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Letter

From the Chair



Dear Members,

A warm welcome to our Executive Director, Sarah Hills and our new Vice-Chair, Mark Ypinga. They have got off to a running start and already shown just how dynamic and professional they both are. EURADIA is most fortunate and I am looking forward to working with them to make our Alliance even more effective.

September is a busy month for diabetes meetings and this provides the occasion for us to (re)introduce you to two members who just organised their annual meeting in Copenhagen (FEND and EASD). We look forward to featuring other members in future newsletters.

The European Commission continues to be a major focus of the Alliance. We have been particularly concerned about ensuring the prominence of diabetes in FP7 as well as the proposed budget for research in our area. We shall report on our lobbying activities at the Board meeting in November. I have also been in contact with the steering committee of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) with a view to exploring the opportunity for EURADIA to play a major role in the diabetes track of this planned technological platform. It was apparent from these early discussions that EURADIA is a unique alliance of NGOs and industry that is seen by IMI as a "ready to use" entity not existing in any other disease area. The link between research and patients was seen as a particular strength as was the involvement of industry.

As one of her first duties, our new Executive Director, Sarah Hills, represented EURADIA at the recent European Health Forum at Bad Gastein. This was a useful occasion for networking with other European stakeholders in health including members of the European Parliament. She will report to the Board and we shall then decide whether it would be useful to have a stronger presence at the next Bad Gastein meeting, possibly with a specific EURADIA event.

Philippe Halban
Chair EURADIA



Welcome to the new Executive Director and the new Vice-Chair of EURADIA

EURADIA would like to welcome its new Executive Director and new Vice-Chair:



Sarah Hills, RGN, MSc, Executive Director EURADIA

Sarah Hills trained in general nursing at the Middlesex Hospital in London and in cardiac intensive care nursing at the London Chest Hospital. Sarah then worked for the EASD (page 6) from 1986-1988, while the office was located in London. Between 1988 and 1997 Sarah managed the editorial office of *Diabetologia* first at the University of Uppsala, Sweden (editor Prof Claes Hellerström) and later at the University of Pisa, Italy (editor Prof Ele Ferrannini). Since 1997 Sarah has been administrator for the European Group for the Study of Insulin Resistance and since 2001 also the manager of a European multi-centre EU-funded project on insulin resistance coordinated at the University of Pisa. Sarah is also active in FEND (page 6), and has been the Editor of the journal *European Diabetes Nursing* since 2004. In July 2006 Sarah joined EURADIA as a part-time Programme Manager and was appointed as full-time Executive Director in October 2006.

Mark Ypinga, Vice-Chair EURADIA
(Representing Merck Sharp & Dohme)
Assoc. Marketing Director, Diabetes Products
Global Human Health
Merck & Co., Inc.
Whitehouse Station NJ, USA



Mark Ypinga is currently working as Associate Director global marketing for Merck's diabetes products. In this function he is based in the USA at their headquarters. Although his last name wouldn't point you in that direction, Mark is actually Dutch. Mark has spent the last 10 years in the pharmaceutical industry in different sales and marketing positions for several companies. Prior to working in the pharmaceutical industry he worked in healthcare management providing services to employees of corporations and organisations with a specific focus on prevention. Mark holds a bachelors degree in physical therapy and completed a post-graduate curriculum in strategy in the pharmaceutical environment.

Mark was elected as Vice-Chair of EURADIA in July 2006 after the former Vice-Chair Sarah Morris had to step down because of changing responsibilities within her company.

Goodbye to Dr Carole Brendel, EURADIA Scientific Officer

We would like to wish all the best to Carole Brendel who is leaving EURADIA to move to the USA. Carole has been with EURADIA since its inception in 2003 and has overseen the developments and changes in the Alliance. Carole will be very much missed by all in EURADIA for her enthusiasm and professionalism and especially her kind approach to everyone who has worked with her.

EU funded research programmes in the field of diabetes

EURADIA has compiled, with the help of Nathalie Vercruyssen (European Commission, DG-Research), a non-exhaustive list of EU funding of diabetes and related research during research framework programmes FP5 and FP6. This list, and the project-related websites, are available under: www.euradia.org and www.cordis.lu/lifescihealth/major/diabetes-eu-funding.htm. You will note that projects are indicated according to their specificity to diabetes research in particular (*highly specific* indicated by asterisk*).

