



European Federation of Nurses
Associations

EFN UPDATE

April-May 2015

President Message



Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

Spring is just around the corner and new policies and exciting EU challenges are coming up. The last weeks the EFN met the European Commission on key political topics, especially with DG Connect to prepare nurses' contribution to the eHealth Week 2015 in Riga with a presentation on the EU project ENS4Care and nurses contribution to "mHealth modernising clinical pathways". On 19 March, DG SANTE organised the European Health Policy Forum, in which EFN advocated for a new governance body which will be a key milestone for civil society's leadership in driving EU policies. In a period where the European Commission is reshaping the way to involve EU stakeholders, the EU Health Programme should support stakeholders in designing EU public health policies. As a priority, modernising healthcare and educational systems becomes a priority to boost productivity, growth and EU citizens' access to services with the 5 sectoral professions (the Big 5) providing clear messages to the EU Institutions about their engagement in the development of EU policies, especially the EU future agendas on Quality of Care, EU Health Workforce and eHealth.

Regarding Ebola, the EFN questionnaire collected 1.800 responses that are in the process of being analysed. We really appreciate the time of professionals who submitted a response. As soon as the final results are available, we will discuss with DG SANTE, ECDC and the European Parliament on the future activities on preparedness within the EU.

Additionally, the EFN participated in the "peer reviews" of 'SmartCare' deployment sites in Spain, Finland, and Italy. EFN is part of the SmartCare User Advisory Board, whose task is to make sure that the interests and needs of all users (elderly, patients, informal carers, nurses, other healthcare and social professionals involved in care and ICT) are properly taken into account. Nurses are most of the time the case manager enabling the delivery of integrated care to older citizens to support them to live independent lives within the community through ICT tools necessary to integrated care pathways between social and health services.

Finally, our next EFN General Assembly is coming up in two weeks' time to advance the EFN lobby work while at the same time the 4th ENS4Care General Assembly takes place to finalise the ENS4Care guidelines on Prevention, Clinical Practice, Advanced Roles, Integrated Care and Nurse ePrescribing with the aim of implementing these in EU Member States. The project partners will therefore tackle the ENS4Care sustainability building on EFN coordination expertise of ENS4Care. Spring is bringing opportunities to submit Horizon 2020 proposals taking on board EFN expertise on integrated care and e-health services.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Brussels in April 2015.

Marianne Sipilä
EFN President

"Without appropriate resources and investments, and a sufficient number of highly qualified and competent workforce, there is not enough protective measures to guarantee safety. The EU has the legislative framework (2010/32/EU) since 2010 to provide clear, professional and legislative answers to protect workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work (2000/54/EC). Moreover, the workability of the ECDC tutorial on Personal and Protective Equipment (PPE) is key for nurses' security."

EFN Article "[Nurses Safety neglected when dealing with Ebola preparedness](#)", published in the [Diplomatic World Magazine](#), spring edition (March 2015).

News from EFN

The EFN Executive Committee meets in Brussels

Meeting on 27 February 2015 for its first meeting of the year, the EFN Executive Committee took this opportunity to discuss the key EFN current lobby activities and projects and prepare the next EFN General Assembly, to take place in Brussels on 16-17 April 2015. This was a good opportunity for the Executive Committee members to be briefed on the latest EFN developments on some key topics as the revision of Annexe V of the reviewed Directive 36 on the recognition of professional qualifications; the European Professional Card with the first pilots to be tested by the nurses and physiotherapists; Continuous Professional Development; EU nursing Workforce and the EFN matrix on nursing care; "Ebola" and the [EFN questionnaire](#) aiming at identifying the gaps on preparedness towards infection diseases of high consequences (IHDC, Ebola). The Executive Committee approved the [EFN Activity Report 2014](#) and prepared key recommendations for the EFN General Assembly to take informed decisions.

Czech Nurses Association Conference on Nurse Education

Invited as keynote speaker, the EFN General Secretary participated in the [meeting](#) organised by the [Czech Nurses Association](#), a member of EFN, on 16 March 2015, in Prague. The EFN General Secretary took this opportunity to highlight the need for all the nursing schools at EU level to ensure high quality care is delivered in Europe, by implementing appropriately the directive (2005/36/EC, amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and securing the nursing education for the best interest of EU citizens and patients. This can be done by using the EU social cohesion funds, as successfully done in Poland. In the Czech Republic there are 25 university schools and 17 Secondary schools. Both programs are similar but should merge to comply with the new DIR55 (competency based).

