



## PRESS RELEASE

### Patient Power and the Role of Biotech in Europe

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The new revolution in patient power was the topic of discussion at today's EuropaBio event in the European Parliament, Strasbourg.

The event, hosted by Swedish EPP MEP Christofer Fjellner, highlighted the increasingly influential role played by patients in managing their own care and recovery. So far, more than 350 million patients have benefitted from medicines manufactured through biotechnology and gene technology to treat or prevent heart attacks, strokes, multiple sclerosis, breast cancer, cystic fibrosis, leukemia, hepatitis, diabetes and other diseases. In addition, an estimated 50% of all new medicines will originate from biotechnologies. EuropaBio was pleased to organize the discussion in support of the evolution of patient-centered healthcare systems and the commitment to work together with patients towards providing answers to unmet medical needs.

Roxana Radulescu, Senior Policy Advisor for the European Patients' Forum, who spoke at the event said: "When a person becomes a patient with a chronic disease, often, one of their worst fears is a loss of control over the way they lead their lives. Access to high quality, timely, objective information about their condition and possible treatments and support puts the patient in the driving seat and helps restore their confidence in the future. Patients across the EU want equal access to better information and resources to be real partners in determining their care. This is what we strive for in our EPF Patients' Manifesto '150 million reasons to act'".

Host MEP Christofer Fjellner commented: "Today's session has helped raise awareness of the urgent need to update and modernize current legislation on information about medicines. It's evident that we need better access to information about medicines to empower patients all over Europe. To achieve this we need a broad commitment from all European institutions."

Speaker, Mr Thomas Bols, Chair of the Healthcare Council at EuropaBio, outlined how the complexities specific to biotech medicine meant that new insights needed to be thoroughly and openly discussed within society. Challenges, such as complex ideas to pass on to patients and new approaches to promote development of treatments, meant that maintaining the flow of information and dialogue would be essential, he said. He also highlighted that, so far, 20 to 30 million Europeans and their families have the potential to benefit from therapies for rare and very rare genetic diseases, many of which are developed and manufactured using biotechnology.

Chair of EuropaBio, Dr Andrea Rappagliosi, who concluded the session, summarized: "The future of healthcare is clear: patients must be placed at the centre of any medical, social, economical and ethical consideration. EuropaBio now calls on the European institutions to ensure that patients' needs, as well as their expertise, form the foundations for the development of future healthcare policy."

**For further information, please contact**

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**EuropaBio**

EuropaBio is the European Association for Bioindustries, bringing together bioscience companies from all fields of research and development, testing, manufacturing and distribution of biotechnology products. It has 72 corporate and 6 associated members, 4 BioRegions and 25 national biotechnology associations representing some 1800 small and medium sized enterprises involved in research

**European Patients' Forum** is an umbrella European patients' organisation based in Brussels. Its vision is high quality, patient centred, equitable healthcare for all patients throughout the European Union. Through its diverse membership, EPF represents the interests of 150 million European Patients. EPF's role is to provide a united and powerful patients voice in EU health debates. [www.eu-patient.eu](http://www.eu-patient.eu)