



European Federation of Nurses
Associations

EFN UPDATE

January-February-March 2020

President's Message



Dear EFN Members and colleagues,

It is with pleasure that I confirm I will soon see you all at the EFN's 111th General Assembly, taking place on 16 and 17 April 2020 in Brussels, Belgium - home of the EFN office and the EU institutions. As usual, I am certain that we will make good use of this important governance

gathering to discuss the ongoing challenges of the nursing profession and the solutions that will ensure nursing is recognised and valued for the positive contribution to the health of our European citizens.

During the last few months, the newly elected European Commission and European Parliament have restarted their activities. This poses a great responsibility upon all of us to collectively agree on how to strategically influence and lobby the EU institutions to the benefit of the nursing profession and the populations they serve. Although we have long standing issues that need to be addressed, it is important to focus on the vision for the future to ensure nursing remains visible and relevant to policy makers. There are enormous opportunities with many new topics arising on the EU agenda. The digitalisation of healthcare, artificial intelligence, climate change, and many more, are at the centre of the institutional debate. It is key that the nurses are part of these debates, proactively identifying and shaping the solution, providing stakeholders with innovative ideas to address our complex daily reality.

With our strong collective mandate from all EFN Members, our colleagues in Brussels have been working tirelessly to engage with the new EU Commission officials and the members of the European Parliament. The EFN team, on our behalf, effectively attend key strategic events and sessions to articulate our united voice, building partnerships and alliances, while advocating for patient safety and quality of care for the end-users.

The co-creation approach with those that use the health services is key for the future EU developments and deployment of EU legislation into a national policy context. As such, the EFN position is pivotal to delivering on the three EU projects it is involved in: [Smart4Health](#) and [InteropEHRate](#) (both projects developing European cross-border and interoperable Electronic Health Records - See Council [conclusions](#)) and [QualMent](#) (a project addressing the mentorship competencies in line with Directive 2013/55/EU).

Finally, it has been a privilege and honour to work with you all over the last year. Our strength is our solidarity and together we make a significant difference, with 2020 being the Year of the Nurse.

With every good wish for the season and peace and happiness for the New Year.

Elizabeth Adams
EFN President

"Various surveys and debates across Europe prove us that health ranks among the top priorities of European citizens. I am particularly glad that health promotion and disease prevention are finally getting the attention they need."

Outgoing EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis. The full press release is available [here](#).

News from EFN

Croatian EU Presidency

From January 2020 and for 6 months, [Croatia](#) will take over the rotatory [Presidency](#) of the [Council of the EU](#). Their focus will be on a "Europe that develops, Europe that connects, Europe that protects and Europe that is influential". Croatia is a member of the "[Friends of Cohesion](#)" group, which aims at preserving the percentage of the budget allocated to cohesion, and to maintain the member states' participation in projects financed by [cohesion funds](#). The minimum co-financing rate is currently 15% but some member states are discussing its increase to 30%. More information on the upcoming Croatian presidency is available [here](#).

New college of European Commissioners elected

As of 1 December 2019, the [European Commission](#) started its activities again under the political leadership of a newly elected [College of Commissioners](#), and the European Commission President [Ursula von der Leyen](#). The new European Commission has 6 [political priorities](#): 1) A European Green Deal, 2) An economy that works for people, 3) A Europe fit for the digital age, 4) Promoting our European way of life, 5) A stronger Europe in the world and 6) A new push for European democracy. The EFN, which is a stronger believer of the "Health in All Policies" approach, will continue seeking to influence the EU institutions to make sure that "health" is a cross-sectoral item across all six priorities. As such, the EFN has published an [open letter](#) to the newly elected European Commissioners, in which it raising the importance to work together to make a difference for the nursing profession.

Stella Kyriakides new Commissioner for Health

The Cypriot Stella Kyriakides has been designated as the new Commissioner for Health and Food Safety (DG Sante), succeeding to Vytenis Andriukaitis (Lithuania). A politician and a psychologist by training, she will be in charge of moving forward the health agenda of the EU for the period 2019-2024. The European Commission has published online her [Mission letter](#) as well as her [CV](#). In this scope, the EFN has published an [open letter](#) to her, highlighting the major problems of the nursing profession that she should include and address in her political agenda - among others, the shortages of nurses, the transposition of [Directive 2013/55/EU](#), and the digitalisation of healthcare.

Nursing Now Europe

The EFN, as the [Nursing Now European regional leader](#), has been promoting the campaign at the EU level taking the opportunity of all the different meetings the EFN has been attending and/or organised to communicate on the developments made. The EFN also relies on a database of more than 3.000 key contacts to disseminate all relevant information and on the Nursing Now Europe activities, aiming to raise the role of nurses and the nursing profession.



