

**EFN PRESS RELEASE**  
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**International Nurses' Day 2019**  
**Nurses: A Voice to Lead Health for All**



On Sunday, 12 May 2019, the birthdate of Florence Nightingale, nurses around the world will celebrate International Nurses Day (IND) with the theme [Nurses: A Voice to Lead Health for All](#). The EFN and all its members are recognising nurses' invaluable work and promoting the importance of universal access to healthcare as a fundamental right for all the EU citizens.

Ensuring the provision of safe and quality healthcare in the European Union relies on those healthcare professionals on the frontline supporting and informing the development of successful, fit-for-practice health policies. Nurses are the single largest and most trusted health professional group, delivering most of the healthcare across countries and settings, 24 hours/7 days in a roll, 365 days a year, from birth to death, in emergency and ongoing care, and their [real-world experience](#) and knowledge are a vital source to inform and support policy-making at all stages: local, regional, national, EU and global level, and to ensure effective, accessible and resilient health and social systems in Europe.

Nurses are in a unique position to act as autonomous practitioners (Directive 2013/55/EU), and it is therefore key to ensure nurses and nursing protect and promote the health of Europe's citizens, through the provision of safe and high-quality nursing care across settings, regions and countries. To keep on ensuring [universal health coverage](#) in the EU, health and social care ecosystems will need to be resilient to future innovations, making sure EU citizens' values and principles, such as solidarity, equity and participation, are driving the system. The [European Pillar on Social Rights](#), the [digital transformation](#) of healthcare, based on [Research & Innovation](#), should therefore embrace end-user co-design, supporting the three million EU nurses in their daily frontline committed work.

With the upcoming European Parliamentary [Elections](#), nurses' vote is crucial to elect those politicians who care for those who care. On the International Nurses' Day, the [EFN calls](#) on future elected MEPs to invest in nursing education at European and national level, and to ensure optimal working conditions and health workforce planning to deliver person-centred care and promote health in the EU. The benefits from investing in nurses and nursing are obvious to all those engaged in the healthcare system, both professionals and patients.

Nurses have a central and leading role in running the health and social care ecosystems, so it is time for the political and policy rhetoric to translate into concrete support and investment in nurses and nursing to ensure high quality, accessible, efficient and safe care for all.

**You probably know a nurse.**

**Congratulate her/him for all the hard and committed work frontline!**

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