

Quarterly Newsletter Nr. 10 November 2008

Letter from the Chair

Dear EURADIA Partners and Allies,

These are difficult times for the economy in Europe and the rest of the world. In this newsletter there are reports on this issue highlighting the way that diabetes is likely to be affected. Health care for people with the condition will probably suffer as cuts are made within services and reimbursement decisions are further tightened. EURADIA is concerned that there may be a reduction in funds available for research. Institutions will be focussing on ways to make savings, which may affect personnel and government funding. There is also concern that industry investment in research could be reduced as well.

In such a climate it is imperative that diabetes investigators make known their field of interest and contribution in order that information is available for future policy decisions. Funding for diabetes research should be equal to the challenge of the growing epidemic. I strongly encourage you to make your voice heard by completing the DIAMAP Research Questionnaire or the Funding Questionnaire if you have not already done so.

Effectiveness of EURADIA advocacy

Although EURADIA is taken up with DIAMAP activity at present, our advocacy for European research continues unabated and remains at the heart of our mission. That the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) has named diabetes in its first call is testament to our focus on that issue. Also, the third call of FP7 has named issues prioritised by DIAMAP activities during 2007.

Philippe A. Halban Chairman EURADIA

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DIAMAP project update

Information about DIAMAP was displayed during the EASD and FEND meetings in Rome. This was a useful opportunity for DIAMAP as the EASD attracted a final attendance of 18,283 and the project benefitted from mention by Professor Ele Ferrannini during the Presidential Address at the EASD (webcast www.EASD.org). We would like to thank FEND and EASD for providing space at their meetings for EURADIA/DIAMAP to have an exhibition stand where participants could enter their data directly into the online

an exhibition stand where participants could research database.

The result of publicity generated during website under 'Articles-References'. It is countries are publicising the DIAMAP

the meetings can be seen on the DIAMAP pleasing that so many different European message.

EURADIA/DIAMAP press conference with Professor Philippe Halban

A press conference was held during the EASD meeting to present the mission of EURADIA and the rationale behind the DIAMAP project. An audio and slide presentation can be accessed at: http://www.diamap.eu/ (home page).

DIAMAP Focussed Sub-Groups and development of the Road Maps

The six Focussed Sub-Groups have been working since June of this year to develop research tracks that will later be developed into the Road Maps. During the EASD meeting in Rome five of the groups met face-to-face to review progress and to develop the next stage in the project to select the research areas that will be 'mapped' over the next couple of months.





DIAMAP Groups at work in Rome; members of the Groups are listed on http://www.diamap.eu/

Change to the Project Steering Committee

We congratulate Professor Ulf Smith on his election as president of EASD for a 3-year term starting September 2008. Sadly, this has forced him to offer his resignation from the DIAMAP Project Steering Committee. We are delighted to welcome Professor Emmanuel Van Obberghen (Nice, France) who has kindly accepted to join the Committee in place of Professor Smith.





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News from the EU

Diabetes - The Policy Puzzle: Is Europe Making Progress?

The International Diabetes Federation – European Region (IDF Europe) and the Federation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND) are pleased to announce the publication of the second edition of their pan-European diabetes policy audit entitled: 'Diabetes - The Policy Puzzle: Is Europe Making Progress?'

The 2008 report provides the latest evidence of the spiralling diabetes epidemic in Europe – now affecting over 31 million people in the EU - together with a comparative analysis of national diabetes policies and practices across Europe with a view to promoting best practice in the prevention, screening and management of the disease.

Based on the conclusions of this report, and the disappointing lack of progress made by countries since the last audit, IDF Europe and FEND continue to advocate for the need for EU policy action on diabetes.

http://www.idf.org/home/index.cfm?node=1500

Financial crisis expected to slow R&D investment (Summarised from *Euractive*)

The current global credit crunch could dent investment in biotech research and seriously delay the discovery of new medicines, a UK scientist warned yesterday at a conference on the future of life sciences. As the global financial crisis drags on, "investing in biotech companies is now seen as risk taking, and will not be for the timid," said Professor David Wield of the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on 27 October.

Even coping with the everyday expense of basic biotech research carried out by biotechnology companies is "increasingly becoming more of a struggle," he noted. SMEs constitute a majority of the 1,600 or so European biotech companies.

Drug development by pharmaceutical companies has also been "hit by the credit crunch," while big companies are laying off staff and closing down research units instead of eyeing biotech start-ups for new ideas, he added. According to EuropaBio, the European bioindustries association, biotech medicines account for some 20% of all marketed medicines and represent 50% of all medicines in the pipeline.

Recent EU statistics show that the R&D investment rate of European business has grown for the third year running and last year even surpassed that of the United States. However, the Commission notes that this positive development could be undermined by the current financial crisis.

