



AIM Healthcare and
social benefits
for all

Stronger Health Union needed in Europe

Ursula von der Leyen gave her State of the Union Speech today. Her address was bathed in solidarity, a key value of the European Union, which AIM also fiercely defends.

“Europe stands at a crossroads. Now is the time to bet on solidarity to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and healthier world. President von der Leyen has shown citizens that there is a will. Where there is a will, there is a way. AIM is committed to contribute to finding that way.”

Christian Zahn, AIM President

Health and social policies are first

The European Commission President underlined the importance of protecting the most vulnerable as the EU strives to come out of the COVID-19 pandemic and the crisis which it triggered. The pandemic has indeed brought health and health inequalities into the focus. Therefore, AIM demands to put a stronger emphasis on health and social policies. AIM underlines the importance of European Pillar of Social Rights in that respect and hopes that the European Commission will make the most of that new instrument to reduce inequities. The EU should support the Member States in strengthening their health systems and reinforce the cross-border collaboration in times of health crisis.

It is time to provide the European Union with the necessary budget and tools to face future healthcare crisis

AIM agrees that the EU Health Programme budget should keep up with the European Commission's goals and ambitions. As President von der Leyen, AIM much regrets the decision of the Council to water down the European Commission proposal. AIM will contribute to the discussions on strengthening the European Medicines Agency and the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as on the creation of a European Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Agency. President von der Leyen called for a stronger European Health Union. AIM is ready to participate in the reflections on the potential widening of EU health competences.

Vaccines should be accessible for all

AIM joins its voice to President Von der Leyen's when she requests a wide availability of vaccines, stating that "(...) vaccine cooperation saves lives (...)", not vaccine nationalism. AIM underlines that transparency on the production of vaccines is needed and that the vaccine must come at a fair price not only in Europe, but globally. Action should also be taken to counter the anti-vaxxers' lobby and tackle vaccine hesitancy. Transparent and comprehensive information on the necessity of vaccination, based on scientific facts, should be provided to European citizens.

A healthier environment for better health

Von der Leyen called for a true recovery, an investment plan for Europe. Such a decision once more reflects that the European Commission is truly committed to achieve better environmental and public health as well as greener and more sustainable societies. AIM regrets the announcement of an increase of the 2030 targets for emission reduction to 55%. Science is clear that cuts of at least 65% for the EU are needed to reach commitments under the landmark Paris Climate Agreement.

Use of health data needs a legal framework to ensure a secure environment and trust

AIM shares President Von der Leyen's call for a European approach to data. The EU should indeed not let others set standards. In this respect, AIM calls for an adequate legal framework to ensure that sensitive health data is used in a secure environment and has the trust of the general public. To achieve this trust, all stakeholders in the healthcare sector should be included in this process. Only then, trust can be achieved. When it comes to new technologies such as AI, Industry and public authorities should guarantee transparency about the algorithm used for automatic decision-making processes and the objective and data behind it.

AIM is ready to cooperate

The State of the Union speech was promising, reflecting the ambitions set in the European Commission work programme while adapting to the new realities and challenges brought by the pandemic.

As an international umbrella organisation of federations of health mutuals and health insurance bodies AIM is ready for an active cooperation and support for changes and innovations in health care, especially in the hard and challenging time of COVID-19 pandemic, when all Member States, institutions and organizations should speak with one voice.



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The International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies (AIM) is an international umbrella organisation of federations of health mutuals and other not-for-profit healthcare payers. It has 57 members from 30 countries in Europe, Latin America and Africa and the Middle East. 33 of its members, from 20 countries, are based in the

European Union. AIM members provide compulsory and/or supplementary health coverage to around 240 million people around the world, including close to 200 million people in Europe, on a not-for-profit basis. Some AIM members also manage health and social services. Collectively, they have a turnover of almost €300 billion. AIM members are either mutual or health insurance fund.

They are: private or public legal entities; solidarity based; not-for-profit oriented organisations: surpluses are used to benefit the members; democratically-elected members play a role in the governance of the organisation.

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