EMBO Conference on Cellular Signalling & Molecular Medicine
Cavtat, Croatia
21 - 26 May 2010
Organisers: Ellen Van Obberghen-Schilling (France), Erwin Wagner (Spain), Arthur Weiss (USA)

The 2010 EMBO Conference on Cellular Signalling & Molecular Medicine (CSMM 2010) was the second of three biennial meetings devoted to the topic of cell signalling processes and translation of novel discoveries into the treatment of human disease. This conference series followed a highly successful series of meetings held in Dubrovnik since 1998.

CSMM 2010 featured the most exciting areas of cellular signalling in immunity & inflammation, disease microenvironment and tumour progression, stem cells, vascular biology and protein interactions. An important aim of this conference was to catalyse cross-fertilisation among disciplines. Therefore, scientists from a wide spectrum of biomedical fields were brought together. The overarching theme of cell signalling sparked novel interactions and lively discussions among participants throughout the duration of the meeting.

In the tradition of EMBO Conferences, another key objective of CSMM 2010 was to promote the education of young scientists. Judging from extremely positive feedback from the junior scientists and graduate students during the meeting, and comments made on the post-meeting evaluation questionnaire, this conference met the expectations of the organisers. As one post-doctoral fellow stated, “this meeting was perfect, I had the chance to make a lot of contacts!!!! Thanks”

The Conference brought together an eclectic group of speakers. A total of 39 oral presentations were delivered, including 25 lectures by invited speakers and 14 talks selected from submitted abstracts of outstanding quality. Seven Scientific Sessions were held over four days. The first session dedicated to “Controlling Protein Conformations and Interactions” opened with the EACR sponsored lecture by Ivan Dikic from the Goethe University School of Medicine in Frankfurt. Prof. Dikic, recipient of the 2006 EACR Young Cancer Researcher Award, discussed “Ubiquitin-mediated regulation of NF-κB activation and autophagy”. Topics of the following sessions were: Inflammation and Disease, Signalling in Vascular Biology and Disease, Stem Cells, Cell Adhesion and Movement, Control of Adaptive Immunity, Disease Microenvironment and Tumour Progression. A generous amount of unpublished results were presented in the talks.

The Poster Sessions and “best poster competition” constituted a generally appreciated event of the conference. Three Poster Sessions were held to accommodate 89 poster presentations. Selecting the best poster by a scientific committee composed of Drs. Silvia Giordano, Tony Hunter, Michael Reth and Fiona Watt proved to be a quite difficult task due to the large number of high quality exhibits. Therefore, the committee added two runner-up awards. The winning poster, presented by Marie-Laure Arcangeli (PhD student from Marseille, France), addressed the “Role of Junctional Protein Molecules-C and-B in the Maintenance of the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Niches”. In addition to a complimentary registration for The EMBO Meeting 2010, Marie-Laure was offered a one-year subscription to EMBO
Molecular Medicine. The runner-up awardees each received a subscription to the Journal of Cell Science on the evening of the gala dinner.

Editorial representatives from scientific journals (e.g. EMBO Molecular Medicine, Cell, Science Signalling) shared their experience with participants in a programmed “Meet the Editor” session and through informal discussions during the course of the meeting. The EACR was represented by Steven Smith, who was available to meet participants during the session breaks, poster sessions and free time in Dubrovnik. The EACR exhibit provided the opportunity for delegates to discover the Association and offered EACR members an update of EACR services & activities.

In addition to the scientific events, the meeting included a boat trip to Dubrovnik on a replica of an historic karaka trading vessel for the Republic of Dubrovnik (1272 - 1808). The trip was followed by a guided visit of the lovely and historic old town.

The location was great. Hotel Croatia was chosen as the CSMM 2010 venue and, in addition to the excellent meeting facilities, this beautiful site located on the picturesque bay of Cavat is highly suitable for fostering personal interactions. The Hotel Croatia staff and the local transportation/excursion organisers were particularly helpful and attentive to the needs of the conference participants.

Looking ahead, the organisers of the 3rd Conference in this series, Dr Johannes (Hans) Bos (Utrecht University), Sir Philip Cohen (University of Dundee) and Dr Ruth Palmer (Umeå University) are preparing an exciting programme for the 2012 meeting. We look forward to another exciting scientific rendezvous in 2012.

On behalf of the co-organisers of CSMM 2010, and myself, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the EACR for its generous contribution, for helpful support during the meeting preparation and for joining us at the conference. Ellen Van Obberghen-Schilling

Report on the meeting of Polish EACR Members in Gliwice

November 27th 2010, during the Gliwice Scientific Meeting

During the “Gliwice Scientific Meeting 2010”, a meeting of Polish members of the European Association for Cancer Research took place in which seventeen EACR members and a group of conference participants interested in this organisation participated.

This meeting was conducted by the EACR Executive Director Robert Kenney who presented the organisation, its structure and finances, and the opportunities that it offers to members.

Prof. Mieczyslaw Raymund Chorazy, who was the first member of the EACR in Poland, presented the history of the organisation in Poland and his personal activities in EACR at the Polish and European level.

After the official part of the meeting, the EACR members discussed the means by which EACR activity in Poland could be increased. One of the suggestions accepted concerned the organisation of an EACR-dedicated session each year during the Gliwice Scientific Meeting. This session would be organised by EACR members from different scientific centers in Poland (or from other countries) and would create an opportunity for encounters between members and allow for intensification of mutual contacts.

