



Federation of European Chemical Societies  
Fédération des Sociétés Chimiques Européennes  
Föderation Europäischer Chemischer Gesellschaften  
Союз Европейских Химических Обществ

### 10 Years Federation of European Chemical Societies (FECS)

by dr. W. Fritsche\* and Dr. M. A. Preisich\*\* honorary secretaries of FECS

Ten years pass very quickly in the life of mankind, similarly in the existence of an international organization. If we intend now to look back to the first ten years of the *Federation of European Chemical Societies*, our purpose has not been to celebrate, but to compile and assess what FECS has done, in order to inform our colleagues in Europe about these activities and to create a base for future developments.

In reality we have to render account about more than ten years, since the necessity of the Federation arose in the mid-sixties. It was felt that quite a number of professional and scientific activities are necessitated on a European basis.

A number of people began to think and discuss what should be done. These were people who played some role in the life of societies with big membership and also of societies with small membership, societies from East, Middle- and West-Europe.

A Working Party consisting of seven people

Prof. F. Čuta (*Czechoslovak Chemical Society*)

Dr. W. Fritsche (*Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker*)

Dr. F. Martin (*Société Chimique de Belgique*)

Prof. Dr. A. Maschka (*Verein Österreichischer Chemiker*)

Dr. D. P. den Os (*Royal Netherlands Chemical Society*)

Dr. R. E. Parker (*Royal Institute of Chemistry*)

Mr. M. A. Preisich (*Hungarian Chemical Society*)

was convened in 1968 to prepare draft statutes of the Federation. These have been accepted, subject to certain amendments by the Meeting of Secretaries and other Representatives in Rome on 30 June 1969.

This Working Party which subsequently became the Steering Committee for the new Federation circulated copies of the draft Statutes in four languages to all European societies. This was followed by asking the societies whether they would agree to enter into membership of the Federation. Since seventeen societies' response was affirmative, it was decided to organize the Inaugural Meeting in Prague on 3 July 1970.

#### *Objects of the Federation*

The objects of FECS have been defined in the Statutes: »The Federation is a voluntary association, the object of which is to promote co-operation in Europe between those non-profit-making learned societies in the field of chemistry whose membership consists largely of individual qualified chemists. It seeks to co-operate

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with international organisations — especially the *International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry*, to act as channel of communication for such organisations, and to avoid overlap with them on projects initiated by itself or by them.

A fundamental principle governing the work of the Federation is that nothing done by or in the name of the Federation shall detract from the autonomy of any of the participating societies.

The federation seeks to achieve its objects by the following means:

- Providing a forum for the exchange of opinion on matters affecting chemistry and chemists;
- Collecting and disseminating information on the activities of the member societies;
- Co-ordinating the work of the member societies in the field of chemical education (including education throughout the professional life of a chemist) and encouraging the exchange of information in this area;
- Encouraging conferences for the discussion of chemical science and its application, and the compilation of such events;
- Exchanging invitations to important events held by member societies in order to allow reciprocal attendance by their individual members;
- Establishing working parties to survey and report on specific aspects or areas of chemistry in a European context;
- Encouraging collaboration between member societies in the field of chemical literature and chemical documentation;
- Taking any other measures conducive to the objects of the Federation.«

### *Membership*

According to the Statutes, the membership of the Federation is restricted to European non-profit making scientific and technical societies in the field of chemistry. Europe in this connection is considered according to its geographical boundaries.

The Inaugural Meeting of the General Assembly admitted as members 18 societies (from 14 countries). Since then the General Assembly yearly discussed the acceptance of new member societies applying for membership. Now the membership consists of 30 societies from 24 countries, embracing almost the whole of Europe. It may be stated, that the societies entering the Federation after it has been set up, were encouraged by its European and international acceptance, as well as by its results.

It has been found useful to produce condensed information about the member societies — in order to get acquainted with each other's work — and the Secretariat therefore produced a booklet entitled »Information on member societies«. The fourth edition of this booklet is being prepared now.

### *Administration of the Federation*

As there are no membership fees in the FECS, the Federation has no funds. The activities of members of the governing bodies of the Federation are entirely honorary. The governing bodies are: the General Assembly, the Advisory Board and the Executive Committee.

The responsibilities and tasks of these bodies are defined in the Statutes. Their decisions are carried out by the Secretariat.

It is worthwhile to mention that the Advisory Board has been formed by the General Assembly in 1976 in addition to the Executive Committee which was formed immediately at the foundation of FECS, as it was evident that the scientific and administrative tasks needing attention have increased to a large extent and their division between the two bodies was felt necessary.

The General Assembly consists of one representative from each member society. Every representative has one vote. The General Assembly meets once yearly.

The Advisory Board consists of six members, elected by the General Assembly (based on proposals from member societies) for a period of three years (one re-election is possible) and the chairmen of Working Parties of the Federation, who are ex-officio members.

The Executive Committee consists of nine members, elected similarly as the members of the Advisory Board.

The honorary Secretaries of the FECS participate in meetings of governing bodies. If they are not otherwise members of the body in question — without voting rights.

