

Our shareholders residing in countries other than Belgium may be subject to double withholding taxation with respect to dividends or other distributions made by us.

Any dividends or other distributions we make to shareholders will, in principle, be subject to withholding tax in Belgium at a rate of 30%, except for shareholders which qualify for an exemption of withholding tax such as, among others, qualifying pension funds or a company qualifying as a parent company in the sense of the Council Directive (90/435/EEC) of July 23, 1990, or the Parent-Subsidiary Directive, or that qualify for a lower withholding tax rate or an exemption by virtue of a tax treaty. Various conditions may apply and shareholders residing in countries other than Belgium are advised to consult their advisers regarding the tax consequences of dividends or other distributions made by us. Our shareholders residing in countries other than Belgium may not be able to credit the amount of such withholding tax to any tax due on such dividends or other distributions in any other country than Belgium. As a result, such shareholders may be subject to double taxation in respect of such dividends or other distributions. Belgium and the United States have concluded a double tax treaty concerning the avoidance of double taxation, or the U.S.-Belgium Tax Treaty. The U.S.-Belgium Tax Treaty reduces the applicability of Belgian withholding tax to 15%, 5% or 0% for U.S. taxpayers, provided that the U.S. taxpayer meets the limitation of benefits conditions imposed by the U.S.-Belgium Tax Treaty. The Belgian withholding tax is generally reduced to 15% under the U.S.-Belgium Tax Treaty. The 5% withholding tax applies in case where the U.S. shareholder is a company which holds at least 10% of the shares in the company. A 0% Belgian withholding tax applies when the shareholder is a U.S. company which has held directly at least 10% of the shares in the company for at least 12 months, or is, subject to certain conditions, a U.S. pension fund. The U.S. shareholders are encouraged to consult their own tax advisers to determine whether they can invoke the benefits and meet the limitation of benefits conditions as imposed by the U.S.-Belgium Tax Treaty.

Future sales of ordinary shares or ADSs by existing shareholders could depress the market price of the ordinary shares and ADSs.

If our existing shareholders sell, or indicate an intent to sell, substantial amounts of ordinary shares or ADSs in the public market, the trading price of the ADSs could decline significantly. As of March 13, 2020, 64,666,802 shares were eligible for sale in the public market, 553,646 of which shares were held by directors, executive officers and other affiliates and are subject to volume limitations under Rule 144 under the Securities Act. In addition, the ordinary shares subject to outstanding warrants will become eligible for sale in the public market in the future, subject to certain legal and contractual limitations. We have filed registration statements on Form S-8 with the SEC covering ordinary shares available for future issuance under our warrant plans. Sales of a large number of the shares issued under these plans in the public market could have an adverse effect on the market price of the ADSs.

We are a Belgian public limited liability company, and shareholders of our company may have different and in some cases more limited shareholder rights than shareholders of a U.S. listed corporation.

We are a public limited liability company incorporated under the laws of Belgium. Our corporate affairs are governed by Belgian corporate law. The rights provided to our shareholders under Belgian corporate law and our articles of association differ in certain respects from the rights that you would typically enjoy as a shareholder of a U.S. corporation under applicable U.S. federal and state laws.

Under Belgian corporate law, other than certain limited information that we must make public and except in certain limited circumstances, our shareholders may not ask for an inspection of our corporate records, while under Delaware corporate law any shareholder, irrespective of the size of its shareholdings, may do so. Shareholders of a Belgian corporation are also unable to initiate a derivative action, a remedy typically available to shareholders of U.S. companies, in order to enforce a right of our company, in case we fail to enforce such right ourselves, other than in certain cases of director liability under limited circumstances. In addition, a majority of our shareholders present or represented at our meeting of shareholders may release a director from any claim of liability we may have, including if he or she has acted in bad faith or has breached his or her duty of loyalty, provided, in some cases, that the relevant acts were specifically mentioned in the convening notice to the meeting of shareholders deliberating on the discharge. In contrast, most U.S. federal and state laws prohibit a company or its shareholders from releasing a director from liability altogether if he or she has acted in bad faith or has breached his or her duty of loyalty to the company. Finally, Belgian corporate law does not provide any form of appraisal rights in the case of a business combination. Please see the section of this annual report titled "Item 10.B.—Memorandum and Articles of Association."