Professor Maciej Ugorski from the Institute of Immunology and Experimental Therapy of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Wroclaw kindly agreed to organise an EACR-dedicated session entitled “Mechanisms of Metastasis” during the next Gliwice Scientific Meeting which will be held from 19-20 November 2011. We hope that this session will initiate a new tradition which will enable the development of contacts between EACR members and also make the meeting more attractive.

Joanna Rzeszowka, Chair of the Gliwice Scientific Meeting and Member of the EACR Council, National Network Representative for Poland

Ellen Van Obberghen-Schilling
FEBS / ESF Workshop on “Spatiotemporal Dynamics of Cell Signalling”

Oslo, Norway
30 September - 3 October 2010

Organiser: Kjetil Taskén, The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo, University of Oslo, Chair

The FEBS and ESF co-sponsored workshop on ‘Spatiotemporal Dynamics of Cell Signalling’ was held in Oslo, Norway end September-early October with 105 participants. The objectives of organising this Workshop were 1) To arrange a small but excellent and topical international meeting in the field of compartmentalised signal transduction and a particular focus on the current and timely topic of dynamics and signalling systems which uses systems biology to integrate numerous data sets and parallel signalling events into an overall integrated network of signals 2) Contribute to scientific interaction and update of European researchers in this area 3) Educate Ph.D. students and Post Docs that will have the opportunity to meet internationally well recognised researchers in the area and also to present their own data 4) Promote and increase networking and concerted action in this research field in Europe and internationally.

The venue for the meeting was the Norwegian Medical Association Conference Centre, Soria Moria, in Oslo, Norway, which resides in the hills surrounding the city of Oslo. The center provided excellent conference facilities with a suitable lecture hall. It also provided space for the poster session as well as accommodation for all the participants and provided all meals.

The objective of the workshop was to address spatiotemporal organisation of signalling and the use of systems biology to integrate numerous data sets and parallel signalling events into an overall integrated understanding of networks of signals. The workshop featured 24 talks and 11 selected short talks with speakers from across Europe and from the US. Furthermore, over 50 posters were presented in lively sessions with much discussion and facilitating interactions between participants at all levels.

Highlights of the programme were Opening Lectures by Sir Philip Cohen, John Scott and Susan Taylor on interaction networks and dynamics of signalling, respectively, as well as Keynote Lectures by Tony Pawson, Tony Hunter and Martin Lohse on docking and anchoring, kinases and G-protein coupled receptors. The programme continued with sessions on immune cell signalling, mitogenic signalling, trafficking of signal proteins and signal termination. Signal regulation of polarisation and migration in normal and cancer cells was discussed, as well as cardiovascular and metabolic signal processes and their dynamics.

Feedback from the participants was very positive and the organising committee plan to organise another meeting on signalling events in two years time. We responded to comments and feedback from earlier meetings we have organised and have decreased the number of speakers, made room for short talks and extended the time for poster viewing and we now seem to have reached a fine balance. We also note that most participants scored the meeting as ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’.

The EACR Travel Bursary was awarded to Ms Sarah Consonni, Department of Physiological Chemistry, University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands with an abstract titled ‘Regulation of the cAMP-activated Epac1 protein’.

Poster session
A total of 53 posters were presented during the poster session. The posters were of high scientific quality which facilitated exciting discussions between the presenters and the participants.

Best poster

First runner up posters
Cornez I., Mosenden R., Singh P., Rahmouni S., Moutschen M. and Tasken K.: "Disruption of type 1 protein kinase A anchoring in mouse T cells induces enhanced immune responsiveness.”

Richard Marais presenting EACR Travel Bursary Award to Sarah Consonni
The “Second Norwegian Cancer Symposium” was held in Oslo, Norway, the 2nd to the 4th of December 2009, organised by the Norsk Hydros Fund, at the Institute for Cancer Research. The meeting, which was titled “Frontiers in Cancer Stem Cell Research: From Basic Science Towards a Cure”, was held in a 100 year old building in a winter-dressed hill above Oslo, where about 270 researchers met to hear 30 international speakers and discuss the latest developments in the field. The symposium also gave good opportunities for interaction during the breaks and the evening social events.

The three keynote lectures were given by Hans Clevers (Amsterdam), sponsored by the EACR, Pier Giuseppe Pelicci (Milano), sponsored by Oslo Cancer Cluster, and William Matsui (Baltimore), sponsored by the Norwegian Cancer Society. The topics covered were Stemcellness in tumours, Lessons from embryonic cells, Stem cell niches in tumours, Subpopulations of tumour-initiating cells, The surface landscape of tumour stem cells, Signalling in stem cells and tumours, Pathways that regulate slowly cycling cells, Epigenomic determination of stem cells, Identifying stem cell functions for therapeutic targeting, and Application of stem cell-related knowledge in today’s treatment.

Other speakers were Ariel Ruiz I Altaba, Peter Andrews, Eduard Batlle, Thomas Brabletz, Christiane Bruns, Hugues de Thé, Peter Dirks, Amanda Fisher, Monica Gotta, Christopher Heeschen, Jürgen Knoblich, Mark LaBarge, Urban Lendahl, Maarten van Lohuizen, Sendurai Mani, Ron McKay, Ole W Petersen, Mahendra Rao, Tracy-Ann Read, Isidro Sánchez- Garcia, Christine Scheel, Eric Chi Wai So, John Stingl, Rune Toftgard, and Andreas Trumpp.

