

# Joint search for new antibiotics

April 28 2015

---



Experts will create and test new economic models in order to stimulate investment and define a standard for responsible use of antibiotics. Credit: Matton

The WHO has identified antibiotic resistance as one of the three biggest threats to human health. Without new antibiotics, we risk returning to a situation in which every infection is life-threatening. The combined expertise of Europe is now aimed at stimulating development within an area that has long been seen as unprofitable for the pharmaceutical industry.

'To succeed we need to find [business](#) models and reward mechanisms which benefit companies that develop medications without selling them, because [resistance development](#) must be avoided. This has been discussed, but nobody has tested any concrete proposals and there is a lack of research', says Francesco Ciabuschi, professor in the Department of Business Studies, who is leading Uppsala University's participation in a major EU project within the field.

Every year around 25,000 people in Europe die from infections caused by multi-resistant bacteria. The annual cost is estimated at 1.5 billion euros, but the actual economic and social costs are unknown. Despite increased resistance and distribution, only two new classes of [antibiotics](#) have come onto the market in the last 30 years. The investment required is simply not expected to pay for itself.

The EU has drawn the conclusion that only a large scale collaboration between global actors can resolve this crisis situation. 9.4 million euros have therefore been invested in a partnership project in which experts from academia, authorities and business will create and test new economic models in order to stimulate investment. They will also define a standard for responsible use of the small remaining number of effective antibiotics, and for the new ones which it is hoped to develop.

A multidisciplinary group is participating from Uppsala University, including researchers in business economics, global health, IT and media, economic history, law, educational science, medicine and engineering science. The emphasis lies on developing economic models, policies and an implementation plan.

'Involving business and organisations in an [antibiotic resistance](#) project is unique, but I see it as entirely necessary to achieve results. We need to understand the effects on all levels and to think in new ways. We have received a great deal of interest from the business world; many actors

want to be involved', says Francesco Ciabuschi.

## **The project DRIVE-AB**

- Is one of 46 European IMI projects within life sciences, with a budget of 3.3 billion euros for 2012-2024. The project is a joint undertaking between the EU and the industry organisation EFPIA.
- Has 24 partners from academia, research institutes and pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies in 12 countries.

Provided by Uppsala University

Citation: Joint search for new antibiotics (2015, April 28) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-04-joint-antibiotics.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.