

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### EU-LAC Health Conference to launch EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Health Research and Innovation

**Brussels, Belgium, March, 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

*In the 8<sup>th</sup> EU-LAC Health conference the pilot phase for an EU-CELAC Joint Initiative for Health Research and Innovation (JIRI-Health) was launched. This pilot phase is part of the roadmap developed by EU-LAC Health to intensify and coordinate the bi-regional cooperation between EU and CELAC countries in health research.*

The Launch of the JIRI-Health gathered policy-makers, scientists, health research experts, members of EU-LAC Health Advisory Board and project partners with the aim of establishing the pilot phase of the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative for Health Research and Innovation (JIRI-Health). JIRI-Health is a joint initiative between countries of the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) to enhance and coordinate the scientific and technological cooperation between these two regions in the area of health research and innovation. The main objective of this initiative is the development of bi-regional joint programming in health research and innovation and the use of already existing funding instruments for projects and actions according to aligned topics between the EU and CELAC countries.

Prior to the event, a Memorandum of Understanding as well as Governance Rules of Procedure had been developed and approved by the participating countries. Furthermore a bi-regional mapping exercise had been initiated to identify main capacities, funding bodies as well as instruments for EU-LAC collaboration in both regions. The conference has attracted enormous interest as representatives of a wide number of countries of both regions actively participated.



*Mónica Silenzi, MINCYT, Argentina, and Rafael de Andres Medina, ISCIII, Spain*

The EU-LAC Health coordinator (ISCIII, Spain) welcomed the participants of the Conference and presented the JIRI-Health objectives and added value. This introduction was complemented by the presentation of a core set of approved rules of Governance by MINCYT (Argentina) as well as the

*Project Coordinated by the Institute of Health Carlos III. Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness.*

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*This project has received funding from the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007- 2013) under grant agreement n° 281459.*



Memorandum of Understanding ready to be signed. These documents will support the now established Interim Governing Board in a flexible, slim and effective coordination. The presentations were followed by a lively discussion by interested funding agencies and ministries as well as health research experts contributing ideas, experiences and support to enhance the impact of the pilot phase of JIRI-Health.

The following sessions aimed at the ongoing and coming activities of JIRI-Health. The ongoing mapping exercise presented by DLR (Germany) as well as the options for long-term sustainability presented by INNOVATEC (Spain) indicated the need to focus in some areas of common interests as well as the complexity for effectively applying existing instruments for long-term cooperation between the two regions. The next steps include the mobilization of available health research funding instruments and infrastructures to develop pilot activities for the implementation of JIRI-Health in 2016 and 2017.



*Stephanie Splett, DLR, Germany*



*Luis Tacsan, MSCR, Costa Rica*

The next EU-LAC Health conference will take place in autumn 2016 in Costa Rica. Objectives of this conference will be the implementation of the pilot phase and the dissemination of the final version of the EU-LAC Health roadmap so that a maximum impact of the roadmap is reached.

[EU-LAC Health](#) is a project financed by the European Union through the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Program (Health theme). Its aim is to establish a consensus roadmap for cooperative health research between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. This roadmap has been and will continuously be developed including discussions and the advice of active scientists, policy-makers, programme owners and other stakeholders. The project foresees the establishment of an efficient coordination of health research policies and funding that will result in benefits from cooperation for both sides.

More information can be found at the [Project-Homepage: www.eulachealth.eu](#)

**Project-Partners:** ISCIII (Spain), MSCR-RIMAI (Costa Rica), INNOVATEC (Spain), COHRED (Switzerland), DLR (Germany), FIOCRUZ (Brazil), MINCYT (Argentina), APRE (Italy) and INCMNSZ (Mexico).

**Advisory Board members country:** Belgium, Chile, Finland, Costa Rica, Germany, Ecuador, Italy, Trinidad & Tobago, United Kingdom, PAHO/WHO

