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Congratulations to Professor José Barluenga on his 70th Birthday

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It is a great pleasure to provide a short introductory note for this special issue of *Chemistry—A European Journal* to celebrate the 70th birthday of Professor José Barluenga. It contains several articles by his friends and colleagues from all over the world and we sincerely thank them for their contributions.

José Barluenga was born on July 27, 1940 in Tardienta, a village in the region of Aragon not far from the Pyrenees mountains. He was raised and educated in a Spain that was different from how the country is today. As a result, Professor Barluenga is not only a close witness to the stunning development of Spain, but he himself played a decisive role in raising and shaping its Chemical Society.

He studied chemistry at the University of Zaragoza, where he also completed his PhD in 1966. Subsequently, he became the first Spanish chemist to benefit from a newly established fellowship program from the Max-Planck Society. For his postdoctoral stay, which lasted three and a half years, he chose the group of Heinz Hoberg at the Max-Planck-Institute in Mülheim within the stimulating environment created by Karl Ziegler and Günter Wilke, and he often likes to underline the lasting stimulus that he received from this unique scientific environment.

In 1970 he returned to Spain and started his independent career, first at the University of Zaragoza where he got promoted quickly. In 1975 he moved to Oviedo, the capital of Asturias, to take up a position as Full Professor and has remained there as Chair of Organic Chemistry ever since. He has often referred to the initial period as the most challenging, but also the most satisfying one, as he started a research laboratory almost from scratch, converting it over the following decades to become the reference laboratory in organic and organometallic chemistry in Spain. He was the founding Director of the Instituto Universitario de Química Orgánometálica "Enrique Moles", a role which he has fulfilled until very recently.

His research has mostly been focused on heterocyclic chemistry, metal-mediated synthesis, and catalysis, and over the years has covered different aspects of organic transformations. Although earlier work centered on the use of lithium, thallium, and mercury, in the mid 1990s, his group developed unique organic transformations based on Fischer carbene complexes and explored modern zirconium, palladium, and gold catalysis. In addition to this, he developed seminal iodinating reactions, most of them with bis(pyridine)iodonium tetrafluoroborate, which is better known as $I(Py)_2$ or Barluenga's reagent.

José Barluenga has left a strong and unique impact on Spanish chemistry. His characteristic drive for scientific excellence was fundamental in the development of the community in Spain. His group has trained more than a hundred graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, many of which have become successful researchers in academia and research. Several generations of students went through his office, benefiting from all kind of discussions on his blackboard. Those who got through these challenges (and the rather saturated office atmosphere of dense smoke in the

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early years) could count on his generous support and lifelong advice. To date, sixteen Full Professors originate from his research group in Oviedo.

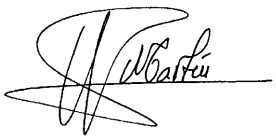
José Barluenga has authored or co-authored more than six hundred scientific publications, including a number of book chapters and review articles, and he has been acknowledged with two honorary degrees (University of Alcalá de Henares, 2000; University of La Rioja, 2009). Among his many awards, honors, and international lectureships, in 1989 he was the first Spanish scientist to receive the Research Award of the "Alexander von Humboldt" Foundation. He was awarded the first Dupont Award in 1991, the Iberdrola Award for Science and Technology in 1996, the first National Award of Chemical Science and Technology "Enrique Moles" in 2001, the Hermanos Elhuyar-Hans Goldschmidt Award (2005), and the Rey Jaime I de Investigación Award (2005). In 2009 the region of Asturias recognized him with a Silver Medal of the Principado de Asturias.

Professor Barluenga got married to his wife Mari Cruz in 1967, and on several occasions he has remarked that the influence of his wife on his life cannot be overstated. The couple has six children—five daughters and one son. To the pride of their father, the family's next scientific generation is already successfully on its way with two of the daughters, Sofia and Marta, pursuing their own academic careers (for a contribution from Sofia, please refer to page 9767 ff. of this issue).

Although he has been living outside his native Aragon for nearly four decades, he remains a man with strong links to his region, enjoying the local cuisine and promoting the Enate wines from upper Aragon. In addition, he can be distracted from the laboratory by live TV events from his favorite soccer teams, Real Zaragoza and FC Barcelona.

The Spanish Royal Society of Chemistry (RSEQ) last year honored Professor Barluenga by a special symposium within its biannual meeting. With his 70th birthday he reaches formal retirement age, but this will certainly not prevent him from continuing to participate in research. It is difficult to imagine Professor Barluenga without being involved in chemistry, and even more difficult to imagine the Spanish chemical sciences without him actively participating.

We would like to conclude this short tribute with our personal best wishes to José Barluenga and best wishes for his future.



Prof. Dr. Nazario Martín
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Prof. Dr. Kilian Muñiz
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The Editorial team of *Chemistry—A European Journal* would like to extend a special thank you to Professor Barluenga for his involvement with the journal over many years both as an author and a referee. He has been the author of 50 manuscripts that have been published in *Chemistry—A European Journal*, with at least one publication every year since the journal began in 1995 (the first manuscript was entitled "Asymmetric *syn*-Selective Michael Addition of Enolates to Chiral 8-Phenylmenthyloxy Vinyl Chromium Carbene Complexes": J. Barluenga, J. M. Montserrat, J. Flórez, S. Garcia-Granda, E. Martin, *Chem. Eur. J.* **1995**, *1*, 236–242 and the most recent manuscript is "Synthesis of Polycyclic Compounds by a Cascade Cycloisomerisation/Diels-Alder Reaction": J. Barluenga, J. Calleja, A. Mendoza, F. Rodríguez, F. J. Fañanás, *Chem. Eur. J.* **2010**, *16*, 7110–7112), and he currently has two further manuscripts in the pipeline. He has been featured on the cover and the inside cover of the journal and Professor Barluenga was also a keynote speaker at the conference to celebrate the 10th anniversary of *Chemistry—A European Journal*, "Chemistry—A European Conference: Stimulating Concepts in Chemistry", in Strasbourg in April 2005.
José Barluenga has also been featured on the Author Profile pages of *Angewandte Chemie* for his 35th paper published in the journal since 2000 (*Angew. Chem.* **2010**, *122*, 6388–6390; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2010**, *49*, 6250–6252), and has published a total of 51 manuscripts in *Angewandte Chemie* over his career.

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