2024 Annual Report

Brain Advocacy at National, European and Global Levels



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EBC
European Brain Council

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

As we enter another important year for the European Brain Council (EBC), we are delighted to take a moment to reflect and celebrate the accomplishments of 2024 through our Annual Report.

As EBC's mandate continues to grow and expand across the national, European and global levels, it was certainly a busy year. Furthermore, as policy and advocacy remain the organisation's raison d'être, 2024 was a crucial year. Elections swept across a majority of Europe and within the European Parliament, bringing new opportunities to engage with policymakers – old and new – and call for increased prioritisation of brain research and overall brain health in the new mandate.

This fostered the **No Health Without Brain Health** campaign in March coupled with EBC's **Election Manifesto.** The campaign, which ran until the formation of a new Parliament and Commission, outlined why EU policymakers need to recognise the urgency to place the brain higher on health and research policy agendas to ensure that more resources are channelled towards prevention, intervention and research. This focused around EBC's key research policy priority areas, highlighting the importance of life sciences, the use of animals in medical research, more incentives for innovation in research and more. Furthermore, calls within the campaign and manifesto were strengthened by the establishment of the EBC-led **EU Health Policy Platform Thematic Network** calling for the establishment of an **EU Coordination Plan for the Brain**. This strengthened our work also with National Brain Councils, welcoming the leadership of our national counterparts as they work to establish **National Brain Plans** back home, with work underway in Norway, Finland, Poland and Spain – to name a few. More to come in 2025!

Momentum at the global level also grew exponentially, seeing the formation of the **Global Brain Coalition** in partnership with like-minded leaders in the space, including the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, BRAIN Africa, Brain Capital Alliance and UsAgainstAlzheimer's. With this core group, EBC was able to host a milestone, high-level event at the **79th United Nations General Assembly** in New York across two days, filled with impressive collaborations and partnerships that showcased just how important brain health and brain capital is for our society and why it needs to be centrally placed in global health policy.

Work continued within the **Coordination and Support Action (CSA) BrainHealth**, tasked by the European Commission to design and pave the way towards a **European Brain Health Partnership**. Set to start in January 2026, the consortium released important deliverables such at the stakeholder consultation, Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and grew in its outreach and negotiation with collaborators for the upcoming Partnership.

Throughout it all, key projects and flagship initiatives continued their smooth run within 2024, including the launch of the **Rethinking Schizophrenia: Beyond the Voices** white paper, followed soon after by the **Brain Awareness Week in the European Parliament**, launching the election campaign period. During World Alzheimer's Month, the subsequent **Rethinking Alzheimer's: From Diagnosis to Care** paper debuted, followed later in the year by a roundtable in the European Parliament on the subject. The concept of a **Rare Brain Disease Ecosystem** was launched on the occasion of Rare Disease Day, featuring the latest work within the Value of Treatment for Brain Disorders and Value of Education projects. Work in the innovation space grew, not only culminating with the largest-ever **Brain Innovation Days** yet but also in EBC's active role in the drafting of a **European Charter for the Responsible Development of Neurotechnologies** and within EU-funded projects such as **BRAINTEASER** and **HEREDITARY**.

This was just to mention a few of the annual highlights – it's certainly not an exhaustive list of all the activities, publications, digital campaigns, events and meetings EBC held or took part in in 2024. It was another outstanding year for EBC, and our reach has never been as strong or wide, building partnership and gaining traction at the national, European and global levels more than ever. This would not have been achieved without the consistent support and collaboration of our Members and Partners, who EBC trusts and relies on to guide our priorities, enrich our content and work with to achieve our collective goals. For this we thank you all and hope you enjoy and appreciate this overview of everything we have achieved together this year. As always, we look forward to our continued work together and to build on our combined momentum towards our quest to put brain health at the top of health and research policy agendas.

Kind regards,



Prof. Suzanne Dickson
President



Frédéric Destrebecq
Executive Director

EBC'S VISION & MISSION

Vision

The European Brain Council (EBC) is a network of key players in the "Brain Area", with a membership encompassing scientific societies, patient organisations, professional societies and industry partners. A non-profit organisation based in Brussels, its main mission is to promote brain research with the ultimate goal of improving the lives of the millions of Europeans living with brain conditions, mental and neurological alike.

Mission

With the aim to speak with one voice, EBC stands as the platform to foster cooperation between its member organisations and other stakeholders, consistently promoting dialogue between scientists, industry and society. As showcased by its growing portfolio of projects, research and policy papers, as well as events, EBC emphasises the importance of continued interaction with the European Institutions to build strong European health policies, raising awareness and encouraging education on the brain and the repercussions of neurological and mental health conditions on society as a whole.



EBC HIGHLIGHTS

No Health Without Brain Health

During the 2024 Brain Awareness Week, EBC kicked off the No Health Without Brain Health campaign in the European Parliament, also launching EBC's 2024 EU Elections Manifesto echoing the Pledge for Science and bolstering EBC's EU Health Policy Platform Thematic Network, "Towards an EU Coordination Plan for the Brain". The campaign was structured around two priority policy asks: the creation of a European Parliament Intergroup on Brain Health and Research and increased support for the creation of EU and National Brain plans.

While EBC's proposal for an Intergroup on Brain Health and Brain Research did not go through to the list of selected intergroups for the upcoming mandate – despite the proposal gaining the support of four key MEPs across four main political groups – the campaign also demonstrated that, when united, the brain community can reach a significant number of policymakers and make its voice heard. With over 100 MEPs supporting the proposal for establishing an Intergroup on Brain Health and Research, this demonstrates the growing traction of brain health as a pressing issue for decision makers. A proposal for an Intergroup dedicated to Mental Health specifically, however, did go through.



EBC Invited to Address the European Parliament Public Health Committee

On October 17, EBC's Vice-President, Prof. Claudio Bassetti, addressed the European Parliament Subcommittee on Public Health (SANT) meeting in Brussels on neurological health, presenting not only on the burden of neurological disorders but the increasing momentum around prioritising brain health and brain capital in Europe and beyond.

Multiple MEPs participated actively in the discussion: Tomislav Sokol, Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis, Aurelijus Veryga, Stine Bosse, Tilly Metz, Anja Hazekamp, Vlad Voiculescu, Manuela Ripa, Letizia Moratti, Christine Anderson, Laurence Trochu, Andras Kulja MD, raising the importance of a holistic approach on brain health in many sectors.



120+ Supporting Organisations

Supported by 100+ MEPs

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EBC HIGHLIGHTS

Brain Awareness Week 2024 at the European Parliament

Brain Awareness Week is the global campaign to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research. Every March, the week unites the efforts of partner organizations world-wide in a celebration of the brain for people of all ages. EBC takes part annually with an initiative to promote and communicate on brain health and research, showcasing ongoing efforts to prevent and treat brain disorders – neurological and mental alike – in Europe.



14 Speakers

70+ Attendees

As part of the 2024 Brain Awareness Week, the European Brain Council (EBC) organised its annual event in the European Parliament on March 7, to highlight the urgency of prioritising brain health and research in Europe ahead of the 2024 EU Elections. Titled **No Health Without Brain Health**, the event was opened by its host, MEP Colm Markey (EPP, IE), who reminded the audience about the staggering cost of brain disorders to the EU.

EBC President, Prof. Suzanne Dickson, announced the launch of EBC's No Health Without Brain Health campaign, derived from its 2024 Elections Manifesto, calling for the establishment of a European Parliament Intergroup on Brain Health & Research and the development of an EU Coordination Plan for the Brain - two critical policy asks designed to strengthen research, innovation, and health policies across Europe.

Voices from the patient community brought powerful testimonies to the stage, stressing the need to break down silos, improve data sharing, and ensure that patient perspectives guide policymaking. Lived experiences are essential to highlight the stigma, inequalities, and gaps in care that continue to affect millions across the EU.
Industry and clinical experts reinforced these calls for united action, emphasising the importance of investing in research and supporting data-driven innovation to advance brain health. As there can be "no brain health without brain understanding," stronger support for basic and translational research to drive precision medicine and tangible outcomes for patients is pivotal.
Participants reiterated the need for brain health to really be understood as encompassing both neurological and mental health: "given the complexity that we are facing, we really cannot afford to compete against each other". This comprehensive approach must be at the core of the EU's growing investment in brain research, including in the work towards the upcoming European Partnership for Brain Health. Contributions from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation confirmed that momentum is building toward a more coordinated and ambitious European brain research ecosystem, instrumental in delivering tangible outcomes for the millions of Europeans living with a brain condition.

Closing the event, MEP Colm Markey and Prof. Dickson reiterated the shared commitment to moving brain health higher on the EU policy agenda, stressing that tackling neurological and mental health conditions together is both a health and economic imperative.

The No Health Without Brain Health event underscored the scale of the challenges posed by brain disorders, but also demonstrated that Europe is at a turning point ahead of the 2024 Elections.

"If you look at the cost (of brain disorders) to the health services, it is estimated to cost €800 billion a year. It's the equivalent of cardiovascular, cancer, and diabetes all put together."

MEP Colm Markey
(EPP, Ireland)

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EBC HIGHLIGHTS

Global Partnerships: 79th United Nations General Assembly

As part of the Global Brain Coalition, the European Brain Council (EBC), Brain Capital Alliance, Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute and UNICEF hosted a two-day, high-level side event at the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA79), in collaboration with partner organisations, in the framework of the Science Summit at the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York City on 19-20 September 2024 at Cure.