Stem cell biology fascinates the public, and its tremendous impact on the cancer field is an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of basic science for human health. In this perspective we were very pleased that the meeting was by opened by Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen, the Norwegian Minister of Health. The Ministry has been active in supporting stem cell research for many years, by funding a national stem cell network, to propose the current act on medical application of biotechnology that allows research on embryonic stem cells, and also by establishing a National Stem Cell Centre at Oslo University Hospital (see www.stemcellnorway.org), which was officially opened in November 2009. The topic also has the attention of local politicians, including the Mayor, Fabian Stang, and all participants were invited to a reception at the City Hall of Oslo. The reception was a very nice opportunity to see and enjoy the different rooms, halls and art inside the City Hall of Oslo.

Hans Clevers from Utrecht, the EACR Keynote speaker, gave a fascinating presentation on the involvement of Lgr5 Intestinal Stem Cells colon maintenance and cancer at the evening session in the new Research building at Montebello. The presentation can be viewed on the web, linked from the symposium web page.

Many fascinating stories were told, about the importance of the tumour suppressor p53 for stem cell function, asymmetric division, the extensive communication between stem-like cells and their environment, including the stem cell niches, properties of stem-like cancer cells, association with malignant potential and stem cell properties and the epithelial-mesenchymal transition, and not least the promising early studies of therapies targeting cancer stem cells, e.g. the mobilisation of leukemic cells using interferons, thus making them susceptible to standard therapy.

Ola Myklebost, Institute for Cancer Research, Oslo, Norway
22nd Lorne Cancer Conference

Lorne, Victoria, Australia

11 - 13 February 2010

The Lorne Conference is Australia’s largest and longest continually run conference dedicated to basic and pre-clinical cancer research. It has an outstanding reputation as one of the world’s premier cancer conferences delivering the highest quality international speakers in a relaxed setting that encourages interaction between researchers and prominent scientists in the field. The conference is set amongst the picturesque gardens of Erskin House with easy access to the beach in the seaside town of Lorne some 3 hrs drive south of Melbourne.

The 2010 meeting, convened by Steven Stacker, (Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Melbourne) and Murray Norris (Children’s Cancer Research Australia for Medical Research, Sydney), proved to be an exceptionally successful conference attended by some 540 delegates.

One of the most innovative features of the Lorne Cancer Conference is that student registration is free if they present a poster and their supervisor attends. This is in line with one of the conference’s mission statements, to enable at an affordable price access of students to world class research and to enable their development as scientists.

A number of themes were covered during the three days including siRNA and cancer, cancer gene regulation, a focused session on glioma, cancer stem cells, cancer signalling, models of cancer, cancer therapeutics, cancer cell biology and the final plenary session on cancer perspectives.

An extremely high calibre cast of invited national and international speakers representing much of the depth and breadth of the contemporary cancer research presented their work. In addition to this many excellent oral and poster contributions provided a feast of science for the delegates.

As with all conferences it was only possible due to the generous support of academic and commercial sponsors. In this regard, in an exciting new development, in 2010, Lorne Cancer Conference entered into a sponsorship arrangement with EACR with the mutual long-term goal of fostering links between European and Australasian cancer researchers.

In its first year it was a resounding success with sponsorship of the plenary speaker and EACR member Peter ten Dijke, Leiden University Medical Centre, Netherlands.

In addition, as a new initiative for Lorne Cancer Conference, the EACR also sponsored a travel bursary for an European based student wishing to attend the conference valued at AUD1,000.

This travel bursary was extremely well received with a high standard of applicants. The 2010 winner was Michael Samuel, Beatson Institute for Cancer Research, UK.

In conclusion, the meeting was a resounding success and the 2011 Lorne Cancer conference promises to be equally as inspiring and thought provoking.

Ross Hannan

www.lornecancer.org

The 12th Central European Lung Cancer Conference

Budapest, Hungary

2 - 4 December 2010

The 12th Central European Lung Cancer Conference was held on 2nd - 4th December 2010, in Budapest. More than 360 registered participants from various parts of the world took part in the conference. While most participants came from Europe and Central Europe in particular, there were some from as far as Australia and Thailand. The EARC, ETOP, ESMO, IASLC and the Hungarian Respiratory Society organised and partly sponsored the assembly.

The main topic of the first morning was the primary and secondary prevention of lung cancer, promoted by the Norwegian fund. Social, psychosocial and molecular genetic aspects and smoking cessation were discussed in detail.

The first plenary section of the CELCC focused on lung cancer in ‘never smokers’, as being the seventh most common cause of death amongst solid tumours. The molecular genetics and the process of carcinogenesis of smoking and non-smoking lung cancer patients differ significantly. They concluded that it is essential to define the molecular genetic profile before the treatment, independently of the smoking status.
Individualised medicine provides broad possibilities in lung cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Since we are living in the age of a paradigm shift in lung cancer diagnosis, a special section was devoted to this topic during the conference. As the cytological diagnosis is often not sufficient, approaches such as “tissue is the issue” point of view and outcomes based on histological sampling are becoming more important. The difficulties and the relationship between pathological diagnosis and biomarker analysis were construed with targeted therapies. Currently, among the biomarkers, only the EGFR mutation demonstration has evidence-based predictive value in choosing the epidermal growth factor tyrosine kinase inhibiting (EGFR TKI) therapy. In lung adenocarcinoma, there are geographical differences in the activating EGFR mutation. It appears more frequently in the Asian group, than in the Caucasian. This conference facilitated a number of presentations about the EGFR mutation rate in Europe and in Hungary. The lecturers had different opinions on the predictive value of the KRAS mutation.

