



**Press release**

14 January 2011

**New members appointed for the ERC Scientific Council**

**The European Commission has appointed seven new members of the Scientific Council, the governing body of the European Research Council (ERC). The term of office of the new members runs from 2 February this year till the end of 2013.**

The new members are

- Prof. Nicholas CANNY, National University of Ireland, Galway (IE)
- Prof. Tomasz DIETL, Polish Academy of Sciences (PL)
- Prof. Daniel DOLEV, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (IL)
- Prof. Sir Timothy HUNT, London Research Institute (UK)
- Prof. Mart SAARMA, University of Helsinki (FI)
- Prof. Anna TRAMONTANO, University of Rome La Sapienza (IT)
- Prof. Isabelle VERNOS, Centre Regulació Genòmica, Barcelona (ES)

The new members have been identified by the independent ERC Identification Committee, composed of six high level scientists and appointed by the European Commission in September last year. The scientific community was consulted in this identification process.

The ERC Scientific Council is composed of 22 distinguished scientists and scholars. The first council's term of office runs till February 2011 and two thirds of members will stay for a second term. The outgoing members are; Prof. Dame Wendy HALL DBE FREng, Prof. Dr. Michal KLEIBER, Dr. Oscar MARIN PARRA, Prof. Dr. Fotis C. KAFATOS, Prof. Salvatore SETTIS, Prof. Dr. med. Rolf ZINKERNAGEL. As Scientific Council member Prof. Leena PELTONEN-PALOTIE passed away last year this seat will also be filled.



ERC President Prof Helga Nowotny, who also chairs the Scientific Council, said: *"The members of the first Scientific Council worked with unique dedication and spent much effort, first, to make sure that the ERC would function in accordance with its vision and ambition and then, to fine-tune its strategy during the first four years. Whilst building on this work and maintaining continuity, it is now time for the Scientific Council to renew itself by welcoming seven new members. They are all renowned in their fields and come with new energy and knowledge. We very much look forward to working with them in this exciting period leading towards the next Framework Programme where the ERC will hopefully have a crucial role. On behalf of my colleagues I would also like to warmly thank the outgoing members for their commitment and very valuable efforts over the past years. It has been a truly exceptional pleasure to work with them."*

## Background

### Renewed Scientific Council (all 22 members)

Claudio BORDIGNON, San Raffaele Scientific Institute, Milan  
Nicholas CANNY, National University of Ireland, Galway  
Sierd A.P.L. CLOETINGH, VU University Amsterdam  
Mathias DEWATRIPONT, Université Libre de Bruxelles  
Tomasz DIETL, Polish Academy of Sciences  
Daniel DOLEV, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Carlos M. DUARTE, Spanish Council for Scientific Research, Majorca  
Daniel ESTEVE, CEA Saclay  
Pavel EXNER, Doppler Institute, Prague  
Hans-Joachim FREUND, Fritz-Haber-Institute, Berlin  
Timothy HUNT, London Research Institute  
Carl-Henrik HELDIN, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research  
Norbert KROO, Hungarian Academy of Sciences  
Maria Teresa LAGO, University of Porto  
Henrietta L. MOORE, University of Cambridge  
Helga NOWOTNY, Wissenschaftszentrum, Wien  
Christiane NÜSSLEIN-VOLHARD, Max-Planck-Institute for Developmental Biology, Tübingen  
Alain PEYRAUBE, CNRS, Paris  
Jens ROSTRUP-NIELSEN, Haldor Topsoe A/S  
Mart SAARMA, University of Helsinki  
Anna TRAMONTANO, University of Rome La Sapienza  
Isabelle VERNOS, Centre Regulació Genòmica, Barcelona



### Note to the editors

The **European Research Council** (ERC) is the first pan-European funding organisation for frontier research. It aims to stimulate scientific excellence in Europe by encouraging competition for funding between the very best, creative researchers of any nationality and age. The ERC consists of an independent Scientific Council and an Executive Agency and was set up by the EU under the Seventh Framework Programme's "Ideas" specific programme. It has a total budget of € 7.5 billion (2007-2013).