In line with the Science Summit's core focus of examining policy, regulatory and financial environments needed to implement and sustain the science mechanisms required to support global scientific collaborations and demonstrate the role and contribution of science in attaining the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the two-day event highlighted existing partnerships and the immense potential and benefits of extending global collaboration in the brain space, for science, policymaking, and society as a whole.

To work towards explicit and tangible next steps in solidifying global efforts in addressing the burden and overall brain health, this two-day event showcased the importance and urgency of prioritising brain health across all policies at the global level and build on the Call to Action launched during the previous year's event. Addressing the immense global burden of brain disorders means investing in research and innovation in the brain health space to power our understanding of the brain, stay ahead in the quest to find treatment and cures and work to prevent any further increase in the prevalence of these conditions. Furthermore, at the socio-economic level, policies and investments to boost brain power can increase productivity, stimulate greater creativity and economic dynamism, afford social cohesion, and create a more resilient, adaptable, and sustainability-engaged populace.

Key stakeholders from across the wider brain community – scientific, clinical, economic, industry – and other relevant actors met to present on their work and co-create towards further action to place brain health at the top of global policy agendas in the post-Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) era. This action was incredibly timely, particularly in 2024, where 64 countries worldwide are hosting major elections, and we are witnessing times of major political, economic, and overall societal shifts and instability. Furthermore, at the global level, the United Nations enters a period of preparation for the future, with the Summit of the Future kicking off during UNGA79 to plan for the post-2030 agenda and a High-Level Conference on NCDs planned in 2025.

Topics touched on throughout the two days showcased just how relevant the brain and brain health is to society, not only in terms of burden of disease, healthcare and research, but also touching key issues such as the built environment, school-centred care, neuroscience in policymaking and judiciary decision making, neurotechnology and so much more. These were covered within keynotes, panel discussions and presentations from the high-level line-up, including a Keynote Address by the Governor of New York, Kathy Hochul and attendance from prominent scientists, clinicians, policymakers and industry leaders.

70+
Speakers

~300
Attendees



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Global Brain Coalition

At UNGA79, EBC announced its collaboration with the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative, Brain Capital Alliance, UsAgainstAlzheimer's and Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute as a like-minded coalition dedicated to elevating brain health to the top of global health and economic agendas. The group brings together leading players in brain health dedicated to building brain resilience and ending brain disorders across the globe, driving economic prosperity through investments in brain health and brain capital and addressing systemic inequities, social, economic, and environmental factors that impact brain health.

EBC HIGHLIGHTS

CSA BrainHealth: Towards a European Partnership for BrainHealth

EBC continued its efforts within the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) BrainHealth in 2024, leading the Work Packages on Global Outreach and Communication/Dissemination and playing key roles within other strategic work packages, including the running of a stakeholder consultation and design of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA).

Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for the European Partnership for Brain Health

2024 brought the development and release of the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) BrainHealth Joint Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), a central strategic framework for the upcoming European Partnership for Brain Health. The SRIA outlines four key strategic priorities to guide the European Union's approach to advancing brain health: Promoting Brain Health and Preventing Brain Disorders, Improving Early Recognition, Diagnosis, Monitoring, and Intervention, Enhancing Treatment, Care, and Support for Patients and Caregivers and Integrating Social, Ethical, and Legal Dimensions.

The SRIA lays out a strategic path forward for the European Union to unite around the challenges posed by brain health. By fostering collaboration and aligning national efforts under a European umbrella, the SRIA aims to position Europe as a global leader in brain health, research and innovation.



Draft Proposal for European Partnership for Brain Health

In 2024, the European Commission published the draft proposal for the European Partnership for Brain Health, a joint effort by the CSA-BrainHealth writing group (ANR, INSERM, EBC, EBRAINS, ZonMW and DLR) incorporating inputs and information from the SRIA, the Funders Forum, all CSA BrainHealth partners and the European Commission itself. This was another milestone in the preparation phase entering the final year of the CSA in 2025 and towards the launch of the Partnership in January 2026.

21 Partners



11 EU Countries



This project, funded by the European Commission, builds the umbrella for 21 participants from 11 countries, and seeks to be expanded further.

General Assembly

On May 14th, partners of the Coordination and Support Action (CSA) BrainHealth, alongside funders, member states, and the European Commission gathered in Berlin for the project's first General Assembly. Attendant funders and partners considerably utilised the opportunity to discuss the priority research areas which were identified during the development of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA).

Global Outreach Activities

As part of its leadership of the work package on global outreach, EBC led a webinar to introduce global organisations and initiatives to the SRIA, the upcoming EP BrainHealth and opportunities to engage. Bringing together participants from Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa, and Australia, the webinar emphasised the importance of aligning European and international efforts to maximise impact. Participants shared best practices in brain health promotion, early intervention, and care, while also addressing critical challenges and the need for coordinated approaches.

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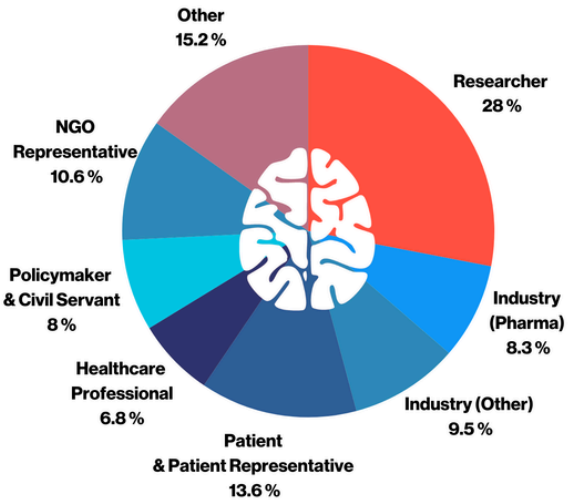
EBC HIGHLIGHTS

Brain Innovation Days 2024

"Navigating the Brain Across a Lifetime"

This event, and the community built around it, is the platform to boost interaction, facilitate knowledge exchange and business development, connect the dots with key people, potentiate investments, foster dialogue and showcase ongoing innovation and progress being made in the space, particularly in Europe.

For the first time, the Brain Innovation Days kickstarted in the European Parliament on the 12th of November with a policy-oriented opening titled 'Bridging Neuroscience, Policy & Society'. This high-level, policy-focused event convened key opinion leaders from the brain health community to explore how policy can drive tangible impacts in brain health and research. This event in the European Parliament set the stage for the following two jam-packed days of innovation and collaboration.





90+ Speakers

30+ Sessions

250+ Attendees

Most Represented Countries: Belgium, Germany, France, The Netherlands, Spain

Rated 4.4/5 by Attendees

The 4th edition of the Brain Innovation Days took place on 13-14 November 2024 in Brussels under the overarching theme "Navigating the Brain Across a Lifetime". These two days brought together more than 90 speakers and over 30 sessions, including inspiring Brain Talks and panel discussions, innovation showcases and poster presentations, and an abundance of networking opportunities.

Brain Talk speakers presented on topics such as migraine and women in society, patient data-sharing avenues and how digital health tools can revolutionise traditional models of care, gender and diversity in neurology, as well as the future of precision medicine for mental health disorders. The engaging discussions between experts in the field revolved around neurotechnological challenges and opportunities, current research in migraine and how to elevate its standard of care. Further sessions looked into how technological advances are revolutionising the diagnosis and management of neurological disorders and others explored how EU policies can accelerate innovation in the brain space, how to invest in brain development and how protecting our planet plays a role in preserving our health.

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ADVOCACY & POLICY OUTREACH

EU LEVEL

Thematic Network: Towards an EU Coordination Plan for the Brain

In 2024, EBC's proposal for a thematic network under the aegis of the European Commission's DG SANTE-led EU Health Policy Platform was voted into action, focused on building "Towards an EU Coordination Plan for the Brain". After hosting two webinars and surveying the community through a public consultation, EBC released its Joint Statement outlining the identified urgent needs for action and the explicit benefits and needs for an EU Coordination Plan for the Brain as a coordination mechanism for EU and national brain strategies to match the targets set by WHO Global Action Plans. This document paves the way on how to connect current and upcoming initiatives as building blocks of a future holistic EU Plan that prepares for the brain-healthy transition of our societies and addresses the burden of brain disorders in a comprehensive and collaborative manner.



2 EUHPP Webinars

Public Consultation & Joint Paper

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European Charter for the Responsible Development of Neurotechnologies

Neurotechnologies are rapidly moving from medical to consumer markets, raising critical ethical and societal issues – notably in terms of human enhancement, regulation and marketing of direct-to-consumer devices, protection of personal brain data and vulnerability of cognitive patterns for commercial or political manipulation. With the ultimate goal to promote a culture of stewardship and trust in neurotechnologies, support greater wellbeing and sustainable economic growth of the field, the European Charter for the Responsible Development of Neurotechnologies complements existing legislation and mechanisms of governance (MDR, GDPR, AI Act) through a more agile and flexible governance framework (non-legally binding agreement) to inform public policy, clinical practice, activities of companies and investment.

In 2024, EBC created a dedicated Task Force bringing together representatives from patient organisations, organisations of professional actors in health, research and ethics, policymakers and SMEs on the identification of gaps and grey areas deserving robust governance and the drafting of the European Charter for the Responsible Development of Neurotechnologies – which underwent a public consultation between November and December 2024.

