



**RiNMS** rehabilitation  
**RiNMS** in multiple sclerosis  
european  
network of ms centres



## How to join RIMS?

RIMS is a fruitful network for all professional working in the field of MS. Therefore we encourage all MS Centres, MS Societies and individual professionals to join the network.

Read more: [www.rims.be](http://www.rims.be) / [How to join?](#)

RIMS Annual membership fees are:

Centre	400 €
Individual	130 €
Student	25 €
Company	750 €

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### Benefits:

Individual members as well as all professionals from a member centre are able to get RIMS Annual Conference registration fee at a special reduced member price.

A number of Special Interest Groups (SIG) have been established. The groups meet at least once a year during RIMS annual conference. The SIGs also organise professional annual in-between workshops which are supported financially by RIMS. For SIG in-between workshop, the member centres' professionals are offered one free hotel night and free meals for such occasion.

Some of the Special Interest Groups have published papers or pamphlets on important MS issues. These are distributed among RIMS members.

RIMS offers up to three to five fellowships annually, each with duration of one week, with a fellowship of 1000 €. Fellows are expected to identify themselves as representing a RIMS member centre (or as individual RIMS membership) prior to application.

The fellowship is available to young European professionals, preferably non-doctors, in order to facilitate their training in rehabilitation related to Multiple Sclerosis among RIMS member centres. The goal of the programme is to promote the multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation in MS and to encourage the exchange of information and professional growth for those working in the field of MS.

RIMS is an active network for MS professionals and Centres and a membership gives you access to the resources of the network and hopefully it encourages study-visits, exchange of best practise and other skill improving activities.

Read more: [www.rims.be](http://www.rims.be)

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Greetings from the President

Dear members

It is my pleasure to thank all our members for your activity and especially, the dynamic role that SIG Chairs and Co-Chairs have played during the past year.

The sunny and warm city of Leuven 8-10, May, 2008 welcomed us all for RIMS annual conference. Once more I take the opportunity to thank our local organiser, Prof Dirk DeRidder and also to congratulate the National Multiple Sclerosis Centre in Melsbroek for its 50 year's anniversary. Building up RIMS conference with such an expertise was a pleasure and I as well as all the participants found the program interesting and stimulating.

During the General Assembly, as three members of Executive Board left after their two terms, the election was organised. As new members started Peter Feys, Pt, PhD (B), Dr Thomas Henze (D) and Victoria Mathews, RN (UK).

I wish to thank very warmly the former Secretary Paul van Asch (B), Dr Katrin Gross-Paju (EE) and Dr Holger Albecht (D) for all their work and contribution for RIMS.

Also, as yet, not so many centres nor individuals have responded to RIMS Fellowship program. So, I take the opportunity to encourage your centre as well as you staff members to take this opportunity. - The fellowship is available to young European professionals, preferably non-doctors, in order to facilitate their training in rehabilitation related to Multiple Sclerosis among RIMS member centres.

Eija Luoto  
RIMS President

## 1 RIMS

The aim of RIMS (Rehabilitation in MS) is to link the European MS Centres in order to encourage professionals interested in Multiple Sclerosis to exchange their knowledge of clinical, scientific, social, economical and educational matters about the disease and to establish individual and scientific contacts between persons. In addition, individual membership for those who have a special interest in MS is welcomed.

### 1.1 Administration

RIMS is managed by an Executive Board, which according to the bylaws is composed of eight elected officers, including the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer. Dr Judith Lutz continued to act as SIG Coordinator and producer of our newsletter Network. Brita Loevendahl remained in charge of membership issues. Dr Claudio Solaro continued as Treasurer. In general assembly, Mrs. Victoria Mathews (UK), Mr. Peter Feys (B), Phd, Prof Dr Thomas Hentze (D) were elected as new members for the Executive Board. Dr Katrin Gross-Paju (E), Dr Holger Albrecht (D) and Paul van Asch (B) retired after completing their two terms of office.

<b>Executive Board member</b>		<b>Country</b>	<b>Officers</b>	<b>Term</b>
Eija Luoto	Administrative director	Finland	President	2008-2010 (*)
Claudio Solaro	Dr	Italy	Treasurer	2008-2010 (*)
Peter Feys	Chief physiotherapist	Belgium	Secretary	2008-2010
Victoria Matthews	Dr	UK		
Ingrid Galan	Dr	Spain		2008-2010 (*)
Brita Lovendahl	Manager	Denmark	Member officer	2008-2010 (*)
Judith Lutz	Dr	Switzerland	SIG-Coordinator	2008-2010 (*)
Thomas Henze	Dr	Germany		2008-2010

(\*) second term; stepping down in 2011 General Assembly.

The Executive Board held four meetings during the year 2008:  
April 11<sup>th</sup> 2008, Brussels, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Leuven, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Munich, 27<sup>th</sup> 2008, November, Zurich

RIMS 2008 conference was organised as in Leuven May 8-10, 2008 in conjunction with the University of Leuven. The local organisers were professor Dirk DeRidder and Dr Stephan Ilsbrouckx.

