

the compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), and the compounds of formulae (IV), (V), and (VI) below, may contain one or more further stereogenic or asymmetric centers, such as one or more asymmetric carbon atoms. The compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI) may thus be present as mixtures of stereoisomers or preferably as pure stereoisomers.

5 Mixtures of stereoisomers may be separated in a manner known to a person skilled in the art.

In addition, it is well understood that, in case the benzimidazole moiety of the present compounds is unsubstituted on the ring nitrogen having a free valency (i.e. R¹ represents hydrogen) such benzimidazole moiety represents tautomeric forms. Thus, substituents (R⁵)_n of the benzimidazole moiety may be attached in the position(s) *ortho* to the bridgehead atoms (i.e. attached in position(s) 4 and/or 7, corresponding to R¹⁴ and/or R¹⁷), and/or in the position(s) *meta* to the bridgehead atoms, (i.e. attached in position(s) 5 and/or 6, corresponding to R¹⁵ and/or R¹⁶). It is understood that the two *ortho*, and, respectively, the two *meta* positions are considered equivalent. For example, the group 4-methyl-1H-benzoimidazol-2-yl is understood to signify the same group as 7-methyl-1H-benzoimidazol-2-yl and 4-methyl-3H-benzoimidazol-2-yl and 7-methyl-3H-benzoimidazol-2-yl.

The present invention also includes isotopically labelled, especially ²H (deuterium) labelled compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI), which compounds are identical to the compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI) except that one or more atoms have each been replaced by an atom having the same atomic number but an atomic mass different from the atomic mass usually found in nature. Isotopically labelled, especially ²H (deuterium) labelled compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI) and salts thereof are within the scope of the present invention. Substitution of hydrogen with the heavier isotope ²H (deuterium) may lead to greater metabolic stability, resulting e.g. in increased *in-vivo* half-life or reduced dosage requirements, or may lead to reduced inhibition of cytochrome P450 enzymes, resulting e.g. in an improved safety profile. In one embodiment of the invention, the compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI) are not isotopically labelled, or they are labelled only with one or more deuterium atoms. In a sub-embodiment, the compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI) are not isotopically labelled at all. Isotopically labelled compounds of formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), and (VI) be prepared in analogy to the methods described hereinafter, but using the appropriate isotopic variation of suitable reagents or starting materials.

In another aspect, there is provided a pharmaceutical composition comprising, as active principle, one or more compounds as disclosed herein, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and at least one therapeutically inert excipient.

5 In another aspect, there is provided the use of a pharmaceutical composition as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of mental health diseases or disorders relating to orexinergic dysfunctions.

In another aspect, there is provided a compound as disclosed herein, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, for use as a medicament.

10 In another aspect, there is provided the use of a compound as defined herein, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in the manufacture of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of diseases or disorders selected from sleep disorders, anxiety disorders, addiction disorders, cognitive dysfunctions, mood disorders, and appetite disorders

In this patent application, a dotted line shows the point of attachment of the radical drawn.

15 For example, the radical drawn below