



Activity Report

European Federation of Nurses' Associations
Working Year 2022



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Abbreviations

▪ AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
▪ APN	Advanced Practice Nurse
▪ BeWell	BluePrint alliance for a future health workforce strategy on digital and green skills
▪ CPME	Standing Committee of European Doctors
▪ DG	Directorate General
▪ DG CONNECT	European Commission Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology
▪ DG GROW	European Commission Directorate-General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
▪ DG SANTE	European Commission Directorate General for Health and Food Safety
▪ DIR36/55	Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC & 2013/55/EU)
▪ ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
▪ EFN	European Federation of Nurses' Associations
▪ EHR	Electronic Health Records
▪ ENRF	European Nursing Research Foundation
▪ EU	European Union
▪ H2020	Horizon 2020 programme (EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation)
▪ ICN	International Council of Nurses
▪ ILO	International Labour Organization
▪ IMMUNION	Improving IMMunisation cooperation in the European UNION (EU project)
▪ InteropEHRate (IEHR)	Interoperable EHRs at user edge (H2020 project)
▪ MEP(s)	Member(s) of the European Parliament
▪ NNA(s)	National Nurses Association(s)
▪ NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
▪ OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
▪ OSHA / EU-OSHA	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
▪ PGEU	Pharmaceutical Group of European Union
▪ Smart4Health (S4H)	Citizen-Centred EU-EHR Exchange for Personalised Health (H2020 project)
▪ SOLP	EFN Strategic & Operational Lobby Plan
▪ WHO	World Health Organization
▪ WG	Working group
▪ WP	Work Package

Executive Summary

2022 was another year marked by unprecedented challenges with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the ongoing underinvestment in nursing. Another year, that has placed our nurses under an enormous pressure. With the human tragedy and social and economic impact of war and decades of underinvestment in healthcare systems, the EFN continued in 2022 to relentlessly lobby the EU Institutions and key EU stakeholders on behalf of its members to ensure every opportunity was embraced to reflect nurses' voices to shape EU developments in line with the [EFN SOLP 2021-2027](#).

With the impact of the war on **Ukraine** particularly on neighbouring EFN countries and across the region, the EFN [support](#) focused on nurses at the forefront taking care of those in need, ensuring access to healthcare and [promoting](#) peace through a [unified](#) nursing response. These very difficult times have demonstrated how international cooperation and solidarity are vital to support nurses and all healthcare professionals at the frontline, and how creating resilient healthcare systems is a fundamental starting point to support nurses and healthcare professionals. One example of ensuring a unified nursing response is the EFN, ICN and the Polish Nurses Association work to [support](#) the development of bridging courses in Poland for the Ukrainian nurses' refugees. This crucial development focused on the implementation of the provisions in Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications ([Directive 2013/55/EU](#)), Article 31 (paragraph 7), and is built with reference to the achievement of the 8 key competences of a general nurse, taking also into account [the EFN Competency Framework](#). EFN believes this is an important step as this will not only help the Ukraine nurses to be able to work as a registered nurse in Poland, but this will also strengthen the leadership and development of the nursing profession as part of the reconstruction of the Ukrainian healthcare eco-system after the end of the hostilities. At EU level, the EFN was appointed as co-chair of the **Coalition on "Supporting Ukraine, neighbouring EU Member States and Moldova"** together with the European Cancer Organisation (ECO) and the European Reference Networks (ERN). This network aims to be an interactive tool to engage civil society and encourage discussion on public health issues, share knowledge and best practices, in addition to inform on the ongoing activities undertaken by the European Commission to support to Ukrainian patients and health professionals, including the neighbouring countries hosting Ukrainian refugees.

In addition, the EFN continued to support the effective evolution of the nursing profession in response to patient needs and care demands in line with the [Directive 2013/55/EU](#), the [EFN Workforce Matrix 3+1](#), and the EFN Working Group on **Advanced Practice Nurse (APN)** currently working on analysing data collected from EFN members as a meta-analysis. The final report will be made available by mid-2023 which builds on the [EFN Policy Statement on EU Advanced Practice Nursing](#) and a five-year short/medium/long term strategy on APN (incorporating educational, workforce and quality and safety aspects) approved by the EFN members at the April 2022 EFN General Assembly. This work will continue in 2023.

Furthermore, COVID-19 has shown that our healthcare ecosystems, thought to be among the strongest in the world, were very fragile and that the European society and systems are not resilient enough. The healthcare and public health systems need to become the cornerstone of resilience. The EU needs to invest in a 'health in all policies' approach, and not reduce health as being only a matter of healthcare. Incorporating nurses' voices and expertise, EFN members approved the [EFN Policy Statement on Building and Sustaining a Resilient EU Nursing Workforce in the EU and Europe](#), at the EFN General Assembly in October 2022, calling on the European Institutions for an ambitious investment in building a resilient nursing workforce in the coming years. The EFN will continue focusing on this development in 2023.

Another longstanding issue for the EFN members is the **ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations** and the data collected, which accuracy/reliability have had a negative impact on national workforce policies' development and workforce planning. ILO started in 2022 the revision of ISCO-08 and the EFN in partnership with ICN have been working together to strengthen and update the Classification through [contact with](#) ILO representatives. The EFN and ICN formally requested amendments to the ILO definitions and guidance and agreed to work with ILO to provide nursing advice and bring forward proposals to amend the Classification. The EFN members are encouraged to check the number of nurses reported by their governments in the [WHO State of the World's Nursing report](#), and to highlight any discrepancies to further support EFN and ICN in this effort. As a first step in this process, the EFN members approved an [EFN Policy Statement on ILO Guidance of Nursing Profession Data](#), at their October 2022 General Assembly calling on ILO to make sure that the new ISCO version builds on the recent ILO report on the General Survey on the International Standards related to Nursing Personnel. This work will continue in 2023.

With ongoing health challenges at EU level, it is extremely important to develop tools and mechanisms that are fit for purpose to support the development, planning and implementation of the strategic policy agenda. The new European Commission's initiative – [European Care Strategy](#), is an example of the incorporation of frontline experience that is anticipated to respond to the challenges of ageing and rising unmet care needs in the EU and Europe. As the largest group of the healthcare professions who can translate policy into practice, it is important that nurses have a voice and an active role in this Commission initiative. In line with the Strategy, the EFN members approved at its General Assembly in October 2022, an [EFN Policy Statement on European Care Strategy](#), calling for the strategy to address the nursing workforce key challenges, including shortage, working conditions, ageing, thereby contributing to the design of the Council Recommendations.

Another core area of relevance for the nurses is **digitalisation**, which continued to be one of the EFN key priorities in 2022, based on the fact that, in the healthcare sector, digital tools can be of added value and a great support in nurses' daily work. However, this can only be achieved through their involvement in the co-creation and co-design of these digital tools and in the digitisation of the healthcare systems/sector. Aligned with this, the EFN had been a key partner in two **EU projects** on Electronic Health Records: [InteropEHRate](#) that came to an end in September 2022, and [Smart4Health](#), coming to an end in February 2023; and is also a key partner in [BeWell](#), a 4-year EU project that started in July 2022 with a view to upskilling and reskilling the nursing workforce to ensure the delivery of quality care to patients and enable them to be better prepared to face future challenges. This project also aims to develop a green and digital skills strategy for the health ecosystem that can be implemented at a local, regional, national, and ultimately at the European level through the [Pact for Skills](#). To do this, the project will build comprehensive curricula and training programmes that will target all professionals within the health workforce, including for health students, health professionals (nurses, doctors, operators, managers) and professionals of emerging occupations. The EFN will monitor that the project deliverables comply with [Directive 2013/55/EU](#).

Over the year, the EFN continued to be very active on **vaccination**, through the [Coalition for Vaccination](#), that brings together European associations of healthcare workers, and relevant students' associations in the field. The Coalition is aiming to support the delivery of accurate information to the public, to combat myths around vaccines and vaccination, and to exchange best practices on vaccination, through advocacy campaigns, such as the [Immunisation Week Campaign](#), undertaken in April 2022 - **EFN posts reached more than 30.000 people** with 650 interactions with EFN. The EFN is also a key partner in the EU project 'Improving IMMunisation cooperation in the European UNION' ([IMMUNION](#)), working closely with the Coalition for Vaccination (this two-year project comes to an end in April 2023).

The EFN also continued to monitor the policy and political developments on [Antimicrobial Resistance](#) (AMR) as one of the current greatest challenges, representing a real and concrete threat to the society. The increase in antimicrobial resistance is the result of years of misinformation that have led to the spread of this AMR. Nurses are [central allies](#) in prevention and are recognised as the most trustful healthcare professionals in disseminating reliable information. In addition, the EFN is very engaged and committed to supporting the work of the European Commission in relation to global vaccination and AMR. As in previous years, the EFN participated in some key EU meetings and took part in the [European Antibiotic Awareness Day](#) held on 18 November, through its [social media channels](#) raising awareness on this key policy topic. **The EFN posts reached 8.000 people** and more than 200 people reacted to EFN posts.

Building on the ongoing developments on Planetary Health, and following on the EU plans to reach targets by 2030, in addition to more concrete actions being put in place to encourage stakeholders and citizens to do more on planetary health, the EFN continued to work on **Nursing Planetary Health**. This is a topic high on EFN policy agenda, as nurses can play a leading role in implementing planetary health from the individual and organisational (behaviour change) to the global level (policies and governance). Planetary health proposes an interdisciplinary, holistic and comprehensive approach to analyse and respond to the health impacts on our planet that are mediated by social, economic and political factors. Nurses have a [key role](#) to play in the co-design and implementation of [planetary health solutions](#). Therefore, the EFN members approved at the EFN April 2022 General Assembly a new [EFN Policy Statement Nursing Planetary Health](#) (reviewed in October 2022 to include the nursing education component), to support EFN lobby next to the EU institutions on Climate Change and other global environmental changes such as the [Green Deal](#), as well as the health stakeholders and industries, for them to engage with the nurses in co-design an EU Nursing Planetary Health Approach.

With the nurses leaving the profession in significant numbers, it is crucial that the developed EU health policies reflect the nurses' expertise to better structure fit-for-purpose solutions and initiatives in the healthcare sector. We still have many challenges ahead affecting the nurses' frontline throughout the EU, however, the EFN and its members work jointly to bring

to the attention of the EU policy makers at national and EU level the nurses' EU added value impacting on health and social care ecosystems, namely on nursing education, workforce and quality & safety, including digitalisation. In 2023, the EFN will continue to ensure every opportunity is taken to make sure nurses' voices are represented and heard at EU level.

Bridging the gap between citizens and EU legislation, the EFN members are central to the loop of advocacy and information, supporting the translation of EU policies to national and regional contexts. High quality healthcare is key to the safety and well-being of EU citizens and, especially in times of crisis, measures must be taken to ensure that nurses and other health professionals are properly equipped to deliver it.

Foreword

Dear EFN Members,
Dear Colleagues

On reflection, 2022 has been another very difficult year particularly for our frontline nurses. With the ongoing impact of COVID-19, the human tragedy and economic and social impact of the war in Ukraine, and the ongoing neglect and underinvestment in the nursing profession that has directly impacted on the health and well-being of all European Citizens, it has been a turbulent, stressful and challenging year.



As a European organisation of nurses, the EFN members have relentlessly worked to [support](#) those who are at the forefront taking care of our most vulnerable, saving lives and protecting the health, peace and prosperity of all global citizens. On behalf of the EFN, we would like to thank all our National Nursing Associations, in particular the EFN members from the neighbouring countries, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Moldova, and their nurse members who continued to provide care and support to all those in need with extraordinary courage and professionalism. More than ever, we have seen how international cooperation and solidarity is vital to support nurses and all healthcare professionals on the frontline. In these difficult times, creating a resilient healthcare systems is a fundamental starting point to support nurses and healthcare professionals at the frontline.

The complex health challenges across the EU make it imperative to develop innovative and accessible European tools and mechanisms to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the solutions across the health and social care ecosystem. The EFN and our 36 National Nurses Associations, have had a very busy agenda over the last months, monitoring the many issues and challenges facing nurses and the nursing profession at all levels. It is appreciated that the EU has understood the need to listen to those who are at the frontline, namely through the new European Commission's initiative - [European Care Strategy](#), which is anticipated to respond to the challenges of ageing and rising unmet care needs in the EU and Europe.

As part of the European Commission's ambition to build a greener and more digital Europe, the [2022 State of the Union address](#) was a good opportunity to raise the role of human-centric digital transformation in advancing Europe's digital decade targets by 2030, with digital skills being an important area which requires investment and progress. As nurses, this is a priority topic to continue be taken forward, as digitalisation of healthcare is completely transforming not only the way healthcare is provided by nurses and other healthcare professionals, but also enhancing the impact of the clinical experience and outcomes of patients. The EFN is committed to supporting the European Commission's ambition and ensuring digitalisation of healthcare remains a priority on the political agenda by ensuring nurses' voice are taken into account in the development of policies that are fit-for-purpose for the end-user.

"We have all recognised over the last two years how important the role of nurses is in our health systems and in our society. We have talked a lot about a more resilient society and nurses are playing a fundamental role in this resilience of our societies", according to Commissioner Schmit, DG Employment, at the EFN April 2022 General Assembly. It is time for the governments and health systems to invest in nursing education and [in a resilient nursing workforce](#) to address the growing nursing shortage. Nursing is the solution to address the world's growing health care needs and inequalities.

Therefore in 2023, the EFN will continue to ensure every opportunity is taken to ensure nurses' voices are represented and heard at EU level. The EFN, in partnership with all our National Nursing Associations members, is committed and determined that EFN EU policy agenda which includes education, workforce, quality and safety, remain priorities on national and EU political agendas.

We really hope you will enjoy reading this EFN Activity Report, that provides an overview of the daily lobby efforts of EFN in 2022. These achievements would not be possible without our National Nursing Associations and frontline nurses' commitment, expertise, collective insights, engagement and positive support which we genuinely value and appreciate.

Looking forward to continuing our collaboration on behalf of all nurses in 2023.