In the “Chemo- and targeted therapies” section the presenters delineated the new therapy methods and made some predictions about the possibilities of the future as well. They conveyed that pemetrexed and bevacizumab play a crucial role in the treatment strategy of patients with non-planocellular lung cancer. Intermittent combining of EGFR TKI with cytotoxic chemotherapy is a new and interesting research. Progression of the disease during EGFR TKI therapy shows the resistance evolved against the EGFR TKI compounds. While the primer resistance is low before the treatment, the acquired resistance can reach 50%. There are researches about the new generation irreversible tyrosine kinase inhibitors, which can refract the resistance acquired during the EGFR TKI therapy.

In the section of “Translational research”, presentations were held on the basic research results, the role of miRNA in lung cancer, the biomarker role of adjuvant chemotherapies, the use of fibroblast growth factor receptors as possible target of the therapies, and the biomarkers of the angiogenesis.

In a summary presentation, we were informed about radio chemotherapy and the possible adjuvant therapies. Furthermore, researches on the detection of circulating tumour cells were analysed. From the surgical point of view, the rational limits of surgery of non-small cell lung cancer and VATS lobectomy were discussed.

The presentations given during the last morning of the conference were dealing with the topic of neuroendocrine lung cancers. While the ratio of small cell lung cancer compared with non-small cell lung cancers has fallen, it is still very important in the diagnosis and in the possible therapies. Unfortunately there is no great improvement in these fields in recent years. An overview presentation was also held about lung carcinoids. In the final section of the conference, issues about the application of generic agents and biosimilars were discussed. The diagnosis and the expense/efficacy analysis of treatments emerged as an interesting topic of the last presentation, highlighting the situation in the Central European region.

Jean Klastersky gave an honorary lecture at CELCC, titled as “Milestones in the chemotherapy treatment on non-small cell lung cancer”. Heine Hansen was supposed to be the other presenter of this section, but unfortunately he was not able to attend due to the severe weather conditions at the time of the conference.

Overall, more than 40 oral presentations were delivered and more than 60 posters were exhibited during the conference.

Based on the votes of the participants, the prize for the best poster was awarded to Ákos Horváth and his collaborators for the work of “Computer aided detection in chest screening – a new attempt to detect lung cancer”. The poster reviewer committee, however, awarded the first prize to the team of Ilya Gagarin for the poster of “EGFR and KRAS mutations in NSCLC patients treated with EGFR inhibitors”.

During this CELCC, several internationally recognised experts offered excellent presentations, such as Robert Pirker, Rolf Stahel, Frederico Cappuzzo, Helmut Popper, James Mulshine, Wilfried Eberhardt, Johan Vansteenkiste, Glen Weiss and Walter Klepetko. The sections were followed by intensive discussion. Due to bad weather conditions, three lecturers were not able to take part in the conference. Nevertheless, using their slides of their presentations, their main points were presented by excellent substituting speakers.

Hotel Kempinski provided a suitable and elegant venue for the conference. The conference successfully combined the scientific programme with some cultural experiences, both of a high standard. The opening ceremony was made memorable by a short performance of the world famous pianist Tamás Vásáry, followed by the Semmelweis String Quartet consisting of local doctors who have regularly performed together for decades. The second evening of the conference was marked by a memorial concert for those who died of lung cancer. At Matthias Church, the local choir and orchestra, including the Semmelweis String Quartet, played Mozart’s Requiem exclusively for the CELCC participants.

Members of the CELCC board have decided that the next CELCC will be organized in Prague in two years time.

Gyula Ostoros
President of the Conference

Balázs Döme
Secretary General
AICR, the Association for International Cancer Research, which is the leading international cancer charity dedicated to funding cancer research around the world, celebrated its 30th anniversary by hosting a very successful conference in St Andrews, Fife in April 2010.

The conference “Today’s Research – Tomorrow’s Therapies” was organised to illustrate how development in basic research can feed through to translational studies and the important role of model systems in both areas of cancer research.

With almost 200 delegates attending from 28 countries including China, Denmark, Hong Kong, Israel, Malaysia, Pakistan, Taiwan, USA and Australia, and also from Europe, the sessions filled up very quickly.

The meeting got underway with an angiogenesis symposium to reflect the support that AICR has given to this field over the last twenty years. Lena Claesson-Welsh from Uppsala University, Sweden presented data on the molecular mechanisms in VEGF-regulated vascular permeability and how this contributes to progression of diseases, notably cancer. Tatiana Petrova from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland followed on by explaining how her data provides novel insights into the molecular program of lymphatic vascular specification and suggests that FOXC2 and NFATc1 are potential targets for therapeutic intervention. Dave Bates from Bristol University, England presented new data about anti-angiogenic VEGF splicing and their role in cancer which was followed by a talk on the role of WNT signalling in angiogenesis and in the development of the blood brain barrier, delivered by Elisabetta Dejana, IFOM, Italy.

The first main session focussed on Basic Science and was opened by Stephen West, CRUK London Research Institute, England who talked about defects in DNA strand breaks and links to human disease. Nick Barker of the Hubrecht Institute in Utrecht, Netherlands followed on by presenting data on WNT, LGR5 stem cells and colon cancer. Christer Betsholtz from the Karolinska Institute, Sweden presented data on cellular signalling in angiogenesis and regulation of vascular permeability. Guido Kromer from Institut Gustave Rousy, France concluded the session by postulating that the desirable death of the cancer cell for optimal chemotherapy is an immunogenic one.