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ADVOCACY & POLICY OUTREACH

EU LEVEL

Move for Your Brain

The holistic approach to brain health requires the implementation of integrated policies that address the key risk and protective factors as well as the determinants of brain health including physical health and physical activity. The goal of the Move for Your Brain campaign is to promote and emphasise the importance of policies and practices addressing brain health from a holistic perspective.

In light of the campaign, the European Brain Foundation, in collaboration with Rugby Europe, organised an event in February 2024 on the brain in sports. The event evolved around how to prevent and manage concussions, including key opinion leaders and experts in the field to share state of play in a medico-scientific perspective and testimonies from players, to better understand where the risk of concussion and head trauma in a particular sport exists and how to best manage it.



Additionally, EBC took part in the Brussels 20km race on 26 May 2024 and the Brussels Marathon Event held on November 3rd 2024. Several team members, as well as external participants ran for the campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of physical activity for brain health.





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ADVOCACY & POLICY OUTREACH

GLOBAL LEVEL

World Economic Forum (WEF)

During the 2024 World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland), EBC was invited to take part in a number of panels in the brain health space to push for a better prioritisation of brain health and research in the international economic agenda. At the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative Expert Roundtable, EBC tackled the importance of advancing global brain health and pursuing healthy aging. The roundtable brought together prominent leaders in government, industry, academic, and global communities to organise a Brain Health Ambassadors Network to extend its reach to the primary care level.

EBC also took part in the panel on **Trends in Mental Health Innovation**, diving into the evolution of mental health innovations, perceptions and investments over the last decade. Academia, corporate leaders, finance executives, and trailblazing entrepreneurs coalesced for a dynamic set of panel discussions on The Evolution of Mental Health at the House of Trust event, where participants explored the transformative journey of mental health, exploring its modern evolution, the pivotal role of businesses in promoting wellness, the cutting-edge impact of technology and the fusion of ancient wisdom and western medicinal practices.

EBC was also pleased to contribute to the session **Building Mental Wealth – threat and possible solutions**, providing an overview about what is mental wealth and how it can be measured and improved. The event was organised by the Mental Wealth Initiative at the University of Sydney. Our vision is to move towards a mentally and socially thriving world. We believe the wealth of a nation is not just based on economic prosperity. National prosperity must be inclusive of social production and the mental health and wellbeing of communities. Today we face unprecedented challenges as climate change re-shapes our borders and our boundaries. Now, more than ever, we need to bring people together from all industries to collaborate and find solutions to protect and enhance the mental wealth of our nations.







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ADVOCACY & POLICY OUTREACH

GLOBAL LEVEL

Brain Health for Society: Insights From Brain Capital

On January 25th, 2024, the European Brain Council (EBC), in partnership with Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy and the Brain Capital Alliance, hosted the event **Brain Health for Society: Insights from Brain Capital**. This full day event brought together international experts, industry leaders, patient representatives and policymakers to explore how investing in brain health and brain capital can drive societal and economic progress.

Brain disorders, neurological and mental alike, have seen a 59% increase over the past three decades, making them the leading cause of disability and the second leading cause of death globally. With an aging population and increasing brain health challenges, the urgency to transition toward a "brain-positive economy" was a key theme throughout the day.

The concept of Brain Capital - encompassing the social, emotional and cognitive resources that shape human potential - is central to building resilient societies. Healthy brains fuel productivity, creativity, and social cohesion, while poor brain health leads to economic instability, reduced workforce capacity and rising healthcare costs.

A series of panels explored specific areas requiring action:

- Children & Youth: Participants emphasised the need for accessible innovations in paediatric health and the importance of education in shaping brain health throughout the life course. Disparities in women's brain health and the necessity of integrating child neurology into broader brain health strategies were also raised as critical issues.
- Mid- and Late-Life Brain Health: Discussions highlighted the need for early interventions, resilience training, and personalised care to reduce the burden of chronic conditions and improve the overall quality of life.
- Democracy & Brain Health: Participants underlined the interconnection between brain health and democratic participation, stressing the need to safeguard both.
- Brain Science & Innovation: The importance of integrating brain health into the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals was a recurring theme, shifting from reactive models toward prevention and brain resilience.
- European Brain Plans: National brain plans, including those from countries like Switzerland, Norway, Finland, and Germany, were highlighted as valuable frameworks to tackle the rising burden of brain disorders. The need for flexible, comprehensive, and life-course approaches was emphasised, ensuring strategies cater to both aging populations and younger generations.



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Throughout the day, patient perspectives fuelled the discussions about the immense social and economic toll borne by individuals and families. The role of public-private partnerships was also stressed as pivotal in making innovative solutions accessible, with calls for stronger cooperation between governments, industry, and civil society.

This event demonstrated that improving brain health is not merely a healthcare priority, but an economic and societal imperative for building brain-healthy societies.

ADVOCACY & POLICY OUTREACH

GLOBAL LEVEL

77th World Health Assembly

On May 27th, EBC was present in Geneva for the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA77), which this year focused on the theme All for Health, Health for All. EBC colleagues took part in a number of side events and meetings, including Rethinking mental health care: harnessing new approaches (led by The Economist) and high-level working session **Systemic Investing for the Brain Economy** (led by the Brain Capital Alliance).

Between May 27 and June 1, Ministers of Health and other decision-makers from all 194 Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) gathered for the 77th World Health Assembly, the annual meeting of the WHO's decision-making body. A range of global health issues were discussed at WHA77: defeating polio, malaria, HIV, and other diseases; increasing access to universal health coverage and immunization; countering growing antimicrobial resistance; and ensuring better maternal and reproductive health outcomes.

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European Health Forum Gastein

From 24–27 September, the hybrid European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG), guided by the theme "Shifting sands of health", explored solutions for the complex interplay of democracy, demographics and digitalisation in Europe's evolving health landscape. The EHFG 2024 is co-organised by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, in collaboration with the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, and with support from the European Union.

On September 25, EBC was pleased to take part in a session organised by the European Academy of Neurology. Titled "Promoting Brain Health for Everyone: Towards a Sustainable and Healthy Future", the session addressed demographic shifts, economic implications and innovative policies needed to support brain health. The combined burden of brain disorders represents a major challenge. This requires a holistic concept of brain health which places an emphasis on prevention, optimising quality of life and on addressing neurological and psychiatric comorbidities. This session explored the multifaceted concept of brain health, emphasising its impact on healthcare systems, economic well-being and societal health.

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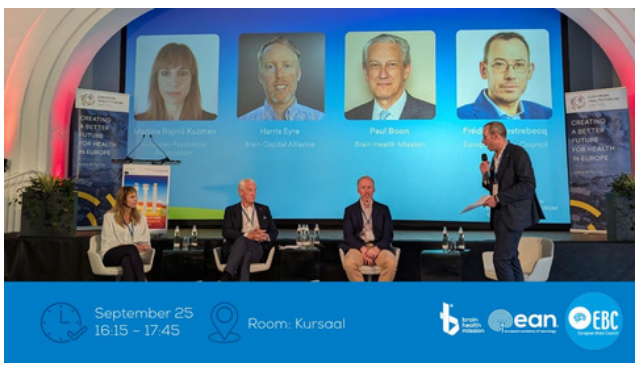

ADVOCACY & POLICY OUTREACH

GLOBAL LEVEL

G7 Health Ministerial Meeting

EBC was pleased to collaborate with the Davos Alzheimer's Collaborative (DAC), who hosted an event on the sidelines of the 2024 G7 Health Ministerial Meeting: Advancing Global Collaboration for Dementia and Healthy Ageing on October 8th. The G7 Health Ministerial meeting is the premier stage for international collaboration on critical health issues. The event aimed to emphasise the continued need for global coordination and commitment to healthy aging, brain health, and addressing the global burden of dementias including Alzheimer's disease. It showcased the progress that is being made on all fronts in the fight to end Alzheimer's, including policy advances, scientific innovations, and improved care pathways. The event convened high-level stakeholders – including government, policy makers, international organizations, industry, and civil society – around the objectives:

- Reiterating the importance of a person-centric approach to developing new treatments and strengthening health systems in support of people living with dementias including Alzheimer's Disease.

- Highlighting the progress countries have made since the 2023 G7 communiqué in Japan supported "policies and resources to care for people living with dementia," including on early detection of Alzheimer's disease and on the development of new therapeutics.

- Building consensus on the urgent need for sustained global collaboration toward healthy aging and brain health, including in addressing Alzheimer's and dementia, supporting the realization of national plans, coordination, and knowledge sharing at the global level.

DAC and all partners in the side event urged G7 governments to take the following actions to ensure that the benefits of scientific progress reach all patients:

- Expand Global and Cross-Sector Collaboration
- Invest in Healthcare System Preparedness
- Build the Capabilities for Early Detection and Accurate Diagnosis
- Accelerate the Development and Delivery of Alzheimer's Interventions
- Foster Research, Access, and Equity Worldwide



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EBC PROJECTS

Rethinking the Management of Brain Disorders

The aim of the Rethinking projects is to develop policy priorities around challenges in brain disorders and present a consensus on what needs to be achieved to resolve the most pressing challenges in brain conditions, today and in the future. There is a clear need to rethink the management of the brain disorders and redesign the care pathways to ensure optimal treatment and care for all people living with brain disorders in Europe.