Prof Elizabeth Adams
EFN President

Prof Dr Paul De Raeve
EFN Secretary General

I. EFN KEY LOBBY PRIORITIES

The EFN continues to dive and inform European policy development and implementation within the framework of the [EFN Strategic and Operational Lobby Plan 2021-2027](#) (EFN SOLP) that is strategically aligned to a number of important European policies and process including, for example, the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) Principles (namely principles 1 'Education'; 6 'Wages'; 16 'Healthcare'; and 18 'Long-Term Care'); – the monitoring of the [European Semester](#), in particular the [Country Specific Recommendations](#), through which the European Commission aims to support the EU Member States to achieve their commitments. In 2022, the EFN continued to build on the achievements of previous years and focused on three major key policy areas: [Education](#) (under the lead of EFN Professional Committee), [EU Workforce for Health](#) (under the lead of EFN Workforce Committee), and [Patient Safety and Quality of Care](#) including [digital health](#) (under the lead of EFN Public Policy Committee).

1. EDUCATION

↳ [Directive 2013/55/EU, Annexe V](#)

The [Directive 2013/55/EU](#) remains a central component of the EFN policy agenda. In 2022, the EFN continued to follow-up on these developments linked to the education of nurses, including the development of Annexe V of the Directive regarding the minimum educational standards for nurses that is now under revision. The important SPARK study recommended changes to the scientific category areas, and the technical progress category. It also lists the evidence of formal qualifications and titles of training courses eligible for automatic recognition under the Directive. This is important for the Nurse Curriculum within each member state, know that, especially post-Covid, the shortage of nurses is huge. So, the EFN Matrix 3+1 is very important as linked to the Directive and Annexe V. The Annexe V should be published in 2023 as now. The EFN will continue to follow these developments in 2023 and encourages DG GROW to publish the delegated act to amend and update the Annex V as delegated acts can be used to amend the detail of the knowledge, skills and competences required. EFN, CPME and PGEU met DG GROW and iterated the importance of publishing the delegated act.



↳ [Advanced Practice Nursing](#)

In a more and more digitalised world, innovation runs fast, and nursing profession cannot lag behind. To keep up with innovation, nurses need to advance in their profession and to acquire new skills and knowledge to lead change. The importance of interprofessional care has increased over the last years, above all after COVID-19 pandemic, with a strong focus on professional collaboration, which gives nurses the opportunity to advance and contribute their expert knowledge and practice to improve safe and high-quality care. It is important for nurses to achieve higher levels of education and training to support the development of new and advanced nursing roles with greater professional autonomy. It is evident that the role of nurses is advancing rapidly that needs to be guided within a framework to evolve the new scope of advanced practice based on evidence and lessons learnt from similar contexts. Advanced nursing roles will positively contribute to the ambition of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#).

The EFN has been committed to ensuring the nursing profession evolves effectively in response to patient needs and care demands in line with the [Directive 2013/55/EU](#) and the [EFN Workforce Matrix 3+1](#), building on the [EFN Competency Framework](#) facilitating the implementation of Article 31 of Directive 2013/55/EU. Set in 2018, the EFN Working Group on Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) dedicated to advance practice developments in APN, has been working on this since then, with a major step forward in 2021 – with data being collected from EFN members, and in 2022 – with the analysis of the data as a meta-analysis (to be discussed at the EFN April 2023 General Assembly). The research identified a significant level of variation in how those countries that reported having an APN framework define what an APN means and how it is regulated at education and practice level. This development led to the approval of an [EFN Policy Statement on EU Advanced Practice Nursing](#) at the EFN April 2022 General Assembly, and at the discussion and approval of 5-year short/medium/long term strategy on APN looking respectively at educational, workforce and quality & safety aspects (only available to the EFN Members). In 2023, the EFN and the WG will take these developments further and focus on a workplan for the approved strategy and the draft core competencies for an advanced practice nurse within the endorsed [EFN Workforce Matrix 3+1](#).

2. EU WORKFORCE FOR HEALTH

↳ Building and Sustaining a Resilient EU Nursing Workforce

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between the health capacities of Member States and excess death in 2020, largely related to COVID-19 and its consequences on the health system. This has reinforced the need to build a resilient nursing workforce to protect Europeans. But even more, the 2-year pandemic shown that our healthcare ecosystems, thought to be among the strongest in the world, were very fragile. Even more, 2022 has seen massive resignation of nurses due to bad working conditions and salaries.

Based on the requirements within the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) to secure health care to populations of Europe in a timely and accessible manner, the availability of suitably qualified professional nurses must be prioritised. On an EU-wide basis, policies must be developed and rapidly funded and implemented to secure enough nurses to allow progression and expansion of nurses' roles that are required in an evolving health service. The [State of the World's nursing 2020 report](#), which shows that *'many wealthy countries are not producing enough nurses to meet their own healthcare needs, and are therefore reliant on migration, exacerbating shortages in poorer countries'*, is calling for the education and recruitment of 6 million more nurses. It is therefore time to act!

Following this very closely, next to participating on some key meetings at EU level, as with DG GROW for example, the EFN members have approved an [EFN Policy Statement on Building and Sustaining a Resilient EU Nursing Workforce in the EU and Europe](#), at the EFN General Assembly in April 2022, calling on the European Institutions for an ambitious investment in building a resilient nursing workforce in the coming years. Having enough, highly educated and motivated nurses will support the EU efforts to act on all health determinants (social, economic and ecological) through health promotion and prevention. The EU needs new laws, policies and investments to develop and deliver resilience across all health services in Europe.

The EFN will continue focusing on these developments in 2023. It is important to build a resilient nursing workforce using the tools that are now available, namely the [National Recovery and Resilience Plans](#) and monitor the allocation of these EU funds that each European country is receiving. We have now a precious opportunity to prepare our health workforce and health systems to be future proofed to respond to current and future threats to the health and well-being of our citizens and wider sustainability of our society.

↳ ILO Guidance on Nursing Profession Data Collection

Over recent years there has been increasing concern across the global Nursing community that the ILO definitions do not reflect the changes that occurred in the health care field and the competencies required by the Nursing personnel. This has resulted in countries reporting data about the composition of their nursing workforce which are not valid, nor reliable, having negative impact on national workforce policies development and workforce planning. With the ongoing revision of ISCO-08, the EFN together with ICN were in 2022 in close

[contact](#) with ILO representatives to bring in the [nurses' views](#) to the process and have formally requested amendments to the ILO definitions and guidance. EFN and ICN have agreed to work with ILO to provide nursing advice and bring forward proposals to amend the ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations. This is just the start of this process, but the EFN really hopes that EFN members' concerns will be address. As a starting point, the EFN members approved an [EFN Policy Statement on ILO Guidance of Nursing Profession Data](#), at their EFN General Assembly in October 2022. To make sure to bring the nurses' voice into this development, the EFN will continue focusing on these developments in 2023.

↳ **Violence and harassment against nurses**

The issues related to violence against nurses has been a [key concern for the EFN and its members](#) for many years as nurses are at the frontline of addressing many forms of violence, due to the role they play in keeping patients and communities safe. Nurses are themselves more likely to be exposed to verbal, emotional or physical (including sexual) violence at their workplace in comparison with other professions. During the pandemic reports of violence have increased.



On the [International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#), 25 November, the European Commission called for the adoption of the new [directive](#) on combatting violence against women (proposed in March 2022) and the EU's accession to the [Istanbul Convention](#) (a human rights treaty against gender-based violence of the Council of Europe signed by the EU in 2017, though still to be ratified). The new Directive proposal, that aims to ensure a minimum level of protection across the EU against such violence, regardless of whether it takes place online or offline, sets out targeted rules for the protection of women to strengthen the actions taken by the Member States. While all the Member States address violence against women and domestic violence in legislation, the scope and implementation vary greatly across the EU. Currently, no specific legal instrument exists at the EU level. Providing an ambitious set of measures for ending gender-based violence against women and domestic violence, the [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#) confirms the commitment of the European Commission to do all it can to prevent and combat gender-based violence, support and protect victims, and hold perpetrators accountable.

Violence and harassment against nurses are not new and is totally unacceptable, as it has an enormous negative impact on nurses' psychological and physical well-being and on their job motivation, with nurses' leaving the profession, and puts the quality of care and patients' safety at risk. As such, the EFN will continue focusing on these developments in 2023.

3. **PATIENT SAFETY AND QUALITY OF CARE**

↳ **Vaccination**

As the largest professional group of the healthcare professions, nurses are the frontline staff largely responsible for delivering safe and effective vaccination programmes to communities across Europe, yet rarely receiving formal recognition for this life-saving endeavour, next to educating the public, identifying vulnerable groups, raising awareness, and promoting uptake. The EFN Members [best practices](#) have shown the important and effective work of nurses in relation to vaccination.

In this context, the EFN has been one of the co-chairs of the [Coalition for Vaccination](#), put together by the European Commission to reinforce its support to national [vaccination efforts](#) to increase coverage, together with [CPME](#) (Doctors) and [PGEU](#) (Pharmacists). The Coalition



for Vaccination aims to support delivering accurate information to the public, combating myths around vaccines and vaccination, and exchanging best practices on vaccination and to organise advocacy campaigns to promote the uptake of routine vaccination, including flu vaccines, among health professionals.



In 2022, next to the regular **meetings of the [Coalition for Vaccination](#)**, held internally (between the 3 co-chairs), as well as with other members of the Coalition and the European Commission (as on 20 May 2022 - **Annual Meeting**, dedicated to further involvement of students' associations in the Coalition's activities, the coalition work, governance, members' activities on vaccination and IMMUNION developments; the Coalition **continued its advocacy work with some campaigns** as: [Immunisation Week Campaign](#) (April 2022) to which the EFN participated to, calling on the European countries to consider routine vaccination a priority for all age groups, especially children; to provide COVID-19 booster shots for adults, especially the vulnerable and elderly populations, and increase COVID-19 vaccine uptake of adolescents and children; to ensure refugee populations, especially children, get easy access to vaccination services; to help healthcare professionals to roll out vaccination campaigns and support them to increase uptake of routine immunisations both amongst host and refugee populations. Launched across Europe simultaneously on EFN, CPME, PGEU social media channels (@EFNBrussels - Facebook, twitter, Instagram & LinkedIn) (key words: #WIW2022 #EIW2022 #CoalitionForVaccination #VaccinesWork #getvaccinated). **EFN posts reached more than 30.000 people and 650 interacted with EFN.**



The EFN also participated in other meetings in relation to vaccination, as for example:

- **Healthcare Professionals Meeting with EU Commissioner Stella Kyriakides**, on 06 April 2022, to exchange views on the challenges around communication about COVID-19 vaccination of adolescents and children and see how to improve it. The evidence shows that COVID-19 vaccines are as effective in children as they are in adults and that only 40% of the 10-14 years and 14% of the 5-9 years have been vaccinated across the EU. It is key to keep increasing the vaccine's coverage on adolescents and children in order to manage transmission among younger age groups and further transmission to the vulnerable population, and to avoid impact on mental health and well-being of younger population.
- **DG Santé Webinar for healthcare professionals on COVID-19 & flu "Working together to increase uptake of COVID-19 and Seasonal influenza vaccination"**, on 26 October 2022, aiming to give healthcare professionals the opportunity to discuss the latest epidemiological and scientific developments, as well as the available support for awareness-raising and communication campaigns that can help increase the uptake of vaccines and protect the most vulnerable. It was made clear that it is key to discuss and communicate on vaccination (both COVID-19 and influenza) above all with nurses and doctors, and to spread safety information and best practices from nurses and doctors as the most trustful healthcare professionals.
- **Webinar on "Waiting for the next Council Conclusions: focus on adult immunisation"**, on 06 December 2022, organised by Active Citizenship (ACN) and hosted by MEPs Interest Group "European Patients' Rights & Cross Border Healthcare" to [discuss](#) the European institutions' commitment to the vaccination policy and the need to prioritise adult immunisation to help ensure the protection of the most vulnerable and reduce the burden on healthcare systems.

Finally, the EFN is a partner (together with other members of the Coalition for Vaccination group) in the EU project 'IMMUNION' ("Improving IMMunisation cooperation in the European UNION"), under the European Commission call "[Stakeholder activities to support strengthened cooperation against vaccine preventable diseases](#)" (Call ID: PJ-08-2020). Building on learnings from vaccination efforts at national, regional and global level, this 24 months EU project, that started in April 2021, is aiming at adding value to existing EU and national initiatives, particularly the Coalition for Vaccination, by increasing stakeholder collaboration to address issues of access to accurate information about vaccination in order to increase confidence in and uptake of vaccines. This will primarily be achieved through strategies focused on communication and training. *For more information on this project, see page 27.*



➔ **Digitalisation**

In an increasingly digitalised and connected world, artificial intelligence (AI) and digitalisation are gaining ground and are profoundly changing the way we live and work. The COVID-19 pandemic has given an important boost and a significant acceleration to the digitisation process. In this context, the healthcare system cannot be left behind, as digitalisation of healthcare has the potential to completely transform how healthcare is provided by nurses and other healthcare professionals, in addition to significantly enhancing clinical experience and positive outcomes for patients. As such, digitalisation has been very high on the EFN policy agenda over the last few years, and continued to be so in 2022, following closely the developments on Health Data Space.

Recently launched by the European Commission, the [European Health Data Space](#) (EHDS) represents one of the central building blocks of a strong European Health Union and will allow individuals to check and use their health data in their own country or in other Member States, fostering the development of a digital healthcare market. Representing a great opportunity for nurses and for all the healthcare professionals to have an easy access to the health data of patients, ensuring protection and high-quality care, the EFN placed and will be placing a lot of focus on this topic, as demonstrated by the 2 EU projects: [Smart4Health](#) and [InteropEHRate](#) (*For more information see page 23*). The focal point is to engage nurses in the European Health Data Space co-creation for developing instruments and services which can really facilitate and help frontline nurses in their daily job. Address the needs of nurses' means ensuring better patient care.



The EFN is also a key partner in [BeWell](#), a 4-year EU project that started in July 2022 with a view to upskilling and reskilling the nursing workforce in this digital context, to ensure the delivery of quality care to patients and to enable them to be better prepared to face future challenges. *For more information on this project see page 29.*

In addition, the EFN participated, in 2022, in some key meetings on Digitalisation at EU level, as:

- **State of Health in the EU**, on 08 February 2022, organised by the [European Policy Centre](#) (EPC) together with the [DG SANTE](#), the [OECD](#) and the [European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies](#) and aiming to discuss the advantages of digital innovation in healthcare delivery and public health and rethinking health workforce strategies and planning after the COVID-19 pandemic. Invited as keynote speaker, EFN President, Elizabeth Adams explained that digitalisation could be really helpful, but healthcare professionals do not have access to the right numbers, right solutions or right equipment. The pandemic helped to implement some new digital solutions but there is still a long way to go. As such, it is key to involve professionals at the frontline in the co-design of these digital solutions. Provide the resources to create regulatory framework is necessary. Digital tools could have positive impact both for patients and healthcare professionals. Digital solutions could create a more resilient healthcare system.
- **Webinar on 'The European health workforce & the digital skills gap'**, on 10 March 2022, organised by the EHFG in cooperation with the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. The event explored how European Union Member States can collaborate more effectively in closing the digital skills gap to empower the health workforce. Following up on the [European Commission skills agenda](#) for a

green and digital transformation for all economic sectors to ensure necessary modernisation and the need for a digitally skilled health workforce to ensure patient centeredness, care integration and multi-disciplinary teamwork, given that the European health workforce is mobile, crossing national borders, digital skills must be ensured in all countries, the meeting raised that it is now time to strengthen digital skills as many countries are building back better their health systems.

