



European Federation of Nurses
Associations

EFN UPDATE

March-April 2013

President's message



Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

After a long and hard lobby process for the EFN, highly supported by the EFN members, we are finally arriving to an end with the debate on the modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC (the so-called Directive 36). On 23 January the European Parliament Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) Committee has reached solid compromises on the most crucial topics for the nurses, as: training of nurses responsible for general care (Article 31) - 3 years AND 4.600 hours; partial access; and Continuous Professional Development. The EFN and its members are satisfied with the outcome of this vote, but continue keeping the pressure with the key policy makers (namely the Council of the European Union) to make sure that nurses concerns are taken into account in the final decision that should be taken before the end of the Irish Presidency (30 June 2013), with a 1st/single reading expected to be on 22 May 2013.

I look forward for the EFN General Assembly, to be held in Brussels on 11-12 April 2013, where the EFN members will have the opportunity to share their concerns, views and expertise on Directive 36 with the European Commission DG Internal Market - Jurgen Tiedje, Bernadette Vergnaud & a Council of the European Union representative. Also, next to key topics, such as: the EFN strategic Plan 2014-2020, EU e-Health Action Plan 2014-2020, and Nursing Research, the EFN members will also be briefed in the several key projects EFN is engaged in 2013: the Joint Action on Patient Safety and Quality of Care - which started in 2012 and will run until 2015; and the Joint Action on EU Workforce Planning & Forecasting - to be launched in the coming weeks, and Smartcare, which kicks off beginning March.

Another important topic for the EFN and its members is the on-going economic and financial crisis in the EU. Health is an important part of public budgets representing almost a third of social policy budgets in most countries. Evidence shows that the relationship between healthcare expenditure and health outcomes is not linear and that it is not only how much money is spent, but also how it is spent, that determines a country's health status. Therefore, EFN welcomes the European Commission social investment package for growth and cohesion, aiming to help the EU Member States to better use the European Social Fund. It is important to keep in mind that we all have a role to play at national and European level to make the change happen.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Brussels

Unni Hembre
EFN President

"The world economy, facing the most critical financial crisis since the 1930's, must deal with recession, severe unemployment, and general fears of worse to come, which, in turn, spawn a range of physical, psychological, and spiritual problems. The backlash of the global 'financial tsunami' will also have an impact on the demand for health care."

Extract from the article 'The impact of the financial crisis on nurses and nursing', published by the Journal of Advanced Nursing (Volume 69, Issue 3 - Pages 497 - 743, March 2013).

News from EFN

EFN Executive Committee meeting

The EFN Executive Committee members met on 17 January 2013, in Brussels for their first meeting of the year. As part of the agenda European Commission representatives from DG Internal Market and DG Connect were invited to brief the Executive Committee members on: the [Directive 36](#) state of compromises within the three EU Institutions (Council, Parliament and Commission); and on the new [Action Plan on eHealth 2012-2020](#). With such up to date information provided, the Executive Committee could take informed decisions on the steps forward on each issue, and start preparing recommendations for the following EFN General Assembly. The Executive Committee was then briefed on the state of art of the EU Skills Council for Nursing and Social Care and expressed their strong disappointment that the second phase was not supported anymore due to 'not being the right time'. The Executive Committee agreed that it is important to keep the pressure on skills design and to know who is going to do what in the future at different levels. Finally, the Executive Committee took note of the EFN yearly accounts 2012, approved the EFN [Activity Report 2012](#) which highlights the areas of EFN achievements, influence, involvement and visibility in the European policy-making arena in 2012, and discussed on the new draft EFN Strategic & Operational Lobby Plan 2014-2020, and the different key points to be focused on in the coming years, as the current one (2009-2013) is arriving to an end.