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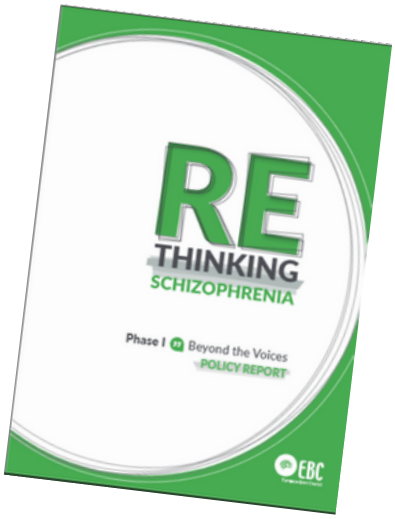
Rethinking Schizophrenia

In March 2024, EBC launched the "Rethinking Schizophrenia: Beyond the Voices" policy report, calling to improve the lives of people living with schizophrenia across Europe. It challenges the status quo and refreshes the European policy debate on people living with schizophrenia, recognises the essential role of social support and encourages multi-stakeholder-driven policy. "Rethinking Schizophrenia: Beyond the Voices" is more than a report; it is a call to action. It beckons us to challenge preconceptions, embrace diversity, and work collectively towards a future where individuals with schizophrenia are not defined by their diagnosis but celebrated for their resilience, strength, and unique contributions.

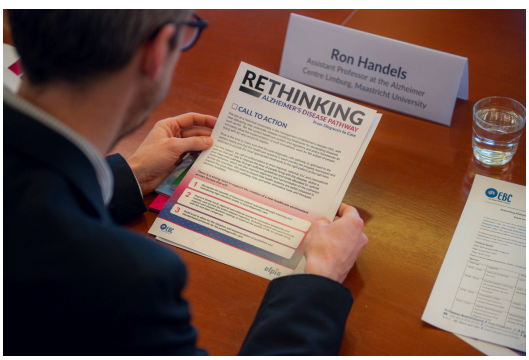




Rethinking Alzheimer's Disease

EBC, in collaboration with the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA), launched the "Rethinking Alzheimer's Disease Pathway: From Diagnosis to Care" Perspective Paper on the occasion of the World Alzheimer's Month in September. The aim of this report is not merely to document the status quo, but to challenge it—to rethink how we approach Alzheimer's treatment, care and management. By offering a comprehensive review of current practices, identifying challenges, gaps and barriers, and proposing policy recommendations, this report seeks to reshape the Alzheimer's disease healthcare pathway in ways that enhance outcomes and quality of life for all involved, and reduce the impact on society.

In order to bring to life this "Rethinking Alzheimer's' Perspective Paper", EFPIA and EBC organised an event at the European Parliament on 3 December 2024. The aim of this event was to convene key stakeholders in the field of Alzheimer's Disease and to rethink how we approach Alzheimer's disease treatment, care and management and shape the future of brain health in Europe.





EBC PROJECTS

Rare Brain Disease Ecosystem

Many initiatives are being undertaken in the rare disease field at both the EU and global levels. The overarching goal of this collaborative effort is to raise awareness and share knowledge about rare brain diseases, highlighting their impact on affected individuals and their families. Building on its ongoing activities in this area, EBC introduced the concept of a Rare Brain Disease Ecosystem at the 2024 Rare Disease Day event. This initiative aims to engage key stakeholders in identifying gaps, rethinking priorities, and advancing projects related to rare brain diseases in Europe.



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The Rare Brain Disease Ecosystem will serve as a scientifically grounded, transparent and independent Rare Brain Disease Ecosystem and Knowledge Hub. Its objectives include bringing together a diverse community —including research institutions, healthcare providers, patient associations, regulators, pharmaceutical companies, technology firms, and public and private payers—who share a common interest in developing effective, equitable, and sustainable solutions. The focus will be on facilitating the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and management of rare brain diseases, particularly in areas where there is a significant unmet public health need. Additionally, the initiative seeks to prioritise brain health by bridging scientific advancements with societal needs and informing policy through the creation of a shared knowledge platform.

Value of Education

Digital Care Pathways for Rare Brain Diseases: The Case of Phenylketonuria

The opportunities presented by data and digital health are expanding rapidly. While barriers remain to unlock their full potential, we are at an unprecedented moment of change. The European Health Data Space and the AI Act hold the promise of shaping a digital ecosystem that can accelerate the shift towards patient-centred, outcomes-focused, sustainable healthcare in Europe, improve patient safety and reduce avoidable harm. Patient care is undergoing a significant transformation, and three key factors – data, patient education and inclusivity – are at the forefront of this change. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the healthcare sector's digital transformation agenda. The delivery of telemedicine services instead of many face-to-face procedures were expanded and many healthcare services shifted online remotely.

The study looked at the unmet needs of patients related to information, education and communication in the management and monitoring of Phenylketonuria (PKU) along the digital care pathways. Data was collected from patients and caregivers in Ireland, Germany and Spain using a patient survey that was co-designed with PKU patient associations, to gather information about where and how digital tools can support PKU diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up. While looking at the patient perspective, the clinician perspective is equally important. Launched in July 2023, the project further examined the current state of digital transformation within healthcare systems and how to address the fundamental challenges that hinder the acceleration of the data-driven revolution. A Position Paper was released on 28 June 2024 on the occasion of Phenylketonuria Day. Results of the study were submitted to the Orphanet Journal of Rare Diseases by the end of 2024 for peer review and publication, which brought the project to a close.

This initiative was led by EBC in partnership with the Institute of Management at Sant'Anna School for Advanced Studies (SSSA) in Pisa, Italy.

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EBC PROJECTS

Value of Treatment III: Chronic Pain

Leading to major improvements in functioning and quality of life and reduced work absenteeism, the Interdisciplinary Chronic Pain Management (which combines medication, physiotherapy, psychotherapy/mental health interventions, complementary medicines and self-management) is not generally available to the patient population at large, partially due to the consideration that it may be too expensive.

As part of the EBC-led Value of Treatment (VoT) project, the VoT Chronic Pain case study aim compared the Interdisciplinary Multimodal Chronic Pain Management and the monomodal therapy (drug or physiotherapy or psychotherapy alone) from a health economics and outcomes perspective. The research focused on adults of working age, a pilot country (Germany) and three pain indications (fibromyalgia, painful diabetic neuropathy and non-specific low-back pain – respectively) as examples of primary chronic pain, secondary chronic pain and musculoskeletal pain somewhere in the continuum between primary and secondary chronic pain.

Presented at the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) 2024 World Congress on Pain in August 2024, VoT Chronic Pain conclusions confirm the Interdisciplinary Multimodal Chronic Pain Management as best practice healthcare intervention, as it leads to both cost savings and QALY gain in German adult population living with the three pain indications.

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EU PROJECTS

PRIME

Prevention and Remediation of Insulin Multimorbidity in Europe

The increasing number of people living with two or more chronic disorders (multimorbidities) poses an urgent need to better understand underlying mechanisms for better prevention and care throughout the life course. Starting from the hypothesis that the co-occurrence of brain and somatic conditions is caused by dysregulated insulin signalling, the Prevention and Remediation of Insulin Multimorbidity in Europe (PRIME) project ran from 2020-2024 and aimed to unravel the mechanisms underlying both brain disorders and somatic conditions (e.g., type 2 diabetes, obesity, metabolic syndrome). Over the past few years, PRIME contributed to advance knowledge on body-brain interactions and the comorbidities of insulinopathies. As Project Partner, EBC was responsible for contributing to communication and dissemination efforts, empowering early career researchers with advocacy knowledge and skills and facilitating the consortium relations with key stakeholders in the field. In 2024, a PRIME session was hosted at the Brain Innovation Days.



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EBC PROJECTS - EU PROJECTS

BRAINTEASER

Bringing Artificial Intelligence home for a better care of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and Multiple Sclerosis

Artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare is a booming field: the development of computer programs and systems able to emulate tasks normally requiring human intelligence such as recognising patterns, taking decisions, evaluating and predicting is set to revolutionise the care of people with a brain disease. BRAINTEASER (Bringing Artificial Intelligence home for a better care of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and multiple sclerosis, 2021-2025) is an EU-funded project seeking to exploit the value of big data (large clinical datasets, patient-generated data from wearables and air pollution data from sensors) to advance remote monitoring and clinical decision making in MS and ALS. Through an AI-based model, BRAINTEASER aims to promote fast, accurate feedback between patients and clinicians. As leader of liaison activities with projects and initiatives with similar or complementary objectives, EBC contributes to foster collaborations in the field and generate synergies to maximise impact. In 2024, a BRAINTEASER session was hosted at the Brain Innovation Days.



LEARN MORE

HEREDITARY

HetERogeneous sEmantic Data integratIon for the guT-bRain interplaY

Despite advancements in digitalization and machine learning, utilising medical data remains complex due to its diverse nature—ranging from genomic data and bio-images to bio-signals and medical texts. HEREDITARY (2024-2027) addresses the critical challenge of leveraging multimodal health data to improve disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment and deepen understanding of the gut-brain axis in the framework of neurodegenerative disorders. As leader of liaison activities with projects and initiatives with similar or complementary objectives, EBC partnered with two other projects on the creation of a cluster tackling pressing issues in the field in a collaborative approach and through 5 different Task Forces.

