



AIM Healthcare and
social benefits
for all

AIM is the international Association of Mutual Benefit Health insurers and health funds. AIM's members are solidarity-based, not-for profit organisations that function on the basis of a democratic governance. They are social actors providing health, sickness and other social benefits while promoting among others the respect, the inclusion and the protection of vulnerable groups.

Time for pandemic solidarity!

During this unprecedented Covid-19 virus pandemic, more than ever unity, solidarity and mutual-aid are vital values which should be at the heart of the decisions of citizens, civil society and institutions, at national, European and international level.

Above all, AIM and all its members would like to emphasize the importance of the role of health services as a fundamental pillar of a well-functioning health system. We would also like to highlight the need of training high quality health professionals who are now in the front line in the fight against this pandemic.

Mutuals have always been committed to the defence and promotion of quality health services either by developing health structures themselves or by lobbying public authorities for maintaining a high level of investment.

In this context, many concerns about the present, but also the future, are shared. And, in the light of these challenges, we would like to make a multi-faceted appeal.

We call on:

- all citizens to act responsibly following the measures and preventive actions that the EU has recommended, to slow down and contain the spread of the virus. This will help to protect the whole population from the most severe consequences of the virus, and in particular, the most vulnerable groups. By behaving responsibly, all citizens will cooperate in helping healthcare professionals and their families, who are daily facing the biggest challenges and worst fears, to fight against this virus and save as many lives as possible.
- the healthcare industries to put effective health technologies on the market at an affordable price, in order to ensure accessibility and affordability for health systems, healthcare professionals and for patients. The pharmaceutical industry should ensure a diversity of supply and allow the greatest use possible of healthcare products to fight the virus.



- European national governments to show solidarity among European Member States and act together to fight this virus. It is worth mentioning that several university hospitals in Baden-Württemberg in Germany accepted COVID-19 patients from the neighbouring Alsace in France. Another good example of solidarity is the suspension of European debt repayments and deficit rules, which was agreed by the European Ministers of Finance of the Member States. National stand-alone decisions cannot provide the long-term solutions that this massive Covid-19 crisis is requiring. As EU Member States are geographically close and economically interdependent, national measures risk proving ineffective.
- EU countries to act in a coordinated manner, showing the meaning of solidarity through concrete actions. The current situation proves that enormous means and resources are required to provide an adequate response to all EU countries' and global health needs. Protective equipment (especially masks) and other essential goods such as medicines should **not** be detained

Beyond the crisis and in a far-sighted approach, we call for a stronger role of the EU concerning public health including the fight against pandemics. The EU and its Member States should consider appropriate ways to strengthen the role of the EU. This can include possible changes in the regulatory framework.

The social, health and environmental dimensions must really be at the top of the agenda and underpin all policy decisions. Indeed, sustainable responses founded on the reinforcement of social and health systems must be supported: while the first priority is to contain the pandemic, a true paradigm shift is needed in a second phase.

Africa and Latin America are the two continents that so far have been the least affected by Covid-19. However, the number of cases is increasing fast. Should African and Latin American health systems struggle to cope with the crisis, European solidarity must also be offered to help mitigate the crisis and to extend social protection schemes. Countries that have strong social protection systems have a valuable inbuilt mechanism to address the socio-economic impact of the crisis. We must ensure no one is left behind around the world.

Last but not least, AIM also would like to draw to attention that mutuals in their role as social actors are an essential and influential element of the European and world economy. They therefore need an appropriate European legal framework for social economy enterprises and the same financial support as any other entities.

It's time for the advent of a pandemic solidarity! That is, in our view, the best way to protect citizens' health and save as many lives as possible.