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## European Genotype Archive launched for personal genome information

Launch of secure archive of genetic data at European Bioinformatics Institute

**Hinxton, 14 July 2008** – Today sees the launch of the European Genotype Archive (EGA) at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory's European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI). The EGA will provide a central and permanent repository for genetic data. However, unlike all the other resources at the EMBL-EBI, the data in this archive is not publicly available, but that's for good reason.

The EGA will store all types of genetic data, which could potentially make individuals identifiable. This includes genotypes, high resolution genome sequence and phenotypic data. The EGA currently contains data collected from individuals as part of the Wellcome Trust Case Control Consortium (WTCCC). The EGA was developed by the Vertebrate Genomics Team at the EMBL-EBI, headed by Paul Flicek. Flicek said "The EGA is exciting because it allows researchers to uniformly access the most up-to-date genotype data from a single entry point. It is important because it allows deposition and sharing of data for analysis while honouring the consent restrictions put in place by owners of the data, be these research institutes, biobanks or other organisations."

Where permitted by the research subjects, information will be made publicly available, otherwise access is granted only after consideration by the committee governing access to the data. The first publicly released data in the EGA is from the WTCCC. Researchers could potentially use this information to improve analysis methods for predicting genotypes from raw data and for analysis of the relationships between genotype and various phenotypic traits. The combined data held in the EGA will be used to identify small genetic differences between individuals that affect their predisposition for certain diseases and so holds promise for future healthcare and disease prevention. ●

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### About the European Genotype Archive:

More information on the European Genotype Archive database and the distributed data access policy please visit [www.ebi.ac.uk/ega](http://www.ebi.ac.uk/ega).

### About EBI:

The European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI) is part of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) and is located on the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus in Hinxton near Cambridge (UK). The EBI grew out of EMBL's pioneering work in providing public biological databases to the research community. It hosts some of the world's most important collections of biological data, including DNA sequences (EMBL-Bank), protein sequences (UniProt), animal genomes (Ensembl), three-dimensional structures (the Macromolecular Structure Database), data from microarray experiments (ArrayExpress), protein-protein interactions (IntAct) and pathway information (Reactome). The EBI hosts several research groups and its scientists continually develop new tools for the biocomputing community. [www.ebi.ac.uk](http://www.ebi.ac.uk)

### About EMBL:

The European Molecular Biology Laboratory is a basic research institute funded by public research monies from 20 member states (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) and associate member state Australia. Research at EMBL is conducted by approximately 80 independent groups covering the spectrum of molecular biology. The Laboratory has five units: the main Laboratory in Heidelberg, and Outstations in Hinxton (the European Bioinformatics Institute), Grenoble, Hamburg, and Monterotondo near Rome. The cornerstones of EMBL's mission are: to perform basic research in molecular biology; to train scientists, students and visitors at all levels; to offer vital services to scientists in the member states; to develop new instruments and methods in the life sciences and to actively engage in technology transfer activities. EMBL's International PhD Programme has a student body of about 170. The Laboratory also sponsors an active Science and Society programme. Visitors from the press and public are welcome. [www.embl.org](http://www.embl.org)

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