- **Challenges on health data in Europe – are we preparing?**, on 06 April 2022, [aiming](#) to contribute to the inclusion of digital health in a framework of ethical values through the implementation of the European principles for ethics in digital health adopted by the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The meeting raised the importance to train health professionals to understand and analyse data.
- **EHDS Stakeholder Group meeting**, organised on 23 May 2022, to discuss the objectives and contents of the EHDS, and focussed on the impact assessment and the primary and secondary use of data.
- **Potential impact of data regulations on service provision in health and care**, on 09 June 2022, aiming to [discuss](#) about data sharing and access, how to boost innovation and how to regulate this market.

For the European Commission, digital transformation means empowering and including every citizen, strengthening the potential of every business and meeting global challenges with EU core values. The EFN believes that it is necessary to create the right digital instruments that can facilitate and support nurses' daily operational activities/services. This is an initial and essential step for creating sustainability and resilience of the healthcare eco-system and healthcare professional workforce. As such, the EFN will continue in 2023 to follow this topic closely and to provide the nurses' views and expertise as end-user.

→ **Planetary Health/Climate**



Taking further one of its key policy agenda topics, the EFN has been following closely the EU developments on climate/planetary health. Climate change is part of our daily routine and can no longer be underestimated. Therefore, through the "[Proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability](#)" the European Commission invited the EU Member States and the educational partners to invest in skills and training on sustainability, climate change and environment. The aim is to promote environmental sustainability policies, education and training programs and processes to educate citizens about the green transition, and to develop a coherent approach to the competences, skills and attitudes that people need to act, live and work in a sustainable manner, strengthening the importance of lifelong

learning to ensure that everyone can acquire those competences and skills; next to facilitating the sharing of policy maker, researcher and educator expertise and best practices at system and institution level. Climate change has a negative impact on the environment and health. We must be prepared to handle this change!

Nurses have a key role to play in the co-design and implementation of planetary health solutions. As the most trusted professionals, they are in a privileged position to communicate with citizens on lifestyle change and prevention. Based on a long tradition of informing the public about diseases and promoting health, it is evident that nurses take on an important role as change agents in a variety of activities concerning the health aspects of local and global environmental changes. To contribute to nursing planetary health effectively, it is necessary to advance the role of nurses.

As such, and following-up on the ongoing developments on Planetary Health, and building on the EFN [Policy Statement on the Nurses' Contribution to Tackle Climate Change](#), published in 2020, the EFN April 2022 approved a new [EFN Policy Statement Nursing Planetary Health](#), reviewed in October 2022 to include the nursing education component, that calls on the EU institutions and national governments to: 1/ Facilitate and co-create concrete nursing planetary health actions, led by nurses in advanced roles; 2/ Implement the nursing planetary health approach to protect the health of humans and the ecosystems on which it depends in all policies, primarily those related to the European Green Deal and with an emphasis on equity as a guiding principle; 3/ Promote multilateral and inclusive governance by including nurses in decision-making. This could be done by implementing a trans-sectoral planetary health policy framework; 4/ Finance research and actions to

ensure the participation of nurses in decision-making and implementation; 5/ Invest resources in advanced roles in Nursing Planetary Health for improved prevention and planetary health promotion.

We need a deep, radical and global transformation of our societies putting the health of the living (nature, biosphere) at the heart of our common decisions and actions. Nurses are the best placed to apprehend the health effects of global environmental changes and related prevention/mitigation and preparedness, and can play a paramount key role in this transformation, in their practice, their communities and policy decisions. Therefore, the EFN has been lobbying the EU Institutions on nursing planetary health, identifying EFN Members good practices and formulate achievable and concrete actions led by nurses.

In order to keep up with the latest developments on the topic, in 2022, the EFN participated in some key meetings as:

- **Forum Series 2022: Climate and Health**, on 17 February 2022, organised by [OECD](#), to [discuss](#) on the impact of climate change on health, on the issues needed to mitigate health risks linked to climate change and find long-term solutions to future challenges. The meeting showed that to rise to global environmental and health challenges, it is paramount to acknowledge how they intersect, and cease approaching them in siloes. A key strategic area within the discussion on being better prepared for the future must therefore be the wide-ranging impact of climate change on our health. There is no time to waste. Global coordinated actions are needed.
- **Climate & Health in Europe**, on 11 March 2022, organised by the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region ([ASPHER](#)) to discuss the importance of climate action through education and training of public health professionals with a joint statement conveying a one-voice view on climate action through education and training of public health professionals.
- **Meeting on Climate & Health in Europe**, on 16 March, organised by the European Commission [DG Santé](#) and [DG for Climate Action](#), and European Environment Agency that [focused](#) on climate change impacts on health through national policies, with some concrete examples of integration of health and climate into national governance structures, policy and action from Finland, France and Germany. The meeting made clear that addressing climate change impacts on health in an effective manner requires actionable national policies, and in particular, emphasis on protecting health in national climate change adaptation policies, and the consideration of climate change impacts in the national public health strategies are needed.
- **The health impacts of the climate crisis**, on 27 September 2022, organised by the European Health Forum Gastein ([EHFG](#)), to discuss the current needs and actions to estimate the scale and impact of the health risks resulting from the ongoing changes in environmental health determinants associated to climate change; how can current policy initiatives and research efforts at the European level provide the needed evidence, tools and frameworks to answer to the serious threat climate change poses to human health; and reflect and discuss existing approaches and future opportunities to address the climate crisis. The [meeting](#) showed that the ongoing trend of global climate change has introduced new pressures and significant consequences for human health. Urgent action is needed at the European and global level to minimise the ramifications of this threat and increase preparedness of health systems to deal with the ongoing changes in environmental stressors.

↳ **EU Care Strategy**

Following on this EU development closely, the EFN welcomed the new European Commission's [European Care Strategy](#), and the two Recommendations for Member States [on the revision of the Barcelona targets on early childhood education and care](#), and [on access to affordable high-quality long-term care](#), launched in September 2022, that will hopefully respond to the challenges of ageing and rising unmet care needs in the EU and Europe. Ensuring people's access to quality and affordable care throughout their lives is key. This initiative announces EU-level action to strengthen long-term care and early childhood education and care, as envisaged under the [European pillar of social rights](#), that the EFN is also following-up namely on Long-Term care.

Nurses play a fundamental and indispensable role in the provision of health and social care, in particular in prevention and [long-term care](#). As such, nurses will be [key partners](#) in the implementation of this strategy.

Lobbying on this crucial topic for many years, and aiming to bring the nurses' voice to this crucial development, the EFN October 2022 General Assembly discussed and approved an [EFN Policy Statement on European Care Strategy](#), that calls for the strategy to address the nursing workforce key challenges: labour shortages, due to difficult working conditions and low wages, compounded by an ageing workforce and an increased demand for care services. The upcoming proposal for a Council Recommendation on long-term care needs to facilitate the design of a framework for policy reforms to steer the development of sustainable long-term care that ensures better and more affordable access to high quality and safe services, necessitate adequate social protection for long-term care needs and improvement of working conditions in the sector.

The EFN will continue following up on these Patient Safety & Quality of Care key points in 2023.

4. OTHER KEY POLITICAL TOPICS EFN LOBBIED ON

a. **War in Ukraine**

After COVID-19 pandemic, nurses were confronted to another big challenge: the War in Ukraine, that once again has put a strain on the mental health and well-being of the frontline nurses caring for those in need, working in very difficult conditions to ensure patient care and well-being. In 2022, all EFN attention went to this point.

» **Humanitarian Fund**

Since the beginning of the war the EFN has been collaborating closely with EFN Members neighbouring countries and with International Council of Nurses (ICN) to support as much as possible the Ukraine nurses still in the country and the ones who fled to the neighbouring countries, namely through an EFN/ICN Humanitarian Fund to support the nurses in the most affected parts of Ukraine, with the first needs – food, clothes, medication, being in constant contact with the Ukraine nurses to understand their urgent needs and help them as best as possible.

» **Statements**

The EFN published a [statement](#) condemning Russian Federation military conflict in Ukraine, and a [joint statement](#) with ICN & EFNNMA asking protection of healthcare and end to hostilities. The EFN wrote a letter of support to the 5 neighbouring countries NNAs for the relentless input and support to the Ukrainian refugees, in particular the nurses. The EFN was also active in social media on this. Next to this the leaders of several organisations active in global health in areas of conflict, including EFN, [expressed their appreciation](#) for WHO's rapid confirmation of attacks on health care in Ukraine through the Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA), and quick actions, including a strong joint statement with UNICEF and UNFPA about these attacks. And, together with the Polish nurse leaders, EFN & ICN, a [position of support](#) for Ukrainian nurses was published. Finally, EFN is a member of the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition that along with Insecurity Insight issued a report mentioning the EFN [statement](#) condemning Russian Federation military conflict in Ukraine.



» **Meetings**

Next to this, the EFN had several meetings to understand the situation and better bring its support to those in need as quickly as possible at the start of the war - as with ICN, WHO-EFNNMA, Ukraine Nurses and neighbouring countries nurse leaders/NNAs to hear from Ukraine colleagues and from the neighbouring countries nurse leaders/NNAs on the ongoing situation and the how to support them.

Following up on these online meetings, the EFN, together with ICN, went to Poland, on 11-12 April 2022 to meet representatives of nurses and students from Ukraine and better understand the situation of the Ukraine refugees (most of them women and children), and to meet with representatives of the Polish Nursing Association, university deans, the nursing regulator and senior officials from the Polish Department of Health to discuss the upscaling of



the competencies of Ukraine nurses who got a temporary licence to practice, and the implementation of 'bridging courses' that would enable them to meet EU requirements for registered nurses.

Finally, the EFN participated in a [2-days conference](#) in Poland, on 17-18 November 2022, that brought together nursing polish leaders, Ukrainian nursing leaders and nursing students, University nursing teachers, EU and international nursing stakeholders, and the Polish Ministry of Health. This was a big step forward to plan long term international support with the Ukraine nurse colleagues.



» **Bridging Courses**

One of the biggest achievements in this process was the development of bridging courses for the Ukraine nurses' refugees in Poland. Over the year, the EFN, ICN and the Polish Nurses Association (member of EFN) collaborated very closely to support the Ukrainian nurses, namely by putting in place bridging courses for the Ukraine nurses' refugees in Poland. In October 2022 there was a full agreement among the main stakeholders in the Polish Nursing Community of the general points for the training of the Ukrainian nurses, and the Health Ministry started to develop a new legislation enabling the implementation of the new bridging program. This will allow recognition and equal level of qualification of Ukrainian nurses as health professionals that will facilitate the professional assimilation of Ukrainian nurses who temporarily or permanently settle in Poland or other EU Member States. It is key to invest in Ukrainian nurses to avoid losing them to other professions, namely knowing the huge shortage in the field, and to strengthen the leadership and development of the nursing profession as part of the reconstruction of the Ukrainian healthcare eco-system after the end of the hostilities.

» **EU Coalition on "Supporting Ukraine, neighbouring EU Member States and Moldova"**

Following the creation by the European Commission of a dedicated [stakeholders' network](#) on "Supporting Ukraine, neighbouring EU Member States and Moldova", which includes over 250 patient organisations, health professionals, NGOs and industry interested in sharing knowledge to avoid duplicating efforts, the EFN was appointed as co-chair of this network, together with 2 other NGOs – the European Cancer Organisation (ECO) and the European Reference Networks (ERN), representing as such the 3 groups of health stakeholders.

The network aims to be an interactive tool to engage civil society and encourage discussion on public health issues, share knowledge and best practices and pool expertise, next to inform, through its regular meetings, on the ongoing activities undertaken by the European Commission in support to Ukrainian patients and health professionals, including the neighbouring countries hosting Ukrainian refugees.

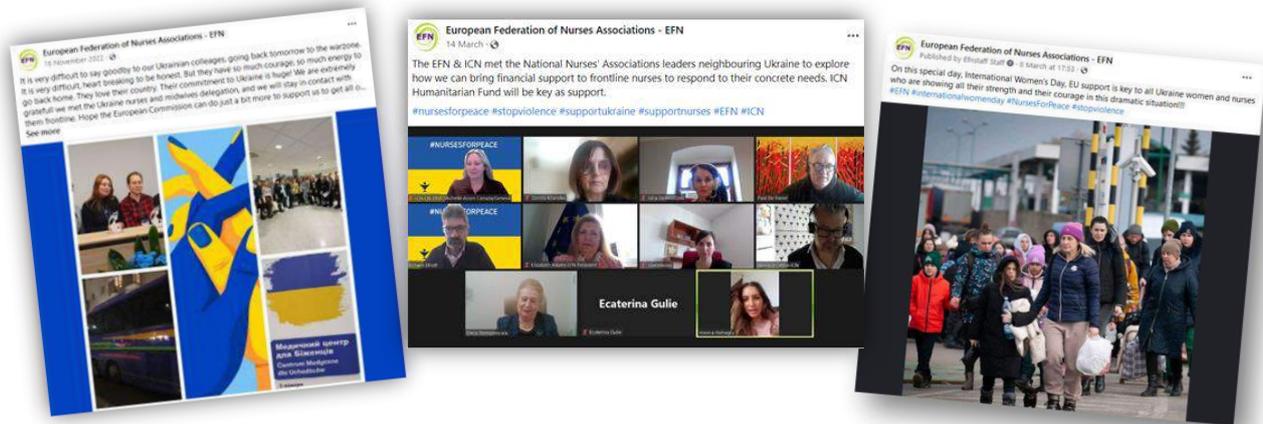


Over the year, the 3 Co-Chairs and Liaisons met on regular basis and have identified four work priorities to work on: 1) Supporting displaced Ukrainian patients, including support on EU Member State to Member State transfers, removing bottlenecks and harmonisation of rules in different Member States 2) Facilitating partnerships and funding support for civil society organisations in Ukraine, Moldova and impacted EU Member States 3) Mental health support for refugee patients and healthcare professionals 4) Recognition and support for healthcare professionals arriving in EU Member States and Moldova, e.g. professional qualification recognition.