The **Scientific Council**, the ERC's governing body, defines the scientific funding strategy and methodologies, and acts on behalf of the scientific community in Europe to promote creativity and innovative research. It is presently chaired by Prof. Helga Nowotny and is composed of 22 eminent scientists and scholars, including some Nobel Prize winners. It was established by the European Commission in July 2005 and the European Research Council was launched on 2 February 2007.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/956&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

New ERC Scientific Council members are appointed by the Commission, on the recommendations of an Identification Committee, following an independent and transparent procedure for their identification. This includes a consultation of the scientific community. Members are identified on the basis of the criteria set out in the Commission Decision establishing the ERC of 2 February 2007 (2007/134/EC, Annex I).

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/l\\_057/l\\_05720070224en00140019.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/l_057/l_05720070224en00140019.pdf)

The current Identification Committee, appointed by the European Commission in September 2010, is chaired by Prof. Eero Vuorio, and include as members, Prof. Ann Dowling, Prof. Andreu Mas-Colell, Prof. Greta Mirdal, Prof. Arnold Schmidt, Prof. Maciej Zyllicz.

[http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/Press\\_Release\\_ERC\\_Identification\\_Committee.pdf](http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/Press_Release_ERC_Identification_Committee.pdf)

The founding members of the Scientific Council were appointed by an earlier Identification Committee chaired by Lord Patten of Barnes.

### Biographies of the new Scientific Council members

#### **Professor Nicholas Canny**

Professor Nicholas Canny is the Director of the Moore Institute, National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway, and President of the Royal Irish Academy. Prof. Canny is a professor of Irish history at NUI Galway. It was his 1976 study *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: a Pattern Established, 1565-76* that brought him to international attention. He won the Irish Historical Research Prize on two occasions, for the above book and for *Making Ireland British 1580-1650*. The latter is his most recent book, for which he was awarded the NUI Irish Historical Research Prize. His research interests include 17th century Irish and British history; Colonial American history; Early Modern history.

Main source: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/history/canny/>

#### **Professor Dr Hab Tomasz Dietl**

Tomasz Dietl is a professor and a head of Laboratory for Cryogenic and Spintronic Research at the Institute of Physics, Polish Academy of Sciences where he completed his PhD and habilitation degrees in experimental and theoretical condensed matter physics, and obtained professor title. He has also a part-time ordinary professor appointment at Chair of Condensed Matter Physics in Institute of Theoretical Physics, Warsaw University. His current research interests are focused on the



development of material systems and device concepts for nanospintronics of ferromagnetic semiconductors and of hybrid metal/semiconductor nanostructures. He is a member of Polish Academy of Sciences, the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics, Commission on Low Temperature Physics, and a Fellow of the Institute of Physics, UK. He is recipient of several international awards for pioneering works that paved the way for the emergence of semiconductor spintronics.

*Main source:* [http://www.fuw.edu.pl/~witek/kfms/kfms\\_eng/html/t\\_dietl.html](http://www.fuw.edu.pl/~witek/kfms/kfms_eng/html/t_dietl.html)

### **Professor Daniel Dolev**

Dolev is a professor at the Computer Science Department of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he has been heading the team that developed Transis, a highly available distributed system. His main research areas include distributed algorithms, computer networks, reliability of distributed systems, synchronization primitives, scheduling theory, protocols and security. He has also performed research on the durability of distributed systems to faults and developing an absolute taxonomy for distributed algorithms. Prof. Dolev had six years of experience as a system analyst and applications' programmer with a particular experience in real-time systems. He has been the chairman of the National Committee for Information Technology and Infrastructure of Israel, as well as the Inter University Communication Center. IUCC is in charge of the network of all the universities in Israel. He co-authored with Knesset Member M. Eitan the position document on Israel's readiness to the Information Era. He is a consultant to various companies. He spent many years in IBM and was part of the team that designed the protocols for the air traffic control system in the USA.

*Main source:* <http://www.cs.huji.ac.il/~dolev/>

### **Professor Sir Timothy Hunt**

Sir Richard Timothy Hunt is the recipient, together with Leland H. Hartwell and Sir Paul M. Nurse, of the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 2001 for discovering key regulators of the cell cycle. After receiving a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, Hunt conducted research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. He later taught at Cambridge later he became principal scientist at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund (now Cancer Research UK). Hunt's research centred on the chain of events that a cell undergoes from one division to another. Known as the cell cycle, the process includes growth, DNA duplication, and division. Hunt's work aided in the understanding of cancer-cell development. In addition to writing numerous papers on the cell cycle, he has served on editorial boards for several journals.

