



European Federation of Nurses
Associations

EFN UPDATE

July-August-September 2020

President's Message



Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

On behalf of our EFN Members and the EFN Team, I would like to express our collective heartfelt thanks, admiration and ongoing commitment of our incredible and professional frontline nurses. They have relentlessly cared for millions of citizens in unprecedented challenging times during the COVID-19 first wave, while currently preparing and strengthening our healthcare systems for possible future waves. Despite an obvious lack of resources and funds across many EU countries, our nurses with exceptional professionalism, commitment, expertise, and innovation did their absolute best to keep the pandemic under control and to maximise patient's healthcare outcomes and recovery processes. It is with great pride and humility that we thank each and every nurse for their selfless and lifesaving work to protect the health of our communities and providing care, compassion and comfort to those who lost their lives and their families.

During the outbreak, the normal working of the EU institutions changed - work of the European Parliament and the European Commission shifted priorities to the strategic management of the COVID-19 crisis. On a daily basis the EFN continued liaising with the European Commission (in particular with DG ECHO, DG SANTE, DG GROW) to coordinate the pan-European response to the pandemic and to maximise the EU-wide institutional support for nurses. In addition, the EFN Office embraced the opportunity to advance and progress strategically on important reports, as: an analysis of the European Semester Country Reports (only available to EFN Members - covering the period 2016 to 2020, and comparing the alignment and results to the EFN's SOLP); the report on the Nursing Now Europe European Parliament Event on Digitalisation (February 2020); and most importantly, the EFN Report on Lessons Learned from Ebola & COVID-19, providing an overview of lessons learnt from both crisis to inform the preparation for any future infectious diseases outbreaks.

As much of our lives went online during the crisis, the EFN Office strengthened its advocacy work on social media. We have embraced the challenge of the Nursing Now Campaign: to stop only talking to ourselves, but to extend our normal sphere of influence and talk to new networks and influencers.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all EFN Members and colleagues for their dedication, support and commitment during the COVID-19 crisis. Words can never express the great debt of gratitude that is owed to each and every one of you for your role in protecting health, saving lives, comforting with compassion those we have lost including patients, family members and healthcare professionals.

Our EFN solidarity provides inspiration, hope, and healing. As we continue to face a global pandemic we are reminded of the vital connection between our own wellness as nurses and that of our communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront the irreplaceable role of nurses as leaders, educators, innovators, and healers within our communities.

Take good care and stay safe until the next time we meet.

Elizabeth Adams
EFN President

News from EFN

EFN report on lessons learned from Ebola & Covid-19

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, all those on the frontline against the virus had to face situations of unprecedented hardship while caring for their communities. Now lockdowns are relaxing after this very difficult period of the COVID-19 pandemic health crisis, the EFN reflected on the lessons learned from COVID-19 building on what nurses experienced in 2014 with Ebola. The EFN office compiled all these lessons learned into a report which not only reinforces the exceptional pragmatism and flexibility of the nursing profession in times of crisis but also shows the value and trust of the wider population in the lifesaving and health protection work nurses effectively deliver. The report has been distributed among the highest-level officials of the European Union, including European Commission's Commissioners, officials, and Members of the European Parliament, asking them for their feedback on it. The EFN is now in contact with some Commissioners to discuss the report recommendations to make sure we are better prepared for the next EU outbreak or health crisis. Nurses crucial role to protect the European citizens' health needs should be translated into EU policies, to be better prepared and pragmatic. This is now also a good opportunity to see how, together with the EU Institutions, we can build the so needed 'Europe of Health'. The full report is accessible [here](#).

EFN report on EP Event on Digitalisation

Following the [EFN event](#) on digitalisation organised at the European Parliament in February 2020, under the scope of Nursing Now Europe and Knowledge4Innovation 11th Summit, the EFN has now published the report on its event. This EFN event and report are a contribution to the "2020 - Year of the Nurse and the Midwife" focussing on the policy and political discussion on the co-creation of a digital healthcare sector, and the importance of the Electronic Health Records. The EFN has Digitalisation high on its agenda, and acknowledges that frontline nurses must remain a part of this initiative as emerging healthcare challenges such as the ageing population, chronic diseases, staff shortages, increasing healthcare expectations and rising healthcare costs are driving the demands for a more efficient, accessible, high-quality and affordable healthcare. The full report is accessible [here](#).

News from the EU

Martin Seychell leaves DG Sante

A great supporter of personalised health and the public health community within the European Commission's DG SANTE, Martin Seychell is leaving his current DG - where he has been deputy Director General for health since 2011 - to take the number two place at the European Commission International Cooperation and Development ([DG DEVCO](#)). Over the years, Martin has attended several EFN General Assemblies, and has cooperated several times with the EFN to foster policies beneficial for the nursing profession. The EFN would like to take this opportunity to wish him the very best in his new role, as well as to his successor - Sandra Gallina from [DG TRADE](#), who will take office as of 1 July.

The new EU4Health programme

The European Commission has proposed a new and ambitious stand-alone health programme covering the 2021-2027 period - the EU4Health Programme. This programme is the European Commission's initiative to upscale the state of the game in healthcare at the EU-level, aiming at making European citizens healthy as they can be throughout their lives. Moreover, this programme is also aiming at making a significant contribution to the post-COVID-19 recovery in the EU countries by strengthening the resilience of our healthcare systems and promoting innovation in the healthcare sector. This new

programme will also fill the gaps revealed by the COVID-19 crisis and ensure that EU health systems are resilient enough to face new and future health threats. Ultimately, this programme wants to create a Europe that supports timely access to affordable, high quality healthcare for all. More details on the EU4Health programme are accessible [here](#).