The second session discussing Model Systems was opened by Dr. Owen Sansom from the Beatson Institute, Scotland. Owen described the approaches taken to understand the role of the Apc tumour suppressor gene and oncogenic Ras in colorectal cancer. Manuela Baccarini, based at the Max F. Perutz Laboratories, Austria, presented results identifying the biological functions of C-Raf and B-Raf in development and tumour-induced angiogenesis. Facundo Pelorosso from Allan Balmain’s laboratory, UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Centre, USA explained the genetic networks and control of skin cancer susceptibility, while Terry Rabbitts from Leeds University, England described the development of preclinical models to evaluate the role and utility of cancer mutations, particularly chromosomal translocation gene products.

All who attended the conference were privileged to have the opportunity to find out “The Truth About Cancer”, the Anniversary Lecture given by Sir Tim Hunt from CRUK London Research Institute, England.
Sir Tim, who started his lecture with a very personal story of how he came into cancer research after watching his own mother die of colon cancer and his desire to find out why the disease seemed to thrive inside her while her body wasted away. Endorsing AICR’s concentration on funding basic cancer research, Sir Tim commented that there are still very basic things we don’t understand about cancer and that people’s perception of research is often mistaken. “Research is carried out by people trying to understand the world and poking and probing and discovering things they were not looking for”. Suitably, the Anniversary Lecture was followed by the conference dinner which gave the opportunity to hear from Dave Cook, a testicular cancer survivor and AICR fundraiser (the One-Ball Rally) giving a very emotive and motivational speech on his experiences of cancer and the reasons he raises money for AICR.

Dr Andrew Tee (the 2006 AICR Fellow) from Cardiff University, Wales gave a scientific look at how his AICR fellowship has helped him in his research by establishing a laboratory and also gave some statistics to back up why money is vital in research. The evening concluded with a ceilidh, provided by the Gary Sutherland Ceilidh Band.

The final session of the conference discussed Translational Research, led by Richard Marais from the Institute of Cancer Research, England who explained why kinase dead BRAF mutants and oncogenic Ras are coincident in human cancer and revealed why patients with RAS mutant tumours should not be treated with BRAF inhibitors. Bob Brown from Imperial College London, England, discussed how we improve the targeting of epigenetic therapies while Peter Fischer from Nottingham University, England presented data on the structure-based design of kinase and protein interaction inhibitors. The session and conference closed with a talk by Fran Balkwill from Queen Mary University of London, England discussed the results from a clinical trial of therapeutic antibodies to TNF-α and IL-6 and also some early data on potential biomarkers of response.

There were also dedicated poster sessions where over 130 posters were presented. To help cover the cost of expenses for those who presented a poster at the conference AICR awarded 21 travel grants, worth £300 each, to PhD students. The quality of all the posters presented at the conference was excellent.

The conference also saw a typical Scottish theme throughout, with a Welcome Reception with the Beating of the Retreat by Madras College Pipe Band, The Scotch Malt Whisky Society hosted a 3 dram tasting session and held two Twisted Tales of St Andrews Ghost Tours. Thanks must be finally given to the sponsors of the meeting without whom we could not have had such a high quality programme. Thanks in particular to Kathryn Wass and the staff at EACR who offered their knowledge and experience in organising such scientific meetings, and also the financial support from them and many of the other companies who backed our first scientific meeting.

AICR is also delighted to be a co-sponsor of the EACR Travel Fellowship scheme, which gives opportunities for researchers to work in exciting new contexts across Europe. The fellowships support the development of research in a centre of excellence and participation in workshops and courses.
The Croatian Association for Cancer Research (Hrvatsko društvo za istraživanje raka, HDIR) established in 2009, organised its first meeting HDIR-1 in November 2010 in Zagreb. The aim of this Meeting “From Bench to Clinic” was to promote our society and better communication between basic and clinical cancer research.

The one day meeting hosted nine eminent speakers; two of them were former presidents of EACR and one member of the Executive committee. The meeting was sponsored by the host institution Ruđer Bošković Institute, EACR who sponsored two speakers and a poster award, Croatian Ministry for Science, Education and Sports Republic of Croatia, and several companies (Applied Biosystems, Gorea, Alpha Crom, Kraš and Narodne novine).

We had two sets of lectures and poster session with 53 posters. Despite limited space we received an excellent response, with 176 registered participants.

The participants were from research institutes (39 %), from universities (35 %) and from medical institutions (26 %). 50 % were students.

The number of participants was double the number we had expected. This gives us great encouragement to continue with the main mission of Croatian Association for Cancer Research.

President
dr.sc. Sonja Levanat

Sonja Levanat, Anne-Lise Børresen-Dale, and poster prize winner Nikolina Stojanović
The 52\textsuperscript{nd} Annual Meeting of the Italian Cancer Society (SIC) was held in Rome at the Angelicum Congress Centre, October 4\textsuperscript{th}-7\textsuperscript{th}. The event was coordinated by Donatella Del Bufalo and Michele Milella (Regina Elena National Cancer Institute [IRE], Rome), supported by SIC President Alfredo Fusco, SIC board members and the local committee. The Meeting had approximately 540 participants.

Successful translation at the patient’s bedside of the exciting results achieved in the understanding of the biology underlying cancer development and progression is probably the biggest challenge ahead in cancer research and we are now learning where outstanding science can get ‘Lost in Translation’, slowing down the process of expanding our clinically effective therapeutic armamentarium. Thus, the Meeting had the ambitious goal of ‘bridging the gap between cancer research and effective therapies’. Margaret Foti, CEO of the American Association for Cancer Research, actively participated to the conference, and underlined the relevance of the international collaborations in cancer research that is critical to the mission to prevent and cure cancer.

