

*French Social Security Finance Bill for 2018*

**The PLFSS is a disappointing carbon copy of the previous ones**

Medicines are once again being used as the main variable for adjusting health insurance accounts in the guidelines to the Social Security Financing Bill for 2018 introduced this morning.

The savings required under Ondam (National Healthcare Spending Target) for 2018 have reached EUR 4.2 billion, the most ambitious level set since this indicator was first created in 1997. With nearly EUR 1 billion in price controls imposed on medicines, i.e. EUR 140 million more than in 2017, a year already punitive enough for the pharmaceutical industry, the contribution demanded from pharmaceutical companies is unparalleled. This record amount comes on top of measures to exclude EUR 500 million worth of prescription volumes from rebates.

**A window of opportunity to enhance France's attraction as a scientific and industrial destination is at risk of closing**

Although the French elections reawakened interest in France at a time of international instability, Leem is concerned about the negative signals that the PLFSS 2018 might send out to the pharmaceutical industry.

The text presented by the Government is hardly likely to restore competitiveness to our sector within the European Union. France's prestige in clinical research has been eroded; productive investment is in decline; employment is stagnating and is only being propped up through growth in outsourcing and contract manufacturing; the contribution made by the sector to the balance of payments surplus is shrinking. Finally, many new medicines already available to our European neighbours are not yet available to French patients<sup>1</sup> on account of inadequate regulatory mechanisms.

While the Government has signalled its intention to promote innovation, it would appear from the text presented today that this ambition does not extend to medicines.

**Overhauling our medicines policy**

Leem wishes to remind the Government that regulation of the sector should not be reduced to a medicines price slashing policy.

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<sup>1</sup> 7 ASMR IV rated products with no cohort temporary authorisation for use and inaccessible to French patients.

It calls for an attractive and coherent regulatory policy that takes into account the renewed drive for innovation and its contribution to the modernisation of the healthcare system. It will be looking to the responses of Government for assurances that this PLFSS is merely a transitional PLFSS preceding the introduction of structural reforms. It is high time to deliver on the promises of the new President of the Republic who in the last election campaign called for an "overhaul of ONDAM and the development of a multiannual strategy that allows the huge investments needed to be integrated with technological and organisational innovations. "

*"Our hope was that this PLFSS would represent a break with the erosive policy pursued over the past eight years. Instead, it's a copy-and-paste of previous versions, **according to Leem Chairman Patrick Errard**. This transitional PLFSS fails to take into account the revival of innovation in therapeutics and is out of step with the policies of the other European countries in competition with our sector. We cannot resign ourselves to this detachment. There is still time to reverse the trend by introducing engaging structural reforms. We will support the Minister's efforts to promote prevention, proper prescribing practices and the correct use of medicines, but we are calling for the immediate overhaul of a medicines policy that has been undermined over the past eight years".*