EuropaBio Healthcare BioForum 2022

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EuropaBio
The European Association for Bioindustries

Innovation, Investment, and Excellence for Healthcare Biotechnology: Achieving a competitive environment in Europe

Introduction

In 2022, EuropaBio launched its vision for Innovation, Investment, and Excellence in European Biotechnology. With the revision of the EU's pharmaceutical legislation on the horizon, EuropaBio believes the EU has the potential to become the world's most innovative biotechnology region by creating the right environment to attract investment and excellence in healthcare biotechnology.

EuropaBio's vision

A Europe where biotechnology delivers benefits across society, from high-skill jobs and economic strength to ground-breaking treatments that change and save lives.

This inaugural Healthcare BioForum brought together representatives of the European institutions and the healthcare biotechnology industry to deliver the momentum needed to achieve a competitive environment in Europe.

EuropaBio envisages Europe leading in three key areas:

Leading the world in scientific and industrial innovation in healthcare biotechnology

Boosting and attracting more investments in healthcare biotechnology than any other region

Becoming a global centre of excellence for healthcare biotechnology

Key outcomes from the Healthcare BioForum

The Healthcare BioForum facilitated an open discussion on the links between innovation, investment, and excellence in European healthcare biotechnology. Discussions revealed a common goal to make Europe a leader in healthcare biotechnology, starting with reinforcing dialogue and collaboration between industry and public actors, both at EU and at national levels.

"Europe has all the tools to compete against other regions, but it needs to harness the full potential of its rich ecosystem built around public-private collaborations at EU and national levels to achieve the objectives of the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe, including accessibility and affordability, and deliver for patients."

"Europe has strong elements to become a leader in healthcare biotechnology but we need to work together to overcome key challenges. The EU can help by connecting the dots in a timely manner and ensure coherent actions between different actors."

"Europe's approach to public-private partnerships is unique and supports rich innovation ecosystems that we need to continue to reinforce to ensure health innovation and breakthrough technologies can reach patients."

Modernising a regulatory system fit for the 21st Century

The benefits and progress that were facilitated by the 2001-2004 regulatory framework revisions were recognised, however it was also noted that the landscape has evolved since then. The EU regulatory network is considered to be fragmented, complex, and prone to duplication, which increases the burden on developers. The need to use the revision of the EU pharmaceutical legislation to modernise the EU's regulatory system to ensure it is efficient, flexible, and future-proof, was recognised as essential to improve Europe's overall competitiveness. Improved collaboration between stakeholders within the network, as well as greater uptake of digital tools were identified as critical elements to improve regulatory efficiency, and bring about real benefits for patients.

Ensuring stability and predictability to attract investments

It was acknowledged that unlike other sectors, the healthcare biotechnology industry invests in R&D over a 10 to 15 year period in projects that have high rates of failure. Healthcare biotechnology companies, small and large, need strong incentives and intellectual property protections to convince investors to support projects that may fail, or may only yield results a decade later. Ensuring stability and predictability for investors will strengthen the EU's strategic autonomy in health. In addition to ensuring the legislative framework provides stability and predictability for investors and industry, existing tools such as InvestEU, the European Innovation Council, and the Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) on Health, warrant further exploration.

Translating Europe's scientific excellence into therapeutic innovation

The significant contributions of EU framework programmes such as Horizon Europe, and public-private partnerships such as the Innovative Health Initiative, (and their predecessors), were acknowledged as helping Europe become a centre of scientific excellence. The discussions demonstrated a common desire to bridge Europe's gap between scientific excellence and therapeutic innovation by nurturing an ecosystem that values, rewards, and harnesses the benefits of healthcare biotechnology innovation.