As co-chair, the EFN is focusing on supporting and mentoring Ukraine healthcare professionals arriving in the EU Member States and Moldova - with a link to [Directive 2013/55/EU](#), Art 31 (8 competencies), development of bridging courses to upscale Ukraine nurses and importantly, explore how NNAs can build Welcoming Programmes for Ukraine nurses. We cannot permit that our healthcare professionals' colleagues from Ukraine leave the profession!

» **Social Media**

The EFN has been active on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn – key words: #supportukraine #supportnurses #stopviolence) on this topic. During the year, the EFN implemented a massive Social Media Campaign to spread important messages of solidarity and best practices to Ukrainian nurses' and to the citizens. EFN messages reached around **105.000 people** and more than **2.200 people** interacted with EFN posts (see here [EFN social media campaign report](#)).



b. Mental Health

During these COVID-19 pandemic years, nurses showed their dedication to deal with the stress, death, fear and incredible resilient, doing their job in very poor working conditions, suffering from anxiety and psychological stress, during heavy working shifts and making life-or-death decisions. The war in Ukraine has once again jeopardized the mental health and well-being of nurses who are always at the forefront of caring for patients.

For the EFN this is a key policy topic, knowing nurses continue to face constant challenges that strain their psychophysical well-being, resulting in 30% leaving the profession. Some countries already recognised that due to COVID-19 there was a significant psychological health toll on nurses who were continuing to deliver health services in times of crisis, putting their own lives at risk, and being often the only professional with comforting and caring for a dying patient. The war in Ukraine came in as another big challenge for frontline nurses, who are not only working in high-risk areas, but without the right equipment to ensure the right quality care for patients. More than ever, it is crucial to keep our healthcare professionals, and in particular the nurses, protected from chronic stress and poor mental health. We can no longer allow nurses to continue to risk their own lives to save that of others.

In September 2022, the European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, announced a new initiative on mental health, to be presented in 2023, as a follow-up of the [conclusions](#) of the Conference on the Future of Europe that ended in May 2022. From its side, WHO published a [report](#) that highlights the urgent need to transform mental health and mental health care, and that urges mental health decision makers and advocates to step up commitment and action to change attitudes, actions and approaches to mental health. Support nurses and sustain their mental health are key for delivering high quality care and creating a resilient healthcare ecosystem.

For the EFN it is crucial to put in place national and local programmes to support frontline nurses who are caring for patients to preserve their mental health and prevent psychological trauma, and to work closely with the nursing profession to develop policies that protect frontline staff from unnecessarily difficult or unsafe working conditions. In 2023, the EFN will continue to follow up on these developments and bring the nurses' views and expertise to the EU level.

Next to this, and as every year, the EFN organised in October, on the occasion of the World Mental Health Day 2022, a campaign on its social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn – key words: #nurses #mentalwellbeing #protectnurses #supportnurses #worldmentalhealthday) to raise awareness on this crucial topic. EFN messages reached around **15.000 people** and more than **298 people** interacted with EFN posts (see here EFN social media campaign [report](#)).



c. Antimicrobial Resistance

Antimicrobials Resistance (AMR) continues to be a serious challenge, which need to be addressed. Being at the top of the EU political agenda and as such is also part of EFN policy agenda.

The [European Commission](#) estimates that antibiotic-resistant bacteria have been associated with the death of 33.000 people in the European Union, and around €1.5 billion each year in healthcare costs and productivity losses. The latest data confirm that across the EU, the number of patients infected by resistant bacteria is increasing every year, which could lead to 10 million deaths per year worldwide by 2050 if no action is taken. The EFN believes that nurses have a [crucial role to play](#). Therefore, engaging with nurses to tackle AMR is key: their perspective is essential to adopt the right strategies and new policies, which can really have an impact on this, and their role in combating AMR crucial for patients' safety and for delivering high quality care! The current European initiatives do not take into consideration the contribution of healthcare frontline professionals, in particular the 6 million nurses throughout the EU.

In 2022, the EFN continued to follow on these [developments](#), trying to best bring nurses' voice to the EU level, namely by **attending some key meetings as:**

- **European Commission DG Santé AMR One Health Network meeting**, on 25-26 January 2022, to [discuss](#) on AMR and how is fundamental to raise awareness on that; focussing on challenges, opportunities, areas of intervention, incentive and joint actions.
- **NNCGSI webinar on the role of nurses and midwives in tackling Antimicrobial Resistance**, organised on 17 March 2022 by the [Nursing Now Challenge](#) to discuss the issues of AMR, possible solutions and the central role of nurses in this context, focusing on tackling the misuse and overuse of antimicrobials or improving infection prevention and control;
- **Managing Antimicrobial Resistance across the Health system**, on 20 June 2022, organised by the European Commission to [discuss](#) and to collect feedback on the [Draft Opinion on AMR](#) published by DG for Health and Food Safety.
- **European Antibiotic Awareness Day 'Preventing antimicrobial resistance together'**, organised by the ECDC on 17 November 2022, to [discuss](#) the latest data and policy actions. The meeting raised the importance to target the audience and to give them the right information, and to think on prevention and control as a key activity, raise the standards and have better tools to prevent AMR.

The EFN provided input to the [EU Public Consultation on AMR](#), raising the importance of recognising the role nurses play in combatting antibiotic resistance through traditional roles as well as advancing roles such as nurse prescribing is crucial, together with acknowledging the importance of a team approach to address antimicrobial resistance and promoting the prudent use of antibiotics. Finally, the EFN together with other EU NGOs **published a joint statement** on the lack of antimicrobials vital to human health in the draft list of antimicrobials to be reserved for human health proposed by the European Commission; next to a [letter](#), signed by EFN and 16 other EU organisations, sent to the MEPs, calling on the European Parliament to approve objection and ask the European Commission to review the list, considering the evidence-based advice from human health experts throughout this process.

The EFN members were also informed on the developments ongoing through [EFN Briefing Notes](#) (available only to the EFN members). On this specific topic, the EFN published 2 key EFN BN: Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) – A Silent Pandemic (in January 2022); Antimicrobial Resistance: main issues and possible solutions! (March 2022).

Finally, as in the previous years the EFN participated in the [European Antimicrobial Awareness Day](#) on 18 November 2022, coordinated by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control ([ECDC](#)), and marked by national campaigns, through its [social media channels](#) (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn – key words: #EAAD #AntimicrobialResistance #nursesrole #AMR #keepantimicrobialsworking) with key posts to raise awareness of the EU policy Makers, the EU Stakeholders, and the public in general, on this key policy topic. **EFN posts reached 8.000 people** during the campaign period and more than 200 people reacted to EFN posts.



5. Other EU Lobby opportunities for the EFN

In 2022, the EFN took all the opportunities to lobby the EU institutions and to give voice to nurses and to their needs. Looking to the future, the pandemic and the war in Ukraine has increased the need for a European Health Union, stronger Europe-wide coordination, more resilient health systems and better preparation for possible future crises.

» Future of Europe



After one year of deliberations, debates and discussions between citizens, regional, national and European politicians, EU institutions, organised civil society and social partners, that the EFN followed closely, a common trajectory for the future of the European Union has been reached and the Conference on the Future of Europe has come to an end. This Conference adopted a collaborative method allowing EU citizens to leave the mark and to contribute for shaping the Future of Europe.

The Conference on the Future of Europe represented the greatest opportunity for European citizens to discuss Europe's challenges and priorities and, among these topics, health was put as the top priority. In this context, the EFN played a key role putting nurses at the forefront of change to build resilient health systems, namely by addressing pressing topics such as the effects of climate change, environmental issues and the new health challenges facing the

European Union. These topics relate directly to the EU's objectives and strategies for the future in the domain health, with direct implications for the European research agenda and for the European healthcare systems and lifestyles.

In April 2022, the [Conference](#) on the Future of Europe reached consensus on its final recommendations, adopting [49 proposals](#), put forward to the three EU Institutions - European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission – and incorporate more than 320 measures across 9 themes, including key topics as climate change, health, migration, and the EU in the world. On the occasion of the [Europe Day](#), 9 May 2022, the Co-Chairs of the Conference's Executive Board presented the [final report](#) that include the final recommendations and measures but also aims to provide an overview of the various activities undertaken in the context of this unique process that the Conference on the Future of Europe has been.



This new process of the Conference has provided a never-seen-before opportunity for citizens to take part in the decision-making process and express their views on the European Union and how it should be improved. Since the launch of the platform on 19 April 2021, more than 50.000 participants have contributed and shared their ideas. Citizens want a clear commitment that their ambitious ideas will be turned into action and the European

Commission is ready to fulfil these requests and the nurses are ready to bring their contribution to build a better, healthy and safe future.

» **DG Santé High-level Conference on COVID-19 Lessons Learned**



The EFN President was invited by the European Commission Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) to chair a session at the “[High-level Conference COVID-19 lessons learned and looking ahead to ensure a stronger EU Health Security Framework](#)” held on 22-23 November 2022, in Luxembourg. The co-hosts Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety and Paulette Lenert, Minister of Health of Luxembourg, opened the two-day event. Chaired by Sandra Gallina, Director General of the Directorate General for Health and Food Safety John F. Ryan (Deputy Director General DG SANTE) presented the new regulation on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 1082/2013/EU. The session “Responding to COVID-19”, chaired by EFN President, facilitated the views of nurses, physicians, patients and health professionals from long-term care facilities. The panel showed that throughout the pandemic, healthcare professionals reported the structural and organisational barriers and challenges that prevented the full actualisation of health professionals’ impact on many fronts. While providing care in diverse settings, the toll of relentlessly delivering care during this unprecedented time has impacted the health and wellbeing of the healthcare workforce which impacts significantly on the care provided to patients. It also showed the need for increased attention to the emotional, financial, and physical recovery of the healthcare workforce and the structure and resourcing of the health system is a matter of great importance if healthcare systems are to fully recover and proactively prepare for the next crisis.

» **2022 European Year of Youth – Policy dialogue on brain drain**

In a [policy dialogue](#) organised on 27 September 2022, in the context of the European Year of Youth, hosted by European Commissioner Ferreira, in charge of Cohesion and Reforms, organisations and associations from all over the EU could discuss on the challenges and opportunities in European regions to attract and retain (young) talents. Invited as key stakeholder, and having retention & recruitment high on its policy agenda, the [EFN explained](#) that retaining and attracting high qualified talents to the healthcare sector is a real political challenge. More attention needs to go to the resilience and sustainability of the healthcare sector, and it is crucial to improve the working conditions and the salary of nurses and create policies that are fit-for-purpose, aiming to attract and retain frontline nurses in the profession, knowing that today, among young people, 30% already left the nursing profession. Not forgetting that most of the nurses are women (89%) and that these women are leaving the profession, which will increase the gender gap. Among the solutions proposed by the EFN, is the support and implementation of the Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications ([2013/55/EU](#)) as an essential starting point to boost the free movement of young people in the EU, and the need to implement [WHO ethical recruitment guidelines](#) to tackle brain drain. The EFN will continue to follow up on this development in 2023.



» **WHO Euro Roadmap - EFNMA-EFN-WHO Meeting series**

The EFN has been involved in those meeting series, represented by the EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, which aim to support the implementation of the [Nursing and Midwifery WHO Euro Roadmap](#) focusing on four strategic priorities: Education, Jobs, Leadership and Service Delivery. In 2022, two meetings were organised on “*Advanced Nurses and Midwifery practice*” on 6 April 2022, and on 28 September 2022, on “*WHO Euro Roadmap to implement Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery (GSDNM) 2021-2025: Measuring Progress*”. The next two meetings of the series of 4 will take place on 25 January 2023 (on Education) and on 10 May 2023 (on Regulation). This is a good opportunity to collaborate closely with WHO on topics that are high on EFN policy agenda and to bring the EFN members’ views and experience to the debate.

» **Nursing Now Challenge**

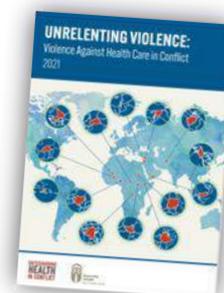
Being part of the [Nursing Now Challenge Board](#), made up of global health experts, representing the WHO regions, Elizabeth Adams, EFN President, participated in the **Board meetings** that took place over the year, representing EFN and its members, as well as other linked meetings as the **Session on “Nursing leaders share their top tips”**, held on 18 May 2022, aiming to highlight key points and messages to influence and assist the next generation of new nurses and midwives along their career pathway.

» **Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition**

Violence against healthcare workers, facilities and patients is one of the most serious and overlooked humanitarian challenges globally. The [Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition](#) was founded in 2010 to address the under-reporting of attacks on health workers and facilities in conflict areas. The EFN members are represented by Elizabeth Adams, EFN President, member of the coalition with over 30 leading international non-governmental organisations. The [EFN Position Statement](#) “Nurses in Conflict Areas Need to be more Protected” (2016) provided the mandate for participation. Following on the work being done by the Coalition, EFN

President participated in 2022 in the regular meetings of the Steering Committee, to discuss mainly on Ukraine situation, with a [letter](#) being sent to WHO, also signed by EFN, pressing them to do more on addressing attacks on health care. In addition, the Safeguarding of Health in Conflict published the [9th annual report](#) entitled “**Unrelenting Violence: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict 2021**”, documenting the global incidence of attacks and threats against health workers, facilities, and transport around the world. The report cites more than **1,335** attacks against health workers, facilities, and transports in 2021.

**SAFEGUARDING
HEALTH
IN CONFLICT**



» **Some key meetings in which the EFN President strengthened the nursing lobby agenda/input:**

✓ **National Academies' Committee on Human Rights**

EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, represented the EFN at the meeting hosted by the [Committee on Human Rights of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) on the topic of attacks against health professionals and the role of the scientific and medical community in responding to these attacks, that took place on 26 January 2022, online. Elizabeth explained that the EFN is member of the global [Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition](#) being dedicated to monitoring and advocating for change in relation to attacks against health professionals. Violence against health care in conflict magnifies the suffering of people living through war by undermining access to health care and places nurses, health professionals and patients at enormous risk. The figures are staggering on average between 2016 and 2020 a health facility was damaged or destroyed every other day and a health worker killed every three days.



