

Division of Analytical Chemistry

European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences



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The EuCheMS Division of Analytical Chemistry (DAC) defines itself as a 'network of societies and their scientists'. This is laid down in the mission statement within the context of the DAC statutes ('Procedures and Practices' - see www.dac-euchems.org). Much of the division's endeavors is devoted to improving and extending the existing contacts, communication and cooperation. The underlying intention is to group analytical knowledge and expertise, and to make it available for EuCheMS, the European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences as the umbrella organization of the European national chemical societies. EuCheMS provides input to AllChemE, the Alliance for Chemical Sciences and Technologies in Europe, formed by EuCheMS with four Europe-based partner organizations via its various Divisions and Working Parties active in the different chemical disciplines and their applications. In turn, the Alliance provides chemistry with a single voice which is increasingly heard in Europe's political arenas.

To be an effective network requires established ways of communication between DAC and the EuCheMS Member Societies as well as their subunits in analytical chemistry and through these to their individual scientists. This linkage is achieved by engaged participation by the DAC Delegates. Each EuCheMS Member Society - European national chemical societies - has the right to appoint one Delegate to DAC. The close interaction of these Delegates with the boards and bodies of the society they represent is a basic resource of the division. Presently Delegates have been appointed by 35 Member Societies. EuCheMS comprises of 50 societies, however some of the missing ones focus on other aspects and do not cover analytical topics explicitly. Societies of smaller countries usually find it difficult to be represented in all specialized bodies of EuCheMS. In such a case DAC tries to keep contact in less formalized ways, all the more since this decreases the activation energy to obtain full cooperation. With satisfaction it can be reported that most societies are interested to appoint an active successor when their Delegate retires.

The Delegates meet once a year at the Annual Meeting. To keep the expenditure in money and time for participation on a reasonable level, the Annual Meeting is organized in conjunction with EUROANALYSIS, DAC's biennial broad-spectrum conference, or with another conference attracting analytical chemists. For chemical societies in non-European countries it is even more difficult to be represented by "Observers" regularly in the DAC Annual Meetings, which might give the impression of lack of interest. However a recent inquiry by DAC proved the considerable interest of such societies to

be informed on DAC's activities. Thus DAC will keep on sending regular information and look forward to learn about their activities and problems. In a few cases DAC has definitely lost contact. Re-activation of such contacts or establishing new relations is regarded as highly important.

With the intention of support when a specific expert is needed and to give an overview on the variety of analytical groups, DAC initiated a directory "Who's who in Analytical Chemistry: Europe", (M. Valcárcel, A. Rios Castro (Eds.), Springer, Berlin 2002). By now, this book requires a thorough revision. However in view of the movement of colleagues from one institution to another or of developing new fields, it was felt that a system which could be updated easily - automatically if ever possible - should be preferred over a printed version. The ideal solution might be a directory of institutions whose detailed entries (scientists, research groups, contacts etc.) are 'self-updating' - at least without any effort on part of DAC. What we intend to be made available via the DAC homepage are the website addresses of analytical institutions. In the first version they will be presented according countries and cities. The reasoning to choose the websites is that institutions have a longer life time than the sojourn of a given colleague in any one of these. The institutions are interested to keep their website addresses while updating the information on staff and their projects whenever appropriate. This also is in accord with the interests of a newly joining specialist who wants to present his activities and coordinates. Therefore, it is expected that the address list will lead you to continuously updated information on research and staff in analytical institutions - provided that for all countries the DAC and its Delegates make the relevant website addresses available.

However for DAC's network not only the internal circle is of importance. As a scientific discipline correlated with virtually all branches of chemistry and molecular sciences, DAC plays a particular role within the EuCheMS divisional structure and has a natural interest in establishing links and maintaining information channels to the other EuCheMS Divisions and Working Parties. One of the DAC aims is to get to know about activities early enough to organize cooperation or contributions from either side whenever it seems appropriate and advantageous. To this end DAC not only distributes regularly its Letters of Information and other documents, but also appointed a liaison person for each Division or Working Party in an attempt to intensify and personalize the network. In several topics such as education and history for which substructures (Study Groups) exist within DAC, the overlap and mutual interest are currently most evident and support common activities. Cooperation in some other fields is close to this level, some still have to be developed.

An important factor of continuity for the 'broad communicative basis' of the network - as prescribed by the statutes - are the DAC internal and external publications. Internally, i.e., among the Delegates, the Observers and their societies, three Letters of Information per year, complemented by the Minutes of the Annual Meeting, are the essential means of communication. Usually there is enough news (and reminders) to fill these letters easily. Externally - in the sense of being accessible by everybody - the DAC website at www.dac-euchems.org is offering information on DAC including the statutes 'Procedures and Practices' and the organizational structure along with the

directory of Delegates and Observers, information on conferences organized in cooperation with DAC as well as reports and publications. A short version of some topics and links are also provided in the DAC section of the EuCheMS website (www.euchems.org). Also meant for a wider (scientific) public is this European Analytical Column which is issued every year and appears in a number of renowned scientific journals and in several newsletters of national chemical societies.

DAC is formally linked to EuCheMS through the Executive Committee where the DAC Chairman represents the Division. Twice a year the progress in the activities, problems and projects of the Divisions as well as plans and policies of EuCheMS are discussed.

In October 2005 the annual General Assembly of the Member Societies was held for the first time under the new name EuCheMS and the new Constitution that was accepted a year before. The process of obtaining the legal status of an international non-profit organization under Belgian law has reached its final stage. The office with telephone and letter box (and with somebody to attend to these) will be opened soon. For this purpose money is needed and eventually the member societies agreed on a budget covering the inevitable costs, and they accepted the general commitment to contribute to the costs according to the number of their full members.

The new Constitution has opened EuCheMS for members other than European national chemical societies. As the first ones of such Associated Members, the General Assembly welcomed its AllChemE partners from chemical industry and research councils, CEFIC and CERC3, respectively, as well as ECTN, the European Chemistry Thematic Network. At the end of the meeting Prof. Giovanni Natile of the Società Chimica Italiana, took over the EuCheMS Presidency from Prof. Gábor Náray-Szabó.

Under the auspices of EuCheMS the First European Chemistry Congress will take place in Budapest from 27 to 31 August 2006. This aims to be a showcase for chemical sciences in Europe and will bring together chemical and molecular scientists from industry, academia and government across Europe and from around the world. The program with invited speakers has been completed and comprises of plenary lectures by six Nobel Laureates and special topic symposia with top level key notes and reports. Analytical aspects will be in the foreground in the symposium on 3D chemical imaging and that on Chemical Education. Details about the program, organization, submission of contributions and registration are available at www.euchems-budapest2006.hu.

Following the sequence of previous EUROANALYSIS events one should have expected the 14th conference this year. However to avoid interference with the Budapest Chemistry Congress, it has been shifted by one year. EUROANALYSIS XIV will take place in Antwerp from 9 to 14 September 2007 (www.euroanalysisxiv.ua.ac.be). By the time shift also a clash is avoided with the International Congress on Analytical Sciences, ICAS-2006 (www.icas2006.ru), from 25 to 30 June 2006 in Moscow, Russia. Its program covers all aspects of analytical chemistry while focusing on new developments and applications. It will attract colleagues from all over the world. When it became obvious that this attractiveness was also felt by the DAC Delegates, the Annual Meeting has been summoned in conjunction with ICAS.

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