

## EU4Health Programme Report - 2020/0102 (COD)

### European Parliament Plenary vote - European Patients' Forum's Recommendations

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

In the European Patients' Forum view, and as outlined in our [position statement](#), the new **EU4Health programme** represents a unique opportunity to build stronger, patient-centred, health systems that can provide care to all, under all circumstances and beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

EPF has [welcomed and supported](#) the work of ENVI Rapporteur MEP Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Shadow Rapporteurs and Opinion Rapporteurs on the European Parliament Draft report, including the agreed and voted **Compromise Amendments**. In our view, **the current version of the Report strongly improves the Commission's proposal**, in particular by putting more attention on the importance of adequate resources for the Programme, a stronger and official role for patient organisations and civil society through an inclusive EU4Health Steering Group, as well accessible and affordable person-centred care, health literacy and better integration between and within health systems.

Bearing in mind the above and in view of the upcoming plenary vote on 12<sup>th</sup> November and trilogue negotiations, **EPF would like to further stress the importance of the following elements included in the current version of the Report.**

#### 1. Solid and inclusive governance with direct participation of patient organisations and civil society

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted, once again, that **patients should be involved in shaping health policy at national and European levels**, and why their unique knowledge and expertise, collectively and individually, are vital.<sup>1</sup> The EU4Health programme represents an exceptional opportunity to act on this, whilst enhancing European coordination to protect our health. To achieve its objectives and to ensure efficient use of resources, the EU4Health Programme must foresee a clear, solid and inclusive governance framework with strong involvement of patients' and civil society organisations. EPF therefore welcomes the **current position of the European Parliament on an inclusive EU4Health Steering Board**. In addition to the abovementioned inclusive governance mechanisms, EPF also welcomes the emphasis on the importance of patients and patient organisations in the design and implementation of the EU4Health Programme featured in several Amendments, and the clear identification of patient organisations as a potential recipient of EU4Health funding.

#### 2. More investment in health

**Adequate resources for the Programme are fundamental to ensure long-term impact on health systems**, addressing the COVID-19 recovery while preparing the EU for future health challenges and responding to the calls of people in Europe for the EU to do more on health.<sup>2</sup> EPF therefore welcomes the European Parliament's effort towards reinstating the original budget allocated to the EU4Health Programme and will support the EP's negotiating actions to obtain adequate resources during the

<sup>1</sup> See for example: Murphy, E. et al. "COVID-19: Public and patient involvement, now more than ever." [HRB open research vol. 3 35v.](#); Richards T., Scowcroft H. "Patient and public involvement in covid-19 policy making" [BMJ 2020; 370 :m2575.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Europeans think the EU spends 13% of its budget on health, while in reality the figure is 0.05% – 260 times less. Almost half would like more EU budget to be allocated to health. Source: <https://www.bruegel.org/2018/01/eu-budgetexpectations-vs-reality/>

trilogue negotiations. **Without sufficient funding, the EU4Health programme will not be able to deliver on the expectations of patients in Europe** and address the well-known weaknesses of our health systems, magnified by the pandemic.

### 3. Accessible and affordable care for all

**Equitable access to care for all is fundamental to reduce inequalities and inequities in health.** The EU4Health Programme can enable the EU to act on these crucial elements for the benefits of European patients, provided that they are clearly featured as core objectives. EPF therefore welcomes the strong focus on affordability, availability and accessibility to quality care stressed in the current version of the Report.

### 4. European coordination to protect our health

Citizens and patients have clearly voiced their expectations for the EU to do more on health. In many cases, the EU already can do more by scaling existing or already discussed coordination frameworks and instruments the field of public health<sup>3</sup>. The **European Reference Networks** proved to be valuable and impactful tools to facilitate integration and exchange of information between EU Member States. EPF welcomes the EP's focus on scaling up their scope to more chronic conditions, resources and enhancing their integration within health systems.

In the context of better integration and cooperation at European level on health, EPF also welcomes the importance given to advancing **HTA collaboration** within the voted ENVI report and amendments.

### 5. Inclusive and safe digital transformation of health and care

The digital transformation, from data to telemedicine to Artificial Intelligence, has the potential to improve quality and efficiency of health and care. However, said transformation should be sustainable, accessible, inclusive of patients-views and adequately resourced. EPF therefore welcomes the attention to these elements included in the European Parliament's report.

**EPF believes that the inclusion of these elements in the final negotiating position of the European Parliament will lead to positive negotiations for a fit-for-future EU4Health programme,** ready to support the needed health systems strengthening, while efficiently addressing the needs of European patients.

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*The European Patients' Forum (EPF) is an umbrella organisation of patient organisations across Europe and across disease-areas. Our 75 members include disease-specific patient groups active at EU level and national coalitions of patients. [www.eu-patient.eu](http://www.eu-patient.eu)*

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<sup>3</sup> EPF Statement, High time for enhanced European coordination and competence On health, <https://www.eu-patient.eu/news/latest-epf-news/2020/enhanced-eu-collaboration/>

## EPF Main Voting Recommendations – Summary Table

<b>Solid and inclusive governance with direct participation of patient organisations and civil society</b>	<b>Amendments 89-93</b> on Article 16 <b>Amendments 42-43</b> on Recital 34a <b>Amendment 84</b> on Article 14 – paragraph 1 – point b
<b>More investment in health</b>	<b>Amendments 73-75</b> on Articles 5 and 6 <b>Amendment 39</b> on Recital 31a
<b>Accessible and affordable care for all</b>	<b>Amendment 57</b> on Article 3 – paragraph 1 – point 2 <b>Amendment 62, 222</b> on Article 4 – paragraph 1 – points 3 and 4 <b>Amendments 16-19, 47</b> on Recital 15 and 43
<b>European coordination to protect our health</b>	<b>Amendments 71</b> on Article 4 – paragraph 1 – point 9 <b>Amendments 145-147</b> on Annex I – point g – point xi a,b,c <b>Amendments 11, 33-34</b> on Recital 11 and 26 <b>Amendment 136</b> on Annex I – point g point viii a
<b>Inclusive and safe digital transformation of health and care</b>	<b>Amendment 237</b> on Article 3 – paragraph 1 – point 3 <b>Amendment 222</b> on Article 4 – paragraph 4 – point 4 <b>Amendments 178-182</b> on Annex I – point j – point i, ii, iii, iv <b>Amendments 16-19</b> on Recital 15

Source: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/report-details.html?reference=A9-0196-2020>