

**A LETTER TO PRESIDENTS OF
NATIONAL EUROPEAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETIES
DECEMBER 24, 2008**

1. 5ECM

2008 has been a very important year for the European Mathematical Society. On July 14-18 European Mathematics had its most important event the Fifth European Congress of Mathematics in Amsterdam. On behalf of our Society I would like to congratulate the organisers of the 5ECM Andre Ran, Herman te Riele and Jan Wiegerinck, the chairmen of the Prize and Programme Committees Rob Tijdeman and Alexander Schrijver as well as all the others who contributed to the success of the 5ECM.

2. European Research Council (ERC)

I would like to draw your attention to the ERC Advance grants that were recently advertised for which the deadline is at the end of March 2009. Please make sure that this information reaches your society members. It is important that the number of applications will be not less than last year.

3. Meeting of Presidents of National Mathematical Societies

A large number of the National Mathematical Societies were delighted with the initiative of the French Mathematical Society who hosted a first meeting of Societies' Presidents or their representative in Luminy in April 2008. This meeting was very fruitful and it has been suggested that we should do it every year.

I am glad to tell you that the Banach Centre offers us to organise the next in Warsaw on May 9-10. As at the last meeting we shall start with lunch at about 12:30 on Saturday, May 9, and continue until lunch time on Sunday, May 10. We are very grateful to the Banach Centre for this initiative. Please let me know as soon as possible if you or any other representative from your Society would be able to participate in the meeting.

4. European Science Foundation (ESF)

We have established excellent relations with both the ESF Physical and Engineering Science Committee (PESC) and the ESF Conference Centre. Our warmest congratulation to the President of the Finnish Mathematical Society, Professor Mats Gyllenberg who has recently been elected as the new

chairman of PESC. Next year we will start a series of joint ESF-EMS conferences in Mathematics. According to our contract there will be up to 6 conferences a year during the next 5 years, organised at one of the ERCOM centres (please see the attached file 08-ems-ercom-TOR.pdf).

ESF together with the CNRS has suggested that the EMS should lead a Forward Look project: "Mathematics & Industry". It has already been approved by the ESF and the Chairman of the EMS Applied Math. Committee, Professor Mario Primicerio has already assembled a committee that has already begun work on this project. The first meeting took place in Pisa three of days ago.

5. Large European Research Infrastructures in Mathematics

After some persuasion, Brussels has agreed to acknowledge infrastructures in Mathematics. Here is the new list of the main sections of European Research Infrastructures:

1. Social Science and Humanities
2. Environmental Science and Non-nuclear energy
3. Life Sciences
4. Physics, astronomy, nuclear- and particle physics Life Sciences
5. Analytical facilities and engineering
6. Mathematics, computer-related sciences data

The next EU call for funding European Research Infrastructures will be in September 2009. Each project has been promised a maximum of 10M. Brussels does not wish to have a bottom up approach, as in 2008. In order to ensure that the applications will be of high standard, Brussels has recently organised a meeting of experts who suggested titles for possible research infrastructures within their subjects.

At this meeting the following two infrastructures in Mathematics were identified.

1. Mathematics centres of competence, Mathematics data and other resources.
2. Mathematics service for Industry and society.

The first infrastructure is intended for the ERCOM (a committee within the EMS).

The second one is directed to Mathematics and Industry. The background for this title is our ESF-EMS-CNRS Forward Look Project "Mathematics & Industry".

Unfortunately neither Zentralblatt (ZBI) nor Digital Mathematical Library (DML) can be considered as research infrastructures. On the other hand both infrastructures are very important for the Mathematical community

and therefore both ZBl and DML are welcomed as parts of the above mentioned projects.

6. Mathematical Weekends

On February 29 - March 2, 2008, an EMS Mathematical Weekend was organised by the Danish Mathematical Society and the University of Copenhagen. We are most grateful to both for their contribution to European Mathematics.

The EMS is also looking for a future venues for a Mathematical Weekend. Unfortunately, so far we have still not had any suggestions. Please discuss with your colleagues the possibility of having such an event in your country.

Finally I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Ari Laptev
EMS President