As a result of these differences between Belgian corporate law and our articles of association, on the one hand, and the U.S. federal and state laws, on the other hand, in certain instances, you could receive less protection as an ADS holder of our company than you would as a shareholder of a listed U.S. company.

Takeover provisions in Belgian law may make a takeover difficult.

Public takeover bids on our shares and other voting securities, such as subscription rights or convertible bonds, if any, are subject to the Belgian Act of April 1, 2007 and to the supervision by the Belgian Financial Services and Markets Authority, or FSMA. Public takeover bids must be made for all of our voting securities, as well as for all other securities that entitle the holders thereof to the subscription to, the acquisition of or the conversion into voting securities. Prior to making a bid, a bidder must issue and disseminate a prospectus, which must be approved by the Belgian FSMA. The bidder must also obtain approval of the relevant competition authorities, where such approval is legally required for the acquisition of our company.

The Belgian Act of April 1, 2007 provides that a mandatory bid will be triggered if a person, as a result of its own acquisition or the acquisition by persons acting in concert with it or by persons acting on their account, directly or indirectly holds more than 30% of the voting securities in a company that has its registered office in Belgium and of which at least part of the voting securities are traded on a regulated market or on a multilateral trading facility designated by the Royal Decree of April 27, 2007 on public takeover bids. The mere fact of exceeding the relevant threshold through the acquisition of one or more shares will give rise to a mandatory bid, irrespective of whether or not the price paid in the relevant transaction exceeds the current market price.

There are several provisions of Belgian company law and certain other provisions of Belgian law, such as the obligation to disclose important shareholdings and merger control, that may apply to us and which may make an unfriendly tender offer, merger, change in management or other change in control, more difficult. These provisions could discourage potential takeover attempts that third parties may consider and thus deprive the shareholders of the opportunity to sell their shares at a premium (which is typically offered in the framework of a takeover bid).

The implementation of the recent reform of the Belgian companies code may adversely affect the rights of our shareholders.

Recently a new Belgian companies code was approved by the Belgian Parliament entering into force on May 1, 2019 (the "New Belgian Companies Code"). For existing companies like us there is a transition regime providing for a staggered applicability of the new provisions. Certain parts of the new code apply to us as of January 1, 2020. The full transition must be completed by the earlier of (i) the next extraordinary shareholders' meeting that amends our articles of association or (ii) January 1, 2024. On the date of this report, we have not yet implemented any changes as a result of such new companies code. Our extraordinary shareholders' meeting, to be held on April 28, 2020, shall decide on the amendment of our articles of association, implementing the provisions of the new code. However, we or our shareholders may propose changes to our articles of association following the entry into force of the New Belgian Companies Code that could impact our shareholders' rights.

For clarity, each reference in this report to the Belgian Companies Code is a reference to the Belgian Companies Code of May 7, 1999, unless where expressly stated differently.

Holders of the ADSs are not treated as shareholders of our company, do not have the same voting rights as the holders of our ordinary shares and may not receive voting materials in time to be able to exercise your right to vote.

Holders of the ADSs are not treated as shareholders of our company, unless they withdraw our ordinary shares underlying the ADSs. The depository, or its nominee, is the holder of the ordinary shares underlying the ADSs. Holders of ADSs therefore do not have any rights as shareholders of our company, other than the rights that they have pursuant to the deposit agreement.

Holders of ADSs may exercise voting rights with respect to the ordinary shares represented by the ADSs only in accordance with the provisions of the deposit agreement. The deposit agreement provides that, upon receipt of notice of any meeting of holders of our ordinary shares, the depositary will fix a record date for the determination of ADS holders who shall be entitled to give instructions for the exercise of voting rights. Upon timely receipt of notice from us, if we so request, the depositary shall distribute to the holders as of the record date (1) the notice of the meeting or solicitation of consent or proxy sent by us and (2) a statement as to the manner in which instructions may be given by the holders.

Holders of ADSs may instruct the depositary of their ADSs to vote the ordinary shares underlying their ADSs. Otherwise, ADS holders will not be able to exercise their right to vote, unless they withdraw the ordinary shares underlying the ADSs they hold. However, ADS holders may not know about the meeting far enough in advance to withdraw those ordinary shares. We cannot guarantee ADS holders that they will receive the voting materials in time to ensure that they can instruct the depositary to vote their ordinary shares or to withdraw their ordinary shares so that they can vote them themselves. In addition, the depositary and its agents are not responsible for failing to carry out voting instructions or for the manner of carrying out voting instructions. This means that ADS holders may not be able to exercise their right to vote, and there may be nothing they can do if the ordinary shares underlying their ADSs are not voted as they requested.