LEARN MORE

EU4H3I

EU4Health Integration and Impact Initiative

Where we live, the air we breathe, what we surround us with are all crucial determinants of our brain health. EU4H3I (EU4Health Integration and Impact Initiative, 2024-2025) is an EU-funded project promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation as well as holistic, multi-sectoral approach to pressing public health challenges. As a partner of the project, EBC convened two sessions: at Brain Innovation Days 2024 ("Protecting the Planet, Preserving Health") and on the occasion of the EU4Health Forum 2024 ("Societal and Economic Impact of Brain Health"), respectively.

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PUBLICATIONS

POSITION PAPERS



The Lancet Neurology

United action is needed to prioritise brain health

More than 3.4 billion people have conditions that affect the nervous system, and together such conditions are the leading cause of disease burden worldwide. This burden is increasing, but brain health still does not seem to be a high enough priority on international agendas. Several recent events and initiatives have highlighted the need to promote brain health, and a concerted effort is now required to build on this momentum, not only to increase awareness but also to ensure that the potential benefits for individuals and countries are realised.

Medscape Medical News

EU Brain Thematic Network Meets to Develop Policy Statement

"There is no health without brain health."
This statement from Tomas Ryan, PhD, associate professor of biochemistry at Trinity College in Dublin and member of the Programme Committee of the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies, underscored the theme of a robust discussion during a webinar sponsored by the European Brain Council (EBC) that took place on September 5. How can we preserve what is perhaps one of the scientifically least understood fundamental components of health, social, and economic system resiliency: the brain?



MEDIA PUBLICATIONS



La Libre

Brain Health: A Global Challenge in the Age of Ageing

Brain disorders are the leading cause of disability worldwide, ahead of cancer and cardiovascular diseases. In the space of thirty years, the number of cases has risen by 64%, and this situation is likely to worsen in the future. The interview with Frédéric Destrebecq, Executive Director of the European Brain Council, is available in French on the page 5.

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Orphanet Journal of Rare Diseases

The COVID-19 pandemic impact on continuity of care provision on rare brain diseases and on ataxias, dystonia and PKU. A scoping review

One of the most relevant challenges for healthcare providers during the COVID–19 pandemic has been assuring the continuity of care to patients with complex health needs such as people living with rare diseases (RDs). The COVID–19 pandemic accelerated the healthcare sector's digital transformation agenda. The delivery of telemedicine services instead of many face-to-face procedures has been expanded and, many healthcare services not directly related to COVID-19 treatments shifted online remotely.



MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

European Psychiatry

Quantifying the economic value of earlier and enhanced management of anorexia nervosa for adults in England, Germany and Spain: improving the care pathway



Anorexia nervosa (AN) is a serious mental illness. One-third of people develop severe, enduring, illness, adversely impacting quality of life with high health system costs. This study assessed the economic case for enhanced care for adults newly diagnosed with AN.

Early and effective treatment can change the trajectory of AN. Reducing the untreated duration of the disorder is crucial. There is a good economic case in different country contexts for measures to reduce waiting times between diagnosis and treatment and increase access to enhanced outpatient treatment.



IASP 2024 World Congress on Pain

Health Economic Gains of Structured Interdisciplinary Management of Chronic Low Back Pain

Chronic primary low-back pain, formerly called, non-specific back pain, is one of the largest health burdens in countries around the globe. Led by the European Brain Council within the Value of Treatment (VoT) initiative, partners analysed to what extent the cost of structured interdisciplinary management is offset by savings in direct and indirect cost of current standard of care. The aim of this study is to assess the cost-effectiveness of chronic pain management in Germany with and without structured interdisciplinary treatment in patients with chronic low back pain.

MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

IASP 2024 World Congress on Pain

Health Economic Gains of Structured Interdisciplinary Management of Fibromyalgia Syndrome

Fibromyalgia is one of the largest health burdens in countries around the globe. Led by the European Brain Council within the Value of Treatment (VoT) initiative, VoT Chronic Pain analysed to what extent the cost of structured interdisciplinary management is offset by savings in direct and indirect cost of continuing the current standard of care. The aim of this study is to assess the cost-effectiveness of chronic pain management in Germany with and without structured interdisciplinary treatment in patients with fibromyalgia.



IASP 2024 World Congress on Pain

Health Economic Gains of Multimodal Management of Diabetic Neuropathic Pain

Diabetic neuropathic pain is one of the largest health burdens in countries around the globe. Led by the European Brain Council within the Value of Treatment (VoT) initiative, VoT Chronic Pain analysed to what extent the cost of multimodal management is offset by savings in direct and indirect cost of continuing the current standard of care. The aim of this study is to assess the cost-effectiveness of chronic pain management in Germany with and without multimodal treatment in patients with diabetic neuropathic pain.



EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

MEMBER'S HIGHLIGHTS

The membership of the EBC consists of patient groups, scientific and professional organisations as well as industrial partners. As per its statutes, the EBC accepts as Full Members pan-European umbrella organisations with an interest in the brain. Any organisation that supports the aims of the EBC can apply to become an observer in order to contribute in an advisory capacity. Organisations or individuals that have contributed in an outstanding fashion to the aims of the EBC can also become honorary members.

ean european academy of neurology

THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF NEUROSURGICAL SOCIETIES

ecnp Neuroscience applied

INTERNATIONAL BRAIN IBRO RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

GAMIAN-EUROPE

EFNA EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS

EUROPEAN PAEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY SOCIETY

ΨEPA

FENS Federation of European Neuroscience Societies

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS (EFNA)

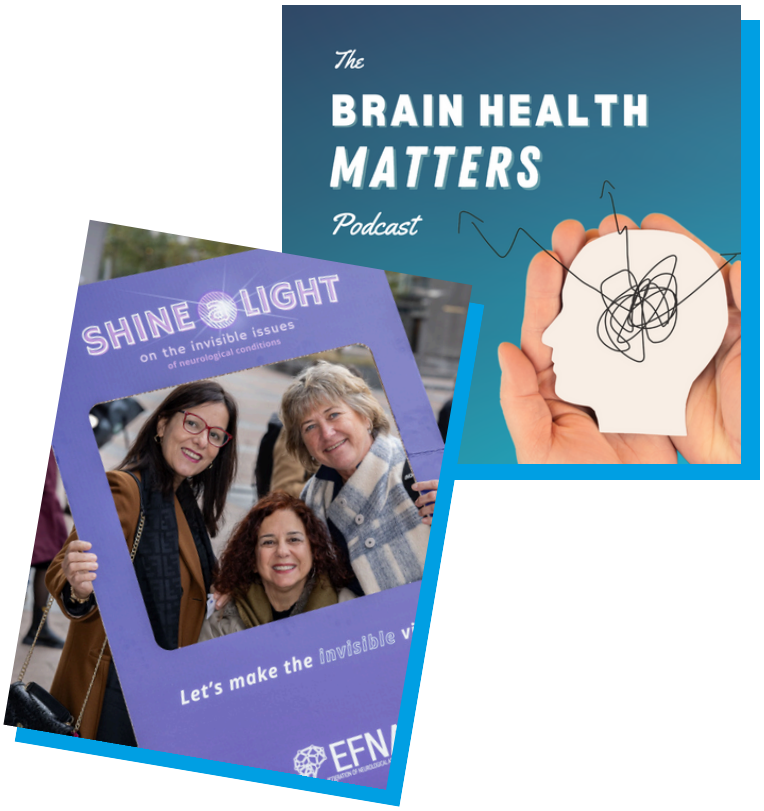




The European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) is an umbrella organisation representing 19 pan-European and International neurology patient advocacy groups.

Early in the year EFNA established its first Community Advisory Board. The group's active engagement has enriched EFNA's work and their input has been instrumental in both shaping the organisation's initiatives and ensuring that its programs are reflective of the diverse needs of our community.

EFNA's activities before and after the EU elections led to the continued influence of the MEP Interest Group on Brain Health & Neurological Conditions. The support of 17 MEPs in the new mandate and the resounding success of the Group's meeting in November reaffirm the significance of this advocacy work in driving positive change at EU-level.



Throughout 2024, EFNA has been deeply committed to high-level advocacy, participating in the Science Summit at the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York and the WHO Forum in Geneva. A written statement at the 74th session of the WHO Europe Regional Committee further amplified EFNA's efforts to champion the needs of individuals with neurological conditions on a global scale. In October, EFNA was appointed to the Commission's HTA Stakeholder Network.

EFNA launched the latest two further episodes of the Brain Health Matters podcast series in 2024, reaffirming their commitment to providing valuable resources and information to empower and support individuals across the neurological community. Listen to these episodes now at www.efna.net/podcast.

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EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS ADVOCACY NETWORKS (GAMIAN-EUROPE)

Throughout 2024, GAMIAN-Europe (GE) worked tirelessly to raise awareness and provide resources addressing mental health challenges through various campaigns, reports, videos and toolkits.
One of the key milestones was the conclusion of the highly successful Vibrant Mind initiative in December. Inspiring exhibition showcased the artwork of individuals living with mental health conditions across 10 different venues in different countries. GE also launched the second phase of the Peer Support Virtual Library on November 25th. A platform that serves as a valuable resource for individuals seeking guidance and connection in managing mental health conditions.

In October, GE ran a campaign and published a report focusing on major mental health conditions. These efforts, timed to coincide with World Mental Health Day, aimed to shed light on the stigma surrounding these conditions. A supporting video campaign was launched, achieving significant outreach.