EU Science and Research Commissioner Janez Potocnik has thus called on governments and the private sector not to reduce their research spending. He argues that sustained investment in innovation can help to relaunch the overall economy, because major societal challenges such as security of energy supply, food safety and climate change will remain long after the resolution of the financial crisis.

http://www.euractiv.com/en/science/financial-crisis-expected-slow-rd-investment/article-176728

Financial meltdown could hit diabetes sufferers

(Summarised from *The Parliament Magazine*)
Participants at a conference in Brussels heard that the global financial crisis may hit people who suffer from diabetes. It is feared governments will trim health-related spending and defer medical care.

This could have a damaging spin-off effect for the estimated 240 million people worldwide living with diabetes. "The current economic crisis potentially worsens an already challenging situation," said James Gavin, co-chairman of the diabetes global advisory board. The conference was organised by the Johnson & Johnson diabetes institute.

http://www.theparliament.com/policyfocus/health/health-article/newsarticle/financialmeltdown-could-hit-diabetes-sufferers/



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EU member states urged to do more to tackle diabetes

(Summarised from *The Parliament Magazine*)

EU governments have been accused of a "half-hearted" approach to tackling potential causes of diabetes, such as obesity.

The *diabetes index* revealed that overall care is best in Denmark and worst in Bulgaria. Other top performers include the UK, France and the Netherlands although the Health Consumer Powerhouse (HCP) report says no country achieves their 'true potential' and all need varying degrees of reform to maximise performance.

The index allows patients to scrutinise and compare their own country with other member states on diabetes care by assessing issues such as patient's rights and information, generosity, prevention, access and treatment outcomes. http://www.theparliament.com

http://www.healthpowerhouse.com/archives/cat_media_room.html

Better access to scientific articles on EUfunded research

(From ERAWATCH news)

Fast and reliable access to research results, especially via the Internet, can drive innovation, advance scientific discovery and support the development of a strong knowledge-based economy. The European Commission wants to ensure that the results of the research it funds under the EU's 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7) are disseminated as widely and effectively as possible to guarantee maximum exploitation and impact in the world of researchers and beyond. The Commission launched a pilot project that will give unrestricted online access to EU-funded research results, primarily research articles published in peer reviewed journals, after an embargo period of between 6 and 12 months.

http://www.erawatchnetwork.eu/en/News/news.html?id=82

European research: a major work in progress - Interview with José Manuel Silva Rodriguez, Director-General for Research (Summarised from Research*eu)

Europe's scientific research sector underwent a series of upheavals in 2007: the start of the 7th Framework Programme, while the project for building the European Research Area was given renewed momentum when a Green Paper was published and submitted for institutional and public consultation. José Manuel Silva Rodriguez has headed the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research since January 2006. In this interview he takes stock of his term in office and discusses FP7 transparency, control and monitoring, and the launch of Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) and the European Research Council (ERC).

Strengthening the Directorate-General's role in the scientific debate is also discussed along with developing research policy. Also, the Lisbon Strategy recommendation that Member States should allocate 3% of their GDP to research and development by the year 2010 and the slow response that is coming from the private sector.

The original interview can be read online:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/researcheu/56/article_5616_en.html

The 2008 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard

The 2008 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard, released in October 2008, presents information on 2000 companies from around the world reporting major investments in R&D. The set of companies it covers comprises the top 1000 R&D investors whose registered offices are in the EU [1] and the top 1000 registered elsewhere.

According to the report on Cordis Europa "European companies are increasing their research and development (R&D) investments faster than their counterparts in the US and Japan". The report can be found on:

http://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/research/scoreboard_2008 .htm



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High-level pharmaceutical forum issues final report

(From Cordis Europa)

Europe's Pharmaceutical Forum has concluded its three-year process and, on 2 October, put forward several recommendations addressing the many challenges facing the pharmaceutical industry, public health interests and national healthcare systems.

The high-level forum was co-chaired by Vice President of the European Commission Günter Verheugen and Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou



(left), and welcomed health ministers of Member States, MEPs, the Secretary General of the European Free Trade Association and representatives of 10 stakeholder organisations.

The Pharmaceutical Forum's initial mandate, set out in 2005, was 'to discuss the competitiveness of the European pharmaceutical industry and related public health considerations, with a specific focus on information to patients on disease and treatment options, relative effectiveness assessments and pricing and reimbursement of medicinal products'. http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&A CTION=D&RCN=29942

Other news

Nanobiotechnology: Involving the public

A public debate on the merits of nanobiotechnology is urgently needed if people's fears about the emerging science are to be allayed, EU-funded researchers recommend in a new report written as part of the EU-funded NanoBio-RAISE project, concludes that the public needs to be engaged in order to calm such fears.

Nanobiotechnology has the power to drastically transform society, yet all too often the dialogue regarding this science has been dominated by fear, created by novels such as Prey, by Michael Crichton, and news headlines about a 'grey goo nightmare'.

http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&A CTION=D&RCN=29983

Online genetic Catalogue

Genetic research is using the web for increasing its effectiveness. With €12 million of financing from FP7, the GEN2PHEN (Genotype-to-phenotypedatabases: a holistic solution) project is setting out to build an online catalogue of relations between health and genetic variations. More and more advances have been made in the field in recent years, but there is still no universal system adapted to the new information technologies to centralise this information.