European Summit on Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing

Invited as speaker on "Are health and care professionals ready to meet tomorrow' health needs? Re-thinking skills mix and professional roles", the EFN participated in the [Summit](#) organised on 9-10 March 2015, in Brussels, that brought together more than 1.000 participants from all over Europe to discuss how Europe can use innovation to address the challenges and the opportunities of demographic change, and new ways of cooperation across sectors and organisations to innovate at European scale and help Europe turn this major challenge into an opportunity for jobs, growth and a better quality of life. The EFN took this opportunity to stress that the health systems should reform to achieve better patient outcomes. In that reform, health professionals and social workers will need to work in a different environment and need to develop different skills. Those relate to leadership and management, independent but collaborative practice, interprofessional communication, etc. There are advanced roles of nurses and social workers that are fitting these reforms and prove to be the way forward. The EFN presented therefore the [ENS4Care](#) project and its contribution in the promotion of these advanced roles and integrated care.

ESCO Reference Group "Healthcare and social work activities"

Being a member of the [European Skills and Competences, qualifications and Occupations \(ESCO\)](#), the EFN provided input to the Reference Group "Healthcare and social work activities". ESCO is now in a final stage of development of its platform with the health and social care reference groups agreeing on the final list of transversal skills for both sectors. As regards the addition to the qualifications that link to the occupations for the health and social care sectors, the only qualifications that will be linked will be the national ones that give access to the profession. As such, National databases of qualifications will be merged into ESCO platform. Finally, the group discussed on some healthcare categories that are not represented in the group, as the art therapists, occupational therapists, orthopaedist, and paramedics, for which it is really difficult to get information that is commonly agreed at EU level. Therefore, the group will use the available information from the literature and will update the database accordingly.

Patient Safety and Quality of Care

Member of the [EU Patient Safety and Quality of Care Expert Group](#), the EFN participated in the meeting held on 11 February 2015, in which key topics were discussed as: the draft work programme 2015 for the Group; the EU project on Patient Safety & Quality of Care (PaSQ) sustainability; EMA draft guidance on medication errors; WHO work on the Minimal Information Model for Patient Safety Reporting; and CPME Continuous Professional Development (CPD) study. It was made clear by the European Commission that it is important to invest in Patient Safety, namely in a European Innovation Partnership with key themes including “patient empowerment” and “selfcare”. The EFN also participated in [PaSQ 5th Coordination meeting](#) held in Brussels on 12-13 March 2015, where the main objectives and results of the project were presented, and the next steps discussed. Once again the European Commission took this opportunity to emphasise that there is the need invest in patient safety and as such to better coordinate it. The [Council conclusions on patient safety](#), adopted in December 2014, invite the Member States and the European Commission to work towards improving the patient safety culture and develop EU guidance for patient safety, since patients are at the heart of care and are a constant in the continuum of care.

SmartCare Users Advisory Board (UAB) deployment site visits

Being a member of [Smartcare](#) EU project, aiming at joining up ICT (Information and Communications Technologies) and service processes for quality integrated care in Europe, and of its User Advisory Board (UAB), the EFN has been taking part in the deployment site visits (“peer reviews”) organised to the project pilots implementing the SmartCare pathways in order to provide a qualitative evaluation of the sites from an end users perspective. The first visit that the UAB organised was to Barbastro (Spain) on 27-28 November 2014, followed by [South Karelia](#) (Finland) on 18 February, led by EFN, and [Friuli Venezia Giulia](#) (Italy) on 6 March 2015. These visits show that in these deployments nurses have a key role to play as main coordinators in the identification of patients in need of Smartcare and in coordinating the care needed. This innovation in Smartcare supports e-services but also shows the importance of human contact in care. Healthcare professionals confirm that since these pilots started, patients’ hospitalizations have reduced, and that patients feel safer and happier of being able to stay at home despite their conditions. Thus, this is quite a positive experience, with all stakeholders involved showing a great interest and commitment to SmartCare. The EFN is now looking forward for the next deployment site visits to take place in the coming months, namely in Denmark, Serbia, and Scotland.

News from the EU

Adoption of new programmes under the European Cohesion Policy

The European Commission adopted over 50 new programmes under the European Cohesion Policy in order to support the economic development and social cohesion in the European Union, for a budget of more than 66 billion euro. As such, [266 Cohesion Policy programmes](#), worth more than 256 billion euro, have now also been approved for the 2014-2020 budgetary period. These programmes represent a significant influence on people’s everyday life, since their objectives are to boost economic competitiveness, strengthen research and innovation, reduce unemployment, and fight social exclusion in Europe.

