

The EU Promotes Top Research In Biomedical Informatics To Support Individualised Medicine

The Commission of the European Union has funded with 4.85 million euros the Network of Excellence **INFOBIOMED 'Structuring European Biomedical Informatics to Support Individualised Healthcare'**. This pan-European project, which brings together 16 European organisations, is coordinated by Fundació IMIM, Barcelona, Spain. It aims to develop tools and methods in Biomedical Informatics (BMI) contributing to significant advances in the field of Genomic Medicine, as well as to create a stable and lasting R&D structure for this discipline in Europe.

Biomedical Informatics is an emerging discipline placed in the confluence between Bioinformatics (computer science applied to the analysis of the genomic and proteomic information) and Medical Informatics (information technologies to support healthcare). These disciplines have been developed in an independent form, but show now great opportunities for interaction and synergistic cooperation.

The genomic revolution is offering interesting opportunities for significant improvements in disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment, with a view on continuity and individualisation of healthcare, with the aim of improving the health and quality of life of the citizens, as well as promoting the efficiency of the expenditure of the healthcare system. This new approach (Genomic Medicine) needs a parallel development of innovative strategies and tools for information management and analysis, which are the ones afforded by Biomedical Informatics.

Therefore, the mission of **INFOBIOMED** will consist on providing scientific and technological knowledge and experiences on the application of information technologies to Genomic Medicine.

The idea of this project stems from the European **BIOINFOMED** study, which was coordinated by the Institute of Health Carlos III, Madrid, Spain. This project carried out a prospective analysis of the relationships and synergy between Bioinformatics and Medical Informatics. The results of **BIOINFOMED** are reflected in the White Paper of the project, including a detailed R&D agenda for the advancement of BMI.

The Network

INFOBIOMED is a 3-year project that has started on January 2004. It includes 16 European organizations from 10 different countries: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.

The Network brings together research groups with different background, each leader in its field of expertise, creating a multidisciplinary team and providing a good working environment for the collaborative approach that supports the consolidation of BMI as a crucial scientific discipline for future healthcare. The network is composed by: Fundació IMIM, Institut Municipal d'Investigació Mèdica, Instituto de Salud Carlos III, Karolinska Institute, the University of Edinburgh, Custodix NV, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Universidad de Aveiro, Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas, Danish Centre for Health Telematics, Informa S.r.l, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Erasmus MC-University Medical Center Rotterdam, Hvidovre Hospital, Academisch Centrum Tandheelkunde Amsterdam, and AstraZeneca Research and Development. The project is scientifically coordinated by the Research Unit on Biomedical Informatics (GRIB) of the Institut Municipal d'Investigació Mèdica (IMIM) in Barcelona, Spain.