## 1.2 Members

At the end of year 2008 RIMS had altogether 32 member centres, 21 individual members, 4 societies and 1 students listed. However, as has already been noted earlier, the amount of centres and individuals that had not paid their annual fee was remarkably high. According to the bylaws a member is no longer considered to be a member following failure of payment of the membership fee for two (consecutive or non-consecutive) years.

The RIMS Member Coordinator was actively corresponding and trying to find the key persons of those centres but did not succeed in all cases. No second round for annual fees was done.

<b>Members 2008</b>	
Centre members	32
Individual members	21
Students	0
Companies	0
Societies	4

## 2 Special Interest Groups

The Executive Board has established a number of Special Interest Groups (SIG). The groups aim to promote research and improve the management of Persons with MS and their caregivers. A short workshop takes place during RIMS annual conference, while an intensive “in-between” meeting of 1.5-2 days takes place between conferences. During “in-between” SIG meetings at one of the members centre across Europe, scientific and clinical presentations about a chosen topic as well as free presentations are presented. Also a clinical or practical session (f.e. patient cases, demonstration of technology; visit to a center) is organised.

<b>SIG Mobility</b>	<b>Chair</b>	Peter	Feys (B)	PT, PhD
	<b>Co-Chair</b>	Paul	van Asch (B)	Physiotherapist
	<b>Web Coordinator</b>	Margit	Muller (I)	Physiotherapist
<b>SIG Occupation</b>	<b>Chair</b>	Daphne	Kos (B)	OT, PhD
	<b>Co-Chair</b>	Stephan	Ilsbroukx (B)	Dr
	<b>Web Coordinator</b>			OT
<b>SIG Psychology and Neuropsychology</b>	<b>Chair</b>	Päivi	Hämäläinen (FI)	PhD Neuropsychologist
	<b>Co-Chair</b>	Agnete	Joensson (DK)	Neuropsychologist
	<b>Web Coordinator</b>	Anita	Rose (UK)	
<b>SIG Bladder, Bowel and Sexual Problems</b>	<b>Chair</b>	Laura	Lopes (I)	Dr, Medical Director
	<b>Co-Chair</b>	Piet	Eelen (B)	Chief Nurse
	<b>Web Coordinator</b>			
<b>SIG Social Integration and Participation</b>	<b>Chair</b>	Rina	Verdoodt (B)	Social worker
	<b>Co-Chair</b>	An	Van Nunen (B)	Dr
	<b>Web Coordinator</b>	Hanna-Mari	Hyvönen (FIN)	Social worker
<b>SIG Communication and Swallowing problems</b>	<b>Chair</b>	Rosa	Terre Boliart (S)	Dr
	<b>Co-Chair</b>	Marta	Renom (S)	Speech therapist
	<b>Web Coordinator</b>	Antonella	Nota (B)	Speech therapist

During the Annual conference the SIG Chairs, Co Chairs and Executive Board members had their joint meeting. Some changes were done among SIGs: Dr DeRidder (B) left the Chair of SIG Bladder, Bowel and Sexual Dysfunction and the new Chair will be Dr Laura Lopes (I). As her Co Chair started Piet Eelen, RN, (B). SIG on Mobility also had a change in Co Chair because Dr Holger Albrecht (D) had informed that he no longer will continue. Paul Van Asch, PT was elected Co Chair.

Detailed contact information is available on [www.rims.be](http://www.rims.be)

## 2.1 New Booklets

The booklets on Emotional Reactions and MS and Personality and MS were translated into Spanish and published .  
The booklet is available on [www.rims.be](http://www.rims.be)

## 2.2 SIG in-between meetings

Alls SIGs were active and held their in-between meetings during the year. Some of them also had another in-between meeting. RIMS contribution for SIG the meetings was 2.500 € per year/group for organising in-between meetings.

<b>2008</b>	<b>City/Country</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Countries present</b>
<b>SIG Psychology and Neuropsychology</b>	London, UK	19.10-20.10.08	11	8
<b>SIG Mobility</b>	Haslev, Denmark	04.04-05.04.08	29	11
<b>SIG Occupation</b>	Ljubjana, Slovenia	17.10-18.10.08	15	6
<b>SIG Bladder, Bowel and Sexual Disorders</b>				
<b>SIG Communication and Swallowing</b>				
<b>SIG Participation and Autonomy</b>	Melsbroek, Belgium	13.11-14.11.08	16	3

The SIGs reported their in between meetings to the Executive Board.

As planned, during the Annual Conference in Leuven, SIG Chairs and Executive Board held a meeting. All SIGs reported shortly on their in- between meetings. The SIG Chair`s responsibilities and the reimbursement procedure for SIG in-between meetings was discussed and also updated and agreed. It was clearly noted that there is a wish for research among RIMS SIGs but that carrying out properly designed research is extremely complicated and difficult, mainly because of lack on funding and also because of lack of coordination and study design expertise.

