



### **GENIEUR (The Genes in Irritable Bowel Syndrome Research Network Europe – *reloaded*)**

The COST Action BM1106 GENIEUR (The Genes in Irritable Bowel Syndrome Research Network Europe, [www.genieur.eu](http://www.genieur.eu)) ended on April 2, 2016. At the COST Action BM1106 GENIEUR Autumn Meeting on October 29-30, 2015 in Barcelona the Management Committee agreed on continuation of the GENIEUR network. Currently, 21 European countries are members of the Action as well as the three overseas countries Australia, Chile and the USA. Portugal, Hungary and Russia also expressed interest to join the initiative.

The COST Action BM1106 aimed at significantly accelerating the establishment of a pan-European, interdisciplinary network of clinicians and basic scientists with the major goal to study epi-/genetic factors and microbiota in the etiology of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

As a prerequisite, the Action established unified **guidelines for patient / control recruitment as well as phenotypic characterization** (deep phenotyping using a detailed case report form in addition to questionnaires assessing the gastrointestinal complaints and comorbid psychiatric conditions and somatisation). For that purpose, a basic study protocol was established for harmonised phenotyping and standardised collection of blood, stool and tissue samples of patients and control individuals for molecular studies.

So far, the infrastructure for multi-centre studies is set. Currently, nine countries have received Ethics Committee (METC) approval (Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden), in nine countries METC approval is pending (Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Malta, Poland, Switzerland, UK). To date, no clinical partners are involved in the three COST Action member countries: Cyprus, Finland and Serbia and therefore local implementation is pending.

Another major achievement of the COST Action BM1106 GENIEUR is the **UEG LINK Award 2016: Harmonisation and implementation of minimal requirement Protocols for phenotype-genotype characterisations to facilitate pan-EU collaborations in IBS: HELP EU in IBS**. Lead organising UEG National Society Member: Netherlands Society of Gastroenterology (NVGE), The Netherlands with Co-operating UEG National Society Member: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gastroenterologie, Verdauungs- und Stoffwechselkrankheiten (DGVS) which was also promoted by the European Society of Neurogastroenterology and Motility (ESNM).

Besides regular meetings (twice a year) The COST Action BM1106 GENIEUR together with the Working Group 'Neurogastroenterology' of the DGVS organised the **DGVS Spring Conference 2014 'Microbiota in Health and Disease'** in Berlin, Germany.

One of the major goals of GENIEUR is to encourage young colleagues to get engaged in translational neurogastroenterology research. With **two Training Schools to date (2014 and 2016)**, GENIEUR offered a platform for the young scientists as well as the more established colleagues to get introduced to the background knowledge about the clinical aspects of IBS: diagnosis and treatment as well as its characterization and the role of nutrition and microbiota in IBS as well as the introduction of the current case report form and inventories for case control characterization. This year the Training School gave an overview on the *state*

*of the art* of experimental methods and analysis techniques in genetics/epigenetics and microbiota research.

GENIEUR aims at widening, broadening and sharing knowledge relevant to the network's objectives. In order to disseminate the Action's outcomes, a final achievement brochure reporting on topics and activities of the COST Action BM1106 GENIEUR will be widely and effectively distributed in order to reach the target groups such as clinicians involved in the diagnosis and treatment of IBS, basic scientists and early stage scientists.

Furthermore, a leaflet with key messages of outcomes of the COST Action BM1106 GENIEUR for IBS patients and their families, patient organisations and the general public in lay language will be produced.

### ***GENIEUR-reloaded***

Recently, the ESNM endorsed *GENIEUR-reloaded* which will continue implementation of the basic recruitment protocol at additional sites to have in the end 24 European and 3 overseas countries recruiting patient and control samples and to collect blood, tissue and stool samples for genetics/epigenetics and microbiota studies.

Our mission is to perform large multi-centre studies in order to nail down genetics and epigenetics in IBS. Further details can be found in *Gazouli M, Wouters MM, Kapur-Pojskić L, Bengtson MB, Friedman E, Nikčević G, Demetriou C, Mulak A, Santos J, Niesler B (2016). Lessons learned: Resolving the enigma of genetic factors in Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Nature Reviews Gastroenterology & Hepatology, doi:10.1038/nrgastro.2015.206, published online, 04 January 2016*

In order to keep the network alive *GENIEUR-reloaded* will

- Meet during UEGW, ESNM, FNM conferences as Special Interest Group
- Propose Epi-/Genetics sessions during UEGW/ESNM/FNM Meetings
- Foster collaboration / grant proposals
- Support young investigators
- Update the GENIEUR Homepage and report on new findings
- Update the GENIEUR repository, a central source of information for GENIEUR members
- Disseminate outcomes to the scientific community and patient interest groups as well as patient support groups in lay language
- Perform Lobbying