



PRESS RELEASE: Healthcare payers welcome the Council conclusions on strengthening the balance in the pharmaceutical system in the EU

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Social security organisations, mutuals and health insurance funds, members of ESIP and AIM warmly welcome the commitment of the Council towards a more balanced pharmaceutical system in the EU.

« The Council has formalised concrete first steps to addressing the current problems threatening patients access to essential pharmaceuticals and the sustainability of healthcare systems caused by rocketing prices of some pharmaceuticals », says Franz Terwey, President of ESIP.

These Council conclusions are in line with the [joint ESIP and AIM position on access to innovative medicines](#). Particularly, they recognize the importance of voluntary cooperation between Member States on Health Technology Assessment, exchanges of information with and between pricing and reimbursement bodies and stakeholders, and joint negotiations and procurement.

As outlined in the conclusions, the focus on assessing the relevance of the EU framework in encouraging real innovation in accordance with patients' needs is also critical to achieve the double goal of ensuring equal access to medicines delivering patient relevant benefits and the sustainability of healthcare systems.

“Exploring the existing options for early access of a drug to the market, defining what are unmet medical needs and clarifying the qualifying criteria for early market access for the benefit of the patients should be the first steps before considering alternative approaches such as adaptive pathways” stresses Menno Aarnout, Executive Director of AIM.

Prevention of anti-competitive behaviour and the timely availability of generics and biosimilars should also continue to be an important priority of the Commission.

ESIP and AIM are fully committed to contribute to the work of both the Commission and the Council to reach the goals formulated in the conclusions adopted today by the Council in order to promote a balanced and sustainable pharmaceutical system in the EU, where equal access to medicines is ensured for all.

About the *European Social Insurance Platform (ESIP)*

The *European Social Insurance Platform (ESIP)* represents over 40 national statutory social insurance organisations (covering approximately 240 million citizens) in 15 EU Member States and Switzerland, active in the field of health insurance, pensions, occupational disease and accident insurance, disability and rehabilitation, family benefits and unemployment insurance. The aims of ESIP and its members are to preserve high profile social security for Europe, to reinforce solidarity-based social insurance systems and to maintain European social protection quality. ESIP builds strategic alliances for developing common positions to influence the European debate and is a consultation forum for the European institutions and other multinational bodies active in the field of social security.

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About AIM

The *Association Internationale de la Mutualité (AIM)* is an international umbrella organisation of not-for-profit healthcare mutuals and health insurance funds in Europe and in the world which operate on the basis of solidarity. Currently, AIM's membership consists of 62 member organisation in 32 countries. In Europe alone they provide coverage of healthcare to around 200 million people. AIM strives via its network to make an active contribution to the preservation and improvement of access to health care for everyone. Web: www.aim-mutual.org