

# BELGIAN BRAIN COUNCIL



## IN THIS EDITION

COVID LONG (or PASC)  
- FOLLOW-UP

BBC General Assembly

BBC-NBCs-National  
Brain Plan

BBC and Care4Autism



## COVID LONG (or PASC)<sup>1</sup> – follow-up

There are currently 16,188 scientific articles listed in the PubMed database (National Institute of Health-USA Library) and 240 published in 2022 that deal with COVID LONG and brain.

The Financial Times article of 19 May reports results published in Nature<sup>2</sup> obtained by comparing brain imaging (MRI) of 785 people of whom 401 were COVID positive (with or without severe symptoms). In comparison to the images before and after infection with COVID reveals marked differences between those infected with COVID and those not infected.

<sup>1</sup>Experts have proposed a new term for this syndrome: post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection (PASC).

<sup>2</sup>SARS-CoV-2 is associated with changes in brain structure in UK Biobank. Nature. 2022 Apr;604(7907):697-707.

In particular, i) a decrease in grey matter thickness in 2 brain regions (orbitofrontal cortex and parahippocampal gyrus), ii) greater changes in tissue damage markers in regions connected to the olfactory cortex and iii) a greater reduction in brain size. Infected participants also showed a greater cognitive decline.

## BBC General Assembly on the 16th May 2022

### Hybrid format

- 1) **In presence** at the BBC headquarters, University Foundation, rue d'Egmont, 11, 1000 Brussels
- 2) **Online** using the TEAMS platform for electronic communication

#### On-site presence:

Charles van der Straten (Ligue Nationale de la Sclérose en Plaques)  
Laurence Ris pour BSNeurosciences  
Lia Le Roy pour Hersentumoren  
Roland Pochet – secrétaire général (ULB)  
Marguerite Mormal (Aidants Proches)  
Marie-Anne Dage (Association Dégénérescence Maculaire liée à l'Age)  
Irakiza Latifah (EBC)

#### Proxies:

Gianni Franco (Ensemble Pour le Cerveau),  
Christine Pahaut (Association Parkinson),  
Rebecca Muller (Ups & Downs),  
Cécile Grégoire (Action Parkinson),  
Spyros Zorbas (EPIONI),  
Albert Counet (Ligue Huntington),  
Delobbe Yolande (Belgique Acouphènes),  
Christian Gérard (Ligue Belge contre les Céphalées)

#### Online presence :

Jean Schoenen (EDAB)  
Philippe Lenders – (OUCH Belgium)  
Chantel Fouche (ADHD)  
Beverly Sinton (ADHD)  
Ann van der Jeugd (Leuven Brain Institute)  
Freddy Hannot (APEPA)  
Mathieu Rudgers (Belgian Stroke Council)  
Monique Sprumont (Le Ressort)  
Olivia Gosseries (COMA-Ulège)  
Marie Bourcy (Alzheimer Belgique)  
Ann Beckers  
Ligue Alzheimer

#### Excused:

Dirk Van Roost, Rufin Vogels

#### Guests:

Rose Bruffaerts (Uantwerpen), Ruth Krebs (Center for Cognitive Neuroscience UGent),  
Marina Bassas (EU4EU Intern), Monika Hoang The (BBC Intern)

**1. Approval of the agenda:** Approved

**2. Approval of the minutes of the GA of 18th May 2021:** Approved

**3. Presentation by Laurence Ris of her action plan for 2022-2023**

**4. Activity report 2021** presented by Roland Pochet with comments on the activities

- Available in 3 languages: (FR, NL and EN)
- Sent by regular mail to all the members
- Summary in 10 slides

**5. Income statement and balance sheet 2021**

Presentation and explanations: Charles van der Straten, Treasurer.

**Approval of the accounts:** Approved (19/19 full members and 9/9 proxies)

**Approval of the Budget 2022:** Approved (13/13 full members present and 8/8 proxies)

**6. Discharge of the members of the Board of Directors:** Approved (19/19 full members present and 9/9 proxies)

**7. Removal and appointment of members of the Board of Directors.**

**Resignations:**

- Hendrik Kajosch

**Appointments:**

- Rose Bruffaerts (Universiteit Antwerpen)
- Ruth Krebs (Center for Cognitive Neuroscience UGent)

