

# Establishment of the Innovative Medicines Initiative Joint Undertaking

2007/0089(CNS) - 14/12/2012

The Joint Technology Initiatives are public-private partnerships in industrial research at European level. They were set up as pilots in 2007-2008 under the Seventh Framework Programme in five strategic areas: aeronautics and air transport (the Clean Sky initiative), **public health (the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI))**, fuel cell and hydrogen technologies (the Fuel Cells and Hydrogen (FCH) initiative), embedded computing systems (the ARTEMIS initiative) and nanoelectronics (the ENIAC initiative). The SESAR (Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research) programme should also be mentioned since it is funded under the Seventh Framework Programme.

An annual report on the progress achieved by the Joint Technology Initiatives Joint Undertakings ('JTI JUs') is required by Article 11(1) of the Council Regulations setting up the individual JTIs. This report contains details of implementation including number of proposals submitted, number of proposals selected for funding, type of participants, including SMEs, and country statistics. This **2011 annual report** follows the **first interim evaluations of the Joint Undertakings** carried out under Article 11(2) of the Council Regulations.

The European Commission, as a co-founding member, was responsible for starting up the JTI JUs. Once they had built up their legal and financial framework and demonstrated their capacity to manage their own budgets, ARTEMIS, IMI and Clean Sky were given autonomy in late 2009, followed by ENIAC in May and FCH in late 2010. Thus, 2011 was the first full year in which all the JTI JUs operated autonomously.

The first interim evaluation was performed on time and assessed their quality and efficiency and the progress achieved towards their objectives. All the reports concluded with a **favourable opinion**: the evaluation panels agreed that the **JUs should continue beyond 2013**. The evaluation panels supported the Sherpa Group's recommendations, in particular that **the current legal framework be streamlined to fit the purposes of setting up and implementing future JTIs**. In this respect, the current 'Community body' status of JTIs should be reviewed. They recommended **reinforcing and streamlining processes and decision-making**.

They also referred to the need (i) for more structured coordination and complementarity with FP7 and national programmes and funds; (ii) for improved communication, to enhance the visibility of JTI actions aimed at the general public and at international level; and (iii) for systematic data collection and a monitoring system for key performance indicators.

**Progress achieved by the IMI JU:** for the period 2008–2013, the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) JU was allocated a total budget of EUR 2 billion. The European Commission contributes maximum EUR 1 billion from its Seventh Framework Programme budget, to be matched by in-kind contributions (consisting mostly of research activities) worth at least another EUR 1 billion from member companies of the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). This makes the IMI Europe's largest public-private partnership overall, as well as the largest pharmaceutical-related PPP.

The IMI's main objectives are: (i) to build a more collaborative environment for pharmaceutical R&D in Europe; (ii) to speed up the development of more effective and safer medicines for patients and (iii) to increase the competitiveness of the EU pharmaceutical sector. The main challenges are: (i) industrial: insufficient R&D investment; (ii) scientific: technological complexity; and (iii) European: research is fragmented in Europe. Industrial partners are heavily involved in IMI; in particular, EFPIA companies

participate much more in IMI projects than in FP7 Health Projects. Another feature of IMI is the two-stage process for calls for proposals: applicants send Expressions of Interest (EoIs) in stage one; then, in stage two, the best ranked participants and the EFPIA consortium are invited to form a full project consortium and draft a Full Project Proposal (FPP). In 2011, IMI completed the evaluation of call 3 and published a fourth call for proposals.

Calls 3 and 4 attracted wide interest and a high number of applicants: 1377. But because of the restricted number of topics, only 20 % (266) of the initial applicants were finally included in the projects selected for funding together with industry participants - about 50 teams from EFPIA companies joined the consortia. The total number of participants in the calls in 2011 is 316, resulting in an average success rate of 23 %.

The participants' typology of IMI is very specific. Industry is well represented (by EFPIA companies and SMEs) and there is also very high participation from universities. At the first stage, a good number of EoIs were submitted by SMEs, followed by other participants and patients' organisations. But academia accounted for most of the participants in the projects eventually funded (208) followed by the EFPIA (53) and SMEs (47), with the latter representing 17.7 % of total participation. SMEs received 13.56 % of the EU funding over the period from 2008 to 2011.

Regarding the geographical distribution of the applicants, in Call 3, participants in the winning projects (123, excluding EFPIA companies) came from 19 countries, mostly the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, France and Sweden. The Czech Republic and Hungary were the only EU-12 countries (recent EU members) represented, with a single participant each. Switzerland led the 'associated' countries, with six participants, followed by Israel and Iceland. As for international participation, the US had three participants (as many as Spain). For Call 4, IMI recorded 143 participations in the proposals selected for funding, but the geographical distribution is still unknown.

In 2011 the main research objectives evolved to reflect the latest progress in their fields of technology. The revision of the IMI's strategic research agenda will change the types of projects funded: calls will focus on **large-scale and game-changing projects**.