You can find more details on FP5 projects in the *Catalogue of Community funded projects in the field of diabetes research in FP5* (Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources Programme - 1998-2002) available under www.cordis.lu/life/.

During FP5 there were more than 25 diabetes/obesity related projects awarded funding. The awards were from around €600 000 to €3.5 million (EU contribution). The average was in the region of €2 million, the total EU contribution accounted for more than €49 million over the 4-year programme period.

Diabetes-related projects span three priorities of FP6: "Life Sciences, Genomics and Biotechnology for Health", "Food Quality and Safety" and "Information Society Technologies". Some of the largest projects were awarded more than €12 million. Up to now the EU contribution is around €179 million for FP6. The funding for projects *highly specific** for diabetes research alone can be estimated to have reached roughly €25 million in FP5 and €61 million in FP6 until now.

For FP7 the level of funding for diabetes related research is not yet known (the calls should be published around the end of 2006). EURADIA was instrumental in channelling suggestions for diabetes research topics to the EU from partners in the Alliance (Newsletter 1, April 2006).

*We considered that projects such as Riset (*Transplantation tolerance*) are less specific for diabetes research than projects such as EUGENE2 (*European Network on Functional Genomics of Type 2 Diabetes*), and we broke down the budgets to ascertain an estimate of the budget specifically earmarked for diabetes research.

5th Framework Programme (1998-2002)

Acronym	Title
Action LADA*	Prevalence characterisation and prevention of latent autoimmune diabetes in adults (LADA) in Europe
ADICOL	Advanced insulin infusion using a control loop
AMPDIAMET*	The cellular fuel gauge AMP-activated protein kinase: a key player in type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and the metabolic syndrome?
BIOCLA	Production of CLA-enriched dairy products by natural means
CAUSES OF TYPE 2 DIABETES*	Phenotypes and genes linked to insulin resistance and risk for type 2 diabetes
DIABETES PREVENTION*	Nutritional primary prevention of type 1 diabetes
DIET and OBESITY	Dietary and genetic influences on susceptibility or resistance to weight gain on a high fat diet
EU CHILDHOOD OBESITY	Childhood obesity: early programming by infant nutrition?
EUPEAH	Glucocorticoid hormone programming in early life and its impact in adult health
EURAGEDIC*	European rational approach for the genetics of diabetes complications
EURODIALE*	Optimal organisation of health care in diabetic foot disease
EUROSTARCH	Stable isotope applications to monitor starch digestion and fermentation for the development of functional foods
FACTORS IN HEALTHY EATING	Examines the causes of eating disorders and obesity
GIFT*	Genomic integrated force for type 2 diabetes
Grow Beta*	Generation and functional characterisation of neuro-endocrine cells for cellular replacement therapy
INCA	Intelligent control assistant for diabetes
HSP for THERAPY*	Heat shock protein 60 as a novel therapeutic target for diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis
MONODIAB*	The blood monocyte as a tool for the prediction of type 1 diabetes
NUGENOB	Nutrient-gene interactions in human obesity: implications for dietary guidelines
NUTRIX	Early malnutrition and programming of adult degenerative diseases: experimental, epidemiological and preventive studies
OB-AGE	Obesity and disease in ageing
Pancreas Development*	Molecular mechanisms controlling pancreas organogenesis and differentiation of pancreatic cell types
PEUDOISLET*	Generation of bioengineered pancreatic islet micro-organs for insulin replacement therapy in diabetes mellitus
RISC*	Relationship between insulin sensitivity and cardiovascular disease risk
TUNEUP	Therapeutic utilisation of a novel enzyme with unique adhesion properties
VIRUSES IN DIABETES - VIRIDIAB*	Enterovirus infections as a risk factor for type 1 diabetes

You can find more details on these FP5 projects in the *Catalogue of Community funded projects in the field of diabetes research in FP5* (Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources Programme - 1998-2002) available under www.cordis.lu/life/. This list, and the project-related websites, are available under: www.euradia.org and www.cordis.lu/lifescihealth/major/diabetes-eu-funding.htm.