September was an especially dynamic month: GE produced a report and a campaign on the intersection of migraine and mental health done in collaboration with The European Migraine and Headache Alliance. Another initiative was GE's participation in World Suicide Prevention Day 2024, which centered on preventing suicide among older adults. A report was produced based on surveys and workshops conducted with older adults who had direct or indirect experiences with suicide.

In May, in collaboration with Cancer Patients' Europe, GE launched the Empower and Connect Toolkit, a resource designed to help individuals, caregivers, and professionals manage the complexities of co-occurring cancer and depression. May also featured the Mental Health Week Campaign, which addressed potential biases in artificial intelligence (AI) towards individuals living with mental health conditions. A series of video interviews with patients were widely disseminated.



In March, to mark Brain Awareness Week, GE launched an interactive resource aimed at deepening understanding of the complex relationship between the brain and mental health conditions. Additionally, significant progress was made on the forthcoming report. The Future of Digital Mental Health (DMH) for Schizophrenia Care, set to launch in March 2025. This report explores the transformative potential of digital tools in improving schizophrenia care.

GAMIAN-Europe has been actively engaged in the European-funded projects it is involved in, with achievements including the publication of a series of project-related interviews coordinated by GE, newsletters, events and the establishment of Patient Advisory Boards for two initiatives, Psych-STRATA and TRUSTING.

GE also participated in key conferences across Europe, contributing through dedicated sessions and exhibition booths where these campaigns and materials were promoted.

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF NEUROLOGY (EAN)

EAN's 2024 Highlights: A Year of Milestones and Achievements



The European Academy of Neurology (EAN) is delighted to look back on a landmark year, full of significant events, impactful initiatives, and celebratory milestones. This year, the EAN celebrated both its own 10th anniversary and the 30th anniversary of its official journal, the European Journal of Neurology. These milestones were commemorated throughout the year, with the 10th EAN Congress in Helsinki serving as the centrepiece. The congress welcomed over 7,000 participants onsite and nearly 2,000 online, delivering an outstanding scientific and educational programme while celebrating EAN's first decade.

The year began with the launch of the EAN Advocacy Training Programme, running from January to June. This initiative trained participants in advocacy, public health, and communication skills to champion brain health and neurology. The WHO featured the programme in their IGAP Toolkit, recognising its impact.
In May, the EAN hosted the European Brain Health Summit in Brussels, attended by Her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians. The event focused on a holistic approach to brain health, including prevention, public awareness, and managing neurological disorders.



Autumn saw the EAN getting involved in three high-profile events. In September, EAN representatives moderated a panel discussion at EBC's Science Summit during the UNGA in New York, and were also present at the European Health Forum Gastein in Austria, moderating a session on promoting brain health, featuring leaders from key neurological organisations. In October, EAN co-hosted an event on Prioritising Brain Health: A Global Imperative for Public Health, alongside the G7 Health Ministers' Meeting in Ancona, Italy, emphasising brain health as a global public health priority.

The EAN also published the inaugural Brain Health Mission report, showcasing its 2024 activities. Highlights included the 2024 Brain Health Summit, the Brain Health School Challenge, Helsinki's designation as European Capital of Brain Health 2024, and various activities at the EAN Congress.

In the latter part of the year, a major focus was the production of a new paper: A Roadmap Towards Promoting and Improving Brain Health in Europe and Closing the Awareness and Funding Gap, which has since been published in the European Journal of Neurology. The paper outlines plans to promote and improve Brain Health in Europe and beyond, and aims to inspire further dialogue, as well as concrete and much-needed actions.



Finally, 2024 saw preparations getting underway for the EAN Congress 2025, in Helsinki on 21-24 June.

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EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF NEUROLOGICAL SOCIETIES (EANS)





In 2024, EANS and its members made significant progress in improving neurosurgical patient care through training, education, and research. The EANS 2024 Congress in Sofia was a remarkable success, with nearly 2,000 participants from 89 countries. The Congress was a testament to innovation, education, and leadership within the European neurosurgical community, featuring ground-breaking presentations, engaging discussions, and an unprecedented level of scientific excellence.

EANS' commitment to training and education has never been stronger. Three EANS training courses (Edinburgh, Copenhagen, and Prague) and four specialised courses (EANS Research Course, EANS Young Neurosurgeons' Meeting, EANS Vascular Section Meeting, and the EANS Advanced Course in Spinal Surgery) were organised. At the same time, EANS continues to offer multiple practical courses tailored to neurosurgeons in training, including seven hands-on courses and specialised microsurgery courses in Cluj and Rotterdam, designed to equip neurosurgeons with the necessary skills to excel in microneurosurgery.









A significant milestone in 2024 was the impressive Impact Factor of 1.9 for Brain & Spine, just three years after the journal's launch! This accomplishment reflects the high-quality research published and the hard work of the authors, reviewers, and editorial team, led by Editors-in-Chief Wilco Peul and Franz Kandziora. Another important achievement was the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding between EANS and the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS). This agreement includes an exchange programme for physicians in residency training, with EANS offering free registration to two AANS-selected physicians to attend EANS training courses, while AANS offers the same to six EANS-selected physicians to attend AANS/NREF courses. The launch of the FEBNS ceremony during the Sofia Congress was a landmark event in the history of EANS. This ceremony recognises those who have successfully completed both Part I and Part II of the exams to obtain the prestigious FEBNS Diploma and highlights the importance of standardised neurosurgical training throughout Europe.

EANS has strengthened its collaboration with other European neuroscience societies, including reciprocal invitations and active participation in important events such as the congresses of the European Society of Neuroradiology (ESNR) and the European Academy of Neurology (EAN). During the EANS 2024 Congress in Sofia, a special symposium was organised where EANS gathered with its European neuroscience partners, including the European Brain Council (EBC), EAN, ESNR, and the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC).

EANS has also taken steps to care for the most vulnerable patients by establishing a Working Group on Geriatric Neurosurgery—addressing the unique challenges presented by an ageing population. In the spirit of continuous improvement, EANS is exploring ways to enhance its organisational culture, ensuring EANS remains a supportive and transparent professional home for all its members.



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European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS)

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF NEUROPSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY (ECNP)

Tying ECNP's activities together in 2024 was the ECNP Roadmap on Precision Psychiatry initiative, to build alignment around a biologically based diagnostic framework for neuropsychiatric disorders. The initiative was launched at the ECNP New Frontiers Meeting in Nice, France, on 17-18 March 2024, `A consensus roadmap for a new diagnostic framework for mental disorders', which brought together stakeholders from all over the world to explore the precision psychiatry's progress and potential. The momentum of the meeting also carried into the ECNP Knowledge Hub, the College's new online learning and content platform. Building on the experience of ECNP's longstanding Workshop on Applied Neuroscience and former Schools, the Knowledge hub brought together a range of new online course to bridge fundamental brain research and treatment science and open the way to new approaches and, ultimately, new therapies.

In an allied spirit, the ECNP Early Career Academy (ECA) was founded to nurture young talent by offering a career launchpad into applied neuroscience and providing a pathway through the College's array of learning and career development opportunities. The ECNP Networks programme was also expanded, in keeping with the College's mission to foster European research alliances and provide a platform to educate, inspire and disseminate applied neuroscience research, with the admission of two new Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), on Clinical Outcomes in Early-Phase Clinical Trials and Perinatal Psychiatry.



ECNP's suite of awards recognised the field's outstanding contributions to applied neuroscience and translational research with the ECNP Neuropsychopharmacology Award being conferred on Elias Eriksson, Sweden; the ECNP Lifetime Achievement Award on Jan van Ree, the Netherlands, and Tomas Hökfelt, Sweden; and the ECNP Rising Star Award on Cristiana Cruceanu, Sweden, and Robert McCutcheon, United Kingdom. Over 100 other awards and subsidies were given to early career scientists and researchers from countries with a developing economy.

In October the 37th ECNP Congress was held in Milan, attracting almost 7,000 participants from some 100 countries, including nearly 700 online. Further highlights included the ongoing strengthening of the ECNP journal European Neuropsychopharmacology (impact factor of 6.1) and the consolidation of ECNP's new open-access title, Neuroscience Applied, both targeting the intersection between human biology, neuropsychiatric disorders, and treatment science; the ninth ECNP Workshop on Clinical Research Methods in Barcelona in November; and the 140,000th download of the Neuroscience-based Nomenclature (NbN) app.

Making precision psychiatry a reality was also the basis of the ECNP Roadmap Meeting on Precision Psychiatry on 20-21 January 2025, Frankfurt, Germany, attended by 150 scientists, industry professionals, regulators and patients, and will be further developed at the 2025 ECNP New Frontiers Meeting, `Targeting neural circuits in psychiatry', on 23-24 March in Nice, France.

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

EUROPEAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION (EPA)

2024 marked another milestone year for the EPA, as the Association continued to expand its influence and collaborations to deliver on its key priorities, raising the profile of psychiatry and mental health across Europe. The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the 32nd Congress of Psychiatry in Budapest from 6 to 9 April 2024. For the second year in a row, more than 4 000 participants representing over 100 countries gathered in person to exchange ideas, make connections, and engage in an ever-growing scientific programme.

This year also saw the finalisation of the European Board Examination in Psychiatry, in collaboration with the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) – Psychiatry Section and the European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees (EFPT). With a growing cohort of candidates and the inaugural exam set for 28 February 2025, the EPA is on track to offer a unified standard of excellence for European psychiatry.



2024 was a year of new scientific collaborations for the EPA. Partnerships were established with the European Sleep Research Society (ESRS), the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM), the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP), and the European Federation of Addiction Societies (EUFAS). The EPA contributed to the EBC Rethinking Schizophrenia project and GAMIAN-Europe initiative on The Future of Digital Mental Health for the Care of People with Schizophrenia.

This was also a seminal year for EU policy and advocacy. The EPA came together with EUFAMI and GAMIAN-Europe to establish the Trilogue of Mental Health, a partnership to raise the voices of patients, family carers, and care professionals ahead of the 2024 EU Elections. The EPA also contributed to the EBC No Health Without Brain Health campaign, supported the EBC Pledge for Science and advanced its engagement with the EAN Brain Health Mission.

The EBC Brain Innovation Days on 13 and 14 November and the EAN Brain Health Summit on 7 May 2024 were among the highlights of 2024.

Looking back on this eventful year with its community and partners, the EPA sees a strong foundation on which to build an excellent 2025.

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European Psychiatric Association - EPA

EPA Minds Online

European Psychiatric Association

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

EUROPEAN PAEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY SOCIETY (EPNS)

The European Paediatric Neurology Society (EPNS) is an international, independent non-profit making Society for physicians, health professionals, scientists, and students with research and/or clinical interest in Paediatric Neurology. The Society's mission is to promote excellence in patient care, research, and education to improve the neurological outcome of children and young people in Europe and across the world. With membership numbers continuing to increase, 2024 has been a year of strengthening established activities, increasing advocacy efforts and looking forward to the future.

The 8th biennial EPNS Research Meeting in October 2024 in Ljubljana welcomed Paediatric Neurologist researchers at all stages of their career in an environment that stimulated international collaborations.



A scientifically stimulating programme has been put together for the 16th EPNS Congress in Munich Germany on 8-11 July 2025 where participants will be part of a unique ABC format to learn and network on an international stage.



The EPNS continues to focus on promoting excellence and providing a comprehensive learning environment in Paediatric Neurology. During 2024 the EPNS Moodle has been enhanced and the EPNS webinar programme maintains high attendance with the introduction of the new EEG Club webinars. The EPNS is thrilled to continue to support the EPNS Visiting Teachers and EPNS Fellowships. In 2024, EPNS hosted training courses in Ferrara covering the topics 'Acute Neurology' and 'Neurophysiological Investigations', the biennial EPNS Masterclass in Cambridge, and the 6th Biennial EPNS Caucasus Teaching Course in Tbilisi which covered the topic 'Neonatal Neurology'.



Significant strides in EPNS advocacy efforts were made in 2024, particularly for the implementation of the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on epilepsy and other neurological disorders (IGAP). 44 EPNS IGAP representatives in Europe are playing an essential role in lobbying at a national level and plans are taking shape for the EPNS to provide additional support to help the EPNS IGAP representatives in this role.



In addition, the EPNS continued to build strong alliances with other organisations who share similar goals, such as with the European Brain Council (EBC). These partnerships amplify our collective voice on behalf of Paediatric Neurology and bolster our efforts to address the healthcare gaps.

The Young EPNS (YEPNS) is an established integral part of the EPNS, and their efforts play a vital role in the operation of the EPNS.

The European Journal of Paediatric Neurology, the official EPNS journal. Published 6 times a year, it accepts high- quality papers on the whole spectrum of paediatric neurological disease.

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN NEUROSCIENCE SOCIETIES (FENS)

In 2024, the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS) made significant progress in advancing neuroscience through impactful initiatives. The FENS Forum 2024 in Vienna was the highlight of the year, drawing over 7,000 attendees, 4,000 posters, and 250 speakers. As Europe's largest neuroscience event, it fostered collaboration across disciplines and borders, highlighting the societal impact of scientific discoveries.



Alongside the Forum, key FENS initiatives thrived, including the European Neuroscience Conference by Doctoral Students (ENCODS), the International Brain Bee, and career-focused programmes such as the Early Career Training Programme and FENS/IBRO-PERC Exchange Fellowships.

FENS also hosted two highly regarded Brain Conferences: "Neuronal Protein Synthesis Mechanisms in Health and Disease" and "Circuits for Movement." These meetings attracted researchers eager to explore cutting-edge topics. Similarly, FENS Schools provided immersive learning experiences, including the FENS-Chen Institute-NeuroLéman Summer School on neurotechnologies and AI tools and the FENS-Hertie Winter School on protein aggregation in neurodegenerative disorders.

The ALBA Network expanded its global presence, championing diversity, equity, and inclusion in neuroscience. Supported by FENS and partners such as IBRO and the Society for Neuroscience (SfN), ALBA launched the inaugural ALBA-Roche Prize for Excellence in Neuroscience and hosted workshops and webinars to further its mission.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence (FKNE) remained a driving force in European neuroscience, advocating for brain research, fostering collaboration, and mentoring early-career scientists. This year also marked the creation of the FENS Advocacy Committee, dedicated to promoting curiosity-driven science and advocating for increased brain research funding. Working closely with the FENS Committee for Animal Research (CARE), the new committee will reinforce FENS's efforts to engage policymakers, stakeholders, and the public on critical issues such as research funding, ethics, and the societal benefits of neuroscience.

The European Journal of Neuroscience (EJN) continued to serve as a vital resource for the community, prioritising transparency in peer review and supporting early-career researchers. FENS encourages members to publish in EJN, recognising its key role in funding the society's activities.

Looking ahead, the FENS Regional Meeting (FRM) in Oslo from 16–19 June 2024 will foster regional collaboration as the first FRM in Scandinavia. Preparations are also underway for the FENS Forum 2026 in Barcelona, a city with a rich scientific heritage and cultural appeal, promising an inspiring setting for neuroscience exchange. Through these initiatives, FENS continues to unite, support, and advocate for the European neuroscience community.

EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

INTERNATIONAL BRAIN RESEARCH ORGANIZATION (IBRO)

In 2024, the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) continued its mission to advance neuroscience globally. Focused on supporting neuroscientists at all career stages, IBRO awarded 624 grants throughout the year, offering opportunities ranging from individual travel grants and exchange fellowships to support for high-impact meetings and events. Additionally, 18 IBRO-supported schools and training programs were implemented, fostering international knowledge exchange and capacity building.

A major highlight in 2024 was the launch of the Neuroscience Capacity Accelerator for Mental Health (NCAMH) program in collaboration with Wellcome. This initiative is designed to empower mental health research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. Awardees from 11 projects engaged in impactful research and participated in professional development activities, building lasting collaborations expected to grow beyond the program.

IBRO also reinforced its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within global neuroscience. New initiatives such as the IBRO Society Meeting Support, Speaker Support, Neuroscience Training Grants, and the Fund for Undergraduate Research Internships were introduced to address the evolving needs of the neuroscience community.

2024 also marked the arrival of a new team of Chief Editors for Neuroscience, IBRO's flagship journal. Their diverse expertise has helped maintain the journal's status as a platform for high-quality, impactful research. In addition, IBRO Neuroscience Reports, IBRO's open-access journal, launched a special issue highlighting early-career scientists' contributions to the field. A new author interview series was also introduced, providing insight into the work of distinguished researchers.

Looking ahead to 2025, IBRO will continue its focus on capacity building and networking. With a presence at key events worldwide, IBRO remains committed to engaging with the international neuroscience community and addressing its evolving needs.



EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI)

The European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI) has an ongoing commitment to improving care and welfare for people affected by mental illness. EUFAMI has a number of programmes supporting people affected by severe mental illness and the organisations representing them across Europe.

LEARN MORE

The European Sleep Research Study

The European Sleep Research Society is an international scientific non-profit organisation that promotes research on sleep and related areas, to improve the care for patients with sleep disorders and to facilitate the dissemination of information regarding sleep research and sleep medicine.

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European Charter - International Federation of Clinical Neurophysiology (EC-IFCN)

The European Chapter is one out of five chapters of the International Federation of Clinical Neurophysiology. It encompasses at present 35 European and African member societies. The Chapter is represented by an Executive Board and the delegates of each Member Society.

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EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

European Stroke Organisation (ESO)

The European Stroke Organisation (ESO) is a pan-European society of stroke researchers and physicians, national and regional stroke societies and lay organisations that was founded in December 2007. Their aim is to reduce the incidence and impact of stroke by changing the ways that stroke is viewed and treated.

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Mental Power – Brain Health Foundation

The mission of the Mental Power – Brain Health Foundation is to promote brain health and raise awareness of mental health in the public debate, counteract the stigmatization of people affected by the crisis, promote prevention in the area of brain health in the form of holistic therapies aimed at recovery, and advocate for the creation of systemic solutions combining health, social and environmental care in order to improve the quality of life of those affected by diseases.

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EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

NATIONAL BRAIN COUNCILS

National Brain Councils (NBCs) are independent and multidisciplinary councils that unite scientific organisations of neuroscientists, psychiatrists, neurologists, neurosurgeons, patients' associations, as well as the pharmaceutical and medical device industry, in order to speak with one strong voice — at the national level —on behalf of the "brain space".

EBC realises that the best results are created in close alignment with NBCs in a bottom-up and top-down approach, thereby ensuring optimal key stakeholder management on both national and EU level. It is especially true at the country level, given that the organisation, management and funding of health services, fall within the exclusive competence of the national governments.

