in which you easily drown. *Select!* Don't cook up a stew. Go for nouvelle cuisine, i.e. one fancily decorated shrimp. Small is beautiful.
3. Synopsis: Produce a one-sheet summary of what your article is all about, its unique selling point, which new knowledge you will reveal, which audiences are to be reached, and how much you will invoice. This is your *blueprint*, and is also useful for negotiations with the editors.



4. Structure: Break your article down into a series of *subtitles*. Think of them as a skeleton, onto which you put the flesh, your writing. *In memoriam of Gerhard Peter Moosleitner, pioneer of a new era of popular science writing throughout Europe © Picture Alliance / G+J*
5. Pros & cons: Life consists of bright and dark sides. Find *critical* voices. Who receives the benefits of the research, is there a dialogue with citizens about anticipated chances and risks? If you skip this, you are not a journalist, but a cheerleader.

This digest is in homage to Gerhard Peter Moosleitner, inventor of P.M. Magazine, who died at the age of 82 in Kirchheim near Munich. The popular science magazine P.M. had siblings all over Europe: Ca m'interesse in France, Muy in Spain, Focus in Italy and Poland. Moosleitner lived up to many of the principles above. The author was P.M. editor for 29 years.

6. Writing: Write like Hemingway: use short, crisp, meaningful sentences. Don't get lost in complicated subclauses. Avoid any type of scientific slang and adhere to writing in a *colourful and expressive* way.
7. Narrative: This is the mother of all stories, which has given birth to the Bible, the Odyssey, and fairy tales. There are heroes and antagonists, entangled in love and hate, ups and down; at the end of the *drama* a lesson is to be learned. Yes, scientific research also has all these ingredients.
8. Pitch: Don't become a hermit--ask other people for *feedback*. Doubts about your story? Try the elevator pitch, maybe in a bar! If you see eyes lighting up you are in the game.
9. Flow: We all love to procrastinate, so give yourself a firm schedule. Stick to it! If you get blocked, try mind maps or *freewriting*. Just start and sooner or later you will get to your essentials.
10. Rituals: Find the right environment for your intellectual work, whether that be a library or a coffee-house; stimulate yourself with classical music, rock, everything which makes your neurons rock, and above all: *reward* yourself!

Needless to say to journalists: experiment. Try out the entire digital tool box. Check into videos and story scrolling. Plenty of challenges, lots of fun!

FROM STOCKHOLM TO BERLIN

By Viola Egikova, EUSJA vice president

These two cities, Stockholm and Berlin, ringed the list of EUSJA study trips in 2015. In the middle were Cadarache and Tallinn, Lindau and Heidelberg, Vienna and Bad Gastein, Prague and Budapest.

Ten trips in total were offered to EUSJA's science journalists. Three from this number were organised by national associations (Czech Republic, Estonia and Hungary) and seven by the board. A good result, even if we note that in 2014 four trips from a total of eight were initiated by national associations (Austria, Estonia, Russia, and Switzerland). This is still progress since just a couple of years ago there were only rare proposals for study trips coming from national associations.

Over 130 science journalists attended EUSJA study trips in 2015.

What did they learn?

They had a good opportunity to see a new phase of the ITER construction in France and to get news from the biggest international project that promises to establish fusion as a sustainable energy source. They could discuss with the researchers new ideas of sustainable cities and watch the realisation of imaginative Life Science and Hagastaden projects in Sweden. EUSJA journalists learned about high-level research on biodiversity and climate change being done in Estonia. They visited the new laser facility in Prague and heard about new projects of Hungarian scientists. Journalists got a wonderful opportunity to interview Nobel laureates in Lindau, and great mathematicians at the Heidelberg Laureate Forum. They could attend the talks by outstanding scientists to prestigious scientific meetings such as the European Pain Forum in Vienna, the European Health Forum Gastein and the Falling Walls conference in Berlin.

There is always a good feedback after these meetings, not only articles and broadcasts, but also the blogs and comments one can see on the EUSJA web page or our page on Facebook.

"EUSJA, thanks for inviting!"

"A great meeting, indeed!" wrote Hannelore Giesser from Munich after the trip to Gastein Forum. "EUSJA, thanks for inviting!" noted Klaartje Jaspers from the Netherlands.



Hi-visibility jackets for an EUSJA inspection of the ITER construction site © ITER

Selection rules

I am sometimes asked to explain the selection process for the study tours. Well, I think we developed good rules: the selection is a competence of the individual national associations. They collect applications from their members, choose the journalists and send their list to the board, with the names ranked first choice, second choice and so on. If there are enough slots then everybody goes.

If not, then we look at the rankings and at the lists for previous visits in order to give a chance to those who never given a trip before. Occasionally, if all the places are not filled, we will give the spare places to non-EUSJA journalists who have applied.

