

EDITORIAL

In this issue of *Synchrotron Radiation in Natural Science* the readers will find the abstracts of the KSUPS-8 (8th National Symposium of Synchrotron Users). The abstracts are preceded by a description of the Polish FEL project and memories of the early work at synchrotrons in mid 1980s. Brief information on the Polish synchrotron project is also included (pp. 41-42); more details have been given in previous issues. Both mentioned projects, of synchrotron and FEL, are at different stages of processing. The way to acceptance of the projects of this kind is typically long and meets many obstacles, as illustrated *e.g.* by Olof Hallonsten's [1] for the cases of MAXlab, ESRF and Stanford laboratories. Many more or less obvious factors account in the decision and choice of machine location and parameters. The cost of the machine is not so high (being comparable with the cost of a stadium or 10 km of a highway). Another important factor is a creation, in advance, of a lobby of a convincing power being able to reach the decision makers with the message about the mission of natural science for both, the society and for the technology. Understanding that modern light sources became a basic scientists' tool, and that their lack enhances the brain drain, a natural process causing that young people who learn the modern material characterisation techniques do not find job in their native countries, is a key point during the decision process. Moreover, it is worth noting that at the turn of the century, intense light sources started their work in relatively small countries such as Sweden, Switzerland and Singapore—the success of these scientific centres is well known and will, certainly, encourage other countries to follow the same way.

Thanks to the special programs of European Commission so called I3 (Integrated Infrastructure Initiative) scientists across Europe benefit from easier access to Europe's best synchrotron and free electron laser facilities. The main objective of this program is the support of the transnational open access to the synchrotrons and FELs facilities, for users from the European area. Under the 6th Framework Programme (FP6) the Integrating Activity on Synchrotron and Free Electron Laser Science (IA-SFS) project was active. The duration of the project was 5 years: from March 1st, 2004 to February 28th, 2009, and the total EU support was at the level of 27 million euro. Starting from March 2009,

the ELISA project is supported by the European Community - Research Infrastructure Action under the FP7 Programme [2]. It is the follow-up of a previous I3 [3]. The duration of the project is 30 months: March 1st, 2009 - August 31st, 2011, but the funds are only 10 million €, *i.e.* they are three times smaller than those got within the FP6 programme. Moreover, there is a discussion for further reduction and releasing the funding responsibility completely to national funding agencies. A special action should be taken to convince authorities from Brussels that this is not a right way and such politics can stress on the level of science in Europe and ruin the many years' efforts to build the international users community. In this aspect the users' voice should be heard. The synchrotron facilities have sent a letter to the users asking for filling a questionnaire to express their concern about need for European Commission support (see p. 99). This letter has been sent to 22000 e-mail addresses of the users but only 1100 answers were obtained through the webpage. The more actions are needed. At p. 100 you will find a Manifest prepared by an *ad-hoc* committee for a European Synchrotron User Organization (ESUO) describing the present situation with the proposition to perform activities which are very important for our future access to national facilities.

We are pleased to inform the readers that Prof. Krystyna Jablonska was elected by the ELISA Council as one of user delegates in the Council (the remaining ones are: Maria Arménia Carrondo, Keijo Hämäläinen, Ullrich Pietsch and Marc Vrakking). The user delegates will represent the users in the ELISA Council with mission of supporting the transnational open access of users to the synchrotrons and FELs facilities; developing innovative instrumentation and techniques, enhancing the communication between the consortium members and strengthening the links to the general public.

References

- [1] O. Hallonsten, *Small science on big machines*, PhD thesis, <http://www.lu.se/o.o.i.s?id=12683&postid=1419054>, (Lund Univ. 2009).
- [2] <http://www.elettra.eu/ELISA/>.
- [3] <http://www.elettra.trieste.it/I3/>.