✓ **European Policy Centre event on the State of Health in the EU**

Invited to participate in the panel discussion “*Locking in the advantages of digital innovation in healthcare delivery and public health: digitalisation as an instrument for creating resilient health systems*” on the impact of digitalisation in healthcare and on healthcare professionals, at the [European Policy Centre event](#) that took place on 8 February 2022, online, the EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, provided the nurses views on the benefits and concerns of the digitalisation of health, stressing that nurses are really committed and passionate to embracing and engaging with digital solutions.



The issue is often that the environments are not prepared and that they don't have access to the right equipment. The pandemic showed that there is a rapid implementation of some new digital solutions, but with that we have a huge process to look at to ensure that the frontline co-designs the solutions as they can really inform on what can work or not. Investing in education is also key. Providing the right resources will help the frontline to focus on the patient. The event focused on [the State of Health in the EU Country Profiles 2021](#) and [Companion report](#), published by the European Commission, the OECD and the Observatory, with stakeholders providing their views on 2 topics identified in the report: locking in the advantages of digital innovation in healthcare delivery and public health, and rethinking health workforce strategies and planning after the COVID-19 pandemic.

✓ **Meeting with Margrieta Langins – WHO Nursing and Midwifery Policy Adviser**

EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, and EFN Secretary General, Paul De Raeve, meet with Margrieta Langins, WHO Nursing and Midwifery Policy Adviser, on 11 February 2022, to discuss points of common interest and see how EFN/WHO could collaborate. One of the points discussed was the [WHO Roadmap for Nursing & Midwifery](#), a guidance that came out of WHO headquarters with strategic direction on nurses and midwifery, and what WHO 5-years work plan is in the 4 areas of WHO strategic directions on nursing and midwifery (including advanced practice, data collection, leadership). In follow-up of this meeting, Margrieta Langins was present at the April 2022 EFN General Assembly, to provide more information on WHO work and on the Roadmap to the EFN Members.



✓ **WHO Policy Makers Forum: Patient Safety Implementation**



EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, represented the EFN at the [WHO Policy Makers Forum](#) that took place on 23-24 February 2022, online, which provided the foundation for effective implementation of the [Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030](#), aiming to lead to sustainable reduction in avoidable harm in health care. The event brought together senior policy makers, healthcare leaders and patient safety officers at national, subnational/regional, organisational and facility levels from countries representing all WHO regions, academic and research organisations, inter-governmental organisations including United Nations agencies, the

European Union, Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development, and the World Bank, as well as key non-governmental and civil society organisations, including patients' organisations.

✓ **Trinity College Dublin address**

The EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, was invited to address the Trinity College Dublin students on 16 March 2022, online. This was a good opportunity to present EFN and its work towards the EU institutions, and the development of nursing in the EU, role expansion, contribution to policy development and implementation focussing on key topics as APN, Nurse Prescriber, and MSc Nursing.

✓ **National grand rounds for the RCSI Hospital Groups**

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) Grand rounds are an established approach to teaching and learning, providing an opportunity for nurses and midwives from across the group to network, learn from one another, and build opportunities for collaboration. On 9 November 2022, the EFN President was invited to give an overview on EFN work and the future role of nursing.

6. EFN Members' Lobby Opportunities

It is crucial for the EFN, as a Pan European Organisation, to continuously support and strengthen its relationship with its members by getting a real sense of what is important to them at national level. Taking part in national events is an ideal way of strengthening ties with the members but it is crucial for understanding the key issues at stake in Member States and offering, in return, the EU-level perspective. The EFN appreciates these moments with its members and

continues investing in national, regional and local events that promotes the EU nurses' voice. But participating in meetings is not enough to get the political message through to national policy makers understanding the importance of the nurses' views and concerns in the policy process and in the daily clinical practice. As such, it is important for the members to get EFN support directly addressing to key political players to help them to push for their key concerns at national level. As such, in 2022, the EFN provided its support through some supporting letters, by receiving them in the EFN Office to provide them with insight on the EFN and EU developments, and by participating in key national events.

➔ **Supporting letters**



As in previous years, in 2022 some EFN Members requested the EFN to send a supporting letter as Malta whose Government was taking to Court after the union protests on the huge shortage of nurses in Malta. Nurses are a valuable resource and meeting their needs will allow them to stay within the nursing profession. The European Union fully respects the contribution and potential of nurses to deliver on European wide health policies and initiatives. It is crucial that national governments respect professional and regulatory dialogue as outlined in the Proportionality Directive (2018/958), requiring governments to engage with all concerned stakeholders, co-designing better working environments. Together we can achieve more, and it is key that political players respect the contribution of the nursing profession and continue to support frontline nurses.

➔ **EFN Members visiting Brussels and the EU Institutions**

Bringing to Brussels NNAs delegations is a good opportunity for the EFN Members' NNAs to meet with their country EU representatives and learn more about the EFN political agenda, how this agenda is influencing and influenced by the EU Institutions, the outcomes achieved by EFN, and the role of the EU Institutions in relation to the EU health policy. The main topics presented on these occasions are: the EFN's key priorities in the EU lobby process, including Directive 36/55 and the challenges for nursing education; the EU projects the EFN is been involved in, and the importance of investing in the EU lobby process.



In November 2022, with COVID-19 pandemic not so strong anymore, the Norwegian Nurses Organisation at the Oslo University hospital delegation came to Brussels and visited the EFN Office to learn more about the Euro-Bubble and the EU Institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, Council). The EFN Secretary General was invited to give an overview on who is EFN, its key priorities, and its role at EU level, and why the EFN lobby is so important.

The EFN welcomes this initiative and pro-active attitude from EFN members. Not only as this increases the visibility and reputation of nurses at EU level but also because it shows that they are serious about their profession and the issues that have an impact on it. Therefore, the EFN members are encouraged to continue these efforts in 2023 in order to give the nursing perspective to the EU on key topics.

➔ **Participation in EFN Members' national events**

» **Shaping the future for Community and health: innovation, challenges and success strategies**

Organised by the Italian Nurses Association, on 18 February 2022, with the aim to shed light on the main challenges and possibilities for shaping the best future ever for nurses and nursing profession in EU Member States. Invited as keynote speaker, EFN Secretary General [focused](#) its intervention on the potential of digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence to really support nurses in their daily frontline job, expressing the need to collaborate with frontline in co-creating digital innovation.



» **VI Nurses' Congress of the Ordem dos Enfermeiros**

In the context of the Ordem dos Enfermeiros VI Nurses' Congress, EFN Member, that took place on 5-7 May 2022, in Braga (Portugal), where funding and management models, careers and remuneration, working conditions and future prospects were discussed, EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, provided a video message of support and motivation for all the efforts and dedication that Portuguese nurses had to endure during these difficult times. As the largest healthcare professional group in many countries, nurses provide around the clock care. Well-prepared and educated nurses lead to lower mortality rates and better patients' outcomes. Therefore, investment in nursing and strategies for recruitment and retention are crucial. Our political leaders and governments witness the brave and heroic commitment of nurses who preserve lives of millions of patients every day and provide comfort and dignified care to end-of-life patients, regardless of the circumstances. Using nurses' expertise, as end-users, in discussions at national, local and EU level is key in the co-creation and co-design of innovative tools and policies.



» **National Federation of Nurses of Belgium (FNIB) 100th Anniversary**

Invited as keynote speaker at the FNIB 100th anniversary congress, held in Brussels on 12 May, EFN Secretary General spoke about the European Nurses and Nursing situation, the state of the situation and future perspectives, stressing on the need to immediately tackling existing nurses' shortages by recruiting more nurses and make sure that the patient/nurse ratio is sufficient, and putting in place workforce retention measures to prevent more nurses from leaving the profession.

» **Conference at the Italian Senate**

On the occasion of the International Nurses Day (12 May 2022), the Italian Nurses Association organised a conference bringing together Senators, Institutions, Unions, Academic and other groups, to present the translation in Italian of [ICN IND2022 Report](#) and a document of synthesis connected to the implementation of [WHO Roadmap](#) "Building better together: Roadmap to guide implementation of the Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery", and the [EFN Policy Statement](#) "Building and Sustaining a Resilient Nursing Workforce in the EU and Europe". Invited as keynote speaker, EFN Secretary General gave an overview of the ongoing challenges in Italy and stressed the advanced roles for nurses as central to improve outcomes and digital skills, providing time and resources for nurses to upskill (use Italian Recovery & Resilience Funds).

» **North Macedonia National Nurses and Midwives Association event**

On the occasion of the International Nurses Day, 12 May 2022, EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, provided to the North Macedonia Association of Nurses and Midwives, EFN member, a video with greetings and good wishes in recognition of all the North Macedonia nurses and midwives, where she also explained that investing in nursing and in strategies for recruitment and retention is a vital pillar to ensure building healthier, safer, fairer, resilient and more sustainable health systems with capacity for any unexpected crisis, as pandemics. Elizabeth also took this opportunity to thank Velka Lukic, NNA President, for her commitment and partnership towards EFN over all these years.



» **Nurses and Midwives Association of Slovenia Symposium**

Invited as keynote speaker to the [18th Symposium](#) of the Nurses and Midwives Association of Slovenia, EFN Member, on 30 May 2022, in Slovenia, EFN President, Elizabeth Adams, gave an overview on EFN work and spoke about the importance and role of nursing and midwifery, which will shape our future. She emphasised that investing in health and midwifery care is investing in the health of people around the world. She also mentioned that it is important for the young generation to be strategic, vigilant, proactive and innovative in order to future proof nursing and midwifery in Slovenia and to build on the proud legacy of the past as they are the generation of innovative and dynamic young leaders that will deliver for the health of the population.



This event was also a good opportunity to discuss new technologies and in particular robotics and telehealth in health and social care, and the role nurses play in this.

» **11th Croatian Nurses Association Conference “Nursing without limits”**

The Croatian Nurses Association, EFN Member, invited Elizabeth Adams, EFN President, to participate in their Conference organised on 09-12 June 2022, in Opatija. As keynote speaker she provided through a video an overview on EFN ongoing activities, and priorities the EFN has been working on, namely in times of COVID-19, and its implications for the nursing profession.

» **CNAI conference with the Italian Minister of Defence**

The Italian Nurses Association (CNAI) organised a conference on 8-12 November 2022, in Venice (Italy), to discuss nurses’ future, digitalisation, cooperation with military civil, and education change after COVID-19. Invited as keynote speaker, EFN Secretary General, highlighted the need to build a resilient nursing workforce will be key to digitise successfully the healthcare sector.



II. EU PROJECTS

A. ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS (EHR) H2020 EU PROJECTS

The EFN is a partner in two EU-funded projects, both started in January 2019, with the objective to ensure a greater engagement of nurses and end-users in the development of electronic health records, and working to empower citizens as managers of their own health, unlocking health data from local silos, and encouraging a bottom-up approach for EHR Interoperability. All of these fit within the nursing profession work on integrated care and continuity of care, in which frontline nurses play a central role.

↪ INTEROPERABLE EHR AT USER EDGE (INTEROPEHRATE)



Aiming to make health data available when and where needed, and provide patients with full control in usage and routes of their medical information through device-to-device and peer-to-peer protocol standards, through a set of new protocols for secure and cross-border exchange of medical evidence, this [EU project](#) (funded under the

European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme - grant agreement: No. 826106), and coordinated by Engineering Ingegneria Informatica (Italy), that started in January 2019, has now come to an end (September 2022).

The partners in the project were: [Engineering – Ingegneria Informatica Spa](#) (IT); [Andaman7](#) (BE); [European Health Telematics Association](#) (BE); [DTCA Hygeia – Diagnostic and Therapeutic Center of Athens](#) (EL); [University of Trento](#) (IT); [University of Vienna - School of Law](#) (AT); [European Federation of Nurses Associations](#) (BE); [Fondazione Toscana Gabriele Monasterio per la Ricerca Medica e di Sanitapubblica](#) (IT); [Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Liege](#) (BE); [Ubitech Limited](#) (CY); [University of Piraeus Research Center](#) (EL); [“Bagdasar-Arseni” Clinical Emergency Hospital of Bucharest](#) (RO); [Siveco Romania Sa](#) (RO); [Fraunhofer Institute for Software and Systems Engineering](#) (DE); Iatrikos Syllagos Athinon (EL); [Byte Computer S.A.](#) (EL).

As a result of all the work done over the last 4 years, the project [developed](#) open interchange protocols supporting patient-centred exchange of health records between patients, healthcare actors and researchers, contributing to help pave the way towards an open European Electronic Health Records (EHR) exchange format and process, with key health data being managed in “patients’ hands”, through smart electronic health records (S-EHR) on mobile devices, including direct device to device (D2D) communication. InteropEHRate’s key result is an interchange method comprising multiple components for establishing [interoperable](#) routes to communicate health data between different actors including patients and researchers. The open nature of InteropEHRate will allow different developers/vendors of healthcare applications to support and implement it. Sustained by a governance model, it has the potential to create a new market based on an ecosystem of applications adopting InteropEHRate.

