

# The Presidents



2013\_ Claudio Bassetti  
Bern, Switzerland

## 1. Reasons for joining the ENS

The first ENS meeting I attended was the 3rd one held in Lausanne in 1992. At that time I was a resident and -according to my interests of that time- I presented some clinical studies on stroke. A decade later, when acting as vice-chair of the neurology department in Zurich, I was asked by Andreas Steck and Gerard Said, with whom I had a longstanding friendship, to join the Executive committee. I was honored and proud by this invitation and I accepted it with enthusiasm. The election took place at the Business Meeting of the 14th meeting in Barcelona in 2004. Subsequently I served the society until the 24th and last meeting in Istanbul in 2014 as chair of the scientific committee, as co-coordinator of the subcommittees for general neurology and sleep disorders, and finally as president.

## 2. On the values and missions of the ENS

The ENS was considered for many years the leading academic neurological society in Europe in terms of scientific and teaching excellence. The opportunities but also responsibilities of individual members towards the society was a second distinctive value of the ENS. As a result, the society could count upon the support and the activities of the very best continental neurologists during its 30 years history. The high quality of the academic discussions and the strong personal contacts within the executive committee reflected the main missions of the society well and made the yearly meetings of the Executive Board in Paris memorable events.

## 3. Important achievements during my presidency

Since the beginning of my time as member of the executive committee I was convinced (and outspoken) about the need to put an end to the sterile „competition“ between the two European neurological societies. In fact, over the years it had become clear that the differences between ENS and EFNS had become less evident, and the goals and activities more similar. Moreover, the strong development of neurological sub-specialties on one side and of basic neurosciences on the other side urged a reflection about the justification, the activities and the organization of a society devoted to general neurology in Europe. According to my personal beliefs about such needs and opportunities, I supported during my 10 years in the board of the society 1) the activities of young neurologists (e.g. taking active parts to their symposia), 2) the cross-talk between neurological subspecialties and between clinical and translational neuroscientists, 3) educational and scientific events dealing with the neurology of sleep (including common symposia and guidelines with the European Sleep Research Society). The main achievement of my presidency was the successful merge with the EFNS. The atmosphere of strong commitment, mutual respect and trust between the 6 members of the task force led to new and strong friendships and made this a unique and inspiring personal experience.