Diabetes, cardiac disorders, obesity and autoimmune diseases are widespread pathologies of genetic origin. The 17 partners in the GEN2PHEN project will be putting together a database and search engine to allow medical genetics specialists to consult the latest works in their disciplines. The project also intends to link this portal to the other similar initiatives, few and far between, at international level.

http://www.le.ac.uk

Diabetes meeting presentations online

The European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) meeting in Rome attracted 18,283 participants from around the world. There is a weblink to the presentations:

http://www.easd.org/easdwebfiles/annualmeeting/44 thmeeting/webcasts/webcasts.htm

The Federation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND) meeting was held in Rome just prior to the EASD and attracted a record number of participants. The presentation can be accessed on: http://www.fend-

lectures.org/index.php?menu=events



Funding opportunities

FP7 Open Calls

Open calls in FP7 are listed on the 'Find a Call' page. See calls across a range of fields in order not to miss possible opportunities for funding for diabetes research e.g.:

- Health
- Food, agriculture and fisheries, and biotechnology
- Information and communication technologies
- Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm

COST call for proposals for cooperation in the field of research

COST (European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research) has launched a call for proposals on actions contributing to the scientific, technological, economic, cultural or societal development in Europe. Proposals playing a precursor role for other European programmes and/or initiated by early-stage researchers are especially welcome.

For details of the call:

http://www.cost.esf.org/opencall/

EUREKA's Eurostars programme is the first European funding and support programme to be specifically dedicated to SMEs. Eurostars will stimulate them to lead international collaborative research and innovation projects by easing access to support and funding. The next deadline for electronic submission of applications is Friday 21 November 2008 at 1700 CET.

http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu/

The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) aims to encourage the competitiveness of European enterprises. With small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as its main target, the programme will support innovation activities (including eco-innovation), provide better access to finance and deliver business support services in the regions.

http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_en.htm

Reports

EU funding guide

EU support for RTDI is provided mainly through the Seventh Research Framework Programme, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and the Structural Funds.

When operating individually, these three funding sources already act as effective tools in support of RTDI. However, their value can be further enhanced by combining them. How can this be done?

The answer to this question is provided by the "Practical Guide to EU funding opportunities for Research and Innovation". In addition to practical information on combining the different funding sources, the guide includes a description of each fund, advice for policy makers and an innovative Checklist and Scorecard. These allow potential beneficiaries to quickly identify exactly how they can access European funding at every stage of a project.

http://cordis.europa.eu/eu-fundingquide/home_en.html

OECD Science, Technology and Industry Outlook 2008 (Summarised from the OECD

Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry website)

Reviews of key trends in science, technology and innovation in OECD countries and a number of major non-member economies including Brazil, Chile, China, Israel, Russia and South Africa. The publication examines topics high on the agenda of science and innovation policy makers, including science and innovation performance; trends in national science, technology and innovation policies; and practices to assess the socioeconomic impacts of public research.

http://www.oecd.org/document/36/0,3343,en_2649_34273_41546660_1_1_1_1,00.html

Science in society portal

Highlights include a report on *Public engagement in science*

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/health_forum/open_2008/program_en.htm



Diary dates 2008 and 2009

2008

- 14-16 Nov European City of Science, Paris, France. http://www.villeeuropeennedessciences.fr/
- 20 Nov Does the Framework work? Brussels, Belgium. http://www.sciencebusiness.net/events/framework.php
- 23-27 Nov **Engineering for Health**. European Biomedical Engineering Congress, 4th European Congress of IFMBE. Antwerp, Belgium. an.bradt@semico.be
- 10 Dec **Promoting a Sustainable Workforce for Health in Europe**. To launch the Green Paper on the EU Workforce for Health, Brussels, Belgium. http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/workforce/program_en.htm
- 10-11 Dec **EU open health forum 1008. Developing and implementing health in the European Union**. Brussels, Belgium. http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/health_forum/open_2008/program_en.htm

2009

- 11-13 March **Diabetes UK Annual Professional Conference** Glasgow, UK. http://www.diabetes.org.uk/Annual-Professional-Conference-2009/
- 26-28 March **5th International Symposium on Diabetes and Pregnancy** Sorrento, Italy http://www2.kenes.com/diabetes-pregnancy/Pages/Home.aspx
- 1-4 April **3rd International Congress on prediabetes and the Metabolic Syndrome** Nice, France http://www2.kenes.com/Prediabetes/pages/home.aspx
- 6 9 May **17th European Congress on Obesity (ECO 2009)** Amsterdam, The Netherlands http://www.easoobesity.org/eco2009/
- 20-24 May **6th Metabolic Syndrome**, **Type II Diabetes and Atherosclerosis Congress** Berlin, Germany http://www.msdacongress.com/congress_2009/index.html



http://www.worlddiabetesday.org/