The associations are not just responsible for the selection. Almost every trip experienced a last-minute cancellation, which meant that the accommodation and/or conference fees still had to be paid by the organisers, but in vain. In this case national association of that journalist should take some responsibility.

To read more about the 2015 EUSJA study trips see the EUSJA web page:

<http://www.eusja.org/study-trip-to-stockholm/>

<http://www.eusja.org/the-golden-cube/>

<http://www.eusja.org/come-back-to-cadarache/>

<http://www.eusja.org/biodiversity-and-climate-change-a-study-trip-to-estonia/>

<http://www.eusja.org/the-meetings-in-lindau/>

<http://www.eusja.org/ein-sommer-voll-wissenschaft/>

<http://www.eusja.org/travel-grants-for-journalists/>

<http://www.eusja.org/pain-in-europe-translating-evidence-into-practice/>

<http://www.eusja.org/securing-health-in-europe/>

<http://www.eusja.org/for-the-first-time-ever-protons-accelerated-in-the-plasma-produced-from-hydrogen-ice-by-a-laser-at-the-institute-of-plasma-physics-asr/>

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<http://www.eusja.org/figures-which-blow-your-mind/>

<http://www.eusja.org/welcome-at-the-falling-walls-where-the-choice-is-up-to-you/>



The director of ITER Bernard Bigot being interviewed © ITER

LASER BEAMLINES IN PRAGUE

By Kaianders Sempler, national delegate, Association of Swedish Medical and Science Journalists

In October 2015 a small but dedicated group of EUSJA travellers came to the Czech Republic to participate in the opening of a brand new high power laser facility in the small village of Dolní Břežany, south of Prague. The lab under construction is part of the EU-financed project ELI – Extreme Light Infrastructure. The project also includes research institutes in Szeged, Hungary and in Margurele, south of Bucharest, Romania. The purpose of ELI is to produce the world's most powerful laser pulses and gamma rays for both basic and applied research.

More interesting than the opening, which was celebrated with quite a lot of formal speeches, good local wines (yes, there is excellent Czech wine!) and delicious food, were the presentations about future laser research given to the EUSJA group by some Czech scientists. The ELI project will – it is hoped – open up a whole new field of basic research. Extremely powerful ultrashort laser pulses can, for example, heat plasmas to billions of degrees Celsius, enough to induce exotic fusion processes.

The problem with 'ordinary' nuclear fusion – as envisioned in the tokamak reactor ITER now under construction in Cadarache, France – is that 80 per cent of the released energy comes in the form of high speed neutrons. Unfortunately, neutrons are very troublesome, for two reasons. (A) They pass through most materials. (B) After having dissipated most of their energy they finally come to rest inside the nucleus of an atom somewhere, often making it unstable, i. e., radioactive. The result is that the whole interior of a fusion reactor in time becomes more and more contaminated with radioactivity, only slowly fading.

"However, there are fusion processes that do not produce neutrons," said Dr Jiri Ullsmied, former head of the laser research department of Prague University.

The most promising of these is the proton-boron reaction:

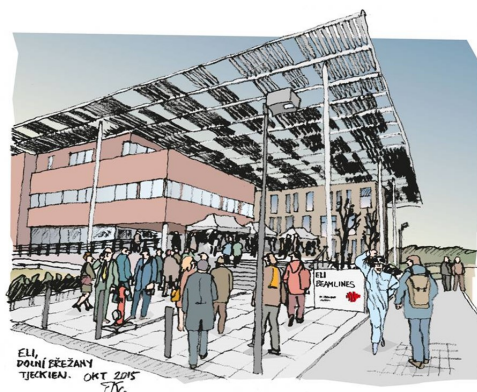


A boron atom is bombarded with a proton, which results in the splitting up of the boron into three energetic alpha particles. As the energy comes in the form of electrically charged particles, electricity can be generated directly. Braking the alpha particles in a magnetic field will induce a current. Thus, there is no need for water coolant and steam turbines in order to generate power, unlike the case of ordinary nuclear reactors.

Also, the proton-boron fusion cannot be used to create nuclear weapons. All this sounds too good to be true. Where is the catch?

"The ignition," said Dr Ullsmied. To start the proton-boron reaction a temperature of not only millions, but billions of degrees is needed. However, with the help of high power laser pulses this can be, and has already been, achieved. In 2013 successful proton-boron fusion was performed at École Polytechnique in Palaiseau, France.

Research on the laser beamlines in Dolní Břežany is planned to start in 2018. We shall see what the future brings.