We may not be able to complete equity offerings without cancellation or limitation of the preferential subscription rights of our existing shareholders, which may as a practical matter preclude us from timely completion of offerings.

In accordance with the Belgian Companies Code, our articles of association provide for preferential subscription rights to be granted to our existing shareholders to subscribe on a pro rata basis for any issue for cash of new shares, convertible bonds or warrants that are exercisable for cash, unless such rights are cancelled or limited either by resolution of our shareholders' meeting or by our board of directors in the framework of the authorized capital, as described below. The extraordinary shareholders' meeting authorized the board of directors to increase the share capital of Galapagos NV, in one or several times, and under certain conditions set forth *in extenso* in our articles of association. We refer to this authority for our board to increase our share capital as our authorized capital. This authorization consists of two parts. A general authorization for capital increases up to 20% of the share capital at the time of convening the shareholders' meeting of October 22, 2019 (i.e. €67,022,402.04) was renewed and is valid for a period of five years from the date of publication of this renewal in the Annexes to the Belgian State Gazette, i.e. November 13, 2019. A specific authorization for capital increases of more than 20% and up to 33% of the share capital at the time of the convening the shareholders' meeting of April 25, 2017 (i.e. €82,561,764.93), was renewed and is valid for a period of five years from the date of publication of this renewal in the Annexes to the Belgian State Gazette, i.e. May 31, 2017. This specific part of the authorized capital can, however, only be used in a number of specific circumstances and upon a resolution of the board of directors that all independent directors (within the meaning of article 526ter of the Belgian Companies Code, as replaced by article 7:87 of the New Belgian Companies Code) approve. As of the date of this annual report, our board of directors may decide to issue up to 12,388,614 ordinary shares pursuant to the general authorization and 2,535,661 ordinary shares pursuant to the specific authorization, without taking into account however subsequent issuances under our warrant programs or otherwise. Please see the section of this annual report titled "Item 10.B.—Memorandum and Articles of Association." Absent renewal by our shareholders of this authorization of the board or absent cancellation or limitation by our shareholders of the preferential subscription rights of our existing shareholders, the requirement to offer our existing shareholders the preferential right to subscribe, pro rata, for new shares being offered may as a practical matter preclude us from timely raising capital on commercially acceptable terms or at all.

Shareholders may not be able to participate in equity offerings we may conduct from time to time.

If we conduct equity offerings in the future, certain shareholders, including those in the United States, may, even in the case where preferential subscription rights have not been cancelled or limited, not be entitled to exercise such rights, unless the offering is registered or the shares are qualified for sale under the relevant regulatory framework. As a result, there is the risk that investors may suffer dilution of their shareholdings should they not be permitted to participate in preference right equity or other offerings that we may conduct in the future.

Holders of ADSs may be subject to limitations on the transfer of their ADSs and the withdrawal of the underlying ordinary shares.

ADSs are transferable on the books of the depository. However, the depository may close its books at any time or from time to time when it deems expedient in connection with the performance of its duties. The depository may refuse to deliver, transfer or register transfers of ADSs generally when our books or the books of the depository are closed, or at any time if we or the depository think it is advisable to do so because of any requirement of law, government or governmental body, or under any provision of the deposit agreement, or for any other reason, subject to the right of ADS holders to cancel their ADSs and withdraw the underlying ordinary shares. Temporary delays in the cancellation of your ADSs and withdrawal of the underlying ordinary shares may arise because the depository has closed its transfer books or we have closed our transfer books, the transfer of ordinary shares is blocked to permit voting at a shareholders' meeting or we are paying a dividend on our ordinary shares. In addition, ADS holders may not be able to cancel their ADSs and withdraw the underlying ordinary shares when they owe money for fees, taxes and similar charges and when it is necessary to prohibit withdrawals in order to comply with any laws or governmental regulations that apply to ADSs or to the withdrawal of ordinary shares or other deposited securities.

As a foreign private issuer, we are exempt from a number of rules under the U.S. securities laws and are permitted to file less information with the SEC than a U.S. company. This may limit the information available to holders of ADSs or our ordinary shares.