Therefore, although independent, NBCs are aligned with the main goals of EBC. These include promoting brain health, raising awareness of brain disorders, addressing stigmatisation, stimulating brain related research, fostering exchange between different disciplines and associations, promoting prevention, and lobbying governments for enhanced research and treatments, in order to improve the quality of life of people affected by brain disorders.

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EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

10TH ACADEMY OF NATIONAL BRAIN COUNCILS

The 10th National Brain Councils Academy (NBCs) was held from 8 to 9 May 2024 in Pula, Croatia. This year, the meeting was integrated into the 3rd International Conference on Neurological Disorders and Neurorestoration and brought together several representatives from European NBCs, including Belgium, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Serbia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

The meeting heard from Karim Berkouk (Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission) and Dr Neerja Chowdhary (Technical Officer, World Health Organization (WHO), speaking on the impact of AI in science policies for neuroscience and health" and the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders, respectively.

During the meeting, the NBCs shared their insights on good practices and national strategies for advancing brain health in Europe, providing updates on their respective national brain health plans. EBC presented an overview of its EU Elections Manifesto 2024 and ongoing advocacy work. The focus of the second part of the programme shifted towards data, with a panel discussion dedicated to the establishment of the European Brain Health Data Hub, an association proposing to share patient data among European health institutions. The aim of this new initiative is to enhance research on mental health, particularly by addressing gaps in data availability. This initiative from the Belgian Brain Council, led by Roland Pochet (Secretary General, Belgian Brain Council) and Gregory Lewkowick (Professor, University of Brussels) was endorsed by the Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Labour, Pierre-Yves Dermagne.





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EBC MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

EBC's Industry Board brings together leaders from across the brain health sector, creating a collaborative platform to advance research, advocacy and policy. Industry members gain access to a robust network, enabling them to initiate and join critical research projects, political advocacy efforts and awareness-raising initiatives, all the while staying informed on real-time developments, which allow them to react dynamically to emerging challenges and opportunities in the brain health landscape. EBC gains critical industry perspectives that bridge scientific research with market realities, ensuring its initiatives remain innovative, scalable and aligned with the needs of patients and healthcare systems.





















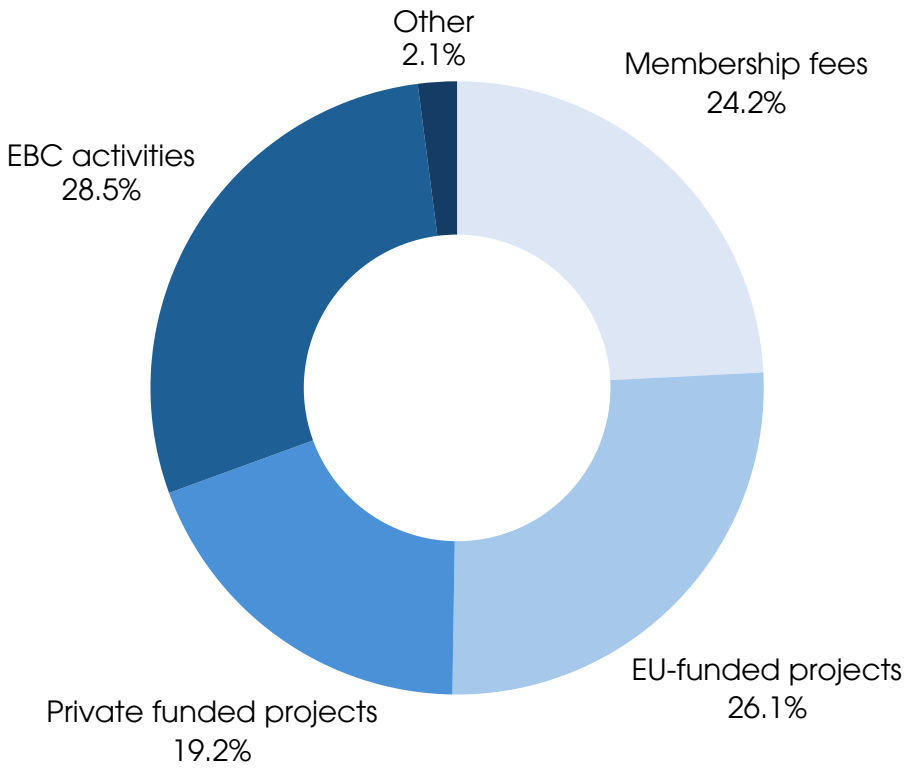




FINANCIAL REPORT

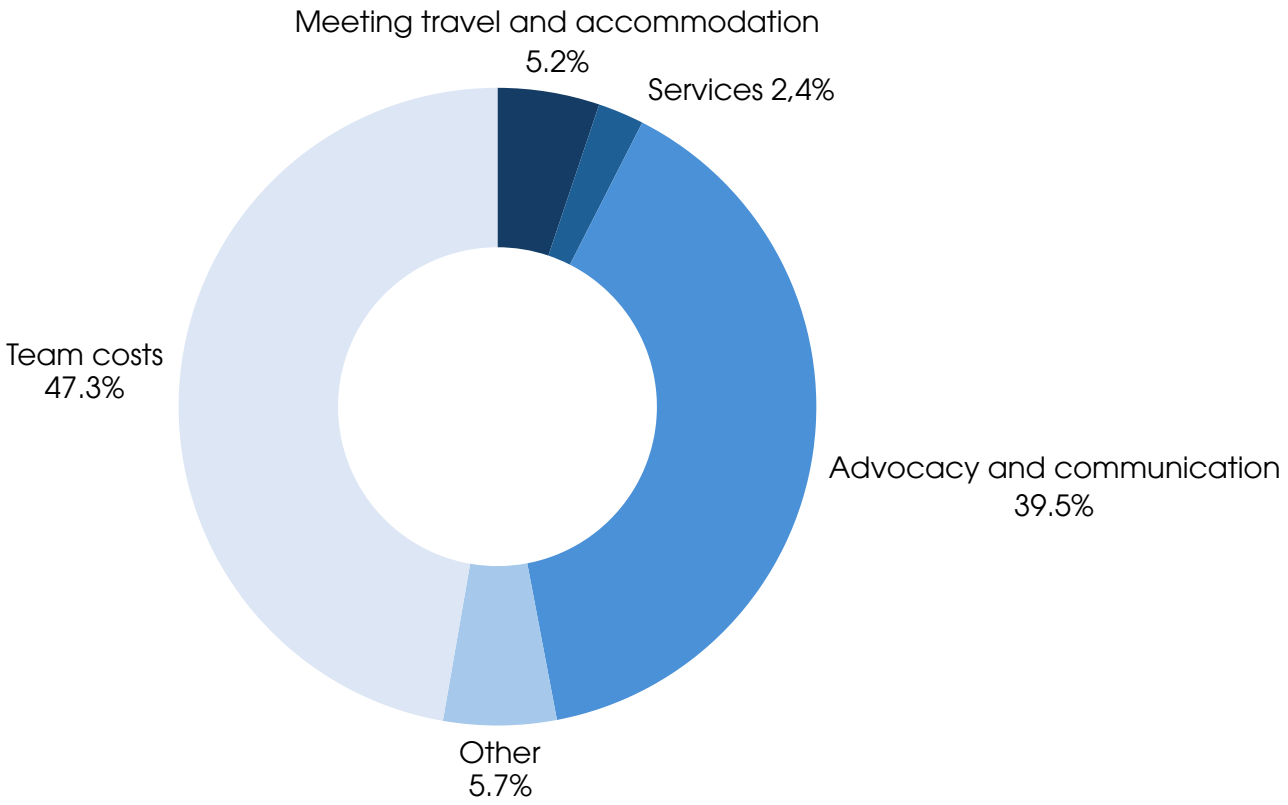
EBC 2024 Income

1.865.608€



EBC 2024 Expenses

1.738.236€



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President



PROF. CLAUDIO BASSETTI
Vice-President



PROF. JUAN LERMA
Vice-President



PROF. PETER FALKAI
Treasurer



DR. ORLA GALVIN
Board Member



PÉTER KÉRI
Board Member



DR. JOSÉ L. LANCIEGO
Board Member



DR. AKI LAAKSO
Board Member
- January 2023 - September 2024



PROF. SAMEER ZUBERI
Board Member

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STEPHANIE KRAMER
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Administrative Manager

RESEARCH TEAM



KRISTIEN AARTS
Chief Research &
innovation Officer



VINCIANE QUOIDBACH
Research Project Manager



DIEYENABA FAYE
Project Manager



ANA-LIVIA COSTACHE
Research Assistant
*June - December 2024

EBC BRUSSELS TEAM

COMMUNICATIONS, ADVOCACY & POLICY TEAM



DOMINIKA SUCHONOVA
Communications & Advocacy Coordinator



HUGO HERMANTIN
Policy Coordinator



TAO ISABEL BUCK
Communications & Events Officer
*Started September 2024



MICHALIS TZACHEILIS
Policy Officer
*Started September 2024



ANNETTE DUMAS
Senior Policy Advisor
*Until August 2024



ADRIEN WAUTERS
Policy Assistant
*February - June 2024



ALEKSANDRA KORDIALIK
Communications Assistant
*March - August 2024

European Brain Council
Brussels Team



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