

## 2012 REVIEW

**Professor Philippe Amouyel, Chair of the JPND Management Board, describes some of the highlights of the year gone by:**

***"2012 was an extremely important year for JPND with the launch of our European Research Strategy. Our resulting research programme of large-scale actions has already begun, guided by our Phase 1 Implementation plan (2012-2014), and we look forward with great anticipation to 2013 and beyond, where we anticipate the announcement of several new initiatives".***

### 2012 JPND highlights included:

#### 29 million euro boost for ND research

As part of its Annual Calls for Proposals, two JPND Joint Transnational Calls were launched on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012, aimed at supporting transnational collaborations in the field of neurodegenerative disease research. Together, the Calls made over 29 million euro available to researchers in 22 countries.

**Call 1:** "A call for European research projects for the identification of genetic, epigenetic and environmental risk and protective factors"

**Call 2:** "A call for European research projects for the evaluation of health care policies, strategies and interventions"

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#### Pathfinder grants for centres of excellence

The Network of Centres of Excellence in Neurodegeneration (COEN) initiative released its second call for proposals in December 2012, providing funds for "Pathfinder" grants for innovative approaches to better understand disease mechanisms and provide new avenues for therapeutic development. COEN is aligned with JPND, although it operates as an independent entity.

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#### JPND fostering EU-US research collaboration

A conference was held in Washington DC in November 2012 to explore the potential of enhanced transatlantic research collaboration in the area of neurodegenerative diseases. The aim of the conference was to showcase JPND and to attract the attention of potential American partners in order to achieve their possible future affiliation. The conference also helped to identify several potential areas of mutual interest, such as platforms for open access data and standardization of laboratory procedures. An action plan for accession of the US to JPND will be further developed by the JPND Management Board, together with the respective American partners, beginning with scientific-level discussions to agree on the main areas of mutual interest

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#### First-phase JPND Implementation Plan agreed

A first-phase JPND Implementation Plan was agreed in September 2012 among JPND countries for the period of 2012-2014. The plan has three major action areas:

- Annual Calls for Proposals in Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) each year
- Action Groups to further determine research needs and opportunities in areas such as longitudinal cohort studies, animal models and assisted living.
- Action Groups to promote engagement, commitment and partnerships, including with the European Commission and Industry.

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#### First Third Country member of JPND

Canada was accepted as the first Third Country member of JPND in May 2012. Austria, Croatia and Israel also joined in 2012, bringing the total number of participating countries to 27.

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#### Results of JPND Biomarker Call announced

Four new international research projects began in 2012, funded under the JPND Transnational Call "Neurodegenerative Diseases - a call for European research projects for the optimisation of biomarkers and harmonisation of their use between clinical centres". The successful projects, containing participants from 20 different countries span areas such as;

- Biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease
- Prion protein analysis in the diagnosis of sporadic Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (sCJD)
- Biomarker-based diagnosis of rapid progressive dementias
- Sampling and biomarker optimization in ALS and other motor neuron diseases .

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#### Research Mapping Exercise

The JPND mapping exercise was released as a searchable database on the JPND website in February 2012. This exercise surveys the European research landscape to understand the current scale and scope of research in neurodegenerative diseases and to help form an objective view of that research. The resulting database is a significant resource for the international research community to identify gaps and opportunities for future research.

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#### Launch of JPND European Research Strategy

The first major achievement of JPND - our European Research Strategy - *Tackling the Challenge of Alzheimer's and other Neurodegenerative Diseases in Europe* was launched on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This joint strategy is designed to guide research activity in neurodegenerative diseases over the next 10 years.

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(L-R) Prof. Philippe Amouyel, Chair JPND Management Board; Mrs. Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science; Prof. Thomas Gasser, Chair JPND Scientific Advisory Board at the Launch of the JPND Research Strategy