We are a "foreign private issuer," as defined in the SEC's rules and regulations and, consequently, we are not subject to all of the disclosure requirements applicable to public companies organized within the United States. For example, we are exempt from certain rules under the Exchange Act, that regulate disclosure obligations and procedural requirements related to the solicitation of proxies, consents or authorizations applicable to a security registered under the Exchange Act, including the U.S. proxy rules under Section 14 of the Exchange Act. In addition, our officers and directors are exempt from the reporting and "short-swing" profit recovery provisions of Section 16 of the Exchange Act and related rules with respect to their purchases and sales of our securities. Moreover, while we currently make annual and semi-annual filings with respect to our listing on Euronext Brussels and Euronext Amsterdam and voluntarily report our results of operations on a quarterly basis, we will not be required to file periodic reports and financial statements with the SEC as frequently or as promptly as U.S. domestic issuers and will not be required to file quarterly reports on Form 10-Q or current reports on Form 8-K under the Exchange Act. Accordingly, there is and will continue to be less publicly available information concerning our company than there would be if we were not a foreign private issuer.

As a foreign private issuer, we are permitted to adopt certain home country practices in relation to corporate governance matters that differ significantly from Nasdaq corporate governance listing standards. These practices may afford less protection to shareholders than they would enjoy if we complied fully with corporate governance listing standards.

As a foreign private issuer listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market, we are subject to corporate governance listing standards. However, rules permit a foreign private issuer like us to follow the corporate governance practices of its home country. Certain corporate governance practices in Belgium, which is our home country, may differ significantly from corporate governance listing standards. For example, neither the corporate laws of Belgium nor our articles of association require a majority of our directors to be independent and we could include non-independent directors as members of our nomination and remuneration committee, and our independent directors would not necessarily hold regularly scheduled meetings at which only independent directors are present. Currently, we intend to follow home country practice to the maximum extent possible. Therefore, our shareholders may be afforded less protection than they otherwise would have under corporate governance listing standards applicable to U.S. domestic issuers. See the sections of this annual report titled "Item 6-Directors, Senior Management and Employees" and "Item 16G-Corporate Governance."

We may lose our foreign private issuer status in the future, which could result in significant additional cost and expense.

While we currently qualify as a foreign private issuer, the determination of foreign private issuer status is made annually on the last business day of an issuer's most recently completed second fiscal quarter and, accordingly, the next determination will be made with respect to us on June 30, 2020.

In the future, we would lose our foreign private issuer status if we fail to meet the requirements necessary to maintain our foreign private issuer status as of the relevant determination date. In order to maintain our current status as a foreign private issuer, either (a) a majority of our ordinary shares must be either directly or indirectly owned of record by non-residents of the United States or (b) (i) a majority of our executive officers or directors may not be U.S. citizens or residents, (ii) more than 50% of our assets cannot be located in the United States and (iii) our business must be administered principally outside the United States. As of March 16, 2020, a majority of our executive officers and directors are not U.S. citizens or residents.

The regulatory and compliance costs to us under U.S. securities laws as a U.S. domestic issuer may be significantly more than costs we incur as a foreign private issuer. If we are not a foreign private issuer, we will be required to file periodic reports and registration statements on U.S. domestic issuer forms with the SEC, which are more detailed and extensive in certain respects than the forms available to a foreign private issuer. We would be required under current SEC rules to prepare our financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP, rather than IFRS, in U.S. dollars rather than euros and modify certain of our policies to comply with corporate governance practices associated with U.S. domestic issuers. Such conversion of our financial statements to U.S. GAAP will involve significant time and cost. In addition, we may lose our ability to rely upon exemptions from certain corporate governance requirements on U.S. stock exchanges that are available to foreign private issuers such as the ones described above and exemptions from procedural requirements related to the solicitation of proxies.

It may be difficult for investors outside Belgium to serve process on, or enforce foreign judgments against, us or our directors and senior management.