Modernisation of the professional qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC)

On 23 January 2013, the European Parliament Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) Committee has positively voted on [Bernadette Vergnaud's report](#) on the modernisation of the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive, which represents a high consolidated position of members of the European Parliament that will enhance and foster a confident application of the Single Market. Still to be voted in plenary, the IMCO Committee has reached solid [compromises](#) on the most crucial topics for the nurses, such as: Article 31 - training of nurses responsible for general care - which embraces existing systems of nurse education, reinforces the number of years (3 years) AND hours (4.600 hours) for nurse training, keeps the right balance of theory (1/3) and practice (1/2) and allows delegated acts to further update the Annexe V; partial access; language requirements; common training frameworks; alert mechanism; and Continuous Professional Development. The 1st/single reading is expected to be on 22 May 2013, under the Irish Presidency, which is aiming to close this file before the end of its term (30 June 2013). After a hard lobby process next to the EU Institutions, we can say that this has been an exciting challenge and process until the end for the EFN, as we have been negotiating with the MEPs until the very last minute to get nurses concerns taken into account in this voted compromised document.

EU Joint Action on Patient Safety and Quality of Care

As member of the European Union Network for Patient Safety and Quality of Care, [PaSQ Joint Action](#) (co-funded and supported by the European Commission within the Public Health Programme) the EFN participated in the 2nd PaSQ Coordination meeting held in Berlin, on 14-15 January 2013. The partners of the project were updated on the state of play of all the WPs, and the activities ahead. National networks events, online seminars, twinning programs and workshops, starting as for July 2013 will be organised to allow the exchange of information on safe clinical and good organizational practices. Taking into account the EFN priority in this project - Identifying best practices and site visits - the EFN members are encouraged to liaise with their [National Contact Points](#) involved in PaSQ and negotiate their engagement in the site visits. The next Coordination meeting will take place in France, in October 2013. As a follow-up of this Coordination meeting, the European Patients' Forum (EPF) organised, on 15 February, a meeting to update the partners on the WPs 4 and 6 data collection on safe clinical and good organisational practices last developments.

Chain of Trust Final Conference

The [Chain of Trust](#) 2 years EU project, funded by the Public Health Programme (in which the EFN was a partner along with [EPF](#), [SUSTENTO](#), [NST](#), [CPME](#) and [PGEU](#)) came officially to an end on 24 January, in Brussels, with the organisation of a multi-stakeholder conference aiming to share with the participants the [main outcomes and recommendations](#) from the project. These were welcomed by Antonyia Parvanova – Member of the European Parliament; Peter Zilgalvis - Head of the Health and Well Being Unit of the European Commission DG CONNECT; and Luc Nicolas from the Belgian Federal Public Service Public Health. The project demonstrated the complex nature of trust, and found essential elements in creating confidence and the need to embrace end-users' needs into the whole process, as well as their necessary involvement from the conception phases. The EFN members from Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the students (ENSA) were also representing the nurses' voice in the meeting.

E-health Stakeholder Group

As member of the [eHealth Stakeholders Group](#), the EFN participated in the meeting held on 21 January. The participants were informed and exchanged views on the [eHealth action plan](#) (including the future Green Paper on mHealth), patient access to health records, interoperability, inequalities, skills, eHealth Governance Initiative, and the eHealth Week. The discussions also raised the medical devices and data protection territory, i.e. where do "apps" end and medical devices begin, what will be the relevant data protection provisions when the proposed Regulation becomes effective, etc. DG SANCO will reactivate its subgroup on medical software (first meeting in April). The next E-health Stakeholder Group meeting is taking place on 15 May 2013, during the eHealth week in Dublin.

TechnoAGE Final Conference

The EFN was invited to participate in the [TechnoAGE](#) one year EU project Final Conference, held in Brussels on 14 February 2013. The conference presented the [results](#) of the Study on "business and financing models related to ICT for ageing well" (a project commissioned by [DG CONNECT](#)), based on 20 case studies. Taking into account the key results of this analysis, it is clear that the public and the private sectors, policy-makers, and commercial actors can successfully work together to overcome the barriers identified (e.g.: the lack of European-wide standards and the absence of clear funding and reimbursement models). Ageing is a clear societal challenge. Therefore, it is crucial to recognise that it also offers many opportunities for new ICT products and services, which can in turn help to work towards resolving the issue.

News from the EU

Investment in Health set as a priority in the Social Investment Package

Calling on the EU Member States to prioritise social investment and to modernise their welfare states, the European Commission adopted its [Social Investment Package for growth and cohesion](#), an initiative that aims to help the EU Member States to better use the EU financial support, notably from the [European Social Fund](#), to implement the outlined objectives. Investing in Health is a key component of the Package. It follows on from the [2013 Annual Growth Survey](#), which recognizes the contribution of health for a job-rich recovery, and establishes the role of health as integral to the [Europe 2020 strategy](#). It also strengthens the link between EU health policies and national health system reforms and presents the case for: Smart investments for sustainable health systems; Investing in people's health; Investing in reducing inequalities in health.

