
By Rolf Jeltsch,
President of the European Mathematical Society

Dear Participant,

It is my privilege to welcome you to this Third European Congress of Mathematics in Barcelona which our friends and colleagues from Catalonia have prepared for us. In the first instance, such a congress is a great opportunity for meeting people, learning about the newest developments in mathematics and its applications and discussing problems of common interest. When you look through the programme you will find a large variety of activities. On the scientific level, the plenary and invited lectures, together with the mini-symposia, give an interesting cross-section of all of mathematics, from number theory to quantum computing and applications in genetics. We shall, as it has become traditional by now, celebrate young European talent by awarding the ten EMS prizes. In addition, it will be the first time that the 'Felix Klein Prize' for an application in industry will be handed out to a young researcher. I am looking forward to hearing the lectures of these young mathematicians.

Clearly, we shall have many interesting topics to discuss, such as the newest developments in our profession, the relation of mathematics to the public as a whole, the teaching of our science at all levels, the influence of new technologies on our professional life, the rise in cost of the mathematical journals, how to develop our own European Mathematical Society and many things more. Some of these discussions will take place at the round tables and other events.

In the name of the EMS I would like to thank all those who helped create this 3ecm. First and foremost, the success of the Congress will be the result of our Catalan colleagues, the Catalan Mathematical Society and the Organising Committee and, in particular, its chairman, Professor Sebastià Xambó. My thanks also go to the Scientific Committee headed by Sir Michael Atiyah, who put together a very interesting programme and the Round Table Committee, chaired by Professor Miguel de Guzmán, for finding excellent panelists. Finally, the Prize Committee for EMS prizes headed by Professor Jacques-Louis Lions and the Prize Committee for the Felix Klein prize, headed by Professor Helmut Neunzert had very difficult tasks.

I wish all participants not only interesting days as far as mathematics go but also a few hours of leisure to learn about local culture, Barcelona and its people.

Barcelona, July 2000