



Statement of the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and the European Lung Foundation (ELF) on Respiratory and Allergic Diseases in FP7

The Council adopted its Common Position on the 7th Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013) (FP7). The European Parliament will commence its second reading on FP7 in September 2006.

We welcome FP7 and the emphasis in the *Health* theme on translating research for human health. We regret however that the Council's Common Position does not fully endorse the proposals made by the European Parliament on *allergic and respiratory diseases*.

The European Parliament has made an important proposal to include ***allergic and respiratory diseases*** under *translational research in other major diseases*, thereby reflecting the need for a balanced allocation of funding among the range of major non-communicable diseases in Europe.

In the opinion of the ERS and ELF, the Council's Common Position fails to attach similar recognition to the importance of these chronic diseases and the burden they place on society.

Chronic respiratory diseases in Europe are third in terms of mortality, morbidity, incidence, prevalence and costs. The total annual cost of respiratory diseases in Europe is estimated to be around €102 billion, mainly due to lost working days. In 2005, chronic respiratory diseases alone accounted for 7% of annual deaths world-wide, ranking third among chronic non-communicable diseases. About 10% of the adult population are estimated to suffer from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). The WHO estimates that COPD will move from the sixth- to the third-leading cause of death worldwide by 2010 and they have included chronic respiratory disorders as one of the main chronic diseases causing death in their global report of October 2005 "Preventing Chronic Diseases: a vital investment".

The European Parliament has specifically called for major chronic respiratory and allergic diseases to be included in FP7 e.g. COPD, asthma and sleep-related disorders, which have a growing prevalence in the Community population. We call for a European research strategy to enable the Community to achieve major advances in the field of diagnosis, prevention and treatment in this field.

For the second reading, we urge the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission to:

- ⇒ **Support the proposal of the European Parliament to include *allergic and respiratory diseases* under translational research in major diseases of the Health theme.**
- ⇒ **Reject the current proposal of the Council, which does not include the amendments of the European Parliament referring to respiratory diseases.**

- ERS** - **The European Respiratory Society**
The ERS is a not-for-profit, international medical and scientific organisation with over 8,000 members (medical doctors, clinicians and scientists in the field of respiratory health) from over 100 countries. The main objective of the Society is to alleviate suffering from respiratory disease and to promote lung health through research, knowledge sharing, medical and public education and working with patient organisations. More information can be obtained at: www.ersnet.org
- ELF** - **The European Lung Foundation**
The ELF is the public voice of the ERS and the only pan-European foundation dedicated to lung health. Its aim is to serve the European Community by sharing scientific expertise in respiratory medicine with the public. This is done by providing better support for lung diseases and its related risks, and informing decision-makers in politics, business and media. More information: www.european-lung-foundation.org