European Community Health Indicators - Updated

The [European Health indicators](#) - being sets of data (tables, graphs, maps) on health status, determinants and care in EU member countries - have been updated. Please find [here](#) the list of the 88 identified health indicators (some of which are already implemented), including data on nurses.

Cross-border healthcare - National Contact Points

The European Commission has adopted an important new proposal for a [Directive on patient's rights in cross border healthcare](#) (Directive 2011/24/EU), to be implemented into national law by 25 October 2013, and which seeks to clarify how patients can exercise their rights to healthcare in other EU Member States. Also important is the responsibility for Member States to provide information to patients, by establishing National Contact Points within each Member State. Taking this into account, a [Feasibility Study](#) was undertaken, with the aim to develop recommendations to be used by the European Commission and the EU Member States to work together to implement the National Contact Points and make information on cross-border healthcare broadly available.

European Skills Passport

The [European Skills Passport](#), which helps people to bring together their skills and qualifications online, has been launched by the European Commission. Available for free in 26 languages it complements the Europass CV used by more than 20 million Europeans. The European Skills Passport is one of thirteen actions launched under the Commission's [Agenda for New Skills and Jobs](#), which aims to make Europe's labour markets work better.

More women in ICT jobs

Information Technologies are everywhere. Some 7 million people work in the European digital sector, which creates around 120,000 new jobs every year. But [women comprise only 30%](#) of the workforce and many of them in junior roles. Therefore, the European Commission is planning to publish a survey (by June 2013) to explain why Europe's information and communication technology (ICT) sector has too few women despite a projected deficit of 700,000 skilled workers by 2015, and will take this opportunity to try to reverse this trend, as well as to encourage young people, [particularly women](#), to take up an ICT-related career. The ["Girls in ICT Day 2013"](#) will be organised by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the ITU, on 25 April 2013, Brussels.

"The European Parliament: Why should I care?"

The [European Policy Centre](#), a Brussels based not-for-profit think tank, is calling young citizens from the EU Member States (including Croatia) [to express themselves in an innovative and convincing manner](#) on why the European Parliament is important to them, and why there is a need to vote in the next European Parliament elections (May 2014). Applicants can write, sing, paint, dance, film or use any other creative means to provide their opinions on this issue. Deadline: 28 March 2013. Twenty winning participants will be awarded a trip to Brussels, where they will present their successful entries, learn more about the EU institutions, and exchange ideas with EU decision makers and like-minded young Europeans.

European Citizens' Initiative on Unconditional Basic Income

Citizens from 15 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and United Kingdom) [presented a citizens' initiative](#) asking the European Commission, which has approved it on 14 January 2013, to encourage cooperation between the Member States to explore the 'Unconditional Basic Income (UBI)' as a tool to improve their respective social security systems. In the long run the objective of this initiative is to offer to each EU citizen the unconditional right as an individual, to having his/her material needs met to ensure a life of dignity as stated by the EU treaties, and to empower participation in society supported by the introduction of the UBI. In the short term, initiatives such as "pilot studies" and examination of different models of UBI should be promoted by the EU. The initiative will now need to collect one million signatures of support to be taken further. Deadline for [signing](#): 14 January 2014.

Publications

The role of national parliaments in European legislation

The College of Europe has published a study report entitled ["National Parliaments and their Role in European Integration: The EU's Democratic Deficit in Times of Economic Hardship and Political Insecurity"](#) which describes the role of national parliaments in the European legislation taking into account the reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty.

Humanizing Healthcare Reforms

Looking at the current turmoil facing healthcare systems worldwide, the author argues - in his publication ["Humanizing Healthcare Reforms"](#) - that a return to a values-based approach to healthcare will create positive transformation, and suggests that without being able to clearly identify the values and goals that unite their members, healthcare organizations are unlikely to be able to meet the demands of the constant and varied pressures they face, and explains how individuals at every level in healthcare can contribute in practical ways to positive change within their organizations.

Agenda

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