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## EDITORIAL

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An organization to bring together scientists dealing with macromolecules, polymers and colloids has been present in Switzerland for more than 20 years under the name PGS, Polymer Group of Switzerland. This group was founded by Prof. P. Pino in 1984 with the aim to represent the Swiss polymer community within the newly founded European Polymer Federation. Over the years, it has become clear that such a relatively small group has a hard time to survive as an independent organization. On the other hand, as the growing importance of polymer and colloid science also in Swiss industries and academia was recognized, the Swiss Chemical Society (SCS) expressed the desire to provide more visibility to these areas. In fact, all other important national chemical societies have subgroups or divisions of macromolecular and/or colloid science, for example the 'Fachgruppe Makromolekulare Chemie' of the German Society of Chemists (GdCh), the 'Macro Group UK', 'Colloid and Interface Science Group' and 'Particle Characterisation Group' of the Royal Society of Chemistry or the 'Division Polymères' and 'Groupe Formulation' of the French Chemical Society. The division 'Polymer Chemistry' of the American Chemical Society is even the second largest division of the society with more than 8000 members, and the division of 'Colloid and Surface Chemistry' has another 2500 members!

Discussions about possibilities of closer cooperation resulted finally in the decision to include the PGS into SCS as a new Polymers and Colloids Division. This Division is now reality and our efforts are focussed on the integration of the group into the SCS, the creation of synergies between the divisions and on the organization of exciting activities in order to become a center of attraction and reference for the Swiss and international polymer and colloid communities.

This special issue highlights some representative academic and industrial activities in this field in Switzerland. Topics range from fundamental aspects of ordering of colloidal fluids in restricted geometries and include new synthetic routes to create dendronized polymers to applied aspects such as polymers in adhesives or colloids in foods. Further contributions include personal views of the development of the field or professional careers in the Swiss environment. They show that polymer and colloid science in Switzerland is internationally competitive, omnipresent in the chemical industry, and thus a key factor for the Swiss economy.

Two important signals to expand polymer and colloid research in Switzerland were made recently. In the last decade, this area was strongly promoted at the Paul Scherrer Institute in Villigen by the establishment of several beam lines that are essential to this field on the newly installed spallation neutron source and the synchrotron. Very recently, an institute for nanotechnology in Fribourg was created thanks to a very generous donation by the Swiss industrial Adolphe Merkle, and this institute will further intensify activities in this field. These developments will certainly help to further promote this important area of research in Switzerland.

We thank all authors for their contributions, the numerous reviewers for their help, and hope that you will enjoy reading this issue.

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It is with great pleasure that the Editorial Board of CHIMIA expresses its warmest thanks to the coordinating guest editors Dr. Bettina Steinmann and Professor Michal Borkovec for their efforts in planning and realising this extremely interesting and informative issue introducing the Polymers and Colloids Division