



European Federation of Nurses  
Associations

# EFN UPDATE

September-October 2013

## President Message



Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

I hope that you have all had a lovely summer break and that you are ready to face the upcoming intense working months.

As regards the EFN lobby work, September and October will be two very intense months with EFN participation in a number of meetings where the input of nurses is seen as crucial. First of all; the EU projects in which the EFN is involved - the two Joint Actions on EU Workforce planning, and Patient Safety & Quality of Care, and SmartCare. Furthermore, the EU Policy meetings - Horizon 2020, the European Health Policy Forum, the eHealth stakeholders' group, and the EPHA annual meeting. We will continue to support our members through meetings, such as the second International nursing congress of Armenia and the Annual General Meeting of the European Nursing Students Association, to name a few.

As a member of the steering group, led by Commissioner Barnier, the EFN will follow closely the Single Market Month, which will take place from 23<sup>rd</sup> of September to 23<sup>rd</sup> of October. I really hope that nurses can make a difference by contributing to the online debates, mainly during the first week, when the topic is related to the Directive 36: "How to find work, set up a business, or get your qualification recognised in Europe". Given the importance nurses place on topics such as mutual recognition and e-health, I believe that nurses can contribute in a constructive and productive manner to the debate.

This is my last message to you as the EFN President, as elections for a new EFN President will take place at the next EFN General Assembly, on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of September in FYR Macedonia. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support during my period as a President. It has been a privilege to serve as the EFN President and I very much appreciate having been a part of the EFN family and actively influencing EU policy together with you. Together we are strong and I wish you all the best for the future!

Unni Hembre  
EFN President

*"Investing in delivering care that has proven to be cost-effective is key to improve healthcare systems in the EU. The EC Social Investment Package that sets investing in health as a priority is therefore well-timed to build trust between the EU citizens and the designed EU health policies that impact daily work and life of EU citizens."*

*Extract from the article "Investing in health to boost the economy", published in [Public Service Europe](#), September 2013 (Issue 30).*

## News from EFN

### ESCO Reference Group "Healthcare and social work activities"

Being a member of the [European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations \(ESCO\)](#), the EFN participated in the meeting of the Reference Group "Healthcare and social work activities" held in Brussels, on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013. The participants were updated on the intermediate activities and had the possibility to discuss, in subgroups, on healthcare & social work and prepare the next steps and actions to be taken further. The ESCO Secretariat took this opportunity to present new templates on sectoral breakdown, sources repository and sectoral overlaps. It is important that this exercise gives clarity on the data collection for nursing in order to have comparable and accurate figures at European level. As agreed by the 34 EFN members and recognised internationally, the four categories of the nursing profession (Healthcare Assistant, Registered Nurse, Specialist Nurse, and Advanced Nurse Practitioner) has been advocated for in the Joint Action on EU Workforce, in which Eurostat, WHO and OECD participated. In order to have safe free movement and high quality healthcare outcomes we need to have comparable data which make sense to the profession. It makes, therefore, sense that DG EMPL calls for an EU Skill Council for Nursing as follow-up of the successful feasibility study in which the EFN participated. As such, we build synergy between the EU and International institutions and develop a motivated and highly skilled nursing workforce fitting the needs of the health system and citizens.

### Europe meets Young Patients

On 9-11 July, the EFN participated in the [EMPATHY Seminar: Europe Meets Young Patients](#), an initiative developed by the [European Patients' Forum Youth Group](#) and co-funded by the "Youth in Action" Programme of the European Commission. The aim of this seminar that brought together young patients, European policy-makers, and stakeholder actors in the fields of health, education, social and youth policy was to establish an active dialogue among all the actors attending the seminar and promote a more holistic approach to addressing young patients' needs in EU decision-making processes, and to raise awareness of young patients' needs and expectations in relation to their care. The debate focused mainly on communication, where the role of nurses was identified as extremely important. Being healthcare professionals the closest and in constant dialogue with the patient, nurses' way of communicating empowers patients. As such, nurses' skills need to be strengthened in order to interact effectively with young patients and provide them with the necessary support they may need.

## News from the EU

### Lithuanian EU Presidency

On 1<sup>st</sup> July, Lithuania took over from Ireland its first presidency of the Council of the European Union. The [Lithuanian EU Presidency](#) will focus on economic growth, financial stability and job creation, and will mobilise forces towards the creation of a credible, growing and open Europe. Lithuania will also take forward the debate on the social investment package that seeks to improve the implementation and the social inclusion of programmes by using the European Social Funds, aiming at providing an adequate environment for economic growth and structural changes. In terms of health, it will seek at better implementation of EU health policy - 'Health in All policies', and will work namely on sustainable healthcare systems, and on medical devices directive. The Lithuanian EU Presidency will urge for the adoption of Council conclusions that include the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy objectives in terms of health, with effective investment in the health sector, use of structural EU funds, integrated care models and better hospital management.

## Horizon 2020

The Committee of Permanent Representatives [endorsed](#), on 17 July, the agreement reached in June 2013 between the Presidency of the Council and the European Parliament representatives on the 'Horizon 2020' programme 2014-2020 for research and innovation, which will replace the EU's 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme (FP7), running until December 2013. This new programme, expected to further eliminate fragmentation in the fields of scientific research and innovation, should be formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council through a vote in the coming months. Being a key opportunity for the nurses and the nursing profession in terms of research, the EFN is following closely this debate.

