

The Network of European Neuroscience Institutes

- How it originated -

The state of mid-2003

- University College London - 6 groups, mostly funded by the Wellcome Trust
- Göttingen - 4 groups, jointly supported by the University of Göttingen Medical School, the Max Planck Society and Schering Pharmaceutical Company
- First 'Network'-Meeting in Göttingen

ENI-Net: A European network

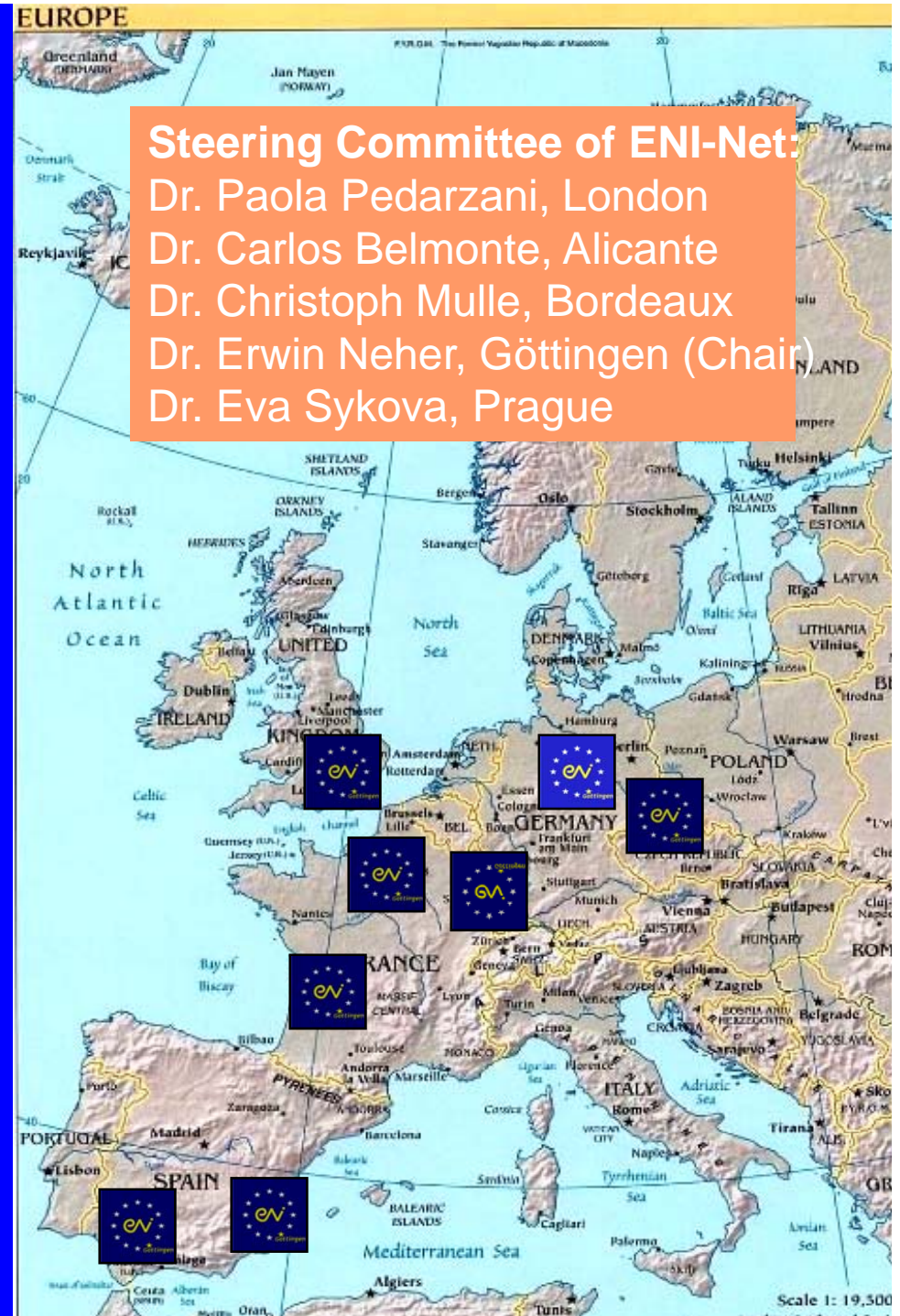
- the Alicante Meeting -

January, 2004

The participating Institutions commit themselves to provide laboratory space and infrastructure for at least 2 Young Investigator Groups

Independence of Young Investigators is monitored by a 'Steering committee'

Plans for:
Yearly meetings, workshops, and exchange
stimulating intensive collaboration



