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Health for all has to be guaranteed throughout Europe

The SME UNION together with the European Institute of Health and SME Health organized a Working Lunch on „Innovation in Medicine due to a European Lead Market“. Health and health innovation are important topics not only for the upcoming EP elections in June but also for the next legislative period. In his opening speech **Felix Unger**, the President of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts and President of the SME Health, emphasized the importance to guarantee health for all. He claims: “There are three main parts which need to find a balance: society, medical work and industry”. He concluded his keynote speech by stressing the crucial role of the European Lead Market: “We are the biggest market and therefore, we hold the biggest opportunities”.

Erdem Erginel, Member of Cabinet for EU Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou, underlined: “The European Commission wants to help to ensure the highest level of health in Europe”. He stated that in the health sector, two principles have to be the main driving force: “Fair distribution of health services and solidarity need to be the main priorities policy maker have to keep in mind”. In addition, **Nils Behrndt**, Member of Cabinet for EU Commission Vice-President Günter Verheugen, highlighted in his statement the lead market initiatives on e-health and the importance of health technological assessment.

Christian Lenz, Director Health Economics & Outcomes Research Pfizer Germany, focused on Health Technology Assessment (HTA) and the promotion of the patient interest in new medicines. **Markus Homann**, AXA Insurance, outlined innovations in patients insurances and claimed: “Our money is our life. We all have to consider how much health is worth for us”.

Marie-Hélène Fandel from the European Policy Centre (EPC) stressed five necessities in this regard: more provided data, more prevention, more availability of designer drugs, more choice for patients and more private financing and funding. **Paul Rübzig**, MEP Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and President of SME Global, concluded the Working Lunch and underlined the patients right to choose the kind of treatment on their own and to put the patient in the middle of the political debates. He stated: “Establishing a real internal market is a big chance for patients and also for health providers”.

During the Working Lunch Felix Unger presented his newest publication: “European Lead Market in Health Care. Report to the European Union” published by the VDG Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, Weimar (2009).

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SME UNION (Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Union) of the EPP (European People’s Party) is the network of pro-business Christian-Democrat, Conservative and Liberal politicians and political organizations. Its main objective is to help in shaping EU policy in a more SME friendly way. www.sme-union.org