Since modern cancer research transcends the traditional boundaries between disciplines and research environments, the outstanding scientific programme featured highly interactive and interdisciplinary sessions, ideally comprising the Opening Lecture on \textit{p53} by Karen Vousden, sponsored by ‘Federico Calabresi Foundation’, and the Closing Lecture on \textit{Cancer Stem Cells} by Pier Giuseppe Pelicci, via the traditional Giorgio Prodi Lecture on \textit{Men, Mice and Molecules}, given by the former SIC President Marco Pierotti.

Ruggero De Maria showed the plasticity of cancer stem cells, giving rise not only to the tumour cell population, but also to the tumour-associated vasculature, while Pier Paolo Di Fiore and Robert Clarke, sponsored by EACR, discussed the relevance of the endocytic protein Numb and the Notch receptor signalling in the replicative fate of mammary stem cells, and in the response to cancer treatments, respectively.

Several talks reported the role of different microRNAs in regulating cancer processes: Reuven Agami showed the interaction between microRNA and regulatory RNA binding proteins in carcinogenesis, Carlo Maria Croce argued about the double function of miRNA as both oncogenes and oncosuppressor genes. Results demonstrating the role of a microRNA targeting dicer, a key component of the microRNA processing machinery, for metastasis control have been reported by Stefano Piccolo.

Through the acute myeloid leukaemia model Hendrik Stunnenberg explained how to investigate protein functionality by a system biology approach. Elisabetta Dejana presented findings establishing a link between Wnt and Notch signalling in vascular development, suggesting that early and sustained beta-catenin signalling alters vascular remodelling and arterio-venous specification. Giulia Piaggio developed a new tool based on a NF-Y-responsive luciferase reporter to monitor proliferation in living animals. Using a genetically engineered mouse model that recapitulates the development of human ductal pancreatic cancer, Natalie Cook described preclinical
studies highlighting the importance of chemotherapy delivery and the possible role of Hedgehog signalling in this context.

Gerry Melino presented data suggesting that the validation of TAp73 and TAp63 as tumour suppressors may offer novel and intriguing therapeutic approaches to enhance the chemosensitivity of tumour cells harbouring a mutant p53. Nadia Zaffaroni reviewed current approaches directed against telomerase and described telomerase inhibition and telomere dysfunction induced by G-quadruplex stabilization as a novel therapeutic approach.

To further highlight the importance of looking at cancer biology and therapy from different angles and perspectives, with the overall objective to successfully translate cancer research into effective therapies, we had presentations on the development of novel anticancer agents and a joint session with the Italian Association of Medical Oncology. The role of mutations affecting crucial signalling pathways and the responsiveness to EGFR-targeting agents was discussed by Yuri Rukazenkov, Tom Lillie, Fortunato Ciardiello and Federica Di Nicolantonio, highlighting controversial findings deriving from clinical trials as well as from basic and translational studies.

Malte Peters and Jorge D. Gallo described the early clinical development of small molecules inhibitors of the PI3K and p21 activated kinase pathways, while Francesca Russo discussed the obstacles encountered during pemetrexed development and how clinical research made a new, effective treatment option available for NSCLC and MPM patients.

Massimo Aglietta presented data about new therapeutic targets in sarcomas. The increasingly crucial role of host response and microenvironment in tumour development and progression and in the sensitivity to conventional and targeted anticancer treatment was also discussed.

Guido Kroemer proposed a “key-lock model” in which the key is represented by changes in the composition of the cell surface and in the release of soluble immunogenic signals and postulated that the immune system is crucial for the long-term success of anti-cancer therapies.

Mario Paolo Colombo suggested that the identification of liaisons connecting mast cells and matricellular proteins in cancer is the key toward their effective targeting.

Angelo Vacca and Michael Andreeff reported the potential of angiogenesis and hypoxia targeting in haematological malignancies.

Federico Bussolino and Alberto Gulino highlighted the parallelism between neural and cancer development and described the role of neurexins/neuroligins and the Hedgehog pathways, respectively.

Last, but not least, approximately 330 high-quality abstracts were presented throughout the Meeting in plenary oral (Cancer stem cells, Epigenetic alterations in cancer, Cancer modeling, Molecular mechanisms of senescence and cell death, Development of innovative therapeutics, Microenvironment and tumour progression), parallel poster discussion (Molecular markers of diagnosis, prognosis, and response to therapy; Cancer genetic, DNA damage, signal transduction; Innovative therapies and mechanisms of drug resistance; Tumour immunology and microenvironment), and poster display sessions.

Many of these presentations were from young and promising scientists and raised great hopes for the future of cancer research in Italy. To acknowledge their contribution several awards were assigned:

Chiara Gabellini (IRE, Rome) and Elena Ghiso (University of Medical School, Turin) won the traditional 'Piero Trivella' Award for best poster presentations.

One poster from Mara Tornincasa (Federico II University, Naples) was awarded by 'European Association for Cancer Research'.

The 'Pezzoller Foundation' scholarship was assigned to Micol Silic-Benussi (University of Padua).

During the Meeting a new tradition was established by introducing three new prizes:

- ‘Elena Cappannini’ for the best 2009 publication in the field of preclinical or clinical innovative therapies,
- The ‘Regina Elena National Cancer Institute’ for the best oral selected presentation, and the
- ‘Grazziela Persico’ for the best poster presentation of a female researcher, awarded to Laura Rosanò (IRE, Rome), Francesco Nicassio (IFOM-IEO, Milan) and Maria Grazia Vizioli (Istituto Nazionale Tumori, Milan), respectively.

