High “gross neurological product”: Europe’s neurologists exceptionally scientifically productive

*European neurology is a highly productive discipline both in terms of quantity and quality – with continuous growth over the years. This is the result of an analysis of scientific publication presented at the Congress of the European Academy of Neurology in Amsterdam.*

Amsterdam, 27 June 2017 – European neurology is a highly productive discipline both in terms of quantity and quality – with research trends reflecting healthy growth for years now. This was confirmed by the results of a current study of neurological research articles presented by Prof Giorgio Cruccu, Head of the Department of Neurology and Psychiatry at Rome’s Sapienza University, at the 3rd Congress of the European Academy of Neurology (EAN) in Amsterdam.

To support his analysis, the expert developed the concept of “gross neurological product” – a metric inspired by gross domestic product – which lists the number of peer-reviewed studies on neurological topics published in the Scopus database*. This database is a repository of scientific journals and books, and conference proceedings. The European countries covered by the analysis included the 46 countries with national neurological societies which are EAN members, including the EU member states, western Balkan states, CIS countries, Turkey and Israel.

The results showed that scientific productivity in Europe among the ten most productive countries between 2000 and 2015 had doubled from around 5,300 neurological publications to 10,600. “The ten top-performing European nations together are on a par with the USA,” Prof Cruccu confirmed. “Some countries have made great progress during this period, but the level of scientific productivity in neurology has risen sharply across the entire region.” In Germany, gross neurological product increased from around 1,500 publications per annum to around 3,400 between 2000 and 2015, while in Italy the total doubled from its starting point of around 1,100.

The trend is not just healthy in numerical terms – the quality of European publications is also improving all the time. “If you look at the publications in the 20 top journals with high impact factors, you can see that the number of European publications between 2000 and 2015 rose from around 700 to 1,700, an increase of more than 140 per cent,” said Prof Cruccu.

Interestingly, it is not necessarily the largest countries that lead the way. For example the Netherlands, this year’s EAN Congress host nation, rank fourth for the publication in top journal, second for the publications per inhabitants and even first in those per gross domestic product (GDP).

“Europe is a highly productive region when it comes to neurological research, and is improving all the time,” noted EAN President Prof Günther Deuschl from University Medical Center Schleswig-Holstein in Kiel. “This has always been the case, so the results hardly come as a surprise. After all, neurological research originated in Europe, and many of the
breakthroughs in this particular discipline are made there. The EAN congress remains
dedicated to ensuring that things remain that way."

**A third of all medical publications contributed by neurology**

Another data analysis presented at the EAN Congress in Amsterdam showed the weight of
neurological research within the various medical disciplines. Dr Amirhossein Ghassemi and
his colleagues from Kerman Medical University’s Neuroscience Research Center in Iran
confirmed that neurology accounted for fully 31.7 per cent of a total of 1,387,980 medical
articles published in 2015. Most of the neurological publications, or 92,502 to be precise,
focused on cerebrovascular disorders, which represented an increase of 149 per cent for this
category between 2011 and 2015. Original papers presenting the author’s own data
accounted for 68.8 per cent of the neurological literature.

**Source:** Cruccu, Deuschl, Federico 2017; 3rd EAN Congress Amsterdam 2017, Abstract Ghassemi et al. Research Tends in Neurology Literature From 2011 to 2015: A Bibliometric Analysis

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1 https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus