



# Activity Report

European Federation of Nurses Associations

Working Year 2009



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## Foreword

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It is with great pleasure, and confidence in the future, that the EFN publishes its annual report, highlighting the areas of EFN achievements, influence, involvement and visibility in the European policy-making arena during 2009, leading to formulate the challenges for 2010.

This year has been very exciting from a political perspective: elections of the members of the European Parliament, appointment of the leaders of the European Commission and all EU Member States ratifying the Lisbon Treaty. With these significant political events, the political content files got a lower profile of discussion, providing EFN the time to discuss with its membership and allied stakeholders and decide on key policy positions, such as: Patient Safety and Healthcare Associated Infections, e-Health, EU workforce for health, compliance with the DIR 36, and EU quality and safety standards.

For the election of the European Parliament, the EFN developed a manifesto and the members organised at local level events to meet and elect the future EU parliamentarians. It is essential for EFN members continue to work closely with their MEPs, at regional, national and European level, as the coming five years will be crucial for the nursing profession to move EU health policy-making towards positive outcomes for all EU citizens.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the nurses across Europe who have been supporting our work and continue giving the profession hope for future developments, as well as the European Healthcare Professions and all the other European Stakeholders with whom the EFN has closely worked in 2009. We hope this report will be motivating and supportive to the 2010 agenda.

We are looking forward to your comments and feedback on this Activity Report and to a strong and effective collaboration in 2010.



Ms Grete Christensen  
*EFN President*



Mr. Paul De Raeve  
*EFN General Secretary*



## I. STRENGTHENING EFN

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### A. EFN LOBBY PRIORITIES

In this year of elections, and changes in the EU institutions, the EFN focused on very specific items. Building up on the EFN Strategic and Operational lobby Plan 2009-2013, and on the work undertaken in 2008, the EFN mainly focused on 4 main specific items:

#### 1. EU WORKFORCE FOR HEALTH

As nurses represent the biggest occupational group in the healthcare sector, the workforce issue is one of the most important for EFN and its members. Developing effective and efficient health systems able to respond to the challenges they face depends to a considerable extent on having a high-quality health workforce of sufficient capacity and with the right skills. Taking into account the numerous challenges the EFN members are facing at national level, such as nursing shortage and workforce ageing, the Green Paper on the EU Workforce for Health represents an important and timely step in exploring the significant challenges faced by the nurses of Europe and possible actions that may be undertaken at EU level.

Being one of the main topics in the EFN political agenda for 2009, and following the EFN and EFN members active input to the drafting of the European Commission [Green Paper on EU Workforce for Health](#), the [EFN provided its input](#) to the Green Paper consultation, to make sure that the nurses' views are reflected in the adopted paper. The EFN General Assembly approved the EFN [Policy Statement & a Position Statement](#) on this issue.

Further, in order to achieve more effective policy outcomes on this specific item, the EFN:

→ participated in several key lobby events, such as:

- the [High Level Working Group on EU Workforce for Health](#) meetings - which aim to encompass the workforce capacity issues and human resource strategies required to care for an ageing population. This working group will analyse and discuss the consultations of the Green Paper and it will be the EU Belgium Presidency who will lead to Council recommendations. EFN will make sure EU actions will go beyond political awareness raising.
- [EHMA roundtables](#) – focussing on the Green paper, including the equivalence of training/skills in [EPA meetings](#) & [EPA adhoc Health Professionals and Healthcare Working Group meetings](#) – The EFN expertise contributed positively to the discussions/decisions on the Workforce issue and the EPA Position is now subsequently in line with the EFN position. The alliance building is essential to increase the political awareness within Civil Society.
- the European healthcare workforce, with a particular focus on doctors and nurses. The main conclusion is that training needs to be expanded, and qualifications need to be comparable (i.e. quality and skills standards). In addition, there need to be incentives for continued training and development. This might also help retain health staff.
- [Peer Review on health care](#) in regions with declining population, to discuss how to ensure health care in regions with declining and ageing populations, with a major focus on skill mix and skill needs. Some Chief Nursing Officers (CNO) were present and shared their experience, such as Greece that explained in detail what they are doing on Social Cohesion Funds for Health. National management teams do not meet on regular basis. The EFN took this opportunity to encourage the European Commission to build that network, including NGOs.
- [Restructuring Forum on “Sectors' New Skills for New Jobs”](#) - aiming to present, promote and discuss the main results of the 18 studies recently published by the European Commission to look at emerging and future skill needs up to 2020, and to launch a discussion on how to reinforce and promote stronger collaboration at European level in the field of skills anticipation, focusing on the sectoral approach.

- **Seminar “Attractive Work - How to keep your workforce and how to attract new employees”** hosted by the Central Sweden Brussels Office and Dalarna University, to showcase two projects, “*Attractive Work*” (employers can increase their attractiveness among jobseekers through a method based on what makes a job interesting for an individual such as support for work/life balance, provision of lifelong learning, and career pathways) and “*PIMEX*” (a technology for ensuring job safety and improvements in working environments through visualizing the connection between the individual’s actions and the risks he or she is facing at work). The EFN took this opportunity to highlight the difficulties the Nursing workforce is facing with regards to recruitment, retention, and downgrading of education.
- made presentations on nurses views on the EU Workforce for Health. As example:
- [European Parliament Special Interest Group on Carers](#) meeting that took place on 15 April 2009 - The EFN stressed the importance of not including carers into the planning strategies of the EU workforce, as the informal carers are important, but cannot be part of the core workforce, especially when planning the workforce. The Special Interest groups are abolished with the new Parliament, instead 5 health sessions will take in Brussels, in which EFN will focus, together with allied stakeholders, on health system topics.
  - **Chief Nursing Officers meeting**, held under the Czech Republic EU Presidency, on February 2009 - The EFN stressed the importance of having comparable data on healthcare professionals’ mobility, EU workforce planning to recruit nurses to and retain nurses in the nursing profession and gender perspectives. It is of significant importance EFN meets up on a regular basis with the EU CNOs and the Presidency meeting are a great opportunity for this gathering.
  - [Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association \(CYNMA\)](#) meeting on the occasion of Dr. Hiroko Minami, [ICN](#) President, visit to Cyprus, in March 2009 – the EFN explained that “*delivering quality services to our communities will not happen by chance. It will happen only by choice, determined lobby actions and leadership for strategic workforce planning and effective EU policy-making.*”
- is involved in two projects, with an advisory role:
- **HEALTHPROMeTHEUS** - [HEALTH PROfessional Mobility in the European Union Study](#) - EHMA project, funded under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme of the European Commission (FP7) and running until December 2011. This study focuses on the mobility of health professionals moving to, from and within Europe for work and other reasons. (*For further information see projects pages*)
  - **RN4CAST** - “[Nurse Forecasting: Human Resources Planning in Nursing](#)” – also funded under the European Commission’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). This three years’ project aims to gather data to explore the impact of the nursing work environment and deployment of nursing staff on nurse recruitment, retention, productivity and patient outcomes (patient safety), in order to support workforce planning in nursing, and the value of nurses in providing efficient, quality, and safe care. (*For further information see projects pages*)

## 2. EDUCATION

Adopted in September 2005, the [Directive 2005/36/EC](#) aims to consolidate and modernise the rules regulating the recognition of professional qualifications in the EU Member States. However, four years after its adoption a number of EU Member States have not yet implemented it leading to [infringement proceedings](#) against them. This was the case for Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Poland, Spain, Sweden and UK. Furthermore, some countries face difficulties at national level related to decisions being taken for the future of the nursing discipline that will impact on the general nursing education, and subsequently on health care quality and patient safety.

Therefore, in 2009, the EFN supported some of its members, such as Italy, Germany, Belgium, Slovakia and Romania, where discussions to downgrade the nursing education took place. The EFN position, sent to the national health authorities, stated that nursing has a specific and unique body of knowledge; nursing must be recognized and maintained as a single specific discipline area distinct from other disciplines; it is important to develop University positions and careers, and University Nursing Departments lead by well prepared and qualified nurse professors. The EFN is concerned about the negative developments in those countries for nurses and nursing. Therefore, the EFN will focus its attention towards the 2012 Implementation Report of the European Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications 2005/36/EC (DIR36), in which the EU Member States efforts to implement the specified criteria and articles will be evaluated.

Being one of the main topics in the EFN political agenda for 2009, the EFN:

- approved a **Policy Dialogue document on “EFN Members evaluating the Implementation of DIR 36”** in the EFN General Assembly held in Stockholm, Sweden, in October 2009.
- organised, in January 2009, a **meeting with the EFN Members’ experts** on Education to discuss the implementation of the [EFN Policy & Position Statements on Synergies between Directive 36, Bologna, and European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#). The experts mainly focussed on the challenges around Directive 36 and the lack of synergy with Bologna and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and concluded that there is incompatibility between prescribed Directive 36 Nurse training hours and ECTS, and that no valid and reliable measurement of nurse competencies exists. Additionally, the EFN experts’ group believe that the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should be included in Directive 36; and that from a practical point of view the experts could develop a generic tool for bridging courses, recognising the differences between the EU Member States, and initiate a pool of Nurse Professors to support those Member States starting with a nursing faculty.
- held a **meeting with CNOs** in Stockholm on 2 October 2009 – The EFN Members took this opportunity to discuss with their national CNOs on their key concerns regarding nurses and the nursing profession. As a result of these meetings, the CNOs are looking forward for a closer collaboration with EFN on specific topics. The EFN finds it important to meet and discuss with the CNOs about common challenges, in order to strengthen the voice of nurses and the nursing profession in the EU.
- met with **DG Internal Market**, to discuss DIR36 on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications related to the EU Members States infringements (Belgium follow-up on Government reply; France nursing education – reduction hours; Germany attempt to change entrance level), Poland Bridging Courses, and the evaluation of the implementation of DIR36 by 2012. Referring to the upcoming report prepared by DG Internal Market on the application of DIR36, the EFN argued for EU stakeholders’ participation and closer collaboration. A conference involving relevant stakeholders should take place in 2010 to launch the report activities and consultation. The EFN also referred to the downgrading of nursing education in some countries and that the EU Commission should take action; and finally encouraged more collaboration between DG Internal Market and DG Sanco as quality and patient safety becomes central. As a follow-up, DG Internal Market will attend the EFN Executive Committee to take place in January 2010, and will work with EFN to prepare the Belgian EU Presidency. The EFN will also feedback further on the challenges faced by the EFN members and should put on hold data collection for the 2012 evaluation report, to allow DG Internal Market to develop concrete list of questions.
- participated in several key lobby events, such as:
  - **TAIEX workshop** held in Croatia, to discuss the mutual recognition of nursing diploma in Croatia. The main objective of these meetings is to create and deliver a curriculum to comply with DIR36; to bring know-how and information to the region on this particular issue; and to get the Ministry of Education to address the education reforms in the pre-training period so as to achieve compliance with the EU Directive.
  - **Conference on ‘Educating Nurses through Bridging Courses’**, organised in Poland, in October 2009, as part of the *project “Professional Education of Nurses and Midwives through Bridging Courses”* co-financed by the European Social Fund, in which the EFN expressed its view on the meaning of “*professional education of nurses and midwives in the EU*” and made clear that bridging courses are important to give prior educated nurses an opportunity to get a bachelor level and have their qualifications recognised across the EU.
  - **CNOs [meeting on Education and Workforce](#)** held in Prague – Czech Republic, in February 2009, under the auspice of the Czech EU Presidency. Invited to make a [presentation on Education and on Workforce](#), the EFN highlighted the need for implementing DIR36, the recognition of variability of the [Continuous Professional Development \(CPD\)](#) and the importance of Social Cohesion Funds to make a difference in the field. When discussing on the main challenges for nurses and nursing - recruitment and retention, ethical recruitment code and the lack of comparable data - the EFN stressed the importance of developing an EU workforce planning mechanism, the emphasis of a gender perspective in the Green Paper on the EU Workforce for Health and the need for concrete action based on the EU Member States best practices. The EFN also took this opportunity to meet with: the CNOs from Sweden, Spain and Belgium – for a briefing on the EU Presidency meetings; the CNO from Poland - looking for support to develop bridging courses; and with the CNO from Croatia - for a briefing on the ongoing developments in Croatia.

### 3. **PATIENT SAFETY & QUALITY STANDARDS**

Patient safety is an issue of increasing concern all over the world. It is estimated that in EU Member States between 8% and 12% of patients admitted to hospitals suffer from adverse events whilst receiving healthcare. On 15 December 2008, the European Commission adopted [a Communication](#) and a [proposal for a Council Recommendation](#) on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections, to which the EFN and its members provided input.

Being one of the high priorities in the EFN political agenda for 2009, and aiming to make sure that the nurses' views were being taken into account and that the EU legislation was in line with the EFN policy, the EFN:

- adopted the [EFN Policy & Position Statements on the Council Recommendations on Patient Safety and Healthcare Associated Infections](#), in the EFN General Assembly held in Brussels in April 2009,
- adopted the [EFN Policy & Position Statements on EU Quality and Safety Standards](#), in the EFN General Assembly held in Stockholm, Sweden, in October 2009.
- participated in several key lobby events, such as:

The **European Commission Patient Safety & Quality of Care Working Group of the High Level Group on Health Care**, engaging the 27 EU Member States and the EU Health Stakeholders, such as: CPME, PGEU, EPF, HOPE, EHMA and EFN. In 2009 the EFN participated in the several meetings organised to lobby the decision makers so that the nurses' views were taken into account in the political decisions. Following work undertaken in this group, favourable Council recommendations were adopted in July 2009 on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections. This political group has subsequently widened its focus to include issues of Quality in Healthcare and is currently working on developing a follow-up of EUNetPaS. EFN is highly regarded amongst stakeholders and Member States in this group as advocating for the practical implications of political decisions in individuals living and working lives.

- **The meeting of European Parliament Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee** on Amalia Sartori draft amendments to the Draft report on the proposal for a Council recommendation on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections. The proposed amendments reflected most of EFN concerns and advice provided by EFN Patient Safety & HCAI experts that met in the EFN Brussels Office on 19 September 2008, as well as the EFN positions as expressed in the EFN [Policy](#) and [Position](#) statements adopted during the 90<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. This European Parliament vote marked an important step in the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections and puts healthcare workers' training and education as critical in overcoming healthcare crisis.

As a result of all the EFN lobby work on this issue, the [Council Recommendation on Patient Safety, including the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections](#), to which the EFN and its members provided input, was adopted by the EU Health Ministers on 9 June 2009. In agreement with EFN [Policy](#) and [Position](#) Statements on this issue, the Council recommended the EU Member States to: Support the establishment and development of national policies and programmes on patient safety; Empower and inform citizens and patients; Support the establishment or strengthen blame-free reporting and learning systems on adverse events; Promote education and training of healthcare workers on patient safety; Classify and measure patient safety at Community level; Share knowledge, experience and best practice; and Develop and promote research on patient safety. The EFN welcomed the Council Recommendations, which are a major step forward in improving "Quality and Safety" and "Cooperation" within the EU.

- is actively involved in the **EUNetPaS project ("European Union Network for Patient Safety")** launched in February 2008, and that involves the 27 EU Member States and the key EU Health Stakeholders CPME, PGEU, EPF, HOPE and EFN. Throughout the year the EFN participated in the several coordination and work packages meetings dealing with 'patient safety culture', 'education' and 'field testing', and provided to the different working group with EFN members' good practice examples and input on key issues, such as the WP2 Guidelines. *(For further information see projects pages)*

### 4. **E-HEALTH AND HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

The EU Council of Ministers (2003) defines eHealth as the application of modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to meet the needs of the populations: of patients, health personnel, health administrators and politicians. eHealth involves the applications of ICT within the whole range of stakeholders and functions that influence the health sector: patients, health personnel, hospitals, municipal health and social

services, research and education, leadership and authorities. The EFN welcomes the eHealth movement with its efficient and effective use of ICT.

In light of this debate, and as eHealth is becoming more and more important in the EU political agenda, the EFN Brussels Office carried out a mapping exercise to provide the EFN members with an overview of all activities related to eHealth at EU level. During the EFN General Assembly held in Stockholm, Sweden, in October 2009, the [EFN members shared their national experience](#) and key developments and challenges regarding eHealth. They reported on: the expected benefits of the eHealth movement, such as: optimization of services and continuity of care; the National e-Nursing advancements, like: electronic documentation, patient and health professional cards, and telenursing; the barriers faced towards implementation; and concluded with their concerns for future developments.

In July 2009, the EFN participated in the Workshop on a Project entitled "[Business Models for eHealth](#)", together with the ICT for eHealth Unit of DG Information Society and Media who is supporting the study, to discuss the initial findings. Discussions were mainly around potential added value of eHealth and ensuring user involvement, while EFN reiterated the importance of usability, CPD, patient centeredness and maintaining quality and safe care through setting appropriate standards. In light of the importance of the nursing community for the future of eHealth in Europe, the EFN Members adopted the [EFN Policy & Position Statements](#) on eHealth, taking into account the EFN members' experiences and good practices, in order to feed them into the political and policy process.

Finally, the EFN is involved as stakeholder in the [Calliope EU project](#) where EU policy-makers meet to decide on further developments on eHealth. The EFN role in this network is to scan the political developments and bring EFN members experiences and best practices upfront. Some priorities discussed are: patient summaries, e-prescribing and professional identity cards. CALLIOPE (*For further information see Projects section*).

## 5. **OTHER KEY ISSUES**

Next to the above mentioned key issues for 2009, the EFN also concentrated on the following key points:

### → **Cross-border Healthcare**

The "Health Services Directive" is a high priority in the EFN policy agenda, and will also be high in the Spanish and Belgian EU Presidencies. Therefore, this is an item that the EFN will put also high in its political agenda for 2010, as the EFN will have numerous key opportunities to lobby on it.

Following a public consultation in 2006 and several delays in 2007, the European Commission finally launched, in July 2008, a revised [proposal for a directive to facilitate the application of European patients' rights in relation to cross-border healthcare](#), aiming to clarify and promote the right of patients to gain access to healthcare in another EU country by ensuring high quality and safe cross-border healthcare. Due to the political elections in 2009, there were no major decisions taken by the EU. Nevertheless, the EFN followed the issue closely and participated in the several meetings held by EU Stakeholders and in the European Parliament several committees, such as: the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI), and the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL). The EFN members were informed by the EFN Brussels Office on the last developments regarding this issue through several Briefing Notes sent all over the year.

Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009, the Employment, Social Policy and Health (EPSCO) Council discussed the legislative proposal for a Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare, but, despite substantial progress and great efforts to create consensus by the Swedish Presidency, the European Health Ministers were not able to find an agreement on this proposal. The text which the Council considered was not yet taking into account the positive amendments approved by the European Parliament in April, and was different from the one presented to the European Parliament at that time. The Swedish Presidency has continuously modified the text hoping to get a political agreement before the end of its presidency, but the compromised text took a slightly different view on some elements of the original Commission proposal, notably regarding prior authorisation, contracted/non contracted providers, safety/quality standards, and e-health. Consequently, the new Commission would have to re-evaluate the situation.

### → **Social Cohesion Funds**

The EFN takes a keen interest in the coordinated development of the education of Healthcare professionals within the EU to meet modern needs and to facilitate the mobility of professionals. Therefore, it is essential Cohesion Funds support innovation within Continuous Professional Development. In 2009, the EFN developed 4 generic proposals (2 on Education & 2 on Recruitment)

linked to DG SANCO 'legislative' developments on: workforce, infection control, patient safety, and patient information, and a [Practical Guidance](#) to support EFN members in applying for Social Cohesion Funds, presented to and discussed by the EFN General Assembly held in Brussels, in April 2009. In March 2009, the EFN met DG SANCO and DG Employment to discuss this issue, and both DGs expressed a strong willingness to actively support and guide the EFN members in accessing the Cohesion Funds via raising political awareness and offering technical assistance. Challenges include the decentralised system that exists in some member states but, this may be overcome by closer collaboration with the Ministries of Health (CNO) and Member States European Social Funds Management Authorities. As a result, the EFN members are looking further for CNOs cooperation to proceed in partnership for accessing European Social Funds, and after long negotiations with the European Commission and the Member States, the Polish Ministry of Health used 42 million Euros of the Social Cohesion Funds to launch bridging courses for 36.000 nurses to increase their professional qualifications in compliance with the EU Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

#### → **European Parliament elections - June 2009**

In June 2009, the citizens of the 27 EU Members States voted for [a new European Parliament](#), making these the biggest transnational elections in the history. 736 Members of the European Parliament (out of 9.000 candidates) were elected for a five-year term, to represent about 500,000,000 EU citizens.

With up to 6 million nurses within Europe, the [EFN and its members were a significant voting force](#). Based on the EFN members experiences, an [EFN manifesto](#) - calling on the MEPs to support three priorities and use their influence to help: Implement the European Directive which regulates the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (DIR 36); Plan the EU Workforce for Health to meet citizens' needs; and Deliver Quality and Safeguard Patient Safety- was developed and approved by the EFN General Assembly, held in Brussels, in April 2009. The EFN members were also invited to use this manifesto at national level to support health/nurse friendly MEPs. As an example, the Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association (CYNMA), member of EFN, met with their candidates to the EU Parliament in order to speak about the issues raised in the EFN manifesto, which was translate and distributed to their members. The RCN, also a member of EFN, developed a manifesto highlighting the key issues its nearly 400,000 members considered as the most important to lobby politicians standing for these elections: ensure enough nursing staff to meet patients' needs; stop nurses getting injured at work; prevent health care associated infections; provide the best possible nursing care through excellent education and training ([http://www.rcn.org.uk/nursing/international/european\\_elections\\_2009](http://www.rcn.org.uk/nursing/international/european_elections_2009)).

## **B. SUPPORT TO EFN MEMBERS**

### **1. EFN Participation in EFN Members National Events**

#### ➤ **BELGIUM - Fédération Nationale des Infirmier(e)s de Belgique (FNIB)**

The EFN participated in the [FNIB](#) Congress 2009 on "[Nurse Responsibility](#)" held in Seraing (Liège), Belgium, on 26 November 2009. Invited as keynote speaker, the EFN General Secretary made a presentation on "Nurse Autonomy" and explained that "*Nurse Autonomy is a valued possession which should be pursued, especially during these threatening times of financial crisis, if Nursing is to continue walking the evolving path of professionalism, academic distinction, and disciplinary recognition*"

#### ➤ **CROATIA - Croatian Nurses Association (CNA)**

The EFN participated in the TAIEX workshop on Education of Nurses organised in Zagreb, Croatia, in October 2009 by the [Croatian Nurses Association](#), to discuss the mutual recognition of nursing diploma in Croatia. The objective of this meeting was to create and deliver a curriculum to comply with EU Directive; to bring know – how and info to region about above stated; Bridging program (nurse teachers in secondary school in higher education); to get the Ministry of Education to address the education reforms in the pre-training period so as to achieve compliance. After that, they need to agree how nurse training can occur in the post 18-year old education system. Finally the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education need to agree the bridging requirements.

#### ➤ **CYPRUS - EFN & ICN Presidents meet in Cyprus**

On the occasion of Dr. Hiroko Minami, [ICN](#) President, visit to Cyprus, on 23-25 March 2009, the [Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association](#) (CYNMA), organising the event and a Member of EFN, invited the EFN President, Ms Grete Christensen, to also participate in the event, that brought together Academics

of the Nursing departments from all Nursing Universities, MPs, Ministry of Health Officers, Nurses, representatives of Nursing Unions and the Nursing & Midwifery Council.

As keynote speaker, Ms Christensen made a presentation on "[European Nursing workforce: Problems and Perspectives](#)" and explained that the "EU Workforce for Health" is of high priority for the EFN members as *"the European trends in health system reform have had a downside for nursing in many European countries. This is reflected in cuts in nursing budgets, the loss of a nursing voice in governmental decision-making processes, increases in nursing workloads, and serious concerns about patient safety and the quality of care."*

Moreover, EFN also participated in a round-table discussion - organised in November 2009 by CYNMA and joined by University, Unions, N&M Council, and Ministry of Health representatives - on the implications of the Commission Green Paper on the EU Workforce for Health and on potential actions that need to be taken at National level to strengthen the Health workforce and preserve patient safety and quality of care.

#### ➤ **LATVIA - 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Latvian Nurses and Midwives**

The EFN was invited to participate, as [keynote speaker](#), in the [Latvian Nurses and Midwives Congress](#) organised in Riga – Latvia, on 18-19 June 2009, where participants discussed health care quality and multidisciplinary collaboration, and the key role of nurses and midwives in the Latvian health care system. The successful congress was a good opportunity for all to share experience on the developments in nursing and midwifery education, legislation, leadership and regulation within the EU.