We are a Belgian public limited liability company. Less than a majority of the members of our board of directors and members of our executive committee are residents of the United States. All or a substantial portion of the assets of such non-resident persons and most of our assets are located outside the United States. As a result, it may not be possible for investors to effect service of process upon such persons or on us or to enforce against them or us a judgment obtained in U.S. courts. Original actions or actions for the enforcement of judgments of U.S. courts relating to the civil liability provisions of the federal or state securities laws of the United States are not directly enforceable in Belgium. The United States and Belgium do not currently have a multilateral or bilateral treaty providing for reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments, other than arbitral awards, in civil and commercial matters. In order for a final judgment for the payment of money rendered by U.S. courts based on civil liability to produce any effect on Belgian soil, it is accordingly required that this judgment be recognized or be declared enforceable by a Belgian court in accordance with Articles 22 to 25 of the 2004 Belgian Code of Private International Law. Recognition or enforcement does not imply a review of the merits of the case and is irrespective of any reciprocity requirement. A U.S. judgment will, however, not be recognized or declared enforceable in Belgium if it infringes upon one or more of the grounds for refusal that are exhaustively listed in Article 25 of the Belgian Code of Private International Law. Actions for the enforcement of judgments of U.S. courts might be successful only if the Belgian court confirms the substantive correctness of the judgment of the U.S. court and if it is satisfied that:

- the effect of the enforcement judgment is not manifestly incompatible with Belgian public policy;
- the judgment did not violate the rights of the defendant;
- the judgment was not rendered in a matter where the parties transferred rights subject to transfer restrictions with the sole purpose of avoiding the application of the law applicable according to Belgian international private law;
- the judgment is not subject to further recourse under U.S. law;
- the judgment is not compatible with a judgment rendered in Belgium or with a subsequent judgment rendered abroad that might be enforced in Belgium;
- a claim was not filed outside Belgium after the same claim was filed in Belgium, while the claim filed in Belgium is still pending;
- the Belgian courts did not have exclusive jurisdiction to rule on the matter;

- the U.S. court did not accept its jurisdiction solely on the basis of either the nationality of the defendant or the location of the disputed goods; and
- the judgment submitted to the Belgian court is authentic.

In addition to recognition or enforcement, a judgment by a federal or state court in the United States against us may also serve as evidence in a similar action in a Belgian court if it meets the conditions required for the authenticity of judgments according to the law of the state where it was rendered. The findings of a federal or state court in the United States will not, however, be taken into account to the extent they appear incompatible with Belgian public policy.

We may be at an increased risk of securities class action litigation.

Historically, securities class action litigation has often been brought against a company following a decline in the market price of its securities. This risk is especially relevant for us because biotechnology and biopharmaceutical companies have experienced significant share price volatility in recent years. If we were to be sued, it could result in substantial costs and a diversion of management's attention and resources, which could harm our business.

We believe that we should not be a passive foreign investment company, or PFIC, for U.S. federal income tax purposes for the 2019 taxable year, but this conclusion is a factual determination that is made annually and thus may be subject to change. If we were a PFIC for our 2019 taxable year, this could result in adverse U.S. tax consequences to certain U.S. holders.

Generally, if, for any taxable year, at least 75% of our gross income is passive income, or at least 50% of the value of our assets is attributable to assets that produce passive income or are held for the production of passive income, including cash, we would be characterized as a passive foreign investment company, or PFIC, for U.S. federal income tax purposes. For purposes of these tests, passive income includes dividends, interest, and gains from the sale or exchange of investment property and rents and royalties other than rents and royalties which are received from unrelated parties in connection with the active conduct of a trade or business. Our status as a PFIC depends on the composition of our income and the composition and value of our assets (for which purpose the total value of our assets may be determined in part by reference to the market value of the ADSs and our ordinary shares, which are subject to change) from time to time. If we are a PFIC for any taxable year, certain U.S. holders of the ADSs may suffer adverse tax consequences, including having gains realized on the sale of the ADSs treated as ordinary income, rather than capital gain, losing the preferential rate applicable to dividends received on the ADSs by individuals who are U.S. holders, and having interest charges apply to distributions by us and the proceeds of sales of the ADSs. See "Item 10.E.—Taxation—Certain Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations to U.S. Holders—Passive Foreign Investment Company Considerations."

Based upon the expected value of our assets, including any goodwill, and the expected composition of our income and assets, we believe that we should not be a PFIC for our 2019 taxable year. However, our status as a PFIC is a fact-intensive determination made on an annual basis, and we cannot provide any assurances regarding our PFIC status for the current, prior or future taxable years. We do not currently intend to provide the information necessary for U.S. holders to make a "qualified electing fund," or QEF, election if we are treated as a PFIC for any taxable year, and prospective investors should assume that a QEF election will not be available.