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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Launch of an IPCEI on Health Announced During the Ministerial Conference ‘Towards an Independent, Competitive and Innovative European Healthcare Sector’**

On 3 March 2022, **Olivier Véran**, French Minister for Solidarity and Health, **Agnès Pannier-Runacher**, French Minister Delegate for Industry, **Stella Kyriakides**, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, and **Thierry Breton**, European Commissioner for the Internal Market took part in the ministerial conference “Towards an independent, competitive and innovative European healthcare sector”, held at Parisanté Campus as part of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Attended by European Ministers, MEPs and many industrial players from the healthcare sector, this conference provided an opportunity to reflect on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis in order to lay the groundwork for a common and bold European healthcare industry strategy.

To address the dual imperative of (i) equipping Europe with a strong, innovative and export-friendly healthcare industry that is able to meet the challenges posed by the future of medical care, and (ii) sharing the same strategic vision for developing lasting and innovative European manufacturing capabilities with regard to critical products, notably pharmaceuticals, the Ministers and **16 Member States\*** **announced the signing of a manifesto for an Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) on Health. This IPCEI is intended to support innovation and improve the quality and accessibility of healthcare for European citizens.**

The manifesto cemented the signatories’ agreement on the scope of the projects that will receive support over the course of 2022.

The projects are set to focus on three strategic areas: (i) developing innovative and greener technologies and production processes for manufacturing medicines; (ii) innovating with regard to strategic challenges such as fighting antibiotic resistance, developing treatments for rare diseases, and in conjunction with the European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), responding to future pandemics; and (iii) developing gene and cell therapies.

The implementation timeline for this IPCEI will be broken down into two phases, to enable Member States to incorporate it to the fullest extent possible.

- The first phase will be devoted to the three above-mentioned strategic areas. Projects will be pre-notified to the European Commission in two stages: in June 2022, under the French Presidency, and in October 2022.
- In the second phase, projects will also be pre-notified to the Commission by end-2022. They will involve foundational areas such as medical devices, medtech and digital healthcare more broadly.

**France has secured project financing of €1.5bn for the IPCEI on Health.** The first round of French projects will be pre-notified to the Commission in June 2022, during the French Presidency. For maximum impact, this initiative will develop synergies with other already implemented national and EU actions, including the creation of HERA.

This new IPCEI will help **to strengthen the EU's strategic autonomy in the health sector**, a crucial area for all European citizens.

*\* **Signatory countries:** Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Spain.*

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