6th Framework Programme (2002-2006)

Acronym	Title
BARP*	Development of a bioartificial pancreas for type 1 diabetes therapy
BETACELLTHERAPY*	JDRF centre for beta cell therapy in diabetes
CLINICIP	Closed loop insulin infusion for critically ill patients
DIABESITY*	Diabesity
DIOGENES	Diet, obesity and genes
EARNEST	Early nutrition programming for adult health
EUGENE2*	European network on functional genomics of type 2 diabetes
EURODIA*	Pathophysiological mechanisms underlying beta cell dysfunction
EUROSTEMCELL	EuroStemCell's mission is to build the scientific foundations required to take stem cell technology to the clinic
EUROTHYMAIDE	Understanding of the mechanisms underlying the development of autoimmune diseases, by exploring the major biological functions of the thymus
EXGENESIS	Health benefits of exercise: identification of genes and signalling pathways involved in the effects of exercise on insulin resistance, obesity and metabolic syndrome
HELENA	Healthy lifestyle in Europe by nutrition in adolescence
HEPADIP	Hepatic and adipose tissue in the metabolic syndrome
IDEFICS	Identification and prevention of dietary and lifestyle induced health effects in children and infants
IMMIDIAB*	Genetic susceptibility for type 2 diabetes among immigrants in Europe
LIPGENE	Diet, genomics and the metabolic syndrome: an integrated nutrition, agro-food, social and economic analysis
MOLPAGE*	Molecular phenotyping to accelerate genomic epidemiology
MUGEN	Integrated functional genomics in mutant mouse models as tools to investigate the complexity of human immunological disease
PREDICTIONS*	The identification of risk factors for the development of diabetic nephropathy
RISET	Transplantation tolerance
SAVEBETA*	Molecular pathways underlying decreased beta cell mass in diabetes mellitus
TONECA*	Coordination action on the aetiology, pathology and prediction of type 1 diabetes in Europe

This list, and the project-related websites, are available under: www.euradia.org and www.cordis.lu/lifescihealth/major/diabetes-eu-funding.htm.

EURADIA representation at FEND and EASD annual meetings 2006

Federation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND) www.fend.org

FEND was established in 1995 and is recognized as a unique voice for nurses working in diabetes care, research and education in Europe, membership of FEND is more than 1000. FEND hosts a two-day Annual Conference at which the attendance is around 550 and is held in a different European city each year. The official journal of FEND is *European Diabetes Nursing*, which is published three times a year by John Wiley and Sons and contains original research, reviews, case reports, and news of the high level of political lobbying carried out by FEND on behalf of its members.



FEND has been instrumental in promoting and developing post-graduate university education for specialist diabetes nurses across Europe. FEND collaborates with the University Automata Barcelona, Spain, University of Uppsala, Sweden and Roehampton University UK in running the FEND ENDCUP accredited programme, which 100 nurses from Europe have completed or are currently undertaking. FEND established the first Chair in Diabetes Nursing (University of Uppsala, Sweden).

European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) www.easd.org

The EASD was founded in 1965 and is based on individual membership; it embraces scientists, physicians, laboratory workers, nurses and students from around the world interested in diabetes and related subjects. Membership currently numbers over 5,500 individuals from over 100 countries worldwide. An annual meeting is held in a different European city each year. The high quality of scientific research presented at the annual meetings is attested to by the increasing participation (at the EASD meeting in Copenhagen in 2006 it was over 12,000). The official journal of the EASD is *Diabetologia*, which has been established for over 40 years. *Diabetologia* is the highest-ranking European diabetes research journal.

The EASD holds an EASD Scientists Training Course and a Clinical Research Course to attract new talent to diabetes research in different centres. Together with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International (JDRFI) the EASD organises a yearly workshop in Oxford, UK where 20 participants come together from all over the world. The Association has 15 active study groups encompassing the different sub-specialties within diabetes research and education.

Since 2001, EASD has been supporting European diabetes research through its daughter organisation EFSD, the European Foundation for the Study of Diabetes. To date, EFSD has committed over €40 million in partnership with industry and other NGOs.



EURADIA booth at the EASD

EU News

Innovative Medicines Initiative

On 18 September, the second version of the Strategic Research Agenda of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) was published by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). The IMI is a unique pan-European public and private sector collaboration initiated under the 6th Research Framework Programme between: patient organisations, universities, hospitals, regulatory authorities, as well as small and large biopharmaceutical and healthcare companies. Founding members of this Public Private Partnership are EFPIA and the European Commission. The objective of IMI is to support faster discovery and development of better medicines.

