



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY  
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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Human Medicines Evaluation Division

## Support for applications on Article 58

Applicants have the opportunity for certain medicinal products intended exclusively for markets outside the European Union to apply for a scientific opinion from the European Medicines Agency (EMA), in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

To this effect, the Agency supports the medicine development and registration processes from an early stage and offers regulatory mechanisms to help candidates for Article 58 applications as early as possible. Companies developing such medicinal products are invited to liaise with the EMA for their products to make full use of these opportunities.

### Scientific and regulatory support

- **Scientific Advice**

Developers are actively encouraged to seek scientific advice during the development of their medicinal products. This procedure offers a platform to seek EMA's views on scientific questions concerning quality, non-clinical and clinical aspects in the context of the intended markets outside the European Union.

In order to streamline regulatory activities based on Article 58 scientific opinions, in agreement with the applicant, experts from WHO or regulatory agencies from target countries may participate to the scientific advice procedure.

Applicants are invited to consult the [Scientific Advice](#) and [Article 58](#) webpages.

- **Business pipeline**

Applicants may find it helpful to request a business pipeline meeting to identify, at early stage, any issue impacting the development of the product portfolio and to anticipate scientific and regulatory expertise needed.

With business pipeline meetings, EMA gives applicants the opportunity to present and discuss their pharmaceutical product portfolio with a restricted group of senior Agency staff. Business pipeline meetings on Article 58 provide applicants with the opportunity to discuss early with the EMA their



development strategy, to identify the need for specific guidance throughout the procedure, and the EMA's role in supporting the downstream steps after the Article 58 scientific opinion is issued.

To request a business pipeline meeting, please contact [businesspipeline@ema.europa.eu](mailto:businesspipeline@ema.europa.eu).

- **SME**

The status of small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) can be sought for companies intending to develop medicinal products eligible to Article 58 procedure.

Companies benefiting from this status can request financial, regulatory and administrative assistance from the 'SME office'.

Fee incentives for certain regulatory activities are also offered to SME applicants. Applicants are invited to consult the [SME](#) webpage. For more information on fees and fee reductions, please refer to the explanatory note available at [fees payable to the European Medicines Agency](#).

Details of how to register as an SME with the Agency are available on the EMA website '[Supporting SMEs](#)'.

## Early access tools

Medicinal products targeting an unmet medical need or which are of major public health interest in the intended markets outside the European Union can benefit from mechanisms to accelerate the registration process or adapt the development and the scientific requirements to the particularities of the disease.

- **Accelerated assessment:** reduces the timeframe for review of an Article 58 application for medicinal products of major public health interest and in particular from the viewpoint of therapeutic innovation;
- **Conditional Article 58 scientific opinion:** allows the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP), for certain medicinal products fulfilling an unmet medical need and in view of their positive risk-benefit balance, to provide a recommendation on use before comprehensive clinical data are available;
- **Article 58 scientific opinion under exceptional circumstances:** allows the CHMP to evaluate medicinal products in specific diseases where comprehensive data could not be generated.

A summary of the above mechanisms is provided below. Further details can be found on the [Article 58](#) webpage.

Accelerated assessment	
Medicines eligible	Medicines of a <b>major interest</b> for <b>public health</b> and in particular from the viewpoint of <b>therapeutic innovation</b> (unmet medical need)
When to apply	6-7 months before submission of Article 58 application: notify EMA of intention to request accelerated assessment 2-3 months before submission: request accelerated assessment
Key features	Reduces assessment time for Article 58 applications to 150 days or less (compared to standard 210 days)

Conditional Article 58 scientific opinion	
Medicines eligible	<p>Medicines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>seriously debilitating or life-threatening diseases;</li> <li>emergency situations;</li> <li>orphan medicinal products.</li> </ul> <p>Fulfilling these criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>positive risk-benefit balance;</li> <li>applicant likely to be able to provide comprehensive data after adoption of the scientific opinion;</li> <li>fulfils unmet medical need;</li> <li>benefits of immediate availability outweigh the risks due to additional data still being required.</li> </ul>
When to apply	<p>Discuss as early as possible, during development, through scientific advice</p> <p>Request when submitting Article 58 application</p> <p>Can also be proposed by the CHMP during assessment of Article 58 application</p>
Key features	<p>Earlier authorisation of medicines for <b>patients with unmet medical needs</b>, on the basis of less complete clinical data</p> <p>Comprehensive data generated after scientific opinion within agreed timeframe</p>

Article 58 scientific opinion under exceptional circumstances	
Medicines eligible	<p>Medicines without comprehensive data on efficacy and safety under normal conditions of use, respectively because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>indications encountered so rarely that the applicant cannot reasonably be expected to provide comprehensive evidence;</li> <li>in the present state of scientific knowledge, comprehensive information cannot be provided, or it would be contrary to generally accepted principles of medical ethics to collect such information.</li> </ul>
When to apply	<p>Discuss as early as possible, during development, through scientific advice</p> <p>Request when submitting Article 58 application</p> <p>Can also be proposed by the CHMP during assessment of Article 58 application</p>
Key features	<p>Take into consideration the impossibility to generate complete clinical data in specific diseases</p> <p>Post-authorisation measures to mitigate the uncertainties inherent to the non-comprehensive dossier</p>

## Collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO)

The EMA and the WHO collaborate on numerous regulatory activities, such as facilitating access to medicines in low- and middle-income countries, fostering scientific harmonisation, technical cooperation and international collaboration on pharmacovigilance. Details on these activities can be found on the EMA website '[International organisations](#)'.