

PRESS RELEASE – State of Health in the EU Address
AIM welcomes Von der Leyen’s plans for an EU “grounded in values and bold in action”

President Von der Leyen delivered on 15 September her much awaited State of the Union address, a speech that was bathed in solidarity and European values, as it should be. The three pillars of the European Commission’s programme, key transitions of this century, were at the centre of discourse: digital, social and green.

AIM stresses that solidarity is key to overcome the pandemic.

AIM agrees that, despite a missed start, the EU’s answer to the pandemic was rooted in solidarity. The progress made regarding vaccination coverage and access to vaccines should be praised. However, as recognised by the President of the European Commission, there is still large room for improvement for international solidarity. AIM will contribute to reflect on solidarity and its role to foster our European social model.

AIM welcomes the announcement of 200 million extra doses for Africa as well as the plans to boost production capacities in the region. However, other regions like Latin-America are also in need of vaccines and the doses delivered under COVAX are not sufficient to cover all needs. As highlighted by President Von der Leyen, only less than 1% global doses are administered in low-income countries. AIM invites the European Commission to step up its international ambitions to become a strong actor in guaranteeing access to COVID vaccines for all, across the Globe.

AIM subscribes to the Commission’s plans for better preparedness.

President Von der Leyen proposed a new health preparedness and resilience mission for the whole of the EU, which will be backed up by Team Europe investment of EUR 50 billion by 2027. AIM is glad to see that the European Commission has drawn its lessons from the health crisis and is ready to invest in better preparedness. Health has rightly become a top priority of the EU. AIM will contribute to the debates around the creation of a Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA).

AIM welcomes the announcement of a new European Care Strategy.

AIM has already [highlighted](#), in debates around the Green Paper on Ageing, the urgent need to look not only at problems of workforce in the care sector but also at the issue of informal carers and their needs, as well as care quality (to cite but a few). AIM and its members welcome the intention to develop a European Care Strategy calling for the needs of carers and those receiving care and looks forward to the discussions on the more concrete role that such a Strategy could play.¹ AIM and its members are ready to provide their expertise and input to make the European Care Strategy a success.

AIM calls for more ambitious action for tackling climate change.

As President Von der Leyen put it, “(...) since [climate change] is man-made, we can do something about it”. AIM wishes to highlight that if action can indeed be taken, it should come fast and be bold enough. AIM welcomes the Fit for 55 Package to which the President of the European Commission referred. We hope that the implementation of the package will meet its objectives. Moreover, AIM believes that climate change cannot be tackled without higher ambitions when it comes to the quick phasing out of fossil fuels. AIM calls on the European Commission to translate words into action also in that respect and to ensure that the green transition does not exacerbate social inequalities.

AIM looks forward to contributing to reaching the ambitions presented yesterday by President Von der Leyen while ensuring that the EU remains grounded in its values and bold in its actions.

¹ AIM called in its [paper](#) for the adoption of an Action Plan on the EU Health and LTC workforce. The announced Strategy should include the actions proposed under that action plan. (for more information see p.6-8)