Representing the nurses as end-users, the EFN contributed to the project by defining nurse-requirements and scenarios to be supported by the new EHR interoperability, next to being responsible for dissemination activities at the EU level, and assisting in the implementation of the project’s outcome. Next to contributing to the project [deliverables](#), bringing in the nurses’ views and expertise, the EFN also participated to the project meetings held over the year. As such, in 2022, next to some Work Packages telcos, the EFN participated in a few key meetings as:

i. 7th Plenary meeting

Due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the project partners met online for their 7th Plenary meeting, held over 3 half days on 15-16-17 March 2022. The partners were briefed on the latest [developments](#) of the project, including the scenarios’ developments, the governance model, and the exploitation plan, and took this opportunity to review and evaluate the project progress and achievements, and to decide on the strategic orientation and next steps and actions.



ii. [8th Plenary meeting](#)

The project partners met for a last online plenary meeting on 21 September 2022, where they were briefed on the final [outcomes](#) of the project, including [pilots'](#) evaluation, open data deliverable, exploitation plan, governance and impact analysis, and implementation of recommendations from the European Commission 2nd review. This was also a good opportunity for the project partners to explore how to further develop a citizen-centric health data sharing approach to improve care and research.

iii. [Final Conference “Towards a citizen-centric health data sharing approach for care, research and beyond”](#)

InteropEHRate [Final Conference](#) has been a key milestone of the dissemination, communication and collaboration activities foreseen in the project. Taking place on 28 September 2022, in Liège, it [presented](#) the project key results to an audience of multiple stakeholders – policymakers; European, national, regional and local health authorities; healthcare providers; health research centres; and health technology companies.

iv. [mHealth Hub Talk “Citizen-centric EHR data sharing for care and research: the industry perspective”](#)

Hold on 16 February 2022, this [conference](#), aiming to discuss on the adoption of citizen-centric health data solutions, highlighted the importance to place people at the centre in the use of digital health tools. Individuals have a central role to play and the integrated approach with citizens at the centre is essential to strengthen digital health. Focused on the importance of data sharing quality to ensure high quality and equitable data sharing space for primary and secondary use of data the event also stressed InteropEHRate developments in support of citizen health data sharing for care and research and showcase how Smart EHRs can adopt InteropEHRate solutions and act as a facilitating vehicle.

v. [Webinar on “Semantic interoperability: are we now ready to meet the challenge?”](#)

Organised by EHTEL on 25 April 2022, the [event](#) gave an overview on the ability of a healthcare system to share information and have that information properly interpreted by the receiving system in the same sense as intended by the transmitting system. It also described the role of national competent authorities and what are the best practices and main services provided by national authorities.

[CITIZEN-CENTRED EU-EHR EXCHANGE FOR PERSONALISED HEALTH \(SMART4HEALTH\)](#)

Smart4Health

Coordinated by UNINOVA (Instituto de Desenvolvimento de Novas Tecnologias (Portugal), this 50 months [EU project](#) (under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme - grant agreements No. 826117), that started on 1st January 2019, is addressing the current challenges in EHR with an outstanding consortium that is developing, testing and validating a platform prototype for the Smart4Health citizen-centred health record EU-EHR exchange. The goal is to deploy citizen-centred solutions and services in a digital single market for wellbeing and healthcare, through an easy-to-use, secure, constantly accessible and portable health data and services prototype, thus advancing citizens' health and wellbeing, and digital health innovation. The EFN is representing the end-users, facilitating a co-design with nurses' representatives. The EFN is responsible for dissemination activities at the EU level, as well as assisting in the implementation of the project's outcome once it has finished. The project has been developing and integrating the necessary technology to move to patient-centered, preventive wellbeing and healthcare services, changing health data management models from institution-based to citizen-centred, enabling citizen access and control of own health data. Also, the opportunity to provide data for research opens a wide set of possibilities from research to innovation helping the citizen and the community as a whole.

The partners in the project are: [Instituto De Desenvolvimento De Novas Tecnologias-Associacao](#) (PT); [Hasso-Plattner-Institut](#) (DE); [Data4Life](#) (DE); [Healthmatrix](#) (DE); [University of Vienna](#) (Austria); [University Hospital Aachen](#) (DE); [Maastricht University Hospital](#) (NL); [Information Technology For Translational Medicine](#) (LU); [Knowledge Biz](#) (PT); [Elixir - Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine](#) (Lu); [Icahn School Of Medicine At Mount Sinai](#) (US); [Zs Unternehmen Gesundheit](#) (DE); [Ospedale San Raffaele](#) (IT); [Stéftung Hëllef Doheem](#) (Luxembourg); [EASPD](#) (BE); [European Federation of Nurses Associations](#) (BE); [Região autonoma da Madeira](#) - Secretaria Regional Da Economia, Turismo e Cultura (PT); [Laboratoire Virtuel Européen](#) (BE).

» Deliverables

The project aims to provide a citizen-centred health platform compliant with EU legislation; a citizen's secure access to own health data and sharing; citizen's empowerment to provide feedback and cooperate with healthcare providers as well as to donate data for societal benefit. As such, it is developing, testing and will validate a platform prototype for the Smart4Health citizen-centred health record with integrated abilities for aggregation of data, for sharing and for data provision/donorship to the scientific community. To follow-up on this development, the project partners continued, in 2022 to develop all the milestones for the project, with EFN providing input to most of them, bringing in the views of the end-users (nurses). The first project deliverables can be found [here](#).

» Project Meetings

Over the year, the EFN participated in some key meetings of the project as:

i. Work Packages Meetings

The EFN is involved in several Work Packages (WPs), namely in WP1 (Citizen- and Professional-User participation: user requirements and performance criteria); WP2 (4HealthPlatform data layer implementation); WP3 (4HealthNavigator portal: services and applications layer implementation); WP4 (Citizen Use Cases: Citizens' health in daily life, work, and healthcare settings); WP6 (Dissemination, Exploitation, Sustainability and Communication); WP7 (Management Administration and Liaison Activities); WP8 (Ethics requirements), and as followed closely, in 2022, their developments. As such the EFN participated in all the regular/monthly teleconferences organised over the year by all the WPs EFN is involved in, and provided input whenever requested and where needed in all the related Deliverables, bringing in nurses' views and expertise in the final documents being provided to the European Commission.

ii. 7th General Assembly

The project partners met in Milan on 20-22 April 2022 (and online for those not able to travel) for the project 7th General Assembly. The meeting was a key opportunity to brief the partners on the ongoing developments of the project and discuss on some key points as: Usability testing of the Citizen Health Data Platform and MyScience app; CitizenHub; Citizen- and Professional-User participation: user requirements and performance criteria; 4HealthPlatform data layer implementation; 4HealthNavigator portal: services and applications layer implementation; CUCs development: state of progress towards the objectives and plans; Communication & Dissemination activities.



iii. 8th General Assembly

Meeting in Berlin (and online for those not able to be present physically) on 29-30 September 2022 for their 8th General Assembly, the project partners had the opportunity to get updates on the project state of progress towards the objectives and plans of the different Work Packages and respective deliverables and to discuss and prepare the next steps towards the end of the project. Aiming to pave the way for the full deployment of citizen-centred solutions and services in a digital single market for wellbeing and healthcare, through an easy-to-use, secure, constantly accessible and portable health data and services prototype, thus advancing citizens' health and wellbeing, and digital health innovation, citizens can, over time, identify progress and influencing factors and share this information with their healthcare providers via the Smart4Health platform, with data stored in a structured format using ICNP.

iv. Smart4Health Health Day

On 28 June 2022, Smart4Health coordinator - UNINOVA, and the project partner - INTEROP-VLab organised a [Health day](#) in Brussels, bringing together different stakeholders with different perspectives in one forum of discussion. EU projects [Smart4Health](#) and [Smart Bear](#) presented the developments and the way they are working together to implement a cross project pilot to provide increased value to their participants. During the day, several EU projects shared their ideas and developments in different Use cases on digital health. New applications to manage chronic diseases, homecare, physical rehabilitation etc. have been proposed. As covid-19 demonstrated, more than ever, digital tools are key in the healthcare sector to ensure well-being and high-quality care to patients. It is clear was made clear that fit-for-purpose EHR solutions to be used to improve health outcomes and increase the quality and safety in the health and social care ecosystems in the EU are key, as the requirements and mechanisms co-designed with the end-users are to ensure the utility and suitability of the developed solutions.

v. Digital Transformation Summit 2022



In the context of the project, the EFN was invited as keynote speaker at the project session on “Digital Health Challenges for the Nursing Profession” taking place during the [Digital Transformation Summit 2022](#), in Madeira, from 24 to 27 October 2022, where the outcomes of the project will be presented to an extended audience. This was also a good opportunity to expand networks and knowledge areas to other applications and domains as Artificial Intelligent and skills – crucial topics for the nurses and the nursing profession. This is particularly important when inter and multidisciplinary are mandatory in most of the upcoming EC calls. As stated by the EFN Secretary General “*Digital solutions must create a more resilient healthcare eco-system and nurses are the best ally being the most trusted healthcare professionals and closest to patients.*” For the EFN, representing 3 million nurses in the EU and 6 million in Europe, it is essential to support the digitalisation process through the

engagement of nurses for developing digital tools and upskilling skills, which can really support everyday nurses’ frontline work. This was confirmed by the European Commission present, DG Connect, who stated that future EU digital projects need to empower nurses in the co-creation, so the end-result will be fit-for-purpose! This is an essential step for creating sustainable and resilient healthcare eco-systems.

EFN DISSEMINATION FOR BOTH EHR PROJECTS

The dissemination activities for EU projects take advantage of the networks of all the partners in the consortium, leading to reach out specific targeted and wider audiences. This is particularly relevant for the activities addressed to policy-oriented and exploitation targets. To increase the visibility of the project and, as such, create awareness of its deployment and exploitation, establish an impact in the European field of EHR is key, as is making this information available in a suitable format to citizens and stakeholders in order to increase the adoption of the project research results. The pan-European multi-stakeholder networks of EFN together with the respective communication activities of all the partners play a crucial role in this task. Since the very beginning of both projects, the EFN has been active in advertising them across EU-related events, EFN Website, and EFN social media. This was again the case in 2022.

EU and EFN internal meetings >>

A way to make a project and its developments known is through disseminating it in meetings at EU, national, or local levels. In 2022, the EFN took all the opportunities to inform the EU stakeholders and EU policy makers on both projects and ongoing developments, as:

- » EFN General Assemblies (e.g.: April 2022)
- » EFN Executive Committee meetings
- » Meetings with European Commissioners & MEPs, etc (e.g.: with DG CONNECT, DG SANTE, WHO Regional Committee)
- » EU events in which the EFN participated, mostly online in these times of COVID-19, organised by the European Commission, the European Parliament, the EU Stakeholders, EFN members, etc. with a focus on digitalisation (e.g.: [CNAI Webinar “Shaping the future of Communities and health”](#), February 2022; [FHP-UEHP Symposium](#), March 2022; [Digital Transformation Summit 2022](#), October 2022.



<< EFN Website

To make the project visible, the EFN included a section dedicated to both projects ([InteropEHRate](#) & [Smart4Health](#)) in its Website with some key information on the projects. The homepage of the EFN [Website](#) is key in this process of dissemination. As such, whenever it is key, the EFN mentions both projects in some of the news it publishes on the homepage, as for example on 29 June 2022, on the occasion of

[Smart4health Health Day](#), held in Brussels, to which the EFN participated; or on 29 August 2022 – [news](#) on the State of the Union address 2022, that mentions both projects.

EFN Updates >>

The EFN uses its Newsletter (EFN Update) to spread information on the projects to its members and other key EU health alliances. In 2022, the EFN mentioned both projects – InteropEHRate & Smart4Health - in its Updates of: [July-August-September 2022](#); and [October-November-December 2022](#).



<< EFN Social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (@EFNBrussels)

The EFN also uses social media to spread information on EHR and the 2 projects. Key words: #Digitalisation; #EHR; #enduser; #IEHR; #S4H; #Smart4HealthEU; #Interoperhate; #ehealth; #nursesengagement; #nursesatthefrontline

B. “IMPROVING IMMUNISATION COOPERATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION” (IMMUNION)



Co-financed by the European Union Health Programme (2014-2020) under grant agreement No. 101018210, [this 2-year project](#), launched in April 2021 and coordinated by EuroHealthNet, aims to improve vaccine confidence and uptake across the EU by providing access to accurate, evidence-based information about vaccination to health professionals and the general public.

The partners in the project are: [EurohealthNet](#) (BE); [Standing Committee of European Doctors](#) (CPME) (BE); [Pharmaceutical Group of European Union](#) (PGEU) (BE); [European Federation of Nurses Associations](#) (EFN) (BE); [University of Antwerp](#) (BE); [Europa Media](#) (HU); [Euractiv Poland](#) (PL); [Istituto Superiore di Sanità](#) (ISS) (IT); [Institutul National de Sanatate Publica](#) (INSP) (RO); [Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) (CDPC) (LT); [Prolepsis Institute](#) (GR); Vienna Vaccine Safety Initiative (VIVI) (DE).

Building on learnings from vaccination efforts at national, regional and global, the IMMUNION project has been conceived and designed to strengthen the existing [Coalition for Vaccination](#) and improve stakeholder collaboration to increase vaccine uptake across Europe. IMMUNION will specifically increase the visibility and reach of the Coalition for Vaccination through a number of approaches and activities, focused on vaccine communication and education and training of healthcare professionals.

» [Project Meetings](#)

i. [Work Packages Meetings](#)

Being involved in all the project Work Packages (WPs), the EFN has been following closely their developments. As such, the EFN participated in all the regular/monthly teleconferences organised over the year, and provided input whenever requested and where needed in the related deliverable development/validation, bringing in nurses' views and expertise.

ii. 2nd General Assembly

Due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the project partners met online, on 10 & 11 February 2022 for their second General Assembly. This meeting was a good opportunity to [discuss](#) the progress made so far, through the activities developed and implemented within the project, but also future steps to take to achieve the desired impact and increase trust in vaccines and vaccination. Another crucial topic of the discussion was the collaboration within the team and with other related project and ways to make it more efficient and productive. At the General Assembly, the [European Health and Digital Executive Agency \(HaDEA\)](#) participated to provide feedback and answered questions.



iii. Coalition for Vaccination

Part of the IMMUNION consortium, and meeting on regular basis to discuss the project ongoing work, the 3 coalition co-chairs – EFN, CPME, PGEU, are looking forward to the project developments expected to strengthen the coalition long-term sustainability and visibility, providing capacity for the Coalition to reach its ambitious objectives and advance its mission to support delivering accurate information to the public through healthcare professionals, combating myths around vaccines and vaccination, and the exchange of best practices on vaccination. The co-chairs are hoping to go beyond general messaging on social media to truly understand how healthcare professionals want to receive training, and to develop user-friendly tools that are taken up in practice across Europe. The focus is on speaking to healthcare professionals, and through them to the public, in the aim of achieving actual impact in increasing vaccine uptake.

» Deliverables

Below some of the 2022 deliverables developed by the consortium:

- [Four National Toolboxes](#) to increase vaccine uptake (Report)
- [National vaccination stakeholder roundtables and media trainings](#) (Report)
- [Co-creating/co-selecting tools for piloting](#) (Report)
- Immunization Week Campaign 2022 - [Social Media campaign](#) & [Statement](#)
- Childhood Vaccination Campaign 2022 - [Social Media Campaign](#)
- Coalition for Vaccination [Leaflet](#) & [Video](#)

For more information on the project developments, please visit the project [website](#).