## Public consultation on the implementation of European Reference Networks

The European Commission DG Health and Consumers published the [contributions](#) received from the EU stakeholders regarding the public consultation on the implementation of the European Reference Networks (ERN), to which the [EFN contributed](#). The aim of this consultation was to help the Commission to draft a list of criteria that the networks and the providers wishing to join networks must fulfil, and the criteria for establishing and evaluating European Reference Networks, as required in Article 12 of the [Directive 2011/24/EU](#) on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.

## New European Commission Calls

The European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion published a new [call for proposals](#) to support the development of comprehensive active ageing strategies. The aim of this call is to provide financial support for Member State national public authorities willing to engage in the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies for active ageing. The deadline to submit your proposals is 30 September.

The European Commission also published a new [Call for tender n° EAHC/2013/Health/03](#) concerning training packages for health professionals to improve access and quality of health services for migrants and ethnic minorities, including the Roma, who may have different linguistic, cultural and health needs which are not always adequately met in the national health system and which may contribute to health inequalities. The deadline to submit tenders is the 27 September 2013.

## Call for tender on CPD

The call for tender the European Commission published in May 2013 on [Continuous Professional Development \(CPD\)](#) has been awarded to the health professionals led by [CPME](#). The EFN, who will map the CPD on nursing, welcomes this opportunity given to the sectoral professions to take ownership in the EU policy process.

## European Innovation Partnership on Active & Healthy Ageing: EU cities and regions awarded

32 cities and regions across Europe (namely from Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and the UK) have been [rewarded for new ways of helping older people](#). These award-winners have been implementing innovative technological, social or organisational solutions to enhance the efficiency of health and social care systems, and have been presented with awards from European Commission Vice-President Neelie Kroes, responsible for the Digital Agenda.

## New European Ombudsman

Meeting in Strasbourg beginning of July, the European Parliament elected a new European ombudsman, by 359 votes in favour and 276 against. Ms Emily O'Reilly, Ireland's National Ombudsman, is the first woman to hold this post, created in 1995. The EFN believes that such position is very important as Ombudsmen/women play a critical role and have an important impact at national & EU levels, specially taking into account the current challenges that all the EU Member States are facing. As nurses, we often take up this role of Ombudsman/woman in the healthcare settings due to our good understanding of the system to support and even empower patients to solve problems prior ending up in court. Ms. O'Reilly will take up her new post on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

## MEPs urge European Commission to take actions to set up a working 112 emergency call

150 MEPs have claimed that previous efforts have not been enough and requested the Commission for a detailed action plan on the 112 emergency call. The Parliamentarians argued that there is a non-implementation of resolution of Parliament of 5 July 2011 and Article 26 of Directive 2009/136/EC and major attention must go to: major awareness-raising campaigns, caller location information, key performance indicators and better accessibility for people with disabilities.

## Publications

### EU Joint Actions

The European Commission published a [booklet on EU Joint Actions](#) funded in 2008-2011, highlighting what a Joint Action is, their funding mechanisms, and a brief description of 20 Joint Actions, their results and impact on national health policies.

### Monitoring and Improving Quality in Long-term Care

The OECD and the European Commission DG Employment published a joint study entitled "[A Good Life in Old Age?](#)" focusing on elderly care and on the importance to develop metrics for measuring safe, effective and responsive long-term care services. It also looks at on-going country initiatives to improve the quality of life of elderly. According to the study the fastest-growing age group are people over 80 whose number will almost triple by 2060, rising from 4.6% of the population to 12% in 2050 in the European Union. It is estimated that up to half of them need help to cope with their daily activities. It also stressed that to meet future demands for higher-quality care and choice by the person receiving care, governments should ensure that the necessary information on long-term care quality is available to the public, and that major reforms are needed to improve the services provided to frail old people and protect them against sub-standard care.

### Review of Public Health Capacity in the EU

A new [report](#), containing the results of a study carried out under the EU Tender No. EAHC/2009/Health/05 launched by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers within Work Plan 2009 of the Second Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health 2008-2013, has been published. Providing an overview of capacity for public health in EU Member States, with a view to identifying areas of action that can be taken at national and EU levels to strengthen public health capacity, and ultimately to improve population health, the review has been performed in 2010 and 2011, thereby providing a snap-shot of the situation in the Member States at that moment.

### Fundamental Rights

The [European Agency for Fundamental Rights](#) published its annual report "[Fundamental rights: challenges and Achievements in 2012](#)" which covers key EU initiatives on fundamental rights, and reviews the achievements undertaken in the European Union and the challenges still remaining. This year the report focuses on the economic and social crisis affecting the European Union, and looks at the effect of budgetary restrictions on social services, education and healthcare for vulnerable groups, such as children. It, finally, acknowledges that the crisis has prompted discussions about the nature, scope and future of the EU, while reaffirming the principles at the EU's heart, including adherence to fundamental rights.

### EU occupational safety and health policy framework

Published by DG Employment, the EFN has contributed to the public [consultation](#) on the European Strategy on Safety and Health at Work 2007-2020. More than ever investing in the EU workforce is imperative if the EU is to take active and concrete initiatives to foster competitiveness and growth. The EU discussions are focusing on determining and ensuring the EU workforce has the right skills and competencies to match labour needs effectively. The EFN stresses in [its response](#) that only a healthy workforce that feels safe at the workplace is able to make this happen.

## Agenda

To view the upcoming meetings' dates, click [here](#).