#### ➤ **NORDIC COUNTRIES - Northern Nurses' Federation (NNF) conference**

The EFN participated in the [Northern Nurses' Federation](#) conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 24-25 September 2009, on the theme *"Trends and developments in Europe with an impact on health services, nursing education, nursing practice and working conditions for nurses"*. As keynote speaker, the EFN made two presentations: «[Directive 36 and Bologna process](#)» and «[Nursing Practice in Europe with focus on Patient Safety](#)» and explained that: *"The upcoming Implementation Report on Directive 2005/36/EC, by 2012, should be seen as unique opportunity for strategic and focused lobby actions"*, and that *"There is an urgent need to explore the current context of professional preparedness in Europe with the emphasis on evidence based practice and assessment of outcomes in relation to established EU standards in terms of education, practice and outcomes"*.

The Northern Nurses Federation (NNF) is a cooperative body for the six Nordic Nurses' Associations (Danish Nurses' Organization; Finnish Nurses' Association; Faroese Nurses' Association; Icelandic Nurses' Association; Norwegian Nurses' Association; and the Nurse Section of the Swedish Association of Health Professionals) that contributes to the development of health and nursing care in the Nordic countries.

#### ➤ **POLAND - Conference on Educating Nurses through Bridging courses**

The EFN participated in a conference on 'Educating Nurses through Bridging Courses', organised on 30 October, in Warsaw, Poland, as part of the project "Professional Education of Nurses and Midwives through Bridging Courses" co-financed by the European Social Fund. As keynote speaker, the EFN General Secretary expressed EFN's view on the meaning of "professional education of nurses and midwives in the EU" and stated that bridging courses are important to give prior educated nurses an opportunity to get a bachelor level and have their qualifications recognised across the EU.

After long negotiations with the European Commission and the Member States, the Polish Ministry of Health launched the long awaiting bridging courses for 36.000 nurses to increase their professional qualifications in compliance with the EU Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (DIR 36). The EFN strongly supported this initiative that gives career opportunities and better working conditions for nurses in Poland. Finally, the EFN urged the European Commission and the Member States to sign off this important EU project leading to a strengthening the nursing profession and the mutual recognition of professional qualifications.

## 2. EFN Support to EFN Members National key concerns

In 2009, the EFN supported its members to support addressing national challenges which were mainly linked to downgrading the nursing education at national level, which affect the health care quality and the patients' safety. EFN send out a letter of concern to the members' national health authorities, to express EFN concern and disagreement on the changes on the nursing education.

As example:

➤ **ITALY**

The Italian National Nurses Association - Consociazione nazionale delle Associazioni Infermiere/I – informed the EFN Brussels Office on the reorganisation of university scientific sectors for all the health professions, with the possibility that it will happen for the nursing discipline (Nursing Sciences) to disappear or include others health professions', thus excluding nurses from teaching in university. The EFN supported the Italian NNA letter to the Italian Health Authorities, explaining their concerns and the concrete dangers of suppressing the nursing disciplinary sector.

➤ **SLOVAKIA**

Contacted by the Slovak Chamber of Nurses and Midwives, an EFN member, on the decisions the health Minister was to take on the future of the nursing discipline, that would have effects on general nursing education and health care quality in Slovakia, the EFN informed the Slovakian authorities that these political decisions were to downgrade nurses and nursing in Slovakia, which was unacceptable for EFN. Recognizing that nursing has a specific and unique body of knowledge, EFN strongly supported the Slovak Chamber of Nurses and Midwives in their position that nursing: Must be recognized and maintained as a single specific discipline area distinct from other disciplines; Develop University positions and careers; and Develop University Nursing Departments lead by well prepared and qualified nurse professors.

➤ **ROMANIA**

The Romanian Nurses Association, an EFN member, informed the EFN Brussels Office on the current state of their national legislation on nursing - new Nursing legislation did not pass the Romanian Parliament, in August 2009. The EFN supported the Romanian Nurses Association request to the European Commission to officially analyse the recent developments made in Romania in relation to the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications as laid out in Directive 2005/36/EC, impeding significantly free-movement.

As the EFN is concerned about the negative developments in these countries for nurses and nursing, the EFN will focus its attention towards the DIR36 Implementation Report 2012 in which Member States will be evaluated on their efforts to implement the criteria and articles as set out in the European Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

Finally, EFN supported EFN members by collecting information about the state of art of actions towards the Influenza A (H1N1) and produced a policy document with the [EFN members' key concerns](#) regarding the Pandemic Flu and on the [health measures and actions being taken at national level](#). The collected data were shared between the EFN members and with key institutions such as EMEA, ECDC, the European Parliament and DG Sanco.

### **3. EFN Members visiting Brussels & the EU Institutions**

In 2009, the EFN was invited to make a presentation on EFN priorities and outcomes related to the EU Health Policy - namely on the implementation of the Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (DIR36), to the EFN members' delegation from Norway ([Norwegian Nurses Organisation - Sykepleierforbund \(NSF\)](#)), and from Poland ([Polish Nurses Association \(Polskie Towarzystwo Pielęgniarskie\)](#)), visiting Brussels & the EU Institutions.

In April 2009, the EFN organised a lobby course for the EFN members, to respond to a demand from some EFN Members to better understand the EU institutions lobby process. The EFN members were orientated how to lobby and adapt their strategies according to the ongoing changes at EU Institutions level, and how to input to the decision-making processes. Finally, a visit to the European Parliament allowed the members to get a full picture on how this institution is functioning. This kind of trainings is very helpful as it gives key tools for daily lobby work at national and European level. The EFN was very pleased to see that the EFN members were going back home with better understanding of EU lobby work.

The EFN encourages its members to visit the EFN Brussels Office and the EU Institutions as this is a very positive experience and a good opportunity for them to become more aware of the importance of investing in EFN & the EU and to learn from the European experience to lobby their national authorities for the benefit of the nurses and the nursing profession.



## II. EU PROJECTS

### A. EUNetPaS

#### 1. Background



Involved as an associate partner in this 30 months European project on Patient Safety - [European Union Network for Patient Safety \(EUNetPaS\)](#), that started in February 2008 (running until June 2010), the EFN actively participated in several work packages of the Project: "Patient Safety Culture" (WP1), "Education and training" (WP2), "Field Testing on Medication Safety" (WP4) and "Evaluation of the project" (WP10).

Funded and supported by the European Commission, within the 2007 Public Health Programme, and coordinated by HAS (French National Authority for Health), the aim of the EUNetPaS project is

- to establish an umbrella network of all 27 Member States and EU stakeholders to encourage and enhance their collaboration in the field of Patient Safety (culture, reporting and learning systems, medication safety and education), thus maximising efficiency of efforts at EU level.
- to establish common principles at EU level through the integration of knowledge, experiences and expertise gathered from individual Member States and EU stakeholders, facilitate the development of Patient Safety programmes in the EU Member States, and provide support to less advanced countries.
- to evaluate, validate and diffuse the new knowledge and good practices gathered within the network in order to decrease the risk of preventable harm to patients during their stay in healthcare settings and, more generally, to improve the quality of healthcare. The information thus obtained will be targeted at health professionals, political decision-makers and EU citizens.

#### 2. Project Meetings

In 2009, the EFN participated in the several meetings organised within the scope of the project different work packages, and provided input to the WPs consultations:

##### ↳ WP 1 - "Patient Safety Culture"

Aiming to be a platform where the national representatives/experts collect and exchange information on EU Member States Patient Safety culture, practices and indicators, the working group has collected several safety measurement tools, from which 3 were chosen to be piloted in Lithuania (started in September 2009), in collaboration with a national platform compiled by health professional groups, including nursing.

The EFN participated in the several meetings and telephone conferences organised throughout the year in order to discuss on the progresses made by the WP and decide on the steps forward. The EFN also provided its input on the document developed by the Spanish and Austrian Ministry of Health (MoH) on collecting information from Member States about their experiences with using patient safety indicators.

The EFN will continue to follow-up the developments, and the EFN Members shall be contacted once the draft documents are finalised.

##### ↳ WP 2 - "Education & Training"

The aim of this work package is to develop core curricula for patient safety for higher education across Europe and as part of continuing education taking into account patients' and health care professionals' needs. The proposed curricula will be based on existing materials such as curricula, national continuing professional development programmes, standards, etc.

The EFN participated in the several meetings and telephone conferences organised throughout the year in order to discuss on the progresses made by the WP and decide on the steps forward. The EFN members have been actively involved in the development of the "Patient Safety Education and Training Guidelines", by providing good practice examples on Patient Safety training and education.

The EFN will continue to follow-up the developments, and the EFN members will be consulted on the draft final version of the EU guidelines, and will be asked to consider potential involvement in the implementation phase – testing phase.

#### ↪ **WP 4 - “Field Testing on Medication Safety”**

Aiming to improve medication safety in hospitals by identifying best practices, translating them into tools, and testing these tools in selected hospitals, the process of piloting medication safety interventions, including EFN members’ contributions, is underway in 11 EU Member States. The test hospitals of most of the countries involved in the project have tested the 7 best practices (Bed dispensation 1; Bed dispensation 2; Safety vest "Do not disturb"; Medication reconciliation at admission and discharge; Medication reconciliation at discharge; Discharge medication list for patients; Sleep card), and the evaluation tool, that will serve as a basis for drafting the recommendations on medication safety, are being filled in by the participating hospitals, to find out if best practices are transferable within the EU. The EFN members concerned are being informed about these developments.

The EFN participated in the several meetings and telephone conferences organised throughout the year, to discuss on the implementation of the seven good practices and on the progresses made by the WP.

#### ↪ **Coordination meeting**

The EFN participated in the third EUNetPaS project coordination meeting held in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 18 May 2009, which included presentations from the different Work Packages and enabled the participants to evaluate the progresses made up till then and discuss on the next steps. The next coordination meeting will take place in Athens, Greece, on 29 January 2010.

## **B. CALLIOPE**

### **1. Background**



Involved as stakeholder in this network of collaborating organisations mandated with the planning and implementation of eHealth, the EFN role in [CALLIOPE – “CALL for InterOPERability”](#) is to scan the political developments on eHealth and bring EFN members experiences and best practices upfront. Some of the issues discussed are: patient summaries, e-prescribing and professional identity cards.

Initiated by 28 founding members, including 17 organisations representing national governments and eHealth competence centres, and 11 EU-level stakeholders’ organisations of health professionals, patients, health insurers and industry, this 30 months EU project (initiated in 2008 & running until December 2010) aims to produce value for decision-makers for national eHealth implementation. CALLIOPE is also collaborating closely with epSOS (“European patients Smart Open Services”) which involves piloting electronic patient records and e-prescribing in 10 EU Member States. A joint initiative, called CALlepSO, has also been developed.

### **2. Project Meetings**

In 2009, the EFN participated in several meetings organised throughout the year, along EU Member States, and other health stakeholders such as [EPF](#), [CPME](#), [PGEU](#), and [UEMS](#):

- **Paris meeting** - held on 28 May 2009, where the participants were briefed on the project work plan, major achievements, opportunities, risks and future steps.
- **Brussels meeting** - held on 1-2 September 2009, to discuss on the European Commission e-Health Interoperability Recommendation and likely response to the Commission, and on Calliope project deliverable: a “Common European eHealth Interoperability Road Map”.
- **Brussels meeting** - held on 12-13 November 2009, to discuss the progress made on the epSOS project and the eHealth Interoperability Roadmap for Europe. A draft should be made available by March 2010.

Furthermore, CALLIOPE set a stakeholder forum for discussions and direct input to Secretaries of State concerning eHealth. As member of the project, the EFN was asked to participate in this Forum as a strong political actor.

Finally, CALLIOPE project should be presented at the High Level Governance eHealth conference to take place in Barcelona, in March 2010. The next meeting of this project should be organised in February 2010, in Athens, Greece.

## C. HEALTH PROMeTHEUS

### 1. Background



Launched in January 2009 and running until 2011, this [EHMA](#) project - [Health Professional Mobility in the European Union Study \(HEALTH PROMeTHEUS\)](#), funded under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme of the European Commission (FP7), is aiming to make a significant contribution to future thinking on the movement of health professionals in the European Union, by focussing on the mobility of health professionals moving to, from and within Europe for work and other reasons. Its main objective is to address gaps in information on health professionals' mobility to be able to generate recommendations for more effective human resources' policies.

The study is seeking to better understand existing patterns of professional mobility and the organizational, contextual and personal factors that push and pull staff across borders, and is taking into account the positive and negative impacts of mobility to map the international, national and organizational initiatives that seek to manage it better.

### 2. Project Meetings

Involved in this 3 years' EU project with an advisory role, along with [DG Sanco](#), [European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies \(WHO/OBS\)](#), [Hungarian Ministry of Health](#), [IOM](#), [OECD](#), [CPME](#), [WHO](#) and [WHA](#), the EFN participated in the first advisory board meeting held on 22 July 2009, in Brussels, in which the participants were informed on the first preliminary findings that identified 5 main themes: "mobility and the EU labour market", "Accession", "impact", "relevance" and "politics and policies", and suggest that: several large countries receive from non-EU countries, and that the effects of this mobility are more visible in the source countries. The next meeting will take place on May 2010.

## D. RN4CAST

### 1. Background



Funded under the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), the "[Nurse Forecasting: Human Resources Planning in Nursing](#)" (RN4CAST) three years project, that builds on previous research made by Linda Aiken at the University of Pennsylvania, USA, showing that deployment of nursing staff greatly influences the quality of patient care, aims to link workforce planning and forecasting models in nursing, with nurse and patient outcomes in 11 European countries: Belgium, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and the UK; the USA; and three International Cooperating Partner Countries - Botswana, China and South Africa.

Launched in 2009 and running until 2011, the project objective is to gather data to explore the impact of the nursing work environment and deployment of nursing staff on nurse recruitment, retention, productivity and patient outcomes (patient safety), in order to support workforce planning in nursing, and the value of nurses in providing efficient, quality, and safe care.

### 2. Project Meetings

Involved in this EU project with an advisory role, the EFN participated in the first meeting of the project consortium, held on 11 September 2009, in Brussels, in which the participants were explained about the overall RN4CAST-study. The participants also decided on the composition and the final role of the stakeholder committee. The next meeting will take place in Madrid on 21 May 2010.

The EFN believes that the project will demonstrate the importance of education and good working conditions for effective nursing practice while adding to the skill mix/skill needs' debate. Furthermore, the EFN and its members may use this project's strong evidence towards supporting investment in Nursing and informing health policy at EU and national levels.



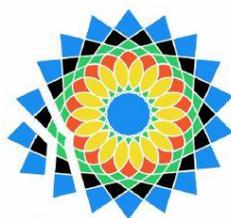
### III. BUILDING ALLIANCES

Building alliances and creating partnerships with key organisations to work on particular issues is very important for the EFN, as this is a mean to strengthening civil society in the policy-making process to achieve successful policy outcomes. In 2009, the EFN continued to prioritise this alliances building and good working relations with key EU stakeholders, built up throughout the years, such as: World Health Organisation (WHO), International Council of Nurses (ICN), European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), European Health Policy Forum (EUHPF), Health First Europe (HFE), European Patients' Forum (EPF), European Health Management Association (EHMA); European Medicines Agency (EMA). Therefore, the EFN organised and/or participated in meetings with other EU health professionals/stakeholders exploring common synergies on health issues that form the basis for the collective lobbying under the EFN Strategic Lobby Plan 2009-2013 and agreed EFN Position Statements.

As example, in 2009, the EFN worked closely with:

#### A. EFN OBSERVERS

##### 1. International Council of Nurses (ICN)



Having an observer status in the [ICN](#) meetings, the EFN, as well as its members, participated in the [24<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Congress of the International Council of Nurses \(ICN\)](#), organised in Durban, South Africa - which brought together more than 5.000 nurses from 134 countries, and showcased the key role nursing plays in leading the way to healthier nations, and shared nursing knowledge and leadership across specialties, cultures and countries. The EFN participated actively in the congress, by making a [presentation on the "Synergy between the European Directive 36 and the Bologna Process"](#), in the symposium on Advocacy, lobbying and legislation. Finally, the EFN participated in the meeting of the [Council of National Representatives \(CNR\)](#) - ICN's governing body – and followed closely the debate of ICN constitution and membership structure, which decisions can also have an impact on the EFN Constitution & Internal Regulation. As a follow-up of this meeting, the EFN established a "Constitutional Committee" to review the EFN Constitution & Internal Regulation.

