

To: Presidents of FENS Member Societies

Dear President,

As you may know, decisions on the distribution of EU research budget for FP7 are approaching, and the European Brain Council (EBC, of which FENS is a founding member), began a campaign to secure the recognition and support for neuroscience it deserves. As a first step in this direction, the European Brain Council has launched an in-depth study of the prevalence and economic impact of brain disorders in Europe. Based on existing national statistics, economical and epidemiological data the "Cost of Disorders of the Brain in Europe" study focuses on the cost of the twelve most prevalent brain disorders. Here we send you several copies of this study published in the European Journal of Neurology.

On April 25 and 26, 2005, Professor Jes Olesen (President of EBC) and myself met with Mr. Janez Potocnik, Commissioner for Science and Research of the EU, to discuss the importance of neuroscience for the well - being of the aging European society, as well as for industrial development. We submitted to the Commissioner a copy of the Cost paper. The next day, on April 26, the official launch of the "Cost Study" took place in Brussels, organized by MEP John Bowis.

The next step is to secure that in autumn, when the European Parliament start discussing the division of the research budget, we have a sufficient number of devoted MEPs from all member countries, who are willing to campaign for brain research. John Bowis MEP is spearheading the formation of a Special Interest Group (SIG) within the European Parliament, focusing on brain disorders. We ask you to approach several MEPs from your country who you believe may be sensitized to brain research, and who are willing to join this group of MEPs. We will send you later a brochure that contains all the information about the SIG, and how to join. MEPs are very busy people, and we cannot expect them to read this long paper about the cost of brain disorders. Therefore, an Executive summary has been prepared (please, find attached), which you should attach to the reprint, drawing attention to the most essential parts of it. Personal meetings with at least a few MEPs would be most advisable (if you can arrange it), where you could present the key figures from the study, and perhaps draw their attention to the seriousness of the problem in your own country. This may be beneficial also for your attempts to gain a large enough share for neuroscience from national grant sources.

Please, let me know the names of the MEPs you manage to get to join the SIG. Thank you very much in advance for all your efforts in this campaign, which I hope will lead to a favourable decision about priorities in FP7 regarding brain research.

With best regards,

Tamas F. Freund  
President of FENS