Silvia Giordano will be the scientific organiser of the next SIC Annual Meeting that will be held in Turin in 2011.
control of telomere maintenance.

The high point of any meeting is the Keynote address. This year at ‘Genes and Cancer’ was no exception with an excellent talk presented by Gregg Semenza from Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. Gregg began his talk by describing the importance of hypoxia in tumours and his discovery of the hypoxia-inducible transcription factor (HIF). He then brought us completely up to date on the most recent work from his laboratory. Suitably, the Keynote lecture was followed by a drinks reception for all.

The first session of the second day focused on Cell Growth and Proliferation and was started by Bruce Edgar (DKFZ, Heidelberg) and Helen McNeil (Samuel Lunenfeld, Toronto) who talked respectively about stem cells and fat cadherins in Drosophila. Sticking with Drosophila, Jordan Raff, University of Oxford - and a recent recruit to the ‘Genes and Cancer’ organising committee! - told us about his latest work on centrosomes and cell division. The topic of the session then changed with talks by Peter Adams (University of Glasgow) on cell signalling in senescence, and Nathanael Gray (Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston) who discussed his lab’s strategies to identify novel selective protein kinase inhibitors.

After the success of having short talks chosen from proffered abstracts at previous meetings, we continued with this component of the meeting in 2010. It was extremely difficult to select two talks from the excellent collection of submitted abstracts. Finally, it was decided to go with talks by Gareth Bond (University of Oxford) who talked about SNPs in cancer and Athina-Mytro Chioni (Queen Mary, University of London) who talked about FGF signalling in breast cancer.

The next session of the meeting concerned ‘Cancer Frontiers’. This was a new session theme for ‘Genes and Cancer’ and was aimed at discussing new directions in cancer research from some of the leaders in the field. The first talk was presented by Alan Hall (Memorial Sloan-Kettering, New York) who discussed a non-canonical Wnt signalling pathway and its role in in vivo cancer regression and last, but not least, the session was wrapped up by Tony Kouzarides (University of Cambridge) who talked about chromatin modifying pathways in cancer.

In addition to the two abstracts chosen for short talks, we once again received a large number of excellent abstracts which were presented as posters. The trade exhibitors kindly paid for a drinks reception that ensured maximum attendance at poster viewing time! The judging this year was extremely difficult with many quality pieces of work on show. Finally, a decision was made and the winners who received prizes from EACR were announced in the evening at the conference party. They were: Joint 2nd Prize winners – Sarah Martin (Breakthrough Breast Cancer Research Centre, London) and Joanne Betts Henderson (UCL Cancer Institute). 1st Prize was awarded to Ana Sanchez (University of Newcastle) for her work on a transcriptionally-independent role for NF-kB in DNA repair. Many congratulations go to all prize winners and many thanks too to all who contributed work which made this part of the meeting such an enjoyable event.

The final session of the meeting related to cell signalling in cancer. Margaret Fame from the Edinburgh Cancer Research Centre started proceedings with a talk about her exciting new work on Src and FAK in invasion and metastasis. This was followed by a talk from Iain Hagan (Paterson Institute for Cancer Research, Manchester) relating to...
the control of mitosis in fission yeast. Kate Nobes from The University of Bristol then presented a very elegant talk on the role of Ephrins in the interactions between tumour and stromal cells and lastly, Axel Behrens and Facundo Batista – both of the Cancer Research UK London Research Institute – presented new insights into the control of stem cells and lymphocytes respectively.

Overall, this year’s meeting was a great success with quality presentations throughout. As each year goes by, ‘Genes and Cancer’ grows in reputation and we once again managed to combine 48 hours of cutting edge high quality science with a very relaxed and informal atmosphere which promotes interaction and discussion with attendees of all levels. We would like to say a big ‘Thankyou’ to EACR for their continued support which helps make this event possible. It only remains to say that planning is already underway for ‘Genes and Cancer - 2011’ and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Warwick this December. More details can be found in due course at www.genesandcancer.org.uk

EACR provided support for this year’s poster prizes. Pictured from left to right are: Ana Sanchez, University of Newcastle (1st Prize), Joanne Betts Henderson, UCL Cancer Institute (joint 2nd Prize), Richard Marais (‘Genes and Cancer’ conference Chair) and Sarah Martin, Breakthrough Breast Cancer Research Centre (joint 2nd Prize.)

Kevin Ryan, Beatson Institute for Cancer Research (On behalf of the ‘Genes and Cancer’ Organising Committee)
The 7th NCRI Cancer Conference will be held at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool from 6 - 9 November 2011

The Conference is the major forum in the UK for showcasing the best British and international cancer research, bringing together the leading experts across all disciplines with a compelling mix of high-quality plenary speakers, symposia and parallel sessions, including focused satellite meetings and workshops.

