



International Seminar reaffirms the Importance of Mutualism in answering 21st Century Challenges

The International Seminar which took place in Buenos Aires gathered around 200 mutualists from around the world. Discussions allowed to highlight the richness and variety of services which mutuals can offer to populations. As social economy actors, they carry out important roles, contributing to human development, economic aid, and accessible and high quality healthcare coverage for all, and contributing to preserving dignity within local communities. The debates which took place testified of the general will to create a more united and stronger movement than ever.



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Unity. Unity is what we have always defended in AIM. We know that the only way to face the challenges of today, is betting on it. I'll never get tired of saying it. At AIM, we strive to build bridges and destroy walls, transported by our values of solidarity and democracy. We are convinced of the unquestionable value of mutual societies as an engine of the development of nations and of universal social protection: covering the needs of the most vulnerable and sometimes excluded citizens of the system; fighting against inequities.

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Christian Zahn, AIM President

The different round tables which took place allowed to show the added value of the mutual model in delivering a wide variety of services to populations. Mutuals, as actors in social economy, integrate the social fabric and have the potential to become schools of responsible citizen participation. Spokespeople defending their affiliates and citizens' interests and acting

with complete independence regarding public authorities, mutuals can also compensate where healthcare services are inexistent or where coverage is insufficient. As stressed by many panellists, their actions, when it comes to healthcare, are not limited to covering risks as they also encompass aspects such as health literacy and education, prevention, or the management of





healthcare centres. Furthermore, mutuals also offer financial solutions such as solidary loans, based on a unique financing model which keeps the wealth of citizens within the community itself, thus contributing to local and regional development. For this development to be sustainable, mutuals involve each and every citizen, to include all genders and generations. Another key issue highlighted in the discussions is the importance of capacity building and education if the continuation of mutuals' fundamental values and the survival of the model is to be ensured.

“ *In Argentina, the CAM is the highest level of integration of an economic and social space that brings together more than 5 million people affiliated to some 5 000 mutuals. Its presence and entrenchment of more than 150 years in all regions of the country shaped a present characterized by the diversity of services, a distinctive feature of Argentine mutualism. Both the cultural, sporting and recreational activity of numerous localities would be radically different without the mutualistic action.* ”

Alejandro Russo, CAM President



The seminar was a clear success. It enabled the mutualist movement to show how crucial collaboration between all mutuals and social economy actors is. It also enabled to reaffirm the important role played by the sector in society as a whole and to reassert the will to work together, across continents, in order to strengthen the model, with always, as final aim, to ensure the wellbeing of all people.

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AIM

AIM is the umbrella organisation of health mutuals and health insurance funds in Europe and in the world. Through its 58 members from 30 countries, AIM provides health coverage to 240 million people in the world and 209 million in Europe through compulsory and/or complementary health insurance and managing health and social facilities. AIM strives to defend the access to healthcare for all through solidarity-based and non-for profit health insurance.

Its mission is to provide a platform for members to exchange on common issues and to represent their interests and values in the European and international Institutions.

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