Ensuring a competitive environment in the EU

The need to support the competitiveness of Europe's healthcare biotechnology industry and harness its enormous socio-economic potential was highlighted. Europe has the right tools (for example, the EU regulatory network, the single market, incentives and intellectual property), and resources (for example, academic and research infrastructures, public-private partnerships, and talent) to compete on the global stage. However, it lacks coherence in action. Europe needs a skilled workforce, scientific excellence, efficient regulatory systems, easier market access, and strong incentives and intellectual property to close the growing gap and remain competitive with other regions.

Fostering the EU innovation ecosystem

The fragility and complexity of the European healthcare biotechnology ecosystem was noted. Academia, start-ups, and established companies complement and need each other within this ecosystem. Academia advances science, start-ups push the boundaries of healthcare innovation, and established companies help patients access that innovation. With the right policies and incentives, Europe's innovation ecosystem has the possibility to capitalise on the resources of twenty-seven Member States, and break the barriers to growth for established companies, SMEs, and developers of advanced therapies and orphan medicinal products alike.

"Our vision for Europe has a clear pathway to reality. We can build a regulatory framework that ensures future-proof routes to approval for innovation, fosters excellence in basic and advanced research, provides companies with the tools and incentives for growth, attracts investment for translation of science towards patients, and nurtures the skills needed to deliver global competitiveness."

A vision for Europe in 2030

Drawing the Healthcare BioForum to a close, participants shared their outlook for Europe for 2030. There is optimism for Europe to be a leader in healthcare biotechnology, with a recognition of changing trends needed in the processes to patients and national healthcare systems. The need for coherent and balanced policy interventions, as well as collaboration between public and private actors, was underlined.

EuropaBio's inaugural Healthcare BioForum came at a critical time for Europe's development towards a global centre of excellence, with benefits for patients and economies alike. It demonstrated that stakeholders have a shared vision for what Europe can, and should achieve. Innovators, policy makers, and facilitators can each bring their own expertise, perspective, and role. EuropaBio will help deliver the vision into reality across stakeholders for Europe, and the Healthcare BioForum establishes a long-term platform for open and forward-looking discussion.

Participants

- **BALOG DE MANKO BUCK SANCHO Axel,** APA to MEP Susana Solis Peres (RE, Spain)
- **DUELUND Inger,** APA to MEP Pernille Weiss (EPP, Denmark)
- **GALLAGHER Aoife,** Head European Government Affairs and Brussels office, Corporate Affairs Europe, Lilly
- **GHYSSELS Philippe,** Vice President Corporate and Global Public Affairs, Ipsen
- **GROOTEN Elke,** Head of EU Relations, Novartis
- **LECHANTEUR Marcel,** President Lilly France, Benelux, EU institutions, Eli Lilly and Company
- **MATTINÒ Giacomo,** Head of Unit, F3 Food, Retail, Health, DG GROW
- **MULCOCK Neil,** Vice President Government Affairs & Policy, Gilead, Chair of the EuropaBio Healthcare Council
- **RICHTER Milena,** Senior Director European Public Affairs, Sanofi
- **RUIZ-RODRÍGUEZ Alberto, I**ndustry Attaché, Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU
- **RYS Andrzej,** Principle Scientific Adviser to the Director General, DG SANTE
- **SCHWAB Philip,** Government Affairs Lead Region Europe, Abbvie
- **SKENTELBERY Claire,** Director General, EuropaBio
- **TSEVELEKI Vivian,** Chief Operating Officer, Theracell
- **VAN HENGEL Arjon,** Deputy Head of Unit, D4 Health Innovations and Ecosystems, DG RTD
- **VAN HOOLAND Tineke,** Deputy Secretary General of the Belgian Life Sciences Industry Association, Chair of the EuropaBio National Associations Council
- **WILKINSON Jamie,** Healthcare Biotechnology Director, EuropaBio
- **ZANAGLIO Andrea,** Head of EU Government Affairs, Gilead

About EuropaBio

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, is the recognised voice of the European biotechnology sector, representing 79 corporate and associate members, bio-regions, and 19 national biotechnology associations which in turn, represent over 2300 biotechnology SMEs.

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