*Main sources:* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/764325/R-Timothy-Hunt>

<http://london-research->

[institute.co.uk/research/loc/london/lifch/huntt/?view=LRI&source=research\\_portfolio](http://london-research-institute.co.uk/research/loc/london/lifch/huntt/?view=LRI&source=research_portfolio)

### **Professor Mart Saarma**

Dr. Saarma is the academy professor and director of the Centre of Excellence in Molecular and Integrated Neuroscience Research of the Academy of Finland at the Institute of Biotechnology, University of Helsinki. He has studied neurotrophic factors and their receptors in neurodegenerative diseases. His group has discovered several GDNF family receptors and demonstrated that RET receptor tyrosine kinase is the signalling receptor for GDNF. Recently his group has discovered a new neurotrophic factor, CDNF, and shown that this protein very efficiently protects and repairs dopamine neurons in pre-clinical models of Parkinson's disease. Currently his group is investigating the mechanism of action and therapeutic potential of CDNF and also the biology of GDNF. Dr. Saarma is the member of several academies and EMBO. He has received several domestic and international scientific prizes and awards including the prestigious Nordic Science Prize.

*Sources:*

[http://www.michaeljfox.org/research\\_MJFFundingPortfolio\\_searchableAwardedGrants\\_bio.cfm?ID=663](http://www.michaeljfox.org/research_MJFFundingPortfolio_searchableAwardedGrants_bio.cfm?ID=663)

<http://www.biocenter.helsinki.fi/bi/saarma/ms.htm>

**Professor Anna Tramontano**

Anna Tramontano was trained as a physicist but she soon became fascinated by the complexity of biology and by the promises of computational biology. After working at the Biocomputing Programme of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Heidelberg, Germany, she moved back to Italy to work in the Merck Research Laboratories. Later she returned to the academic world as a Chair Professor of Biochemistry in "La Sapienza" University in Rome where she continues to pursue her scientific interests on protein structure prediction and analysis in the Department of Biochemical Sciences. She is a member of the European Molecular Biology Organization, the Scientific Council of Institute Pasteur - Fondazione Cenci Bolognetti, and the organizing Committee of the Critical Assessment of Techniques for Protein Structure Prediction (CASP) initiative. Prof. Tramontano is also a member of the EMBL Scientific Advisory Committee, the EBI Advisory Committee, and of the Scientific Advisory Board of the University of Zurich Research Priority Program "Systems biology/Functional Genomics".

Sources: [http://biotecnologie.frm.uniroma1.it/cgi-bin/campusnet/docenti.pl/Show?\\_id=tramontano](http://biotecnologie.frm.uniroma1.it/cgi-bin/campusnet/docenti.pl/Show?_id=tramontano)  
<http://www.biocomputing.it/index.php/People/annasketch>

**Professor Isabelle Vernos**

Isabelle Vernos is a research professor at ICREA (Institutió Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats), Centre de Regulació Genòmica, Barcelona, Spain. In the past, she worked at the Wellcome CRC Institute, Cambridge, UK. She worked in the Cell Biology Program of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, Germany, becoming the team leader of the Cell Biology and Biophysics Program. She also worked as a staff scientist for Cell Biology and Biophysics Program at the EMBL. Research in her lab is directed at understanding the role of the microtubule network in cell organization and function. To address this question they study various microtubule-associated proteins (molecular motors and MAPs) and their regulators (kinases, phosphatases and the small GTPase Ran during M-phase). One major goal is to unravel how the self-organization of cellular components results in the morphogenesis of dynamic molecular machines.

Sources: [http://ub.cbm.uam.es/research/Centrosome\\_Def/membersnew.php](http://ub.cbm.uam.es/research/Centrosome_Def/membersnew.php)  
[http://pasteur.crg.es/portal/page/portal/Internet/02\\_Research/01\\_Programmes/02\\_Cell\\_and\\_Developmental\\_Biology/01\\_Microtubule\\_function\\_and\\_cell\\_division](http://pasteur.crg.es/portal/page/portal/Internet/02_Research/01_Programmes/02_Cell_and_Developmental_Biology/01_Microtubule_function_and_cell_division)

Links

ERC website

<http://erc.europa.eu>

More on the ERC Scientific Council:

<http://erc.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&topicID=15>

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