» Dissemination

All partners are actively engaged in the dissemination of the project messages and results. The messages communicated by IMMUNION, and the European Coalition for Vaccination, are based on the European Commission, WHO, ECDC reports on immunisation campaigns and best practices in communicating vaccination. Aiming to inform the EU stakeholders and policymakers, the EFN is taking all the opportunities to inform as much as possible on the ongoing project developments, through:



<< EU and EFN internal meetings

- » EFN General Assemblies
- » EFN Executive Committee meetings
- » Meetings with European Commissioners & MEPs (e.g.: with DG CONNECT, DG SANTE)
- » EU events in which the EFN participates, organised by the European Commission, the European Parliament, the EU Stakeholders, etc.

EFN Updates >>

The EFN uses its Newsletter (EFN Update) to spread information on the project to its members and other key EU health alliances. In 2022, the EFN mentioned the project and the Coalition for Vaccination in its Update of: [January-February-March 2022](#).



<< EFN social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (@EFNBrussels)

The EFN also uses social media to spread information. Key words: #vaccination #nursesforvaccination, #VaccinesWork, #WIW2022, #CoalitionForVaccination #IMMUNION



EFN Website >>

To make the project visible, the EFN included a [section](#) dedicated to the project in its Website with some key information. Next to that, the EFN [Website](#) homepage is also important in this process of dissemination. When key, the EFN mentions the project and the coalition for vaccination the news it publishes on there.



C. BEWELL – BLUEPRINT ALLIANCE FOR A FUTURE HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGY ON DIGITAL AND GREEN SKILLS



The 4-year [BeWell project](#), launched on 1st July 2022, and co-funded under [Erasmus+ programme](#) (Grant Agreement No 101056563) aims to form an alliance, to build a movement of all healthcare stakeholders supporting and committed to the development, implementation, and upscaling of the strategy on

upskilling and reskilling of the European health workforce ; and to develop a green and digital skills strategy for the health ecosystem that can be implemented at a local, regional, national, and ultimately at the European level through the [Pact for Skills](#).

By addressing the existing skill mismatches and strengthening competencies, the project should enable the healthcare professionals to be better prepared to face future challenges and adapt to ever-evolving societal contexts. To reach this ambitious goal, the BeWell project will build comprehensive curricula and training programmes targeting all healthcare professionals, including students, health professionals and professionals of emerging occupations.

The [consortium](#) consists of 24 beneficiaries and 5 associated partners from 11 countries with a geographical diversity that ensures the representation of different cultural, social, political, educational structures, values and traditions. The partnership brings together a substantial and diverse pool of leaders representing stakeholders in the health sector at regional, national, and European levels.

» BEWELL Specific Objectives:

1. Develop and implement a strategy (blueprint) for sectoral cooperation on skills in the healthcare sector
2. Develop skills intelligence
3. Boost innovation
4. Complement existing curricula for higher education, vocational education, and on the job training
5. Improve digital and green skills

» **Work packages:**

The project is structured in nine work packages (WPs) with WP1, WP2 and WP3 focusing on coordination and the development of skills intelligence and strategy; WP4, WP5, WP6 and WP7 aiming to develop the evaluation procedures and the development and validation of curricula and training programmes to ensure their high quality; WP8 and WP9 focusing on exploitation and dissemination of the project's outcomes. The EFN is involved in all of them.

- ✗ **WP1 - Project management and coordination** = Will ensure a timely and accurate oversight of the project implementation.
- ✗ **WP2 - Developing skills intelligence** = Will develop skills intelligence to inform the activities within the different Work Packages of the project, namely WP3, WP4, WP5 and WP6.
- ✗ **WP3 - Developing skills strategy** = Will produce a strategy for the European health ecosystem that has systemic and structural impact on reducing skills shortages, gaps and mismatches, as well as ensuring appropriate quality and levels of skills.
- ✗ **WP4 - Development of qualification matrices and assessment procedures** = Will establish relevant qualification definitions; prepare assessment and validation procedures; facilitate certification and recognition of skills and competences; and set up, organise and implement career pathway tracking of individuals.
- ✗ **WP5 - Development of curricula and training programmes** = Will create new curricula and training programmes to satisfy the needs requested by health systems (linked to WP2), particularly stressed by the pandemic, and to help the modernisation and digitalisation of the national public system through the re-skilling and upskilling of the health workforce.
- ✗ **WP6 - Piloting delivery and validation of training programmes and end-user performance** = Integrating the outcomes of WP2 and WP3 it will conduct a pilot training for both urgent needs and for emerging occupational profiles.
- ✗ **WP7 - Quality assurance of curricula and training programmes** = Will ensure the quality assurance and evaluation of the project deliverables.
- ✗ **WP8 - Sustainability and Exploitation** = Will establish a sustainability and exploitation action plan building on the findings, the strategy and the curricula developed.
- ✗ **WP9 - Communication and Dissemination** = Will engage with the full healthcare ecosystem, spread information and maximize the impact of the project outcomes.

» **Project Meetings**

i. **Work Packages Meetings**

Being involved in most of the project Work Packages (WPs), the EFN will follow closely their developments. As such, the EFN has been participating in all the regular teleconferences organised since the beginning of the project, providing the nurses' input whenever requested and where needed. The EFN will continue to do so in 2023.

ii. **Kick-off Meeting**

The EFN participated in the [kick-off meeting](#) of the project held in Brussels on 14-15 July 2022. During these 2 days, the project partners were briefed on the project tasks, activities and timeline for the work to be done, and planned immediate actions. Contributing to the Pact for Skills initiative under the European Skills Agenda 2020 – that aims to empower the healthcare workforce to participate in the green and digital transition - the project partners will start by carrying out a review of the existing upskilling and reskilling initiatives and Open Education Resources. They will then focus on the development of a green and digital skills strategy for the health ecosystem and build comprehensive curricula and training programmes that will be piloted and assessed during the lifetime of the project. With the experience and lessons learnt from the piloting phase, partners will refine and finalise the strategy.





iii. Multi-Stakeholder Workshop

The work on the strategy was kicked-off at the [multi-stakeholder workshop](#) hosted by the coordinator European Health Management Association (EHMA) in Brussels on 19-20 October 2022. The objective for this workshop, to which the EFN participated, was to develop a common vision across the different partners' views through establishing a roadmap for the strategy with concrete timeline and milestones towards implementation. Being still developed, the first draft should be available by June 2023.

iv. Launch event of BeWell Partnership

The European health multi-stakeholder partnership on skills gaps and emerging occupations, was launched on 13 December 2022, during an event where Sandra Gallina, Director General of the Directorate General for Health and Food Safety, welcomed the initiative as a good beginning, almost a guarantee that Europe will have the experience to deal with the challenges it faces across the health sector, and invited the partners to inspire young people to join the sector, promoting the value of the work that health professionals undertake. Elizabeth Adams, EFN President took this opportunity to share her perspectives and describe the relevance of the partnership for the nurses.

» Deliverables

Below some of the 2022 deliverables already developed by the consortium:

- Project [Website](#)
- Social Media accounts: [Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#)
- Partnership [Manifesto](#)
- [Position paper](#) supporting the European Commission' proposal on the European Year of Skills 2023

For more information on the project developments, please visit the project [website](#).

» Dissemination

<< EU and EFN internal meetings

In 2022, the EFN presented the project at the:

- » EFN General Assembly October 2022
- » EFN Executive Committee meeting September 2022
- » Meetings with European Commissioners & MEPs (e.g.: with DG CONNECT, DG SANTE, DG GROW)
- » EU events in which the EFN participated, organised by EU Stakeholders, etc.

EFN Updates >>

The EFN uses its Newsletter (EFN Update) to spread information on the projects to its members and other key EU health alliances. In 2022, the EFN mentioned the project in its Updates of: [October-November-December 2022](#).



<< EFN social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (@EFNBrussels)

The EFN also uses social media to spread information. Key words: #digitalisation #innovation #BeWell #nurses #skills

EFN Website >>

To make the project visible, the EFN included a [section](#) dedicated to the project in its Website with some key information. Next to that, the EFN [Website](#) homepage is also important in this process of dissemination. When key, the EFN mentions the project in there, as on 13 July 2022 [“Implementing EU Pact for Skills – BEWELL EU Project kick-off meeting”](#); 20 October 2022 [“BeWeLL EU project – Creating a common vision!”](#); 25 October 2022 [“Digital Transformation Summit 2022 – EFN as keynote speaker!”](#).



III. BUILDING ALLIANCES

Building alliances and creating partnerships with key organisations to work on particular issues has been the top priority for the EFN, as this is a means of strengthening civil society in the policy-making process and to get successful outcomes not only at EU level but also at national and local levels. In 2022, the EFN continued this process of building alliances and strengthening the ones already established with the key EU non-state stakeholders built up throughout the years, which is now providing consortia for the Horizon 2020 highly respected and influential to make innovation happen and implemented. Building alliances is also a good way to work closer to the EU Institutions and get the message across their lobby agenda. 2022 was a very fruitful year in terms of building alliance and bringing the nursing voice at EU level, with EFN participating in a large number of events, from the EU and the EU stakeholders.

➤ Sectorial Professions' Organisations

For the last 20 years, the EFN has been collaborating very closely with the sectorial professions' organisations based in Brussels, working on common topics, as Education (DIR55), Workforce, and Patient Safety and Quality of Care, including digitalisation - the 3 EFN main lobby topics, and participating in the same EU projects, as: [InteropEHRate](#), [Smart4Health](#), [IMMUNION](#), [BeWell](#), etc. In 2022, even with the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, and the war in Ukraine, that has been taking all our attention and support to, the EFN continued this good collaboration and exchange of views on key concerns, as: education, workforce, skills, value-based health systems, patient safety, digitalisation, artificial intelligence, ehealth, Vaccination, COVID-19, Mental health, Climate, through regular meetings with the EU Health Stakeholders as: The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union ([PGEU](#)), representing community pharmacists at EU level; The Standing Committee of European Doctors ([CPME](#)), representing the national medical associations across Europe; The Council of European Dentists ([CED](#)), representing the dentists and promoting oral health in Europe; The European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy / Physiotherapy ([ER-WCPT](#)) representing the physiotherapy profession at European Level; and the European Midwives Association ([EMA](#)), representing midwifery organisations and associations at EU level. The EFN is looking forward to continuing, in 2023, this important collaboration in the EU lobby arena, to build strong alliances to jointly push for quality of care, patient safety, and health system reform.

Next to these NGO's, the EFN continued its close collaboration with the following organisations:

➤ European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health (EU-OSHA)



[EU-OSHA](#) is the European Union information agency for occupational safety and health, and its work contributes to the European Commission's [Strategic Framework](#) on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027 and other relevant EU strategies and programmes. As the Official Campaign

Partner of 'Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load [campaign 2020-22](#)', the EFN continued to work very closely to OSHA, in 2022 to create a safe workplace to improve trust and safety for all the EU healthcare professionals. The EFN looks forward to continuing to strengthen this close collaboration in 2023.

➤ International Council of Nurses (ICN)



Representing the nurses worldwide, and having an observer status in EFN General Assemblies, the [ICN](#) has been collaborating with EFN on some nurses and nursing key topics for many years. In 2022, the EFN and ICN continued their good collaboration, namely in supporting the Ukrainian nurses and nurse refugees and the 5 neighbouring countries National Nurses Associations, since the very beginning of the war in Ukraine, namely through the Humanitarian Fund. Next to this, the EFN and ICN have been

supporting the Polish Nurses Association in setting up bridging courses for the Ukrainian nurses' refugees in Poland. The EFN and ICN have also been collaborating on the ILO data collected, and namely on the review of the ISCO classification, to get more reliable data for workforce planning. The EFN will continue this close collaboration in 2023.

➤ World Health Organisation (WHO)



Over the last 20 years, the EFN has been engaged with WHO Europe in different ways, as: by having an observer status in WHO Regional Committee (RC) meetings, by participating in several WHO & WHO RC meetings, and by contributing to consultations/debates, to make sure

that the nurses' views were taken into account in the debate. WHO EFNMA is having an Observer status within EFN

General Assemblies. Aiming to continue and strengthen this close collaboration with WHO & WHO Forum, namely on Health systems reform, Digitalisation, Primary care, and Nursing workforce, the EFN has been looking closely at these developments and is participating in the WHO Regional Committees' meetings. Next to EFN being an official partner of the WHO European Region, the EFN Secretary General, Paul De Raeve, is part of Roster of Experts of the [WHO Digital Health Technical Advisory Group](#), a group that harnesses the power of digital health to help achieve [WHO's triple billion goals](#) as set out in our [General Programme of Work](#), and [Sustainable Development Goal 3](#): Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. The EFN is also part of the [WHO Consortium of non-state actors](#).

In 2022, the EFN had some meetings with Margrieta Langins, Nursing and Midwifery Policy Adviser, WHO Regional Office for Europe, also invited to the EFN April 2022 General Assembly to brief the EFN members on the WHO European Region ongoing work and the Roadmap to guide the implementation of the Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery in the WHO European Region. The EFN also participated in a few WHO meetings as:

- [WHO Policy Makers Forum on Patient Safety Implementation](#), on 23-24 February 2022, which provide a global platform for engaging with senior policy makers and health care leaders in the discussion around implementation approaches of the Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030 within broader health agenda at country level.
- WHO first engagement session with **non-state actors**, on 25 February 2022, to discuss the role of communities and the barriers to meaningful community engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting raised the need to build trust and capacity for better responding to health crisis and emergencies situation.
- WHO Europe briefing on activities in Ukraine for **non-state actors**, on 4 April 2022, aiming to update Non-State Actors on the latest developments regarding WHO's activity and response to the ongoing situation in Ukraine
- WHO Regional Committee for Europe special session on 10-11 May 2022, to discuss the emergency situation in Ukraine.
- [72nd WHO Regional Committee for Europe](#) meeting held in Tel Aviv (Israel) on 12–14 September 2022 to which the EFN contributed actively through joint statements with other WHO **non-state actors**:
 1. [Joint Statement by EuroHealthNet and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 3 on "Regional digital health action plan for the WHO European Region (EPW flagship)")
 2. [Joint statement by EUPHA, EuroHealthNet and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 4 on "European regional action framework for behavioural and cultural insights for health, 2022–2027" (EPW flagship))
 3. [Joint statement ESO, IFA, EHN and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 5 on WHO European framework for action to achieve the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities 2022–2030)
 4. [Joint statement PSI and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 6 on Strengthening health emergency preparedness, response, and resilience: learning the lessons and building back better)
 5. [Joint statement EUPHA and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 6 on Strengthening health emergency preparedness, response and resilience: learning the lessons and building back better)
 6. [Joint statement IAHPC and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 9 on Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO Region)
 7. [Joint statement European Cancer Organisation and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda item 9 on Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO Region)
 8. [Joint statement EFAD and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda Item 14 on the Progress report on the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the WHO European Region 2016-2025)
 9. [Joint statement World Obesity Federation and other Non-State Actors](#) (Agenda Item 14 on the Progress report on the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the WHO European Region 2016-2025)
- [WHO QoC Webinar series on Meeting of the Minds - Patients' perspectives on Quality of Care](#), on 5 October 2022, to explore how to increase the role of patients in decision making and in the development of a culture of quality and safety.
- **WHO-EFN-EFNMA meetings series**, represented by the EFN President, designed to support implementation of the [Nursing and Midwifery WHO Euro Roadmap](#) by focusing on each of the four strategic priorities for development: Education, Jobs, Leadership and Service Delivery.