##### 2. World Health Organisation (WHO)

###### a. WHO Regional Committee (WHO RC)

Having an observer status in WHO Regional Committee meetings, the EFN participated in the [59<sup>th</sup> session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe](#) that took place in Copenhagen, Denmark, in September 2009. The delegates from the 53 WHO European Member States discussed about protecting health in times of economic crisis: the role of health systems (including social determinants of health) ([Resolution EUR/RC59/R3](#)); the governance of health within the WHO European Region; health workforce policies in the WHO European Region, including the support for a global code of practice for international recruitment of health personnel ([Resolution EUR/RC59/R4](#)); and the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) in the WHO European Region ([Resolution EUR/RC59/R5](#)). The EFN took this opportunity to lobby the EU Health Ministers on the Nursing Education (as some countries, such as Italy, Slovakia, and Romania, were discussing downgrading the nursing education) and the EU workforce for Health (as follow-up of the EC consultation process on the green paper on EU Workforce for Health, to which the EFN contributed). The next meeting will be held on 13-16 September 2010, Moscow, Russia.



The EFN also participated in the [WHO RC High Level meeting on "Health in Times of Global Economic Crisis"](#), organised in Oslo - Norway, on 1-2 April 2009, in cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Norwegian Directorate for Health to discuss the global economic crisis, and how the health sector can help mitigate negative health and social impacts and counter the economic downturn. From a nursing perspective, nurses and nursing are the professional sector where investments are urgently needed, especially as regards primary health care, skill mix and skill needs, and retention of nurses. The EFN took this opportunity to present the EFN concerns and national challenges regarding the financial crisis, and to stress the importance of stakeholder approach. Governments do not only need to think "about", they need to think "with", next to developing policies with a gender approach.

#### b. European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations (EFNNMA)

Having an observer status in EFNNMA, the EFN participated in the [13<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations and WHO \(EFNNMA\)](#) held in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 4-5 June 2009. The meeting focused on several key issues, such as: Health workforce policies in Europe (having as a background the [WHO Regional Committee for Europe Resolution on Health workforce policies in the European Region](#), and the [Tallinn Charter “Health Systems for Health and Wealth”](#)); WHO draft code of practice on the international recruitment of health personnel and the challenges for nursing and midwifery; Models of good practice in recruitment, retention and migration. This was a good opportunity for the EFN to share EFN members’ key concerns on the discussed items. The EFN used the outcomes and shared information in its daily lobby work at EU level. The EFNNMA 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum will take place in Bulgaria on 29-30 April 2010.

#### 3. European Nursing Students Association (ENSA)



The EFN was invited to participate in the [European Nursing Students Association \(ENSA\) Annual General Meeting 2009](#) that took place in Berlin, Germany, on 8-11 July 2009, and to make a [presentation](#) on the current financial crisis and how it has or will affect the welfare and the public health in Europe. Based on the discussions, and on EFN presentation, ENSA [drafted a statement](#) on the financial crisis and its impact on the quality of nurse education. ENSA is an organisation for cooperation between national nursing student organisations or colleges of nursing in Europe, which brings together European nursing students and representatives from all countries across Europe. Having an observer status within EFN General Assemblies, the EFN supports ENSA work and encourages the EFN members to support their nursing students to participate in the activities of the ENSA network.

### B. EU STAKEHOLDERS

#### 1. European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

As member of [EPHA](#), the EFN has been strengthening its involvement in EPHA by actively participating and sharing information on EFN work with other EU health stakeholders, also members of EPHA, in the monthly Policy Coordination Meetings (PCMs) (with active associated Working Groups), Annual General Assembly, and other meetings organised by EPHA and taking place in Brussels.

For EFN, there is an added value to be a member of EPHA - which aims to promote and protect the health interests of all EU citizens and to strengthen the dialogue between the EU institutions, citizens and NGOs -, and to participate in these meetings, as EFN priorities are reflected in EPHA lobby priorities (EPHA position is in line with EFN position on EPHA/EFN related key issues) and EPHA supports EFN in achieving its mission and objectives. In 2009, the EFN participated in several meetings, such as:

- **Policy Coordination Meetings** – which are very valuable as the members are briefed on the latest EU developments and can share information on specific topics.
- **Working Groups** - Following the EU agenda and the importance of the policy topic for public Health, EPHA facilitated Working Group meetings with members to discuss on a specific issue in depth and prepare an advocacy strategy. In 2009, EPHA set up a **special interest group on Health Systems**, in which the EFN is involved, and which aims to focus on two dimensions, related to two EU Directives: the patient mobility and the professional mobility. Within these two topics, EPHA **will mainly focus on different aspects** such as: standards, information, e-health, and impact assessment.

EPHA also lobbied on behalf of EFN on the [European Parliament Health and Consumer Intergroup](#) (meetings bringing together representatives from the European Parliament, European Commission officials, health organisations, and representatives from the EU Member States to discuss on key health issues), which unfortunately, was not kept. Instead we achieved to have five health sessions a year to discuss health related issues.

Finally, EPHA input to **EU consultation processes held in 2009**, such as in the Green Paper on the European Workforce for Health, included EFN and its members’ views.

#### 2. European Health Policy Forum (EUHPF)

As a member of the [European Health Policy Forum](#), the EFN was actively involved in this Forum in 2009 by providing input to the relevant questions addressed, and participating in the meetings organised in Brussels.

As a collective and informal stakeholder group (which Secretariat is run by EPHA) including the European Commission DG Sanco, the pan-European members from health NGOs, professional organisations, health industry stakeholders and other interested NGOs, the EUHPF aims to bring together umbrella organisations representing stakeholders in the health sector to review the EU work in various areas of public health and adopt recommendations on them, and to ensure that the EU's health strategy is open, transparent and responds to the public concerns. In 2009, the EUHPF priorities were reviewed and several political letters written to the Council of Ministers to address their key concerns.

In the [meeting organised on 14 May 2009](#) to discuss the future work and activities of the Forum (including the strategic priorities and work plan 2009/2010; Open Letter on the economic crisis and health; and the implementation of the EU health strategy), the EFN made a presentation on the impact of the current economic crisis on health, and stressed the severity of the situation while reminding that the [effects of the crisis on health](#) were evident in many EU countries.

The EFN also participated in the [meeting held on 16 October 2009](#), in Brussels, in which the participants were briefed on: [the Council Working Party on Public Health](#) representing a new mechanism for "strategic cooperation" on the EU health agenda, focusing on implementing the Health Strategy and particularly looking at issues of quality, performance of health systems, and methods of evaluation; eHealth; the work undertaken on encouraging internet based patient feedback, future work in supporting the development of a Joint Action on the topic of Quality of Healthcare, and H1N1 actions. Furthermore, comments were made on some key concerns, including the EFN concerns on H1N1 impact on the workforce, and the EFN members input regarding H1N1 National Strategies.

As these meetings are important, the EFN renewed its membership to the EUHPF.

### 3. Health First Europe (HFE)

As full member of [Health First Europe](#) - a non-profit alliance of patients, healthcare workers, academics and healthcare experts and the medical technology industry - and member of the Advisory Committee, the EFN is working closely with HFE.

As an example of the activities undertaken in 2009, reference can be made to:

- **Exhibition** on "[the future of Health](#)" organised in the European Parliament, from 6 to 9 January 2009, under the patronage of the MEP Elizabeth Lynne, to which the EFN took part. The aim of this event was to raise awareness of the EU on the quality of healthcare and safety of patients and healthcare workers in Europe.
- **Roundtables:**
  - "[Patient Safety in the EU](#)", meeting co-hosted by MEPs Liz Lynne (ALDE) and Amalia Sartori (EPP), that took place on 17 March 2009, in order to discuss on the European Commission Communication and Council Recommendations on Patient Safety and HCAs. The EFN took this opportunity to express its concerns about ECDC lack of stakeholder approach and top-down policy-making.
  - "[From Nice to Lisbon: an important step for EU Health?](#)" this high-level roundtable organised at the European Parliament, co-hosted by MEP Nessa Childers (Ireland, S&D) and MEP Antonio Correia de Campos (Portugal, S&D) was held on 17 November 2009, on the occasion of HFE 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary and was attended by over 40 participants with an interest in EU Health policy. The discussion centred on cross-border collaboration, mobility, quality standards, and patient safety. Under the Lisbon Treaty and article 168 on Public Health (ex article 152), Health protection is empowered in being implemented in all Union policies and activities. The EFN took this opportunity to flag-up nurses' key role in healthcare systems and advocate for the importance of preserving a sufficient number of high quality educated nursing workforce.
- **HFE General Assembly** that took place on 17 November 2009, and included updates on HFE key activities for 2009 and working plan for 2010, a discussion on the HFE membership that is expanding, and John Bowis, former MEP, unanimously appointed as HFE new Honorary President
- **Advisory Committee meetings/Telephone conferences** organised throughout the year to discuss and decide on key issues, such as: HFE membership; input to consultation processes; eHealth; Patient Safety, and quality of care.