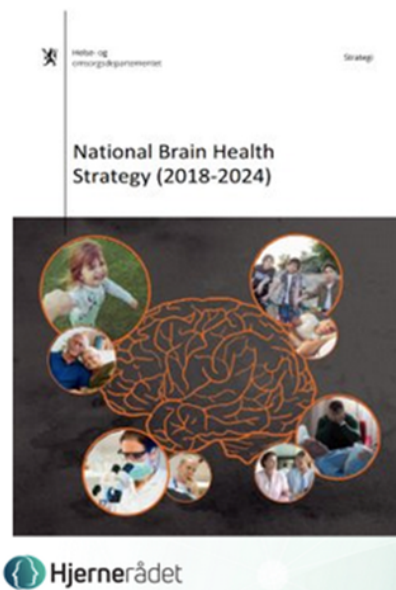
## BBC–NBCs–National Brain Plan



On 10 May, the 8th Academy of National Brain Councils was held at the Bavarian Permanent Representation to the European Union. Among the participants were the presidents of the National Brain Councils of Germany (Ulrike Shara-Schmidt), France (Philippe Gorwood), Belgium (Laurence Ris), Norway (Henrik Peersen), Spain (Mara Driessens), Greece (represented by Nikolaos Grigoriadis) and Serbia (Pavle Andjus).

The agenda focused on the National Brain and Mental Health Plans. Three countries (Germany, Norway and Belgium) presented the status of their plans. It emerged from the Academy's discussions that a Brain Plan template should be prepared and submitted to the various NBCs in order to have, despite the heterogeneity of the Member States' public health policies, a coherent project to submit to the European Commission, which is ready to support a Brain Plan project as it did for the Cancer Plan.

## The Brain Health Strategy 2018-2024: Dec 12, 2017



Four main objectives:

1. Good life-long brain health, prevention and quality of life
2. Health care service tailored for the needs of the user and caretakers
3. Good health care from onset, diagnosis and treatment to habilitation and rehabilitation
4. Adequate knowledge and quality through research and innovation

## The German Brain Plan



### Agenda 2030

Supporting brain health.  
Treating brain disease.

The roadmap to a brain healthy future in Germany.

## Belgian Brain Plan

Phase préparatoire et plan d'action



These 3 presentations can be downloaded from our [website](#) (7th NBC Academy).

## BBC new members

The BBC is pleased to welcome as a new member of the CENTER FOR COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE (CCN) of [Ghent University](#). This center brings together the Departments of Experimental Psychology, Experimental Clinical and Health Psychology, and Data Analysis of the Faculty of Psychology.

As a reminder, **cognitive neuroscience** studies neuronal connections and determines how the brain carries out the functions it performs. It is a transdisciplinary field that combines biological sciences, behavioral sciences, and neuroimaging. The SCC is currently headed by Prof. Ruth Krebs.