Plenary speakers

- Michael Hall (Switzerland)
- Michael Stratton (UK)
- Hans Clevers (The Netherlands)
- Maria Blasco (Spain)
- Harald zur Hausen (Germany)
- Jeffrey Settleman (USA)
- Murray Brennan (USA)
- Mike Richards (UK)
- Eva Grunfeld (Canada)
- John Potter (USA)

Also Featuring symposia on

- Cancer screening and prevention
  Hosted by Robert Steele

- Epithelial mesenchymal transition
  Hosted by Nicholas Hastie

- Living with and beyond cancer
  Hosted by Peter Selby

- Predictive models of human cancer
  Hosted by David Tuveson

- Metabolism and cancer
  Hosted by Eyal Gottlieb

- The diagnostic and therapeutic potential of the tumour microenvironment
  Hosted by Thorsten Hagemann

- Epigenetics and cancer
  Hosted by Peter Adams

- Stratified medicine
  Hosted by Alan Ashworth

Important dates for the 2011 NCRI Cancer Conference

- Abstract submission opens: Monday 21 March
- Abstract submission deadline: Friday 13 May
- Registration opens: Wednesday 1 June
- Late breaking abstract submission opens: Monday 11 July
- Earlybird registration deadline: Monday 1 August
- Late breaking abstract deadline: Wednesday 31 August
- Online registration deadline: Friday 30 September
- NCRI Cancer Conference commences: Sunday 6 November

NCRI Conference Secretariat, Angel Building, 407 St John Street, London EC1V 4AD, UK
www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference
PIVAC 10
Tenth International Conference on Progress in Vaccination against Cancer
27th – 30th September 2010
Cambridge, UK

Graham Pawelec

The 10th “Progress in Vaccination against Cancer” (PIVAC) conference, held for the 1st time under the auspices of the EACR, celebrated 10 years of unbroken annual meetings by returning to Cambridge, where the first meeting was held in 2001 (see Rees RC, Pawelec G, Müller L, Robins A. Progress in Vaccination against Cancer (PIVAC) 2001, Robinson College, University of Cambridge, UK. Cancer Immunol Immunother 51:58-61, 2002).

Much progress has indeed been made in the intervening decade although there is still a long way to go. Nonetheless, PIVAC 10 at St Catharine’s College this year was very optimistic about the future of immunotherapy, with great strides having been made with the introduction of prophylactic vaccines, combination therapies and the use of genetic vaccination approaches. Our keynote speakers Olja Finn (Pittsburg), Drew Pardoll (Baltimore) and Christopher Klebanoff (Bethesda) got the conference off to a good start, followed by an excellent program of invited speakers and young investigators’ presentations selected from submitted abstracts. For sponsoring the latter, and for providing poster prizes, we are especially grateful to the British Society for Immunology and the EACR. We are also grateful for the generous support of numerous other sponsors, without which this conference would not have been the success that it was.

Poster prizes were awarded to Helena Tufvesson, Immune and Gene Therapy Laboratory, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm,

Left: Alexandra Sevko and Helena Tufvesson are presented with their Poster Prizes by the Organisers of PIVAC 10 Elissavetta Naumova, Graham Pawelec and Lindy Durrant

Right: the meeting venue of St. Catharine’s College, Cambridge

ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROGRESS IN VACCINATION AGAINST CANCER

10th – 13th October, 2011 Copenhagen, Denmark

We welcome you all to this years PIVAC meeting which will cover all aspects of therapeutic cancer vaccinations, and retain a relaxed and informal atmosphere for scientific discussions and interactions.

PIVAC-11 will be held at the Radisson Blu Royal Hotel in the centre of Copenhagen for a maximum of 100 participants and will provide much scope for close interactions among attendees in addition to offering an exciting programme of presentations.

We look forward to welcoming you to Copenhagen.

Scientific Organising Committee
Per thor Straten Graham Pawelec Lindy Durrant

For the full Scientific Programme and Registration details
Please visit the Conference Website
www.eacr.org/pivac11

Abstract Deadline: Thursday 30th June 2011
Registration Deadline: Friday 29th July 2011

PIVAC 11 is supported by EACR and administered by the Association for the Meeting Organisers
Sweden and Alexandra Sevko, DKFZ, Heidelberg, Germany. The EACR Bursary Award was awarded to Hugo De la Peña from the University of Birmingham Medical School, UK.

The conference concluded with an entertaining and informed overview from our special invited scholar, Av Mitchison, who was able to look back over considerably more than the single decade during which PIVAC has been active (see YA Alpizar, B Chain, MK Collins, J Greenwood, D Katz, HJ Stauss, NA Mitchison, “Ten years of progress in vaccination against cancer: the need to counteract cancer evasion by dual targeting in future therapies”, Cancer Immunol Immunother, in press).

We are very pleased to be able to rely on the EACR, and especially the excellent support of Kathryn Wass, for PIVAC 11, which will take place in Copenhagen 10th-13th October 2011, organised by Per thor Straten. Thanks to all for making PIVAC 10 such an enjoyable success. I hope to see you at PIVAC 11.

Graham Pawelec
University of Tübingen
The new ‘look’ of the journal
A new cover for the EJC has been unveiled. Incorporating the journal’s distinctive EJC motif, the cover represents the journal’s broad scope, from basic research to epidemiology to translational and clinical research.

EJC News Focus online (the news videos)
EJC News Focus launched at the beginning of 2011. EJC News Focus is a new section of the journal, published online at www.ejcancer.info and features interviews with key thought leaders in Europe.

Watch the latest edition of EJC News Focus at www.ejcancer.info

New Faces at the EJC:
Following the appointment of Professor Alexander (Lex) Eggermont as Editor-in-Chief, a new Team of Editors has joined the EJC.

Lex welcomes the new Editor team and explains:

“The Editors all have wide networks, great knowledge and experience….With this much-enlarged editorial board we will be able to handle correctly and swiftly the high volume of papers that are being submitted to the journal.”