News from the EU

EU Ministers adopt Council Conclusions on key issues for nurses

The EU Ministers have been in the Council of the EU last November and December 2019 on several occasions. They have adopted three conclusions which are of utmost importance for the nursing profession on [the way forward on gender-equal economies in the EU](#), as part of the review of the implementation of the [UN agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment](#) by the EU and its member states; [building a sustainable Europe by 2030](#), stressing the need to accelerate action

both within the EU and in other parts of the world in order to fulfil the vision and goals of the [2030 Agenda](#); and on a Commission [new EU strategic framework on health and safety \(OSH\) at work](#) for 2021-2027, inviting the Commission, the member states and social partners to intensify their efforts in the area of the changing world of work, including on psychological risks, work-related accidents and diseases and the inclusion of disabled and older workers.

EU Action on Antimicrobial Resistance

Representing one of the most current and growing public health problem across many countries worldwide, [Antimicrobial Resistance \(AMR\)](#) is a professional and political challenge that requires the engagement and leadership of frontline nurses. The European Commission estimates that AMR is responsible for about 33.000 deaths per year in the EU, and EUR 1.5 billion per year in healthcare costs and productivity losses. In 2017, the European Commission adopted the [EU One Health Action Plan against AMR](#), and the first deliverables of the plan, such as the [EU Guidelines on the prudent use of antimicrobials in human health](#) (aiming to reduce inappropriate use and promote prudent use of antimicrobials in people), in which they target all actors who are responsible for or play a role in antimicrobial use. As one of the most influential actors to [combat AMR frontline](#), nurses are continuously active in advancing their commitment to tackling AMR. It is crucial to make clear that accelerating progress to manage antibiotics better can only be done by involving and engaging frontline, bedside health professionals and supporting them with concrete actions.

Measles continues to be a threat in EU/EEA countries

The [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#) is [warning](#) health authorities that measles (a vaccineable-preventable disease) reported cases in the past three years, has been exceptionally high. This is happening due to the insufficient vaccination coverage, in both adults and children, which fuels the circulation of the disease. This includes large outbreaks ongoing in countries at which the [disease](#) had previously been eliminated or endemic transmission interrupted.

Ebola can now be detected in 15 minutes

The [Innovative Medicines Initiative \(IMI\)](#), an EU public-private partnership funding health research and innovation, has financed the [FILODIAG project](#), which has created an ultra-fast molecular test that can detect Ebola in a blood sample in a fraction of the time it typically takes in the lab (about 15 minutes). The technology is based on pulse-controlled amplification and a specific set of reagents. This project took part within the IMI's [Ebola+ programme](#). A video on the IMI Ebola+ programme is available [here](#).

Emily O'Reilly re-elected European Ombudsman

On 18 December 2019, Emily O'Reilly (Ireland) was [re-elected](#) European Ombudsman, with 320 out of 600 votes cast in the European Parliament, giving her a new five-year mandate (2019-2024). The [European Ombudsman](#) conducts inquiries into cases of maladministration by EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, acting on their own initiative or on the basis of complaints from EU citizens.

Publications

State of Health in the EU – Companion Report 2019



The European Commission published its [State of Health report 2019](#), that describes the profile of health systems in 30 countries, issued with the [Companion Report](#) that shows some of the biggest trends in the transformation of the healthcare systems and draws key conclusions from the Profiles. The five key conclusions for 2019 to 1) how to tackle low vaccine confidence, 2) the digital transformation of health promotion and disease prevention, 3) strengthening the evidence base in access to healthcare, 4) task-shifting and skill mix and 5) breaking down medicinal silos.

Options to foster health promoting health systems

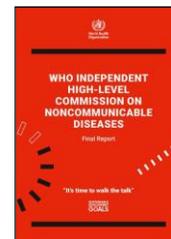
The [Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in Health](#) (funded by the European Commission, who gives them mandate to draft an opinion on a certain topic) has published its "[Options to foster health promoting health systems](#)", aiming to strengthening health promoting health services, especially within primary care, to have sustainable financing for health promotion, and implementing a 'health in all policies' approach. Health promotion has a critical role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of current and future generations of EU citizens, moving the focus from individuals at risk of developing illness to systems and environments that shape the development of good health at a population level. As such, it is an essential component of modern health systems. The full report is accessible [here](#).

OECD Health at a Glance 2019

The most recent comparable data on the [health status](#) of populations and health system performance across OECD countries is now available. It highlights how countries differ in terms of the health status and health-seeking behaviour of their citizens; access to and quality of health care; and the resources available for health.

"Time to Deliver" - Report of the WHO Independent High-Level Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases

The [WHO Independent High-Level Commission on Non-Communicable Diseases](#) latest report "It's time to walk the talk" highlights the vital role of nurses and says nurses will need to be empowered to take on new roles and responsibilities through 'enabling legislation, effective policies, accessible, affordable and high-quality education, commitment from employers, supportive funding models, leadership and the collection and analysis of data and information'. The full report is accessible [here](#), in several languages.



Policy toolkit for better health, an improved environment and greater equity

The [Horizon2020](#)-funded project [INHERIT](#) has published a [policy toolkit](#) containing three tools, ten recommendations, and an annex. These aim at modifying the way we live, move and consume to respect planetary boundaries and address the climate crisis, all while promoting measures to invest in health and others.

Agenda

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

The EFN Team shares with you all our best wishes for Happy Holidays and a magnificent New Year 2020 - the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife!



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