



### **New EU research project on the trail of chronic pain**

Chronic pain syndromes which develop after nerve damage, trauma or surgery are characterized by persistent and severe pain. They induce anxiety and depression and greatly impair patients' quality of life. One out of five Europeans suffer from chronic pain, many of them for more than two years, some even longer. Chronic pain therefore constitutes not only a heavy burden for individual patients and their families, but also for national health systems in Europe since treatment cost take up 1.5 to 3 % of their gross domestic product (GDP) per year. Advancing scientific research in this field is thus a societal need and a crucial engagement for improved patient care.

With *ncRNAPain*, a new European research project sets out to further explore the biological mechanisms underlying chronic pain. Endowed with an overall funding budget of 6 million euros by the European Commission for the next four years, the project will focus on non-coding RiboNucleic Acids (ncRNAs). "Recent scientific findings suggest that these biological molecules, which perform multiple vital roles in our genetic make-up, also play a major role in the generation of chronic pain syndromes", explains Prof Michaela Kress, Director of the Division of Physiology at Innsbruck Medical University and coordinator of *ncRNAPain*.

### **Multidisciplinary partners, one goal: Enhanced pain prevention and relief**

Against this backdrop the project therefore seeks to identify and validate specific ncRNAs that could serve as basis for the development of new drugs for pain prevention and relief. Diagnostic tools developed in the course of the project will enable better patient stratification, improved treatment and targeted prevention strategies for high risk individuals. *ncRNAPain* thus aims to provide a major advancement in both, the knowledge of how pain is generated, propagated and relieved, and in evidence-based diagnosis and treatment.

In order to achieve this ambitious goal, Prof Kress has brought together a multidisciplinary project consortium of leading molecular and systems-level neuroscientists and bioinformatics as well as ncRNA experts and clinical partners from eleven European partner institutions.



## **About ncRNAPain**

The project *ncRNAPain* (Non-coding RNAs in neurogenic and neuropathic pain mechanisms and their application for risk assessment, patient stratification and personalised pain medicine) is funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP7) with a total budget of 6 million euros over four years.

The partners in ncRNAPain at a glance:

### **Austria**

- Innsbruck Medical University

### **Czech Republic**

- Masaryk University Brno – University Hospital

### **Denmark**

- EXIQON A/S

### **France**

- Bordeaux Segalen University

### **Germany**

- University Hospital of Würzburg
- University Medical Center of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
- European Research and Project Office GmbH
- Heidelberg University Hospital
- The European Molecular Biology Laboratory

### **Israel**

- The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

### **UK**

- King's College London

### **Coordinator:**

Innsbruck Medical University  
Prof Michaela Kress  
Email: [michaela.kress@i-med.ac.at](mailto:michaela.kress@i-med.ac.at)  
Phone: +43-512-9003-70800

### **Project Management:**

European Research and Project Office GmbH (Eurice)  
Dr Vera Schneider  
Email: [v.schneider@eurice.eu](mailto:v.schneider@eurice.eu)  
Phone: +49-681-9592-85