Grand opening of ELI Beamlines in Dolní Břežany © Kaianders Sempler



Some of the EUSJA group in front of the ELI Beamlines building © Kaianders Sempler

Dr Jan Ullsmied, former head of the laser department at Prague University © Kaianders Sempler



Marina Huzvarova, leader of the EUSJA group, dressed for action

© Marc Ulieriu

SECURING HEALTH IN EUROPE: EUROPEAN HEALTH FORUM GASTEIN

By Mercè Piqueras, Catalan Association for Science Communication delegate

Bad Hofgastein is a village in the Austrian valley of Gastein that experiences intense tourism activity during both the ski season and the summer. At the end of September, despite being low season, the village receives hundreds of visitors from all over Europe to participate in the European Health Forum (EHF) organised annually since 1998 by the European Commission in collaboration with the Austrian Health Ministry. For any science journalist interested in health issues, the EUSJA study trip to attend the Gastein EHF was a unique opportunity to be updated on healthcare, technical and social innovations in health, new therapies and health crises, all in a European context.

The motto of the 2015 Forum was 'Securing health in Europe. Balancing priorities, sharing responsibilities', reflecting the need of the EU member states to defend and maintain the improvements achieved while responding to new challenges and opportunities. Some topics discussed were recurrent in various sessions. Examples of this included the health of migrants, most of them political refugees; the need to move from a disease-centered approach to a patient-centred one; and the need to promote patient empowerment, mostly involving them in the management and treatment of their diseases through the use of digital solutions. To the classic triumvirate of 'prevention, promotion and protection', we must now add 'participation'.



Bad Hofgastein Conference Centre © Mercè Piqueras

'Securing health in Europe. Balancing priorities, sharing responsibilities'

The plenary session devoted to the health of refugees and migrants was called 'Securing solidarity in Europe. From Mare Nostrum to Mare Europaeum'. Europe faces a major social crisis caused by the massive arrival of refugees from sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, especially Syria. For them, the Mediterranean is not their sea, but that of Europeans. Anyway, as said by Meinie Nicolai, president of the MSF operational center in Belgium, Europe does not have a refugee crisis but a reception crisis; in our more and more globalised world, mobility is in an increasing trend and we must become accustomed to receive migrants. In addition, Europeans seem to have

have forgotten that they are the result of many migrations throughout history. The values and objectives on which the EU was based, especially that of solidarity, are at stake in the current situation.

The conclusions of the EHF do not determine health policies in the EU member states but can be of help to stakeholders. Investing in health is investing in people's lives, and health should be a transversal issue taken into account in all policies, including those of the European Commission.



At the press conference (from left) Helmut Brand, President European Health Forum Gastein; Meinie Nicolai, Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF), Brussels; Karin Kadenbach, Austrian member of the European Parliament; and Martin McKee, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine © Mercè Piqueras

BOOKS FROM RUSSIA



Elena Kokurina, a member of the Russian association INTELLECT, has written not one, but two, books in the past year. Both are science-based documentary novels, and published by Boslen.

The title of the first transliterates as 'Megagrant'. The main character is a famous surgeon and specialist in the field of regenerative medicine. He was one of the winners of a 'megagrant competition' in 2011, receiving a grant from Russian Federation government for the creation a high-level research laboratory. The book, which is based on fact, relates the story of a foreign scientist who adapts to living in Russia.

The day to day life of the Russian laboratory is the background to the development of the new science of regenerative medicine.

The more recent of the two books is about research on new medical technologies that allow life to be prolonged, up to about 120 years. Its title transliterates as 'Bessmertnije', the Russian word for 'Immortals'.

*At a non-fiction book fair in Moscow— Elena Kokurina and Bessmertnije/Immortals, her latest book
© Albina Pilaeva*



The Megagrant cover

NOBEL WEEK IN STOCKHOLM – SCIENCE AND ENTERTAINMENT

By Kaianders Sempler, national delegate, Association of Swedish Medical and Science Journalists

During Nobel week in the beginning of December, science is king in Sweden. There is science in the newspapers, in the radio, in television. The climax is reached on the 10th, Alfred Nobel's birthday, the day the prestigious Nobel prizes are presented to the laureates by his majesty the king. The ceremony, which is held during the afternoon in the Stockholm concert hall, is broadcast live on national radio and television. To give additional pomp to the day all the busses and trams in Stockholm are equipped with small Swedish blue-and-yellow flags.

The climax of the celebrations is the Nobel banquet in the evening. The Nobel laureates, the royal family, the cream of Swedish scientists, politicians and business tycoons, altogether some 1300 prominent guests, gather in the town hall of Stockholm for an exquisite dinner party. The entire event is also broadcast live on television, providing one of the most watched programmes in Sweden.

During the dinner there are musical intermezzos – Swedish modern high class compositions performed by local singers and musicians. This December we listened to a choir singing a classic jazz ballad, a pop singer with a laser harp in the band, and a young girl accompanied by a saw. And of course, there were interviews with the laureates and other scientists.

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This newsletter is published by EUSJA, which has its secretariat in Strasbourg. The views expressed in it are those of the individual writers, and not necessarily those of the EUSJA board, the EUSJA secretariat, the newsletter editor or the layout/design director.

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