It was decided that RIMS Advisory Board will be asked to work as a Scientific Committee in evaluating suggested projects and, for example e.g. booklets, before they are launched. Their task will be to read, for example, the RIMS booklet texts for the authors´ advice, comments and critics.



## 2.3 RIMS www-site

A special project regarding updating the SIG's www-pages was established and it was decided the pages should be updated by the Leuven RIMS Conference 2008. Each SIG's web coordinators were actively involved with this.

## 3 Annual conference 2008

### 3.1 Participants

RIMS Annual Conference 2008 was organized as In Leuven, Belgium. Altogether 256 professionals participated the conference. Among them, altogether 51 (49%) reported that they participated for their first time. As many as 33% reported that RIMS is a good forum to start international activity and 45 % appreciated the multidisciplinary nature of the conference very important.

<b>RIMS Participants</b>	<b>Tallinn 2005</b>	<b>Barcelona 2006</b>	<b>Prague 2007</b>	<b>Leuven 2008</b>
Doctors	163	72	22	49
Nurses	26	69	3	71
Physiotherapists	14	35	5	33
Occupational therapists	4	14	4	27
Social Workers	3	3	2	9
Psychologist	10	14	2	10
Neuropsychologist		19	2	3
Speech therapists	3	10	1	5
Others	4	25	14	8
Center managers/Directors	12	16	3	14
Occupation not documented	23	24	2	27
Marketing representatives	12	12	4	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>64*</b>	<b>274</b>

\*Joint RIMS-ECTRIMS Conference

The traditional RIMS Awards for Best Poster and Best Oral Presentation with 500 euros were nominated.

The Best RIMS Poster Award: C Santoya, DFàbregas, MJaner, G Loyola, SI Sànchez, I Galan (E): "Risk factors and prevention of falls among people with multiple sclerosis. A preliminary study."

The Best RIMS Oral Presentation Award: D Gijbels, G Alders, T Broekmans, BO Eijnde, P Feys (B): "Ambulatory activity patterns in persons with multiple sclerosis: relationship with clinical mobility tests and effects of physical training programs"

A special CMSC award (invitation to CMSC conference) was given to Alon Kalron, Tel Aviv (Israel):" Short term rehabilitation improves gait in multiple Sclerosis patients"

### 3.2 Feedback from the conference

A www-based feedback questionnaire for evaluating RIMS Leuven conference was sent to 275 emails. Unfortunately some participants did not leave their personal emails and some email addresses appeared to be incorrect. So, not all could give their feedback. Altogether 102 persons answered (102/275 = 37%).

In general, the participants were quite satisfied. The major problem appeared to be the lack of an abstract book.

The participants were asked to evaluate the contents with the scale from 1 (poor) to 4 (very good).

	mean	
Interest of the contents	3	69% "good"
Usefulness of the contents	2,8	56% "good"
Application of the contents in daily practise	2,6	48% "good"

### 4 Network

RIMS newsletter *Network* was published twice, June and in December in 2008.

### 5 Fellowship program

RIMS offers up to three to five fellowships annually, each with duration of one week, with a fellowship of 1000 € in order to facilitate their training in rehabilitation related to Multiple Sclerosis among RIMS member centres. The goal of the programme is to promote the multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation in MS and to encourage the exchange of information and professional growth for those working in the field of MS.

Fellows are expected to identify themselves as representing a RIMS member centre (or as individual RIMS membership) prior to application.

In 2008, we received no formal applications. The rehabilitation centre Haslev, Denmark, hosted a fellow from Romania, but outside of the fellowship program. The centers that are officially willing to host (Haslev, Ry in Denmark, Masku in Finland), will be shown on the website. Centers don't have to formally present themselves and be accepted. The only thing needed is a formal agreement that they are willing to host a certain applicant.

## 6 Financial support, marketing

The Executive Board continued planning new tools for marketing and advertisement purposes. Work on new brochures for informing possible new members of RIMS activities was ongoing throughout the year.

The financial situation was reasonably stable. No outside sponsoring was available. The annual conference 2008 did a financial profit of 27.000 euros.



From RIMS Leuven Conference, Faculty Club Dinner (Dr D DeRidder and P van Asch on the right)

Rehabilitation in Multiple Sclerosis (RIMS), the network of MS Centres in Europe was created in 1991, in Milan, Italy to enhance collaboration by the foremost MS Centres in Europe. Today the Organisation has 38 member centres throughout Europe.

The aim of RIMS is to link the European MS Centres in order to encourage professionals interested in Multiple Sclerosis to exchange their knowledge of clinical, scientific, social, economical and educational matters about the disease and to establish individual and scientific contacts between persons. In addition, individual membership for those who have a special interest in MS is welcomed.

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