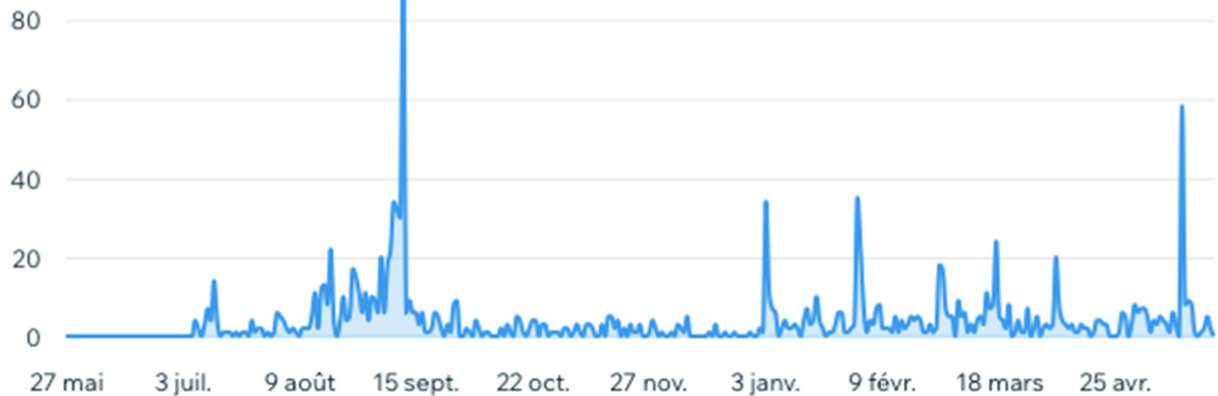


CENTER FOR COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE



## BBC website statistics

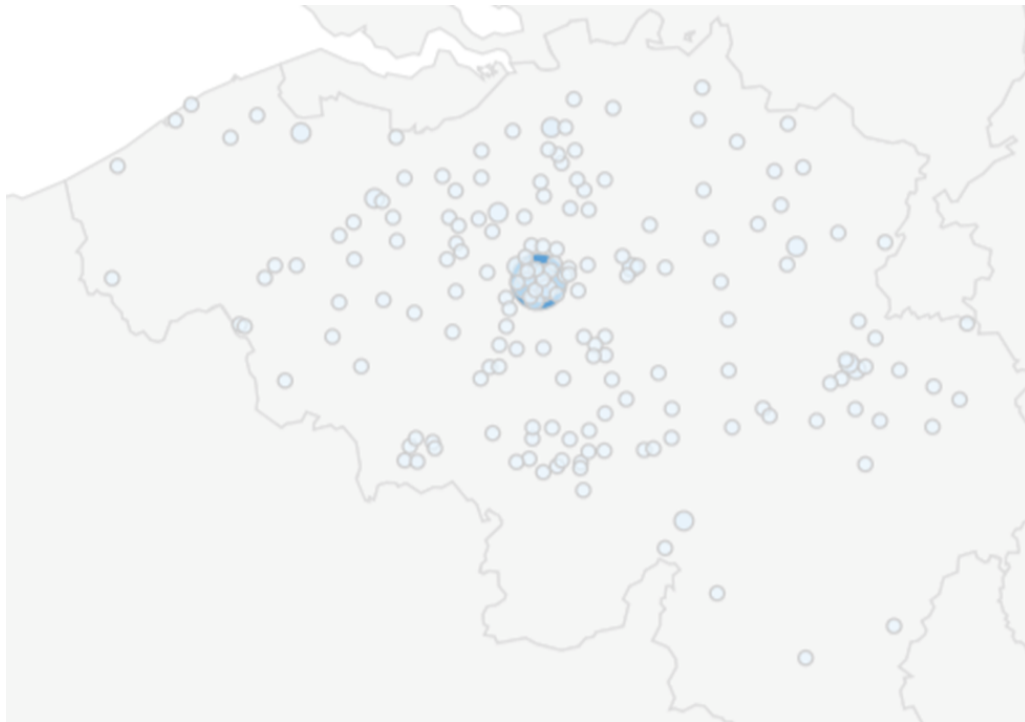
### Sessions au fil du temps



The peak on 11 September is explained by our COVID Long WEBINAR, the other 5 correspond to the publication of newsletters and the one on 16 May to our General Assembly.

The site was visited (between July 2021 and May 2022) by 1,412 sessions during an average time of 4 min 50 seconds (which is remarkable!).

The majority of visitors are located in Belgium (80%), spread over 182 cities. The remaining 20% are spread over 32 countries.



## BBC and Care4Autism

On 28 March, the BBC coordinator of the Erasmus+ Care4Autism project organised a Kik-off meeting in a hybrid format. All partners were present either in presence or online.



In addition, this meeting benefited from the intervention of a member of the European Parliament, Ms Maxova, visible on [Youtube](#), Prof. Mikael Kissinne from the association ACTE and Mrs. Alice Suls from the association APEPA (associated partners).



# Care4Autism

## News from our members

On the occasion of World MS Day on 30 May, please find attached an "open letter" in which the Federal MS League appeals to researchers and the medical profession, as well as to political, economic, and social leaders, for better care for people with multiple sclerosis. We hope that this appeal will be heard by everyone in our society and that those responsible will take the necessary measures to improve the quality of life of people affected by the disease, but also of their relatives, their carers, their family, and professional environment.

Through this [link](#) you will also be able to watch video clips, moving testimonies of young people with MS, full of courage and resilience.

## Support our activities I



**BBC ACCOUNT: BE87 7512 0194 0094**

**The BBC is on the following social networks:**



## Composition of the Executive Committee for the period 2021-2022

President: **Professeur Laurence RIS**

Secretary General: **Professeur Roland Pochet**

Vice-President: **Professeur Chris Bervoets, Docteur Gianni Franco,  
Baron Charles van der Straten-Waillet**

Treasurer: **Baron Charles van der Straten -Waillet**

Secretary: **Madame Lia Le Roy**

## Dates to remember

**11 juin**

Belgian Pain  
Society  
Congress

**5-9 juillet**

ICNMD -  
International  
Congress on  
Muscular Diseases