Women at the core of the fight against COVID-19 crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic is harming health, social and economic well-being worldwide, with women at the centre. First and foremost, women are leading the health response: women make up almost 70% of the healthcare workforce, exposing them to a greater risk of infection. At the same time, women are also shouldering much of the burden at home, given school and childcare facility closures and longstanding gender inequalities in unpaid work. Women also face high risks of job and income loss, and increased risks of violence, exploitation, abuse or harassment during times of crisis and quarantine. Taking this into account, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) compiled a policy brief to provide support to governments and other relevant stakeholders in thinking about the important gendered implications of the pandemic and taking policy action. The full policy brief can be found [here](#).

European Commission's Pharmaceutical strategy for Europe

Coming in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the new European Commission's Pharmaceutical strategy for Europe which will also inform the newly proposed [EU4Health Programme](#) and align with [Horizon Europe](#) for research and innovation, aims at creating a future proof regulatory framework, which reaps the benefits of digitalisation, and supports industry in promoting research and technologies that actually reach patients and fulfil their therapeutic needs, while addressing market failures. It will also take into account the weaknesses exposed by the coronavirus pandemic and factor-in appropriate actions to strengthen the system. More details on the strategy, as well as on the European Commission public consultation on this, can be found [here](#).

The European Commission launches Artificial-Intelligence VS Covid-19 Initiative

The European Commission launched the initiative AI-ROBOTICS vs COVID-19 with the aim to collect ideas about deployable artificial intelligence and robotic solutions, as well as information on other initiatives that could help face the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. The initiative aims to create a unique repository that is easily accessible to all citizens, stakeholders and policymakers and become part of the common European response to the outbreak of COVID-19. More information on how to contribute to this initiative, or to submit one's own initiative, is available [here](#).

True Reform of the European Union's Enlargement Process

An important window of opportunity to reform the European Union's enlargement process was opened at the European Council in Brussels in October 2019 and with the rejection of the launch of negotiations with Albania and Northern Macedonia. But, the reflection initiated by the European Commission, which was presented in February 2020, together with the green light given by the Council in March 2020 to the opening of negotiations to these two countries do not seem to demonstrate any new awareness of the problems and issues related to enlargement. Although the natural place of the Balkan States in the European Union should not be questioned, vital reflection regarding the way in which the enlargement process has been conducted to date and its link to the European project is required reform, which would give the candidate States the means to consolidate, and strengthen the Union. A full report on this topic, including research conducted by the Foundation Robert Schuman, can be found [here](#).

The European Commission launches a roadmap on GDPR

Two years after the entry into application of the General Data Protection Regulation ([GDPR](#)), the European Commission will be reporting on its application across the EU Member States. The Commission's Roadmap explains that the Commission's Report will look to evaluate the application of the GDPR in particular as regards

international transfer of personal data to third countries and the cooperation and consistency mechanisms between national data protection authorities. The full roadmap is accessible [here](#).

Publications

European Innovation Scoreboard 2020

The Annual European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) provides a comparative assessment of research and innovation performance of the EU Member States as well as Iceland, Israel, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. It allows policy makers to assess relative strengths and weaknesses of national research and innovation systems, track progress, and identify priority areas to boost innovation performance. The [2020 edition](#) of the innovation scoreboard highlights that the EU's innovation performance continues to increase at a steady pace, with growing convergence between the EU countries. On average, the innovation performance of the EU has increased by 8.9% since 2012. Performance increased in 24 EU countries since 2012, with the biggest increases in Lithuania, Malta, Latvia, Portugal and Greece. In this year's edition, Luxembourg (previously a Strong Innovator) joins the group of Innovation Leaders (next to Sweden Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands), while Portugal (previously a Moderate Innovator) joins the group of Strong Innovators. All the information is available [here](#).

ECDC publishes new guidelines for monitoring COVID-19 in long-term care facilities

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control ([ECDC](#)) has published new guidelines for Member States planning to implement COVID-19 monitoring systems at long-term care facilities. The target audience for this guidance is public health experts, healthcare professionals and administrators working in long-term care facilities at local/regional level, and national public health authorities. The full guidelines can be found [here](#).

Health is made at home, Hospitals are for repairs



Lord Nigel Crisp, author of this book, co-chairs Nursing Now, the global campaign on nursing. He now works and writes extensively on global health with a focus on Africa. His main current interests are global health partnerships, health creation and nursing. His new book challenges us to set aside our normal assumptions and take off our NHS spectacles to see the world differently and take control of our health. And it calls for a new partnership between the NHS, government and the general public to build a healthy and health creating society. Copies of the book can be bought at

www.healthismadeathome.uk

WHO European Centre for Primary Health Care annual report 2019

In 2019, the WHO European Centre for Primary Health Care worked closely with the WHO Regional Office for Europe, other programmes, partners and, most importantly, the countries, to advance primary health care work along three pillars: direct country support, analysis and policy development and knowledge management. Among others, this report includes examples on how the role of nurses in primary care has been strengthened in many countries. The full report is available [here](#).



Agenda

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

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