EU: European Health Union. Access to medicines, cancer plan, digital healthcare, patient safety

"The European Health Union – the Commission went on to say in its statement – thus emerged in the midst of the pandemic as a necessity to preserve EU resilience and contribute to Europe's societal wellbeing, strategic autonomy and geopolitical stability". Unveiled in November 2020, the goal of the European Health Union is to "ensure that Member States are better prepared to respond to future health crises together, while supporting modern and innovative health policies for all citizens across the EU. Backed by substantial funding from the EU4Health programme, the goals of the European Health Union quickly turned into tangible results", according to the Commission's assessment. Indeed, the European Health Union has delivered to date: "Stronger health security measures, to better respond to future crises"; "Equal and timely access to affordable medicines for all citizens"; "A world-leading Cancer Plan"; initiatives to digitalise healthcare; "Comprehensive action for better mental health"; "Rules to boost patient safety and secure the supply of medicinal products"; and "A One Health approach to tackle major health risks" ("by recognising the link between human, animal and environmental health, Europe is better positioned to develop stronger policies to tackle major health challenges, such as antimicrobial resistance and the impact of climate change on health"). Commissioner for Health Stella Kyriakides said: "Over the last 5 years, the way we work and cooperate in the area of health has changed fundamentally. The unity and solidarity that emerged when faced with the most difficult health crisis in modern times has led to the creation of a strong European Health Union. Its every pillar and action have one purpose: to put citizens and patients at the centre, protect their health and change their lives. Our citizens rightfully expected more in the area of health, and we are delivering".

Valentina Bombelli