New expertise exchange initiative to better manage Regional Policy investments

The European Commission launched a new platform for public service officials to exchange expertise and best practice around Europe to improve how EU investments are spent and managed. By helping Member States strengthen administrative capacity, [TAIEX REGIO PEER 2 PEER](#) is part of a broader initiative to fully use the potential of Regional Policy to create jobs and ensure sustainable growth, in line with the goals set by the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#) and the EU’s new 315 billion euro Investment Plan. This is particularly relevant for countries with low absorption rates, such as Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Strategic framework on health and safety at work 2014-2020

Meeting on 9 March 2015, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) [adopted the conclusions](#) about the Commission’s [EU strategic framework on health and safety at work 2014-2020](#), which identifies key challenges and strategic objectives for health and safety at work and key actions and instruments to address them. As such, the Council confirms the need to improve the implementation of the existing occupational safety and health legislation; to prevent existing, new and emerging risks to health and safety at work; and to address the challenges posed by an ageing workforce and longer working careers.

Adapting to these challenges requires now actions by the EU Member States to further consolidate their national strategies in the light of the new Strategic Framework and to continue to implement occupational accident prevention policies and initiatives.

Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

The Commission adopted a [Communication](#) on the results of the public consultation on Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, held in 2014, to collect the views of the EU Stakeholders on the first year of the implementation of the strategy. The main results show that Europe 2020 is seen as a relevant overarching framework to promote jobs and growth at EU and national level, and that there is a need to improve the delivery of the strategy through enhanced ownership and involvement on the ground. Though, Europe 2020 objectives and priorities remain significant for current and future EU challenges and useful for policy action to promote jobs and growth at EU and national level. In line with the [Commission’s work programme for 2015](#), the Commission will present proposals for the review of the Europe 2020 strategy before the end of the year.

How digital is your country?

Digital Europe is one of the key priorities of Juncker’s Commission. Its objective is making one digital Europe of the European Union, the largest single market in the world, but still working as 28 fragmented silos, in terms of digital market. As such, the European Commission released a new tool - [Digital Economy and Society Index](#) - that shows how digital countries varies across the EU, how borders remain an obstacle to a fully-fledged Digital Single Market, and how much progress is needed towards the so-called ‘digital Europe’. Based on data from 2013 & 2014, this new tool also gives an overview of the countries’ connectivity, the Internet skills, the use of online activities from news to shopping, how key digital technologies and digital public services such as e-government and e-health are developed. The EFN will look closely into this tool and see how nurses can help in making Europe more ‘digital’.

The European Citizens’ Initiative to be reviewed

Launched three years ago with the introduction of the Lisbon Treaty, the [European Citizens’ Initiative](#) (ECI), which allows one million citizens to participate directly in the development of EU policies, by calling on the European Commission to make a legislative proposal, have struggled with a number of organisational and technical issues. So far only 3 initiatives have been approved by the European Commission, out of the 46 submitted, and none led to any meaningful action. As such, the European Parliament is preparing a review and subsequent reform of the European Citizens’ Initiative. The European Commission is drafting a report on the ECI implementation to be presented to the Council and the European Parliament in the coming weeks.

Publications

A Beginner’s Guide to EU Funding

In the context of the new budget (2014-2020), knowing that the EU has now simplified the rules for Europe’s businesses, towns, regions, scientists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to access it, the European Commission published a [guide](#) on how to apply for EU funding, with key details, examples and practical tips, including links to further detailed information about specific opportunities.

Unequal Europe: Recommendations for a more caring EU

Austerity and the economic crisis have seen ‘Social Europe’ pushed gradually down the EU’s policy agenda. Taking that into account Friends of Europe brought together a high-level group of key experts to assess the strengths and weaknesses of social policies that have been fundamental to the creation of the EU. The results and key recommendations of this experts’ group are now available in a new report [“Unequal Europe: Recommendations for a more caring EU”](#), published by [Friends of Europe](#), which sets out a range of concrete recommendations for the EU Institutions to reaffirm Europe’s social principles and address competitiveness goals. It also calls on the new EU Commission to take a broader approach to social investment, essential to avoid long-term burdens on economic growth, as well as in the education and training that can ensure equality of opportunity. Overall their key message is clear: “Human investment must be given equal priority with investment in infrastructure, innovation and all other areas viewed as vital to boosting Europe’s competitiveness”.

Agenda

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

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