



European Federation of Nurses  
Associations

# EFN UPDATE

## September-October 2015

### President Message



Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

I hope you had a lovely summer break and that you are now full of energy to face the upcoming intense working months.

For the EFN, ready for action to ensure political decision making takes into account the views of the nurses' for a better, safer, and more equitable health service in Europe, the main focus will go to lobbying the Luxembourg Presidency on two key topics: Ebola, with the presentation of the EFN Report highlighting the results of its survey on Ebola, during a summit being held in Luxembourg in October 2015; and Dementia, with the launch of a joint position paper developed together with other EU Health Stakeholders members of the Health Policy Forum.

Also, next to participating in key meetings on the its priorities (Education, Workforce, Patient Safety & Quality of Care), the EFN will be preparing the final conference of its EU project ENS4Care, to be held in December, and working for the project sustainability and the progress on the possible deployment in daily practice of several of the five guidelines developed on Prevention, Clinical Practice, Advanced Roles, Integrated Care, and ePrescribing. The EFN is also involved in the organisation of an EFN-COCIR high level dinner on Women in integrated care, to take place in November in the context of the COCIR eHealth Summit. The closed dinner will focus on the role of women in Integrated Care and will provide a good opportunity to articulate the role of nurses and social workers in ICT enabled Integrated Care, with a special focus on the gender component, and to have more nurses in high leadership positions in health and social care.

The EFN political agenda provides guidance for innovation, leading to change in the way nurses are educated and trained to be fit for practice (DIR55), working in daily practice and being supported (Workforce Action Plan), and delivering high quality and safe services within a multi-disciplinary team (Quality & Safety).

Finally, I hope to see all the EFN Members in London on 22-23 October for our autumn EFN General Assembly, where we will discuss key political issues for nurses and the nursing profession.

I look forward to seeing you all in London.

Marianne Sipilä  
EFN President

*"The competences included in Directive 2005/36/EC, amended by Directive 2013/55/EU, are part of the minimum educational requirements for nurses responsible for general care. Interesting to highlight are the opportunities that these competences bring in for the nursing profession to develop a solid foundation for general care nurse education. It is clear that the nursing profession in the EU has become legally and professionally strengthened."*

EFN Article "[Nursing Legislation and Curricula in compliance with Article 31 of Directive 2005/36/EC, amended by Directive 2013/55/EU](#)", published in the [Diplomatic World Magazine](#), summer edition (June 2015).

### News from EFN

#### Seminar on Recognition of Qualifications

Organised on 30 June, the seminar aimed to evaluate different existing EU initiatives on professional and academic recognition, see how they interact, and address both existing obstacles and potential synergies in the context of the future European skills initiative agenda (expected beginning 2016). The debate showed that the European Commission is trying to join forces within the different DGs to better collaborate on the recognition of qualifications (at academic and professional levels) and on professionals' mobility, particularly from third countries. Within the context of the Directive 36-55 the possibility of developing common training frameworks was highlighted as a good way forward to facilitate the recognition of qualifications within the general system, and the importance of implementing the requirements of the Directive. Participants also stressed the need for guidance, as the [EFN Competency Framework](#), seen by the European Commission as a good document that they would continue promoting for a successful implementation of the Directive requirements.

Interestingly, a recent petition to the European Parliament highlighted the case of a Croatian nurse wishing to practise in Ireland confronted with internal discords between the Competent Authority and the Ministry of health regarding the recognition of her professional qualification. Trained at vocational secondary level prior to Croatia's accession to the EU, they were unable to get the Competent Authority to establish that her qualifications were complying with Art. 33 (1) of Directive 36. At the same time, the European Commission published a [new report](#) on transitional arrangements on free movement for Croatian workers, concluding that future potential flows of Croatian workers to other EU Member States are likely to be small and unlikely to lead to labour market disturbances. The report also recalls that after previous enlargements mobile EU workers have brought needed skills to the host labour markets and helped fill local labour shortages. But, a lot still needs to be done to improve implementation in the daily practice.

#### Health Workforce Expert Group

As a member of the [Health Workforce Expert Group](#), the EFN participated in the [meeting](#) held on 15 June 2015, in Brussels, where members were informed on the progress made and the steps forward; exchanged information on the results of the survey to continue working on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for health professionals; discussed the Commission-funded study to map effective retention & recruitment strategies; and the sustainability of the Joint Action on health workforce planning and forecasting. With all the activities coming to an end by next year, the European Commission is looking at proposals and priorities to continue the collaboration of the Health Workforce at EU level, with the willingness from the group to continue cooperating in the area of CPD and patient safety. Meeting in October 2015, the EFN General Assembly will analyse the EU Workforce strategy and provide proposals on ways forward and priorities to continue the collaboration on Health Workforce at EU level - Opening to design policy priorities on Health Workforce.

#### Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting

Being an associated partner of the [Joint Action](#) and a member of WP4, the EFN participated in the WP4 Workshop "Filling the gaps - Planning purposes come first" organised in Budapest in June 2015. Miklos Szocska, former Hungarian State Secretary for Health highlighted the complexity of health workforce governance and the need to define the relationship between technology and health care professionals, as there is no global strategic coordination. Eszter Kovacs, WP4 Activity leader highlighted the data gaps analysis and identification of causes for Member States not having/collecting/using certain data sets undertaken in WP4. In this process, the minimum planning data requirements to conduct Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting was identified: while for the profession, age and headcount is available, the least available data relates to migration outflow. Countries were clustered into groups with systematic and non-systematic health workforce planning. Taking that into account, it was emphasised the need for data management, collection and reporting in health workforce planning. The EFN is very concerned about the different deliverables of the Joint Action which are extremely academic, with not enough focus on what can be done today to improve the daily practice of the health workforce tomorrow. While the challenges of the workforce are becoming worse, EU recommendations become more theoretical.

### Patient Safety and Quality of Care Expert Group

Being a member of the group, the EFN participated in the [Expert Group](#) meeting that took place in Brussels, on 8 June 2015. The group was briefed on the latest activities of the group and on some key EU projects (European validation of the Minimal Information Model for Patient Safety Incident Reporting and Learning (WHO), the promotion of self-care systems in the European Union (CBO), International Research on Financing Quality in Healthcare (Medical University in Warsaw)), and discussed the next steps in the field of Patient Safety and Quality of Care, including Continuous Professional Development. The EU Member States defended the engagement with EU Stakeholders in EU initiatives with the rationale that EU and National Governments decisions need to reflect what goes on into the field. Consequently, the European Commission is redrafting the new governance structure on Quality of care and Patient safety. However, next to that process, it is key to focus on content, deliverables which enable the fieldworkers to do their job better: delivering high quality and safe care!

### 5<sup>th</sup> European Biosafety Summit

Hosted by MEP Glenis Willmott, the [European Biosafety Network](#) organised its [annual Summit](#) in the European Parliament, in June 2015. The meeting brought together key EU decision makers and stakeholders to discuss how the Directive on prevention of sharps injuries in the hospital and health care sector ([2010/32/EU](#)) can be better implemented in all the EU Member States, and identify gaps for further improvement, also in sectors outside the hospital environment. The health Stakeholders believe that the Directive should not be re-opened with the risk of losing all efforts done. A Joint Declaration with the Social Partners is therefore an important signal to keep the protection of the health workforce high on the political agenda. Participating in the event, the EFN General Secretary highlighted that “quite recent data on the implementation of the Directive shows that education and training, risk assessment and engagement of frontline staff in policy design stays a huge challenge. It is therefore important for the Commission to measure legislative compliance and impact at the workplace”.

### mHealth stakeholder meeting

Following the publication of the [Green Paper](#) on mobile health, the results of the [public consultation](#) and discussions in Riga during the [eHealth Week](#) in May 2015, the European Commission decided to engage with the EU stakeholders to work on the follow-up actions on privacy and security, safety and transparency and web entrepreneurs' access to the market. Building on these first discussions, the [group met on 6 July](#) and discussed the need to ensure quality and reliability of health and wellbeing apps, as well as data protection and a Code of Conduct for mobile health apps. A common concern is the lack of clarity between what stands as a medical device and as an application. A good way forward is the development of guidelines that can work in collaboration with common methodologies for assessment, mutual recognition, and common platforms for apps. Being a key stakeholder in mHealth discussions the EFN took this opportunity to present its EU project ENS4Care and respective guideline on Prevention - HeartAge App, highlighting how good collaboration among different stakeholders representing patients, professionals, industry and competent authorities can bring certainty about the use of applications. The European Commission underlined the key role of professional organisations in promoting certain apps, and the need to have the right skills to determine whether an application can or cannot be of positive use.

## News from the EU

### Recruitment and Retention

The European Commission published a [report](#) that recognises recruitment and retention of health workers as an immediate and urgent problem to be addressed by policy-makers, healthcare managers and healthcare workers, and analyses effective strategies for recruiting and retaining health professionals to serve as inspiration for the development of organisational strategies and human resources policies in Europe. Being a [key topic](#) for the nurses and the nursing profession, and taking into account the current situation of massive recruitment of nurses by some EU countries, the EFN has developed a new position paper on the topic that will be approved by its autumn General Assembly, in October 2015. It is time to put recommendations into practice!