### 4. European Patients' Forum (EPF)

The [European Patients' Forum](#) and EFN have been working closely together on some key EU lobby issues, such as patient safety and social cohesion funds, and took part in different panels where key EU legislative initiatives were discussed. The EFN also participated in [the final conference of EPF project VALUE+](#) -

Promoting Patients' Involvement in EU Health Projects and Policy -, held in Gothenburg – Sweden, on 09-10 December 2009. The conference was the opportunity to present Value+ findings and deliverables as well as to discuss patient involvement in other contexts than projects.

#### **5. European Health Management Association (EHMA)**

As a member of this [Pan European Organisation](#), the EFN have been working with EHMA on some issues EHMA is willing to lead the political debate: patient safety and the workforce for health. Therefore, EFN participated in some of the events organised by EHMA, such as the [roundtables](#) on:

- "[Patient Safety and Quality Standards](#)", organised in Brussels on 22 January 2009, to discuss about the Communication and a proposal for a Council Recommendation on Patient Safety.
- "[Green Paper on Workforce for Health](#)", organised in Brussels on 13 February 2009, to discuss the final version of the Green Paper, launched in December 2008.
- "[Equivalence of Training Skills in the European Healthcare Workforce](#)", held in Brussels on 13 July 2009, to discuss the equivalence of training/skills in the European healthcare workforce, with a particular focus on doctors and nurses.

#### **6. European Medicines Agency (EMA)**

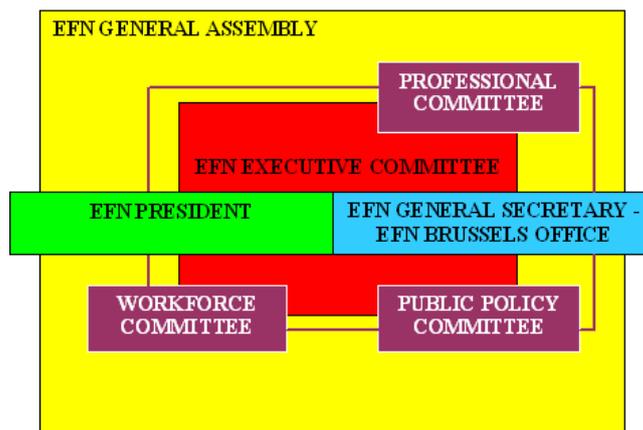
As member of the [EMA](#) Working Group with Healthcare Professionals' Organisations, the EFN has been involved in the regular meetings held by EMA. In this policy environment, health care professions, including ESNO, meet patient and consumer organisations to advance policies. The main lobby outcomes relate to the transparency policy of the EMA and the engagement of civil society in the process of 'information to patients'. Consequently, the new Commission decided handed over the portfolio of the EMA to DG Sanco, instead of DG Enterprise, an achievement for civil society.



## IV. EFN GOVERNANCE

### A. EFN STRUCTURE

The EFN governance structure consists of the General Assembly, which includes 32 National Nurses Associations, supported by the Executive Committee, the Professional, Workforce and Public Policy Committees, and the EFN Brussels Office.



### B. EFN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Being the EFN governing body, the General Assembly meets two times a year, to discuss the important issues related to the EFN lobby work that can influence the nurses and the nursing profession at EU and National levels, to discuss and endorse key Policy and Position Statements, and to work on several EU projects.

The EFN General Assembly is constituted by:

- ↳ **Full Members** - drawn from the National Nurses' Associations from the twenty-seven EU Member States plus Croatia, Norway, Iceland and Switzerland).
- ↳ **Associate Members** - European Specialist Nurses Organisations (ESNO) – with one representative taking part in EFN General Assemblies; and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- ↳ **Observers** - International Council of Nurses (ICN); World Health Organisation (WHO); and the European Nursing Students Association (ENSA).

To view the full list of the EFN Members, updated on regular basis, please visit the EFN Website: [http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/about\\_members.html](http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/about_members.html)

In 2009, the EFN General Assembly met on 16-17 April 2009, in Brussels, for the Spring General Assembly organised by the EFN Brussels Office, and on 1-2 October 2009, in Sweden, for the Autumn General Assembly, organised by the Swedish Association of Health Professionals, to discuss and decide on the following key points:

1. **EFN input to the European Commission Consultation Processes** - Throughout the year, the EFN members were consulted internally to give input and to support the EFN contribution to the consultation processes launched by the European Commission, such as: the Green Paper on EU Workforce for Health. See EFN Website: [http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/networks\\_eu\\_input.html](http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/networks_eu_input.html)
2. **EFN Policy & Position Statements** - In 2009, the EFN members approved the Policy and Position Statements on: Council Recommendations on Patient Safety and HCAI; Green Paper on the EU Workforce for Health; eHealth; and EU Quality and Safety Standards. All the EFN Policy & Position Statements are available at: [http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/core\\_pstatement.html](http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/core_pstatement.html).

3. **EFN Policy Dialogue Papers** - In 2009, the EFN members approved the Policy Dialogue documents on: EU Quality and Safety Standards; Skills Needs Mix in the EU Health Sector; and EFN Members evaluating the Implementation of DIR 36.
4. **EFN Tour de Table** - The EFN members have the opportunity during the 'Tour de Table', organised during the EFN General Assemblies, to share national key developments, challenges, concerns and priorities. The outcomes of the discussion can lead to more focussed agenda setting within the EU. The exchange of best practices between the EFN members can be a support for national developments. In 2009, the EFN Members discussed on: the financial/economic crisis all over the EU (EFN General Assembly – April 2009, Brussels), and eHealth (EFN General Assembly – October 2009, Sweden).
5. **EU Projects** - The EFN is involved in the following EU projects – EUNetPaS, CALLIOPE, RN4CAST, HEALTH PROMeTHEUS (*For further information see the Projects' pages of this report*).
6. **EFN budget** – The EFN budget for 2010-2012 was discussed and endorsed during the EFN General Assembly, October 2009, Sweden.

### C. EFN COMMITTEES

Constituted in 2006, in order to prepare and facilitate the EFN lobby process towards the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Regional Committee of the World Health Organisation, the three EFN Committees meet two times a year, during the EFN General Assemblies, to discuss and produce recommendations to the General Assembly on the steps forward to achieve concrete outcomes related to specific issues:

1. **Professional Committee:** In 2009, the Professional Committee lead by Branka Rimac, from Croatia, discussed and provided recommendations to the EFN General Assembly on: the Implementation of Directive 36; Synergy DIR 36, Bologna & European Qualifications Framework (EQF); Continuous Professional Development; EUNetPaS Project (WP2 – Education & Training); and Social Cohesion Funds.
2. **Workforce Committee:** In 2009, the Workforce Committee, lead by Ioannis Leontiou, from Cyprus, discussed and provided recommendations to the EFN General Assembly on: the Green Paper on EU Workforce for Health; Skill Mix & Skill Needs; EUNetPaS Project (WP1 – Patient Safety Culture); and Social Cohesion Funds.
3. **Public Policy Committee:** In 2009, the Public Policy Committee, lead by Unni Hembre, from Norway, discussed and provided recommendations to the EFN General Assembly on: EU Recommendations on Patient Safety and Healthcare Associated Infections; Patients Rights in Cross-border Healthcare Directive; Quality and Safety Standards; EUNetPaS Project (WP4); Social Cohesion Funds; and eHealth.

Furthermore, following the outcomes of the [ICN Council of National Representatives \(CNR\) meeting during the ICN Congress in June 2009](#), in Durban, South Africa, on the discussion on the ICN Membership & Inclusiveness, the EFN General Assembly decided to establish an **EFN Constitutional Working Group**, consisting of: Branka Rimac (Croatia), Annette Kennedy (Ireland), Per Godtland Kristensen (Norway), Dorota Kilanska (Poland), Antonio Manuel da Silva (Portugal), Maximo Gonzalez (Spain), Maura Buchanan (UK), and Paul de Raeye (EFN General Secretary), to review the EFN Constitution & Internal Regulation, and propose changes, where needed, in order to make EFN more inclusive.