The strategic research agenda (SRA) contains a whole section on metabolic diseases to which EURADIA contributed. This section sets out proposals developed by key stakeholders to promote pre-competitive research in Europe that will address the bottlenecks that exist in the development of novel therapies for diabetes.

A multidisciplinary group representing major stakeholders with a broad range of expertise was set up to review the bottlenecks in developing novel therapies for diabetes, and to make proposals for how they should be addressed in a pre-competitive manner. In addition, a number of scientists focusing on diabetes research or drug development were consulted for further opinions and ideas. The major research areas that need to be addressed concerning the prevention and treatment of diabetes and its complications are: glucose metabolism, lipid metabolism, obesity and cardiovascular diseases. As there are other programmes focusing on dyslipidaemia, atherosclerosis and obesity, the focus of this

proposal is research for the normalisation of glucose metabolism.

The group has identified five major research priorities:

- Develop more predictable *in vitro*, *in vivo* and *in silico* pre-clinical models for diabetes and its complications;
- Identify and validate novel targets in diabetes by discovery research in the pathophysiology of the disease and its complications;
- Identify and validate biomarkers for beta-cell function and loss, for treating both insulin resistance and diabetic complications;
- Characterize subpopulations and patient groups using genomics and biomarkers for focused therapeutic and preventive studies;
- Develop quality-of-life and patient-reported outcome metrics to measure the impact of novel treatments on daily activities, and the overall benefits of novel therapy.

The bottlenecks of drug development for diabetes were prioritised as follows:

- Predictive pharmacology;
- Cell-based and animal models for type 1 and type 2 diabetes;
- Basic research in the pathophysiology of diabetes and micro- and macrovascular complications;
- Modification of behaviour and lifestyle;
- Identification of biomarkers for beta-cell function, mass and for insulin resistance;
- Validation of the biomarkers *in vivo* and in humans;
- Characterisation of focused patient groups for clinical trials;
- Quality of life.

For further information you can find the SRA on our website www.euradia.org

7th Framework Programme

The Council adopted on 25 September its common position on a draft decision establishing the 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7) of the European Community (EC) for the period 2007-2013. The Council's common position will be forwarded to the European Parliament with a view to reaching an agreement in a second reading under the co-decision procedure. Adoption follows a political agreement achieved by the Council on 24 July. The Council's common position reflects both the Commission's proposal and the Parliament's opinion as regards structure, scientific and technological content, means of implementation and budgetary resources. A total of €50.5 billion will be allocated to FP7-EC for 7 years. **Next steps now are the vote in 2nd reading in the Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee on 6 November and the Plenary vote on 30 November.**

On 5 September, an informal high level meeting of the European Parliament, Council and Commission took place to iron out differences in the FP7 following the political agreement reached by ministers and Commissioner Janez Potočnik at the Competitiveness Council in July. With the existing FP6 due to expire at the end of the year, all parties are working on potential points of disagreement. In its second reading, the Parliament will therefore only pass amendments that the other two institutions can accept, thus helping to ensure that the new Framework Programme can come into force on time on 1st January.

In addition to fulfilling the objectives laid down in the EC treaty and contributing to the reform strategy laid down in 2000 in Lisbon (creation of a more competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in Europe capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and

better jobs and greater social cohesion), the new FP7 has the following characteristics:

- concentration on a selected number of thematic priorities in which Community action can provide the greatest possible added value;
- support for research at the frontiers of knowledge, through investigator-driven basic research performed by the most excellent research teams in Europe, through the creation of an independent European Research Council;
- better education and research training, easier access to research opportunities and better recognition of the researcher's contribution to the goals of society, through the strengthening of human resources policy;
- optimising the use and development of European research infrastructures; strengthening the innovative capacities of small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) and their ability to benefit from research; supporting the development of researcher-driven clusters; bringing science and society closer together, and giving support to the coherent development of research policies at Community and national level;
- strengthening the role of the EU's Joint Research Centre in providing customer-driven scientific and technological support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of Community policies;
- simplification and streamlining of the implementation arrangements, on the basis of improved decentralised management procedures.

For more information go to Community Research and Development Information Service <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/>