

Brussels, 18/02/2021

Dear PACT Partners,

In view of the ongoing exchange between EU Member States and the European Commission on the recovery and resilience plans, and further to the discussions between the Patient Access Partnership and the European Commission, we would like to encourage you and your national constituents to take active participation in the consultation process on the recovery and resilience plans at the national level<sup>1</sup>.

The COVID-19 pandemic put healthcare systems across the EU under enormous strain and has profound implications for access to quality and timely health care and services in all EU Member States. In response to the unprecedented situation, the European Commission proposed practical instruments to help Member States implement public investments and reforms necessary to mitigate the economic and social impact of the pandemic while contributing to long-term resilience. The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) is the main building block of the NextGenerationEU recovery package and will provide €672.5 billion of loans and grants to support the recovery of Member States from the impacts of COVID-19. To access the available funds, Member States should submit before the end of April recovery and resilience plans (RRP) that outline the action areas on their policy agenda.

These plans should be in line with the recommendations issued in the framework of the European Semester and contribute to social resilience and the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights principles. With health-related challenges becoming more prominent in the European Semester cycles in the past few years<sup>2</sup>, and the link between the disbursement of funds from the RRF to the European Semester, commitment to act on health systems reform has never been more timely, nor more urgent.

Given the momentum and magnitude of rebuilding societies and economies, and the investment therein, PACT reiterates that it is crucial that all health stakeholders are vocal in the ongoing consultations at the national level by providing input to ensure that these resources are used in an optimal, impactful, and meaningful way. Your active contribution in setting the priorities for action at the national level will guarantee that investment is allocated to relevant reforms which aim to rebuild and strengthen the capacity of health care systems so that inequity of access for patients across the EU does not get exacerbated in times of crisis.

This is a unique opportunity – we hope very much it will further our collective mission to address inequalities in access across and within EU Member States. Should you need additional support from the PACT secretariat, please do not hesitate to contact us.

With kind regards,

Susanna Palkonen,  
Chairperson, Patient Access Partnership

Stanimir Hasardzhiev,  
Secretary-General, Patient Access Partnership

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<sup>1</sup> In line with Article 18 (4) of the Proposal for a Regulation on the Recovery and Resilience Facility ([COM/2020/0408](#))

<sup>2</sup> 2019, EuroHealthNet. The European Semester 2019 from a health equity perspective. Available [here](#).