

# Mar Fabregas - General Manager, STADA Spain

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04.02.2022

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*STADA's general manager for Spain, Mar Fabregas, reveals how the acquisition of parts of GSK and Sanofi's portfolio is helping the global*

*generics company better compete in consumer health. In addition, she analyses the biosimilars market in Spain, where the company recently launched Bevacizumab, and comments on the importance of a diversified presence in the retail and hospital segments.*

## **Can you begin by introducing STADA's presence and footprint in Spain?**

STADA Spain, like STADA globally, is built on three main pillars. The first, and largest pillar, is generics, where we have a very strong historic presence and are the third-largest player on the market. Secondly, the business has diversified into consumer health accelerated in recent years with acquisitions from Sanofi and GSK strengthening our positioning in the field, backing up our organic growth with inorganic growth. Our third pillar is specialty pharma, within which biosimilars are contained.

In Spain, the company's main activity is commercialisation and it does not have a production site. In generics and consumer healthcare, much of our focus is on pharmacists in the retail market, but for specialty pharma many of our customers are specialist doctors such as rheumatologists, as well as hospital pharmacies.

**Last year STADA launched its Bevacizumab biosimilar in Spain; what strategy have you put in place for this product and how many other biosimilars does STADA already have on the Spanish market?**

STADA currently has two biosimilars on the Spanish market: Movymia (teriparatide), a pharmacy retail product in rheumatology for osteoporosis and Oyavas (bevacizumab) in the hospital setting. Globally, STADA has put in place a strategy to grow its biosimilar segment through new alliances with new biosimilar launches planned as well as other products which are more innovative than pure generics. In this moment of diversification, STADA Spain plans to be extremely active across all the opportunities in tenders and negotiated offers.

**What do you see as the key trends affecting the Spanish generics market today?**

Spain is a very mature generics market with a high level of consolidation among the top five companies, so I do not expect any big changes. Nevertheless, unfortunately, generic penetration in Spain has stagnated after incentives to grow the market were removed in 2015. A change is needed, and I hope that the COVID-19 pandemic has foregrounded the value that our industry can bring. For example, generics are vital to supply security and 70 percent of the medicines declared 'essential' by the Spanish Ministry of Health during the crisis had generics option. My wish is for the contribution of the generic industry to be better valued by the Spanish authorities through the implementation of measures such as ensuring a price difference between generics and reference products. Without such incentives, the industry will not be able to grow.

**Regulatory changes for biosimilars and generics are currently being discussed; what would you like to see included in any new legislation?**

This plan was supposed to promote the use of generics and biosimilars, but many of the measures need to be more concrete. Additionally, not all the measures were regarding the use of generics; some were about reducing prices, which will not have an impact on increasing generic penetration.

The measures in this generic and biosimilar promotion plan should include price differences between generics and reference products, a framework for co-payments, and preference in INN prescriptions. There are several potential measures currently being used in Europe that could be utilised here to increase generic penetration and free up resources to be used in innovation or other areas.

**While STADA does not have a proprietary Spanish manufacturing footprint, does it work with contract manufacturing organisations (CMOs) in the country? How do you evaluate their quality?**

We have a large network of contract manufacturing partners here in Spain, which are all fully accredited by the Spanish Medicines Agency, and which work to the very highest standards of quality and service.

**After globally acquiring parts of GSK and Sanofi's consumer health portfolio, how has STADA's consumer health portfolio and strategy shifted in Spain?**

These acquisitions – from GSK in June 2020 and from Sanofi in Q4 2021 – have caused our strategy to change significantly. STADA's penetration of the consumer health market has skyrocketed, and the company's image has been boosted among pharmacists.

These acquisitions have given us the leading brands in a few key categories that still have room for growth with more innovation and through leveraging synergies with other brands already in the company. In consumer health, which is less regulated than other segments, we have a fantastic opportunity to grow quickly.

**What are the positives and negatives of the pharmacy retail and the hospital settings in Spain today?**

In general, the pharmacies are functioning well, not only in terms of dispensing drugs and cosmetics, but as an accessible partner in health for the entire population. This includes their work on training and communication during the pandemic. We are very thankful to have 22,000 pharmacies in Spain giving this support to the population.

Although the hospital setting is a smaller part of our overall business today, we also appreciate all their work and enormous contribution during the pandemic. Of course, access was limited during COVID, but STADA has been able to work very well with stakeholders across all the regions in Spain's decentralised healthcare system.

**Some industry executives have posited that the European biosimilars market is in many ways behaving like the classic generics market. Do you see this playing out in Spain?**

There are some similarities, especially in hospital tenders where the main criteria tend to be mainly economic whilst there could be more balance in supply capacity and other criteria. However, I hope that learnings will be taken from the evolution of generics that will allow a better system to emerge for biosimilars.

**Given that STADA seems to be in acquisition mode globally, what kind of opportunities are you looking to take advantage of in Spain?**

Consumer health is a key area and I see potential to back up the company's recent global acquisitions through deals with local hero brands and thus accelerating our pipeline in that area. STADA has good growth momentum which we can take advantage of. Biosimilars deals tend to be on a global level and our generics portfolio is already extremely broad, so consumer health will remain the focus of any local tie-ups.

**Having been in the industry for almost 20 years, what keeps you excited and motivated?**

STADA's current growth momentum is not only leading to an increase in sales, but also a lot of professional growth and learnings for our team. We have no limits in terms of new opportunities and our cultural ecosystem is strongly aligned with values of entrepreneurship, agility, integrity, and One STADA. This is also attracting excellent talent profiles as well as requests from other companies to strike commercial agreements with us. Today, STADA is a fantastic commercial platform for any project in generics, consumer health, or specialty; something which has accelerated greatly in the last three years, and which makes it an exciting and dynamic place to work.

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