### European Professional Card

The final adopted version of the Implementing Regulation for the [European professional card](#) (EPC) and alert mechanism (Directive 2005/36/EC, amended by Directive 2013/55/EU) has been [published](#) in the Official Journal of the European Union. Aiming to facilitate the free movement of professionals in the EU by simplifying the recognition of professional qualifications, enhancing transparency for EU citizens and increasing trust among competent authorities across the EU, the EPC will be available for nurses responsible for general care, pharmacists, physiotherapists, mountain guides and real estate agents by January 2016.

### Evaluative study on the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive

The European Commission DG SANTE published a [new report](#) evaluating the implementation of the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive ([2011/24/EU](#)), taking into account the deadline of 25 October 2013 to transpose it into national legislation. Carried out in the 28 EU Member States, the aim of the study was to gather reliable and comparable data on three main areas: Reimbursement of cross-border healthcare; Quality and safety of cross-border healthcare; and Undue delay. The study report shows that cross-border healthcare is moving at a fast pace with yet still a great potential to grow.

Also, a new EP Interest Group on “European Patients' Rights and Cross-border Healthcare” has been put in place. With the Secretariat led by the [Representative office to the EU of Active Citizenship Network](#), the idea to encourage a MEPs informal Interest Group focused on patients' rights is linked to the widespread request of more than [100 civic and patient organizations](#) sent to the EU Parliament to recognize officially the value of citizens' initiatives, as the [European Charter of Patients' Rights](#) and the [European Patients' Rights Day](#). The MEPs supporting this initiative believe that the new European Parliament has the opportunity to play an active role in improving the protection of patients' rights in the European framework.

### Luxembourg EU Presidency

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 Luxembourg took over the EU Presidency from Latvia, concluding the Italian-Latvian-Luxembourg Trio. One of the Luxembourg [priorities](#) will be the social dimension of European policies with a special focus on investment in human capital. Particular attention will be paid to gender equality, including a balanced representation of women and men in political and economic decision-making as factors of competitiveness. In terms of health, the Luxembourg Presidency will focus on ‘patients and innovation’, with a view of implementing a strong regulatory framework providing citizens with quick access to safe and high-quality care, and will initiate a process of reflection on improved access to personalised medicine and focus on better dementia care, which poses a serious challenge to the EU healthcare systems. In this context, the EFN together with other EU Health Stakeholders members of the Health Policy Forum developed a joint paper on dementia calling for greater recognition and involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the development and deployment of dementia strategies and policies at EU and local levels. This topic is becoming a key priority for the EFN. Another key health issue during the Luxembourg Presidency will be ‘Ebola’, with a Summit to be held in Luxembourg on 12-14 October 2015, where the impact of the Ebola outbreak on health security will be analysed. Being a key issue for the nurses and the nursing profession, as fieldworkers, and having participated in the key meetings organised by DG Sanco in the last months, the EFN will be present in this important event, together with other EFN members, to provide [nurses' views and expertise](#) on the topic. The EFN will also take this opportunity to share the results of the Ebola survey undertaken by the EFN in the first half of the year, and to identify clear lines for action that DG Santé could take forward to improve the situation and preparedness at EU and national level. The EFN is pleased with the work of DG Santé in this field and will support them to bring the reality of the health workforce closer to the design of future policies.

## Publications

### ENS4Care guidelines

The EU thematic network coordinated by the EFN has finalised five [guidelines](#) on eHealth for nurses and social workers in the following areas: Prevention, Clinical Practice, Advanced Roles, Integrated Care and nurse ePrescribing.

### Pain Management in Nursing Practice

Being an important guide to managing pain in nursing practice, focusing on the biology of pain, pain management across the life course, and key topics as acute pain, cancer pain and pharmacology, Shelagh Wright's [book](#) also highlights the importance of the [European Charter of Patients' Rights](#), which stresses the patients' right to avoid unnecessary suffering and pain, and summarizes the main aspects of the [Civic Survey](#) on the Respect of Unnecessary Pain: Patients' Rights in Europe carried out by Active Citizenship Network and Pain Alliance Europe at EU level in 2013.

## Agenda

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

BOOK IN YOUR AGENDAS [EFN EVENT IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ON 8 DECEMBER 2015 FROM 15.00 TO 17.00](#).

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