

SNAPSHOT

The latest updates from the team at FTI Consulting Brussels

Giving you insight to what is on the EU's political agenda

The Netherlands: Europe's most attractive life sciences hotspot, or the next big troublemaker?

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The Netherlands certainly has a lot going for it when it comes to attracting the world's leading biopharmaceutical companies: World-class research institutes, a well-respected healthcare system and not least of all the new home of the European Medicines Agency. FTI Consulting and IvCB explore whether there is another side to the story.

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The Dutch healthcare system was recently voted first for the sixth consecutive year in the Euro Health Consumer Index. This achievement compounds what has been a very successful few years for the life sciences and healthcare industries in the Netherlands, confirmed when Amsterdam won a Europe wide competition to be the new home of the European Medicines Agency, moving from London following the Brexit referendum.

At a recent event host by FTI Consulting and IvCB in Brussels, a distinguished panel of speakers from the Council of the EU's Task Force on the UK, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, the Dutch Association Innovative Medicines (VIG) and Invest in Holland, looked at what this could all mean for the future of the industry in the

country and how this could impact the rest of the EU.

As part of a lively discussion, it became apparent that headlines can be misleading. Despite its perceived success, there is clear frustration that the Government is promoting a number of mixed messages and consequently the pharma world is confused. There is clear inconsistency between what is being said and what is being done.

Key influencers have taken up the political baton highlighting the contradictory messaging emanating between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, which is seeking to attract inward investment, and those from the Ministry of Health, which is seeking to address issues around pricing and healthcare sustainability.

Concern has risen to such a level that some now believe that Dutch actions could lead to the eventual unravelling of the EU's regulatory framework for medicines. Brussels is aware and listening.

On the one hand the Government is seeking to benefit from the EMA decision, promoting the Netherlands as the place to be for pharma

companies, while on the other side challenging the sector's business model. Primarily amongst these allegations is a perception that it is undermining the intellectual property framework which the industry relies on, notably by encouraging the use of compounded medicines over regulatory approved products.

However, these discrepancies don't appear to have had a material impact - just yet. The numbers paint a more positive story. Even before the EMA decision, the Amsterdam area has become one of the most vibrant life science hubs in Europe with a lively cluster of thousands of pharma, life sciences, medical technology companies, and research institution.

It remains to be seen whether the Netherlands can further leverage the arrival of the European Union's flagship regulatory body for medicines. Most agree it is far too early to tell. The move is still

underway with many staff still to transfer to a temporary headquarters whilst they await the development of a new permanent home. Watch this space. It's a conversation that still has a long way to go.

IvCB and FTI Consulting are organizing a visit to the EMA's new permanent home in Amsterdam. For those keen to find out more and to register, please contact Kevin Zuidhof @ IvCB on kzuidhof@ivcb.nl

For further information on the issue, a more detailed analysis of the relevant legislative and non-legislative activities (by European institutions and agencies, as well as the United States Federal and States level) can be found on the FTI Consulting website [here](#) or go to www.fticonsulting.com.

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