

Preface

This special issue of Collegium Anthropologicum supplements and extends the work presented at the Second Croatian Congress of Neuroscience, held in Zagreb on May 18–19, 2007 at the Croatian Institute for Brain Research, School of Medicine, University of Zagreb. The congress was organized by Croatian Society for Neuroscience (CSFN), which was founded in 2001 and at present has almost 300 members of highly interdisciplinary profile in the fields of both basic and clinical neuroscience as well as related disciplines (ranging from biology, physics, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neuropharmacology, neurogenetics, neuropathology, pediatric neurology, neurology, neurosurgery and psychiatry to psychology, linguistics, phonetics, and speech therapy).

This volume testifies that the CSFN represents a thriving and vigorous community of researchers. The overwhelming majority of its members have developed a long-lasting network of international research collaborations and have publications in high-profile international journals. In addition, our neuroscientists at present conduct their research in 7 program projects (with 60 individual research grants) supported by Croatian Ministry of Science, Education & Sport. Over the past 6 years, they successfully organized »Brain Awareness Weeks« in Croatia, as a part of worldwide effort of DANA Alliance for Brain and European DANA Foundation to increase the visibility of brain research and disseminate exciting findings of cutting-edge neuroscience research to the general public. Finally, they are intensely and enthusiastically engaged in teaching neuroscience at all levels of academic education: Schools of Medicine in Zagreb, Split and Osijek have basic neuroscience courses for medical students since mid-1990s, and School of Medicine in Zagreb two years ago established a separate PhD program in Neuroscience. In addition, University of Zagreb offers interdisciplinary postgraduate doctoral program in neuroscience entitled »Language Communication & Cognitive Neuroscience«.

The proceedings of the Second Croatian Congress of Neuroscience as well as this special issue of Collegium Anthropologicum show that our membership is equally dedicated to promoting neuroscience research at both local and international level and to extend the network of brain and mind research within the Croatia. Therefore, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board of Collegium Anthropologicum for kindly offering us the opportunity to present results of our research in a single thematic volume. We also hope that this publication will serve as an incentive for at least some of our esteemed colleagues in the field of anthropology to join the membership of Croatian Society for Neuroscience and thus enhance the interaction of two frontiers of research equally dedicated to explaining the evolutionary origin and developmental underpinnings of uniquely human mind/brain and promoting the application of that knowledge in resolving issues important for improving human health, education, personal well-being and social interactions.

Ivica Kostović,
the President of the Croatian Society for Neuroscience