Steering Committee of ENI-Net:

Dr. Paola Pedarzani, London

Dr. Carlos Belmonte, Alicante

Dr. Christoph Mülle, Bordeaux

Dr. Erwin Neher, Göttingen (Chair)

Dr. Eva Sykova, Prague

The Aims of ENI-Network Members

- We want to attract the best young investigators from Europe and the US
- We want them to pursue their own scientific ideas
- We believe that ENIs will be attractive for the best

because we offer:

- Independence and excellent working conditions
- A European and International group spirit
- An attractive neuroscience scene at each of the locations



Comments by Group Leaders

Quality criteria for junior group conditions

- ✓ • **Autonomy**
- ✓ • **Scientific freedom**
- ✓ • **Responsibility**
- ✓ • **Mentorship**
- ✓ • **International Visibility**
- ✓ • **Competitive Environment**
- **Sufficient funding**

ENI-Net: A European network, dedicated to the promotion of Young Investigators

Application to Brussels for a Coordination
Action in the Neurosciences (Sep. to Nov. 2004)

:

Twelve Institutes in 2004, now 16

45 Young Investigators approved by the Steering Committee

1.4 Mio € granted through a CA for:

- Yearly meetings
- workshops
- Exchange of students
- Coordination of joint applications



ENI-Net:

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1st Goals:

- Promote the independent research of Young Investigators (Career Development)
- Intensify Collaboration and training
- Stimulate Joint Activities, including applications to other programmes of the EU
- Contribute to the establishment of the 'European Research Area'





.....as of
Nov, 2008

Oct. 2008: ESF- application Research Networking Program 2008 Call

- creating interdiscip. fora
- Sharing knowledge and expertise
- developing new techniques
- training young scientists

Example of a typical ENINET Institution: ENINET-ROME: The European Brain Research Institute



The European Brain Research Institute
(EBRI)



Presided by the Nobel Laureate
Prof. Rita Levi Montalcini



EBRI's Research:

- New Institute (2005) with Focus on Neuroscience Research
- Basic and translational research side by side (currently 5 laboratories)





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EBRI's Mission for Career Development:

- Provides Fully independent positions for Young Investigators (ENINET criteria):
 - YI recruited by international open call (Meritocratic selection)
- Start-up package:
 - Laboratory space
 - Start up budget for equipment, consumables, salaries
 - Full independence for publications, grant submission



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Goal:

➔ **Anti-brain drain by offering positions equivalent to Assistant professorship positions in the USA (pioneers in Italy)**

Success of EBRI's approach:



-2005 call: 3 YI selected with international open call:



Dr. Bacci

Italian

Stanford
University

ERC SIRG



Dr. Marie

French

Stanford
University



Dr. Delcroix

French

Stanford
University



Typical Profile of an ENINET YI

e.g. Dr. Marie



- Education/positions:

- Undergraduate in Edinburgh University, UK
- Ph.D. at University College London, UK
(Wellcome Trust 4 Year PhD programme in Neuroscience)
- Post-doctoral fellowship at Stanford University, USA
(4 ½ Years)
- Group leader at EBRI, Italy (3 years now)

- Research Interests:

- Identification of the Molecular Mechanisms of Memory formation (basic)
- Identification of the molecular Mechanisms leading to Alzheimer's disease (translational)

- Techniques:

- *In vivo* expression of protein in the brain using viral systems
- *In vitro* brain slice electrophysiology
- Behavioral analysis of memory

YIs of the ENINET Institutions: Who are we?



-60% YI of ENINET performed Post-doctoral fellowships in North America

-90% YI set up independent laboratory in Institute different from their Thesis Host



Anti-brain drain efforts & Mobility of Researchers

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Research Interests:

- ALL YI implicated in ***Neuroscience research***:

-Different levels: e.g. Genetics, Physiology, In vivo behavior

-Different Model Organisms: e.g. C.elegans, rodents

-Different Techniques: e.g. Electrophysiology, EM, *in vivo* calcium imaging

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**NETWORK IS VITAL TO HELP US ESTABLISH
OURSELVES AS INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATORS
IN EUROPE**

Gender Issues: The situation in the ENINET:

-25 % ENINET YI are WOMEN between 30-40 years old

→ Starting off their independent careers
but need to adjust professional life with Maternity leave/Child Care

What has been done to resolve this issue:

- Little action taken by national bodies and EU:

e.g. New ERC SIRG application age limit pushed by 1 year per child
(normaly limit of 8 years post-PhD)

- Proposed by ENINET (but not funded by EU programme):

- Help with child care during meetings & in host institutions during
first years of life when children cannot attend public school