

Mr Michel Barnier, Chief Negotiator at the European Commission, michel.barnier@ec.europa.eu

Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, Health & Food Safety Commissioner, CAB-ANDRIUKAITIS-WEBPAGE@ec.europa.eu

Mr Donald Tusk, European Council President, donald.tusk@consilium.europa.eu

Dear Mr Barnier, Mr Andriukaitis, Mr Tusk,

The undersigned patients', and consumers' organisations eligible to work with the European Medicines Agency would like to draw your attention to important aspects to be considered when deciding the new location of the agency, following the initiation of Article 50 by the United Kingdom. These considerations are in line with the letter from the representatives of patients and consumers on the EMA management board and on the Committee for Pharmacovigilance and Risks Assessments (PRAC) which the signatories support fully.

The EMA is a network of regulators and external experts, and it works with more than 4,500 experts from 28 Member States, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, in addition to its own 890 staff. In 2016, on 770 occasions, patients and consumers participated in EMA activities and on 402 for healthcare professionals. The EMA is one of the most successful of the 44 EU agencies regarding the involvement of civil society in its activities.

The involvement of civil society in EMA activities is set in stone; the European legislator acknowledged the necessity for public health to involve patients, consumers and healthcare professionals in the activities of the agency. As a result, patients and healthcare professionals are now members of the scientific committees and management board, and are consulted as experts, participate in scientific discussions and workshops, and review all documents intended for their respective audiences.

For the continuity of this successful role of civil society and to guarantee the continuity of the EMA activities, the undersigned organisations would like to recommend the following key aspects to be considered for the choice of a new place to host the agency, should the ultimate decision be to relocate the agency.

The choice of the location should facilitate the involvement of patients and consumers

Meaningful involvement of civil society can best function in an agency which is located in a Member State that fully respects the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The host member state should guarantee the highest standards of protection for all persons, including non-discrimination as set out in the Charter; it should apply the solidarity principles of the Charter with respect to all people regardless of their citizenship status including refugees and asylum seekers; and it should respect fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, the press, academic and civil society organisations, and protection of whistle-blowers.

The choice of the location should facilitate safe and easy travel for external experts

Civil society can best work in Member States that ensure a high level of protection and safety to all citizens and visitors. The location needs to be easy to access from all major cities in the European Union, with a well-served airport that guarantees frequent direct flights, clear instructions in a language that travellers can understand, and with easy access by public transport from the airports or train stations to the EMA. Particular attention should be given to persons with disabilities visiting or working with EMA.

The EMA increasingly needs to be open to the wider communities of pharma, biotech, clinical research, academic and clinical networks, civil society etc. and larger conferences and workshops will be organised. The new location should ensure easy and economic travel, for a large number of people to attend conferences.

The signatories are asking you to ensure the Member State that will host the EMA will guarantee the above-mentioned recommendations. We thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alzheimer Europe (AE)

European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG)

The European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC)

European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA)

European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA)

European Heart Network (EHN)

European Institute of Women's Health (EIWH)

European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP)

European Organisation for Rare Diseases (EURORDIS)

European Patients' Forum (EPF)

European Prostate Cancer Coalition (Europa Uomo)

International Diabetes Federation European Region (IDF Europe)

International Patient Organisation for Primary Immunodeficiencies (IPOPI)

Myeloma Patients Europe (MPE)

Patients Network for Medical Research and Health (EGAN)