### D. EFN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The EFN Executive Committee is constituted of seven members: President, Vice-president, Treasurer and four delegates elected by and from the full EFN Members National Nurses' Associations. They meet at least twice a year (in between and prior to each General Assembly) in order to discuss important issues for EFN and to prepare recommendations for the following General Assembly; and to take further the General Assembly decisions. An extraordinary Executive Committee meeting also takes place the day before the General Assembly, to set up the last recommendations for the General Assembly.

In 2009, the Executive Committee Members met four times: on 16 January in Brussels and on 1<sup>st</sup> July in Durban, South Africa, for their regular meetings; and on 15 April in Brussels and on 30 September in Stockholm, for their extraordinary meetings.

At the Autumn EFN General Assembly held on 1-2 October 2009, in Stockholm, Sweden, re-elected the following members of the EFN Executive Committee: President - Ms Grete Christensen (Denmark); Treasurer – Mr. Pierre Théraulaz (Switzerland) and two members of the Executive Committee: Mr. Thierry Lothaire (Belgium), and Dr. Peter Carter (UK).

As a result, the new Executive Committee is constituted by:

<b>President:</b>	Ms Grete Christensen	Danish Nurses Organisation, <i>Denmark</i>
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Mr. Ioannis Leontiou	Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Associations, <i>Cyprus</i>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mr. Pierre Théraulaz	Association Suisse des Infirmières et Infirmiers, <i>Switzerland</i>
<b>Four Executive Committee Members:</b>		
	▪ Mr. Thierry Lothaire	Fédération Nationale des Infirmier(e)s de Belgique, <i>Belgium</i>
	▪ Ms Branka Rimac	Croatian Nurses Association, <i>Croatia</i>
	▪ Ms Unni Hembre	Norwegian Nurses Organisation, <i>Norway</i>
	▪ Dr. Peter Carter	Royal College of Nursing, <i>United Kingdom</i>

## **E. EFN BRUSSELS OFFICE**

The EFN Brussels Office, consisting of the General Secretary, the Secretary and the Policy Advisor (that joined the EFN team in January 2009), and supported by EFN consultants (Accountant, Social Secretariat, IT managers, Translator, and Lawyer), focused on setting proactively the EFN political agenda, by influencing the major policy initiatives having an impact on nurses and the nursing profession, and supporting its members by providing up to date information (through the EFN Updates, Press Releases, Briefing Notes, etc.) and engaging the EFN members in the Brussels lobby process (through contribution to the European Elections, consultation processes, and participation in key EU meetings). As a result, the gap between EU and National policy making became closer and the EFN members became more visible at EU level.



## V. COMMUNICATION

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For the EFN, it is essential that its members have the necessary information, knowledge and experience to take informed decisions on the key issues for the nursing profession, not only during the EFN General Assemblies, but also when an item is being discussed and/or need urgent decision. In order to be as reactive and proactive as possible, the EFN Brussels Office regularly provides the EFN members with up-to-date information on the most recent items discussed at EU level, through: updates, briefing notes, press releases, position statements, speeches, and articles. Most of these documents are made available to the public in English and French, via the EFN Website: [www.efnweb.eu](http://www.efnweb.eu).

### ➤ **The documentation to the General Assembly & Executive Committee**

Prior to each General Assembly and Executive Committee meeting, the EFN members/Executive Committee are provided with the relevant documents for the discussions/issues to be addressed during the respective meetings. It is crucial for the EFN members to receive accurate and updated information in order to take informed decisions and make recommendations on the key issues for nurses and the nursing profession, as it is important that EFN members' knowledge and experience are shared amongst each other and with their key national & EU stakeholders. These documents are available only to the EFN Members.

### ➤ **Monthly EFN Update**

Once a month, the EFN publishes an [Update](#) that makes reference to the main information for nurses and the nursing profession within the European Union and to the key issues to influence in the European Institutions. These Updates keep the EFN Members, and other key EU health alliances, informed about the EFN policies, actions and up-to-date European initiatives.

### ➤ **EFN Briefing Notes**

The [EFN Briefing Notes](#), available only for the EFN members, provide the members with specific information on key lobby issues that may influence national policies. In 2009, the EFN has published several Briefing Notes on key items such as: the Green Paper on EU Workforce for Health; Council Recommendations on Patient Safety; Patients Rights in Cross border Healthcare; and the proposed Cross Border Health Directive.

### ➤ **EFN Press Releases**

The [EFN Press Releases](#) provide the EFN members, and other key EU health stakeholders, with information on key issues the EFN believes it is important to share, at that specific moment. In 2009, the EFN published Press Releases on several key issues: the exhibition on "the future of Health" organised by Health First Europe (HFE) in January, in which the EFN took part; Bologna Summit; Financial and Economic Crisis; Bridging Courses for Polish Nurses.

### ➤ **EFN Position Statements**

The [EFN Position Statements](#), highlighting the EFN/EFN members views on specific issues, and approved by the EFN General Assembly, are crucial for the EFN lobby work with different the EU Institutions and EU Stakeholders, and to support the EFN Members in their daily lobby work. Therefore, in 2009, the EFN members approved Position Statements on: Council Recommendations on Patient Safety and HCAI; Green Paper on the EU Workforce for Health; eHealth; and EU Quality and Safety Standards.

### ➤ **EFN Website**

The [EFN website](#) is used as a key communication tool to disseminate information to the EFN Members, the EU Health Stakeholders, and the public in general. Updated on regular basis, the EFN Website reflects the ongoing activities of EFN on the important issues related to the nurses and the nursing profession.



## VI. CONCLUSION

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The EFN is becoming a big family with the main focus on EU legislation and exchange of best practices between Member States. Therefore, it is essential to support, to listen, and to encourage each other. It is not about prestige, it is not about who is the best, it is about our collective interests, views and actions, and it is about our collective concerns and challenges. As we all know we cannot change the world on our own. But we can focus and work together, in synergy, on specific actions that can make the difference for the nurses and citizens of Europe. Building up and strengthening links and relationships with key EU stakeholders and policy makers to establish further and maintaining EFN's reliability as a key partner and actor in the EU health policy-making process, by providing positive, accurate and constructive ideas to the decision-makers at EU level, led to successful policy developments and outcomes.

However, the EFN acknowledged that the economic and financial crisis of 2008-2009 has left a bitter taste for Healthcare in the EU. Although Europe is recovering, the true impacts are just getting realised with reduced budgets, pay cuts, loss of nursing posts, and unfortunately dilution of the quality of our workforce. In 2009 EFN has observed a worrying discourse unfolding which needs to be monitored. Providing high quality nurse education, at University level, is identified as costly while its potential impact is long-term and thus not immediately visible. The Member States are struggling with the implementation of Directive 2005/36/EC (DIR36) and through their MEPs are placing pressure on the Commission to reflect on and potentially re-evaluate the utility of such legislation. The healthcare sector is realised by EU politicians, including Commission President JM Barroso, as a major source of employment for the huge numbers of unemployed unskilled workers. With 2011 coming up as the European Year of Volunteering, the Brussels lobby scene is concerned that the health professional workforce may be asked to take a back seat in policy-making; EFN and its alliance will make sure this concern will not be realised. Therefore, unity, speaking with one voice in the nursing community is essential to safeguard quality and safety.

The work that EFN and its Members have invested during 2009 in protecting and promoting nurses and nursing as one of the founding pillars of Europe's healthcare systems will be carried forward into 2010. The upcoming work of DG Internal Market on the implementation of DIR36; of DG Sanco on follow-up of the Green Paper on the EU Health Workforce; of the European Parliament, Council and upcoming Presidencies on issues of Cross-border Healthcare, eHealth, Safety, and Quality are all coming together in the coming year. EFN and its Members are ready for action and remain vigilant and actively involved to ensure political decision making takes into account the views of the Nursing community for a better, safer, and more equitable health service in Europe.

2009 was a very active and successful year in moving towards achieving our objectives and mission! In 2010, the European Federation of Nurses Associations will continue its hard work to represent and strengthen the EU nurses and the nursing profession, and to make sure that the nurses' voice is heard at EU level, and their concerns are at the centre of the EU health developments.



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The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) was established in 1971. The EFN represents over 32 National Nurses Associations and its work has an effect on the daily work of 6 million nurses throughout the European Union and Europe. The EFN is the independent voice of the nursing profession and its mission is to strengthen the status and practice of the profession of nursing for the benefit of the health of the citizens and the interests of nurses in the EU & Europe.

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