### *Relations of FECS*

At the Inaugural Meeting of the General Assembly it has been decided to apply to IUPAC for affiliation of the Federation as an Associated Organisation. This application has been accepted by the IUPAC Council in July 1971. In the following years care has been taken to avoid any overlap and to increase the communication among the various bodies of the two organizations. This purpose has been achieved mainly by

- restricting the activity of the Federation to problem being primarily of interest for European chemists, and
- asking for cooperation in the working bodies of FECS of people who are active on the same field in IUPAC and excluding overlaps in this manner.

Great care has been taken to inform UNESCO about the activities of the FECS, especially in the field of chemical education and professional affairs. This has been done by inviting a representative of UNESCO as observer to each General Assembly. As a consequence UNESCO became interested in the work done by FECS, used its results and financed (at least partly) some of the bigger projects.

From the start the question of the EUCHEM Conferences has been discussed practically at every meeting of the governing bodies of the Federation. It is generally known that the EUCHEM-Committee, which is a group of outstanding scientists — without statutes — organizes meetings in Europe along guidelines similar to the ones of the Gordon Conferences. These meetings always take place in Western Europe, it rarely happened that a participant or lecturer from Eastern Europe was invited. The Federation proposed to the EUCHEM-Committee that »All European countries should be given the chance to participate in the organization of EUCHEM Conferences«. Since this proposal was rejected by the EUCHEM-Committee — FECS decided to start organizing FECEM Conferences for active scientific discussion among a limited number of scientists in specially defined chemical fields in any country where a member society of FECS exists.

### *Working Parties of FECS*

Parallel with the setting up of the Federation in such manner that a good functioning should be ensured, the working bodies have been formed successively. These bodies have the form of Working Parties, directed by a chairman and consisting of the delegates of members societies, who decided to participate in the work of a particular Working Party. The activities of the Working Parties contribute considerably to the overall activity of the Federation, since the Working Parties do or direct all the work which appears as the Federation's activity before our colleagues in Europe. At present the following Working Parties are active:

- Working Party on Professional Affairs,
- Working Party on Chemical Education,
- Working Party on Analytical Chemistry,
- Working Party on Organometallic Chemistry,
- Working Party on Food Chemistry,
- Working Party on Chemistry and the Environment,
- Discussion Group on History of Chemistry.

The Working Parties produce relevant information for the use of member societies — in the form of leaflets or booklets — and they initiate and undertake the scientific organization of conferences — events on actual topics.

### *Events of the Federation*

Events of the Federation may be classified into three groups.

1) *Conferences, Symposia* etc., are initiated and scientifically organized by the Working Parties. The administrative tasks are covered by a member — the host society — which cares of the management of the event, printing of circulars and

other documents of the event, providing lecture rooms, reserving hotel rooms for the participants etc. The financial part is also taken over by the host society.

2) *FECEM conferences*: There also is a division of tasks between FECS or one of its Working Parties and the host society, but strict guidelines are applied according to which the number of participants has to be limited (to max. 100), normally from Europe, and ample time has to be provided in the time-table of the Conference for discussion sessions.

3) *FECS sponsorship*: Member societies of FECS organizing outstanding national or international events may apply to the Federation for a sponsorship. The decision rests with the Advisory Board. If sponsorship is granted, then

- the emblem of the Federation,
- the fact that the event is sponsored by the Federation and
- the serial number of the event

is printed on all circulars and other documents of the event.

The rapid increase in the activity of the Federation — due to the outstanding work of the Working Parties — may be well assessed on the hand of the statistical evaluation (Table I):

TABLE I  
*Events of the Federation*

Year	Number of events	Number of participants	Number of papers
1972	1	400	118
1975	2	900	270
1976	1	106	50
1977	4	910	210
1978	4	1100	370
1979	7	1300	270
1980	10	....	...
1981	3	....	...

From the 32 events of the Federation — which have been agreed to by the Advisory Board —

- 16 events are Conferences initiated by Working Parties,
- 6 are FECEM Conferences initiated also by Working Parties and
- 10 Conferences of member societies are sponsored by the Federation.

It is the aim and purpose of the Federation to create a forum for chemists in the whole of Europe to meet, to exchange opinions and ultimately to ensure a better understanding. We are convinced that in achieving these aims, the Federation does not only contribute to the progress in chemistry and to the benefit of chemists but also to preserve the conditions and the atmosphere of peace.

February 8, 1980

**32. SASTANAK INTERNACIONALNOG DRUŠTVA ZA  
ELEKTROKEMIJU (ISE)**

Mjesto: Dubrovnik / Cavtat  
Datum: 13—20. 9. 1981.  
Glavne teme: *Fundamentalni aspekti elektrokemijske konverzije  
i energije  
Otapanje i taloženje metala*  
Informacije: 32. ISE Meeting, 41001 Zagreb, POB 840

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CROATICA CHEMICA ACTA izlazi godišnje u četiri broja. Pretplata godišnje 400 N din (ili US \$ 30), za članove 100 N din (ili US \$ 7.5), a za studente-članove 20 N din. Za izdavača odgovara odgovorni urednik. Glavni i odgovorni urednik Prof. Dr Božo Težak, Zagreb, Marulićev trg 19/II (Pošt. pret. 163). Uprava: 41001 Zagreb, Marulićev trg 19/II (Pošt. pret. 163). Žiro račun Hrvatsko kemijsko društvo, Zagreb broj 30102-678-4153

Tisak: NIŠRO »VJESNIK« — OOUR TMG — POGON VS