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CEPR - Centre d'étude des pathologies respiratoires

Rapport Hcéres

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HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research
and Higher Education

Department of Research Evaluation

report on research unit:

Research Center for Respiratory Diseases

CEPR

under the supervision of
the following institutions
and research bodies:

Université François-Rabelais de Tours

Institut National de la Santé Et de la Recherche
Médicale – INSERM

Evaluation Campaign 2016-2017 (Group C)

HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research
and Higher Education

Department of Research Evaluation

In the name of HCERES,¹

Michel Cosnard, president

In the name of the experts committee,²

Alain Filloux, chairman of the committee

Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 november 2014,

¹ The president of HCERES "countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the experts committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5)

² The evaluation reports "are signed by the chairman of the expert committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2)

Evaluation report

This report is the sole result of evaluation by the expert committee, the composition of which is specified below.

The assessments contained herein are the expression of an independent and collegial reviewing by the committee.

Unit name:	Research Center for Respiratory Diseases
Unit acronym:	CEPR UMR U1100
Label requested:	UMR
Current number:	U1100
Name of Director (2016-2017):	Mr Mustapha SI-TAHAR
Name of Project Leader (2018-2022):	Mr Mustapha SI-TAHAR

Expert committee members

Chair:	Mr Alain FILLoux, Imperial College London, UK
Experts:	Mr Charaf BENARFA, Theodor Kocher Institute, Switzerland
	Mr Mustapha CHERKAoui MALKI, Université de Bourgogne (representative of the CNU)
	Ms Geneviève DERUMEaux, Université Paris-Est Créteil (representative of the CSS Inserm)
	Ms Marie-Laure FRANCO-MONTOYA, IMRB U955 (representative of supporting personnel)
	Mr Pieter HIEMSTRA, Leiden University Medical Center, The Netherlands
	Mr Clive PAGE, King's College London, UK

Scientific delegate representing the HCERES:

Mr Bohdan WASYLYK

Representatives of supervising institutions and bodies:

Ms Marie DEMATHIEU, Inserm

Mr Emmanuel LESIGNE, Université François-Rabelais de Tours

Head of Doctoral School:

Mr Thierry MOREAU, Doctoral School n° 549, "Santé, Sciences Biologiques et Chimie du Vivant - SSBCV"

1 • Introduction

History and geographical location of the unit

The “Research Center for Respiratory Diseases” (CEPR) is associated with two institutions: Inserm (UMR 1100) and the François-Rabelais University. This multi-team laboratory is located on the shared campus of the Faculty of Medicine and the François-Rabelais University of Tours. The CEPR is sited in two buildings, almost adjoining and is composed of three teams.

The CEPR was established on 1st January 2012 and was the result of major restructuring of the former Inserm U618 unit entitled “Proteases and Pulmonary Targeting” managed by Mr Francis GAUTHIER. CEPR is the association of two Inserm labelled teams and one university hosting team (EA). The French ministry, Inserm and the Tours University gave their authorisation in 2012 to create this new laboratory. Since 1st January, the third team has acquired Inserm status, like the two others.

Management team

The director of the CEPR is Mr Mustapha SI-TAHAR, and Mr Yves COURTY is assistant director.

HCERES nomenclature

SVE5 Physiologie, Physiopathologie, Cardiologie, Pharmacologie, Endocrinologie, Cancer, Technologies Médicales.

Scientific domains

The CEPR develops a continuum of research from the understanding of the mechanisms of respiratory infection and inflammation up to the development of drug delivery systems for their treatment. The themes of the three teams are as follow: respiratory infection and immunity, proteolytic mechanisms in inflammation, aerosol therapy and biologics for respiratory diseases.

Unit workforce

Unit workforce	Number on 30/06/2016	Number on 01/01/2018
N1: Permanent professors and similar positions	23 (FTE 9.2)	18 (ETP 7)
N2: Permanent researchers from Institutions and similar positions	8 (FTE 7)	8 (FTE 7)
N3: Other permanent staff (technicians and administrative personnel)	7 (FTE 6)	7 (FTE 6)
N4: Other researchers (Postdoctoral students, visitors, etc.)	2	
N5: Emeritus	1	
N6: Other contractual staff (technicians and administrative personnel)	9	
N7: PhD students	9	
TOTAL N1 to N7	59	
Qualified research Supervisors (HDR) or similar positions	19	

Unit record	From 01/01/2011 to 30/06/2016
PhD theses defended	17
Postdoctoral scientists having spent at least 12 months in the unit	10
Number of Research Supervisor Qualifications (HDR) obtained during the period	3

2 • Assessment of the unit

Global assessment of the unit

The unit has a unique expertise in the study of respiratory diseases and how to treat them. The activity is split between 3 teams with very good complementarity. There are a number of particularly important respiratory pathogens that are investigated in detail, either viral (influenza virus) or bacterial (*Pseudomonas aeruginosa*). The research covers key aspects, from basic mechanisms of virulence to administration of biologics using aerosolisation. It also involves in depth understanding of immunological and inflammatory aspects with particular emphasis on proteolytic mechanisms. The unit has access to an exceptional animal facility, including non-human primates, and is in a position to exploit this facility and expertise in a small company (Cynbiose respiratory). The unit has demonstrated a clear capacity to develop translational research (8 patents filed, 3 of which are licensed) and is ideally integrated into the socio-economic landscape of the region. The scientific strategy of the unit is clear and in the direct line of what has been put in place since the arrival of Mr Mustapha SI-TAHAR as a director. It is all refocused on respiratory diseases, and the restructuring is still ongoing, as highlighted by the unique expertise of team 3 in aerosolisation. Researchers from team 3 will be moved into team 2, which will ideally regroup all the expertise in proteolytic mechanisms, by adding the research performed on kallikreins. The unit now has a very coherent organisation, thanks to the steering and managerial style of the new director who should be acclaimed for his impressive work. The unit now needs to get international recognition, by not only delivering better on publications in higher impact factor journals, but also by spreading the word about such a unique set up. It could be done by organizing more international conferences, which is already happening to some extent, by attending major conferences and by getting better exposure through communication on social media.