



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



**Annual Report  
2009**

## 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 2009:

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 workshops, 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 between three to five fellowships annually, each of one week duration and 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 Multiple Sclerosis related rehabilitation amongst RIMS member centres. The goal of the programme is to promote the multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation in MS and encourage the exchange of information and professional growth amongst 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, 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 note that we had altogether 247 registered participants for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of RIMS in the sunny and warm city of Genoa 23-25, April 2009. So, although it seemed at some point that we could get less participants than we had hoped for, the result at the end was really good. The impact of the global economic difficulties meant we had even more reason to be satisfied.

Once more I take the opportunity to thank our local organiser, Dr Claudio Solaro and Italian MS Society as well as Genoa Neurological Department for their fruitful collaboration.

Also, I wish to express my happiness that we finally got the fellowship program started. The first RIMS fellowship "student" was from Venice (Italy) and she stayed for one week at Masku Neurological Rehabilitation Center, Finland. During the year, it also became clear that two other fellow students will enter the program in 2010.

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 all European MS Centres in order to encourage professionals with an interest in Multiple Sclerosis to exchange their knowledge of clinical, scientific, social, economic and educational matters about the disease and 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 was in charge of membership issues. Dr Claudio Solaro continued as Treasurer. A new function was created: Vicky Matthews served as web editor.

<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	Associate professor	Belgium	Secretary	2008-2010
Victoria Matthews	MSc, RGN,	UK		2008-2010
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 three meetings during the year 2009:  
March 27<sup>th</sup>, London, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009, Genoa, November 21<sup>st</sup> 2009, Masku

RIMS 2009 conference was organised as in Genoa 23-25, April 2009. The local organisers were Dr Claudio Solaro and the Italian MS Society.

## 1.2 Members

At the end of year 2009 RIMS had altogether 32 member centres, 20 individual members, 6 societies, 1 student and 1 company listed. However, as has already been noted 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 attempting to find and correspond with key contacts in these centres but did not succeed in all cases.

<b>Members</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Centre members	42	33	32	32
Individual members	31	19	21	20
Students	2	2	0	1
Companies	0	0	0	1
Societies	2	4	4	6

## 2 Special Interest Groups

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

Special Interest Group core people in 2009

<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>	Jytte Rose	Jacobson	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>	Roberta	Motta (I)	Nurse
<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

(\*) At the end of 2009, An Van Nunen stepped down, with Jeanne Hansen (nurse, DK) starting as co-chair of the SIG Social Integration and Participation.

A new SIG regarding 'patient education' was in constitution (lead, Dr. Christoph Heesen, D) with a first meeting being planned in January 2010.

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

## 2.1 New Booklets

The booklet “Talking about communication in MS” was translated into Spanish and 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 had both a meeting during the annual conference as well as an in-between meeting. RIMS contribution for SIG the meeting was 2.500 € per year/group for organising these meetings, except of 5000.euro for the SIG Mobility given large number of participants. A special Triple SIG “Empowering communication of people with MS” was organized together with SIG Occupation, Communication and Participation.

	2009	City/Country	Date	Participants	Countries present
<b>SIG Psychology and Neuropsychology</b>		Genoa	24-25 April 2009	20	4
		Enschede	30-31 October 2009	7	6
<b>SIG Mobility</b>		Hasselt	15-17 January 2009	57	13
		Genoa	24-25 April 2009	50	14
<b>SIG Bladder, Bowel and Sexual Disorders</b>		Genoa	24-25 April 2009	35	10
<b>SIG Occupation</b>		Genoa	24-25 April 2009	19	7
<b>SIG Communication and Swallowing</b>		Genoa	24-25 April 2009		
<b>SIG Participation and Patient Information</b>		Genoa	24-25 April 2009		
<b>Triple SIG (OT, Communication, Participation)</b>		Turku	20-21 November	24	8

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

## 2.3 RIMS www-site

A special project regarding updating the SIG www-pages was established and the pages, especially regarding SIG functions were updated by Genoa RIMS Conference 2009. Each SIG`s web coordinators were actively involved with this.

In 2009, all SIG pages were harmonised with same headings:  
Also the SIG “Patient education” was added to the web pages of the SIG.



A new webmaster was appointed in November 2009. His name is Peter Van Den Nieuwenhof (Belgium), with mail address [webmaster.rims@gmail.com](mailto:webmaster.rims@gmail.com).

### 3 Annual conference 2009

RIMS Annual Conference 2009 was organized in Genoa, Italy. Altogether 247 professionals participated in the conference.

All accepted abstracts were published in the International Journal of MS Care.

The Traditional RIMS Awards for best Poster and Best Oral Presentation with 500 Euros were nominated.

- The Best RIMS Poster Award: F. Frauke (G). "Efficacy of an executive function intervention program: a placebo-controlled trial"
- The Best RIMS Oral Presentation Award: A. Solari (I). "Effectiveness of an information aid for newly diagnosed PwMS"
- A special CMSC award (invitation to CMSC conference) was given to J. Paltamaa (F) for her oral presentation: "Responsive of physical functioning measures in PwMS who are ambulatory"

### 4 Network

The network issue of June 2009 was not distributed as hard copy but made only available on the website.

### 5 Fellowship program

RIMS offers up to three to five fellowships annually, each with a duration of one week and a fellowship of 1000 € to facilitate their training in Multiple Sclerosis related rehabilitation within 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 2009, one occupational therapist from Venice, Italy stayed for one week at Masku Neurological Centre. The experience was very good both for the center and the fellowship student.

## 6 RIMS activities

### *Booklet on Rehabilitation Recommendations*

The European MS Platform (EMSP) asked Thomas Henze to organize a follow-up of their high-quality booklet on “Recommendations on Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Multiple Sclerosis in Europe” (2004). Cooperating authors are mostly RIMS members contributing their extensive knowledge to this comprehensive overview on modern MS rehabilitation issues which will be published in 2010.

### *Nursing Survey*

Participation with EMSP and IOMSN to implement an European survey of MS nursing in Spain, Italy, Poland, Germany, Finland, Czech Republic and UK. Data were collected in 2009, with results being available in 2010.

RIMS was also represented at the MS Trust National Conference in UK, November 2009.

## 7 Financial support

The Executive Board continued planning new tools for marketing and advertisement purposes. One company joined as a member.

The balance for the annual Conference 2009 in Genoa was positive.

The overall balance of 2009 was positive, strengthening the healthy financial position of this organisation.

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 nearly 40 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.

RIMS 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.

RIMS newsletter *Network* is published electronically.

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