- **Organising Committee** meetings, on 25 April 2022 and on 30 May 2022, in preparation of the meetings series on key topics, with 2 organised in 2022, and 2 other ones in 2023.
- **First meeting series** on “*Advanced Nurses and Midwifery practice*” held on 6 April 2022, with the aim to show the priorities and challenges to advanced practice for nurses and midwives.
- **Second meeting series** held on 28 September 2022, focused on the topic “*WHO Euro Roadmap to implement Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery (GSDNM) 2021-2025: Measuring Progress*”, aiming to raise awareness of the data-dialogue-decision-making continuum; what are the elements of this approach to implementing the GSDNM and European Roadmap; identify national baselines and profiles; reflect on the role of national nurses and midwifery associations in the implementation of the GSDNM.
- The next meeting series will take place on 25 January 2023 (on Education) and on 10 May 2023 (on Regulation).

The EFN is looking forward to strengthening this cooperation in 2023.

V. A FUTURE FOR EVIDENCE BASE POLICYMAKING

A. EUROPEAN NURSING RESEARCH FOUNDATION



Founded by the EFN in 2013, within the context of the increasing emphasis placed on nursing research at EU level to secure reliable evidence from which to base future workforce decisions, the European Nursing Research Foundation (ENRF) is aiming at making the bridge between evidence and policy-making process and act as a contact point for EU policy-makers and politicians, and analysing and compiling what already exists in terms of nursing research in the EU Member States, in order to convert existing data into evidence-based advocacy for the EU policy-making process.

Although 2022, was another challenging for the nurses all over the globe, with a whole profession relentlessly caring for millions of citizens due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine, the ENRF continued its work of setting the future of the EU nursing research, by monitoring the work of the EU Institutions and focussing on integrating nursing research into the EU policy arena. Bringing the nursing researchers' knowledge together to strengthen the delivery of evidence-based nursing to add rigour and credibility to the political decision-making and outcomes is key, knowing that nursing research is a growing field even though it remains a relatively new activity in many countries.

↳ ENRF Governance body

The ENRF Board of Directors (BoD) is responsible for defining the policies and priorities of the Foundation in accordance with its mission, vision and constitutional aims, included in the [ENRF strategic plan \(2021-2024\)](#) (SORP) that contains a set of values, content and theme for the Foundation to work on. The ENRF [governance body](#) is currently composed by three Directors, re-elected in January 2022, for a 2-year mandate (2022-2024), and the ENRF Secretary General, Paul De Raeve:

- Founding EFN Director and ENRF President:



Anne Marie Rafferty
Royal College of Nursing - UK

- EFN Directors:



Izabella Uchmanowicz
Wroclaw Medical University – Poland
ENRF Vice-President



Andreas Xyrichis
King's College London – UK
ENRF Treasurer

- ENRF Secretary General:



Paul De Raeve

↳ **ENRF activities**

In 2022, the ENRF continued taking forward its activities, even though reduced, in compliance with the agreement of the October 2019 EFN General Assembly, in Greece, and in the context of rethinking the future of the Foundation. Which meant for the ENRF Office the circulation of only 2 Newsletters over the year, less Briefing Notes, attending less meetings, no social media, etc. But keeping always the EFN members, the ENRF Board of Directors and the ENRF Reference Points informed on the key topics for nursing research ongoing discussions at central moments, and developing some key documents as agreed by the EFN Members in 2019.

i. Evidence Based Policy Briefs

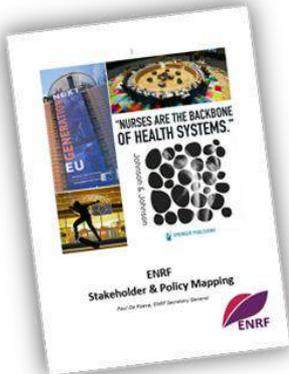
This is one of the main achievements for the ENRF in 2022. Following-up on the work started in 2020, and first developed in 2021, on the EFN research evidence needs to underpin EFN political lobby objectives, the ENRF continued to develop a few Policy Briefs to support the EFN Members and EFN EU lobby process. As such, the ENRF approved 3 new Policy Briefs in areas of scientific and political interest, linked to the current health research priorities in the European Union: [Advanced Practice Nursing](#); [Nursing Planetary Health](#) and [Violence Against Nurses](#). These 3 Policy Briefs come next to the ones on [Care left Undone](#); [Digitalisation](#); [Nursing Mentorship](#) (published in 2021).



The ENRF Board of Directors will now look at the next ones to work on – themes still to be defined, in compliance with the EFN lobby priorities.

ii. Stakeholder & Policy Mapping

In 2021, the ENRF Board of Directors discussed and approved the need to have a stakeholders' & policy mapping for one of the ENRF priorities, to help analyse, understand, and create effective strategies to promote ENRF SORP and [Policy Briefs](#), and providing an overview on the policy actors to be in touch with to influence research policy and support EFN work. Digitalisation was seen as a key topic to develop this stakeholders' & policy mapping, taking into account the ENRF [Policy Brief on Digitalisation](#) and as a follow-up of the [EFN event on digitalisation](#) in the European Parliament, in February 2020. In 2022, the ENRF continued to develop this document with major focus on the [European Health Parliament](#) - a movement connecting and empowering the next generation of European health



leaders to rethink EU health policies – constitute by a group of 60 young professionals - with some successes for the ENRF in influencing their outcomes on [Digitalisation](#). The ENRF will continue to develop this key policy document in 2023.

Stakeholder – European Health Parliament	Objectives	Interests	Influences	Potential
Every year, the European Health Parliament (EHP) invites all national policy holders and professionals from all over the EU to take a holiday and meet in Brussels for a week-end to discuss and negotiate policy recommendations.	The EHP wants to achieve two objectives: 1. The EHP wants to improve the way we deliver care to our patients and to our society. 2. The EHP wants to improve the way we deliver care to our patients and to our society.	The EHP is a European movement that seeks to provide solutions to European health issues. The EHP members are professionals who are directly involved in the care of patients and in the development of health systems in all EU countries.	How to influence the writing of the EHP's recommendations: - Public events in European Parliament - EHP can start by facilitating side events in the EHP meetings and EC meetings. - EHP can start by facilitating side events in the EHP meetings and EC meetings.	ENRF potential impact on EHP: - Public events in European Parliament - EHP can start by facilitating side events in the EHP meetings and EC meetings.

iii. Health & Research EU agenda

As part of its [SORP 2021-2024](#), and as in the previous years, the ENRF followed very closely, in 2022, the developments on the health & research EU agenda, and in particular [Horizon Europe](#), knowing that nursing research can bring a strong contribution to this EU Health Research Programme focusing on improving health conditions across all EU Member States through better prevention, access, and treatment. Nursing research is essential to make it fit-for-practice. Next to that, the ENRF also followed closely the developments on the new [European Innovation Agenda](#) (aiming to help Europe to develop new technologies to address the most pressing societal challenges), on [EU4Health](#) (aiming to reinforce crisis preparedness in the EU by contributing to the long-term health challenges by building stronger, more resilient and more accessible health systems), and the [European Research Area](#) (aiming to create a single, borderless market for research, innovation and technology across the EU).

To make sure that the nurse researchers and the EFN Members were fully informed on these developments, the ENRF participated in several meetings at EU level, and reported the key information to the EFN Members and the ENRF Reference Points through some Briefing Notes, namely: [Horizon Europe Lump Sum](#) (02/02/2022); [EU Health Programme 2021-2027](#) (09/07/2022); [European Research Area](#) (05/04/2022); [Fostering Coherence in EU Health Research](#) (20/10/2022); and information on ENRF Website homepage as: [What EU money for health research?](#) (05/12/2022), [The European Commission adopts the EU4Health Work](#) (25/11/2022), [New European Innovation Agenda](#) (29/08/2022), [European Research & Innovation Days – don't](#) (28/06/2022), [The Lump Sums Methodology](#) (02/02/2022).

The outbreak and subsequent pandemic of COVID-19 has challenged EU policies for health and has led to several new initiatives under a commitment towards a European health union, strengthening EU preparedness and response during health crises. In such a changing world, research and innovation play a key role. From a nursing research perspective, investing in research and innovation is investing in Europe's future. The ENRF, and nursing researchers, will be key to move from EU research fragmentation and the lack of coherence towards impactful and outcome-oriented research outcomes with a key focus on exploitation. As such, the ENRF will continue, in 2023, to follow up on these developments very closely and inform the EFN members and the ENRF Reference Points.

iv. Communication

Crucial to enhance effectiveness, communicating on the ENRF activities is key for making it visualised, to get the message across, and to engage ENRF reference points to the work of the ENRF, making the Foundation more visible, especially at EU level. In 2022, in order to share important information on nursing research at EU level, the ENRF Board of Directors, the ENRF Reference Points, and the EFN members received ENRF [Briefing Notes](#), on regular basis, and 2 [ENRF Newsletters](#). The ENRF Office is also regularly updating the [ENRF Website Homepage](#) with key information.

- » **Briefing notes** – In 2022 the ENRF published the following ones: [Horizon Europe Lump Sum](#) (February 2022); [Climate and Health](#) (March 2022); [European Research Area](#) (April 2022); [EU Health Programme 2021-2027](#) (July 2022); [Fostering Coherence in EU Health Research](#) (October 2022). All the ENRF Briefing Notes are available on [ENRF Website](#).
- » **ENRF Newsletters** - In 2022, the ENRF Office published 2 Newsletters: [May 2022](#); [December 2022](#), referring to the main news for nurse researchers/nursing research at EU level that can support and influence their daily work. All ENRF Newsletters are available on [ENRF Website](#).
- » **ENRF Website** - Updated on regular basis with key information/news, the ENRF Website (www.enrf.eu) is aiming at making the Foundation more visible. Next to a Homepage with latest news' overview, updated on regular basis with key information, the ENRF Website also provides information on its history, governing body, Constitution and Internal Regulation, mission and objectives, Policy Briefs, and Dissemination (Newsletters, Briefing Notes, Press Releases, input to the EU, articles). The Website is managed by the Brussels' Office and will evolve as the Foundation will.
- » **ENRF Social Media** - The ENRF has a Facebook (@enrf.foundation) & Twitter (@Enrf_Foundation) accounts, aiming to make the ENRF more visible, even if for the moment these are not so much used, as agreed by the EFN Members, in October 2019.

v. Board of Directors meetings

In 2022, the ENRF Board of Directors met on:

- » **23 February (Online)** to reflect on the work done so far, and on the activities to be done in 2022, setting up some key priorities, as: finalise a 4th Policy Brief on Advanced Practice Nurse, and to develop two other ones on Planetary Health and on Violence against nurses, and continue developing the ENRF Stakeholder & Policy Mapping – approving to follow-up on the work of the [European Health Parliament](#) (EHP) and networking and meeting people from the group on Digitalisation.



- **30 May (Online)** where the ENRF Directors prepared the joint ENRF BoD/EFN Executive Committee meeting of 1st June 2022, aiming to brief the EFN Executive Committee on the latest ENRF developments, based on the decisions taken by the EFN Members at the EFN General Assembly in October 2019, in Greece.
- **3 October (Online)** where the ENRF Directors discussed and approved two Policy Briefs - on Planetary Health and on Violence against Nurses; on the need to go over the EFN SOLP and the ENRF SORP and agree on the top priorities for the ENRF to take forward, namely in the context of Policy Briefs development to support EFN lobby work; and to have the ENRF communication documents reviewed to have more impactful documents' format.

vi. EFN Executive Committees & General Assemblies

As done since its establishment, the EFN Executive Committee and General Assembly were, in 2022, continuously informed on the ENRF ongoing work, and the ENRF Directors' reflections reported to, and discussed at the EFN Executive Committee meetings and General Assemblies. Next to this, meeting on 1st June 2022, the ENRF BoD and the EFN Executive Committee discussed the future and sustainability of the ENRF, including the proposal for an external review of the ENRF. A Terms of Reference is being developed jointly by the EFN President & ENRF President, with the support of Pat Cullen (RCN – EFN Executive Committee member). The ambition is to present developments at the next EFN General Assembly, in April 2023.

vii. Building Alliances

Building alliances and creating partnerships, next to strengthening the ones already established with key EU stakeholders and EU policy decision-makers is key for an organisation to grow and to achieve concrete outcomes. Contributing to an efficient information flow, the ENRF participated in 2022 in some key EU meetings and looked at building reliable alliances with key EU health and social Stakeholders, and policy and decision-makers, to ensure that nursing research get higher on the EU Research and Innovation Agenda. As mentioned in the section "Stakeholder & Policy Mapping", one of the key focuses for the ENRF in 2022 was the [European Health Parliament](#) that took some ENRF Policy Briefs in the development of their recommendations submitted to the European Parliament in August 2022. Their priorities on Digitalisation linked to the ENRF Policy Brief on [Digitalisation](#); Future Proof (healthcare systems) linked to the ENRF Policy Brief on [Advanced Practice Nursing \(APN\)](#) & on [Care Left Undone](#); Sustainability (including environment) linked to ENRF Policy Brief on [Planetary Health](#). The final [recommendations](#) of these working groups reflected the ENRF evidence. The ENRF Office will continue this important alliance building in 2023.

viii. EU Consultations

Answering European Commission consultations is a great opportunity to increase the ENRF visibility and making sure the nursing researchers' voice is heard at political level. As such, the ENRF always provides [input](#) to the European Commission consultations when seen relevant. Unfortunately, in 2022 due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine, no major EU consultations were made available for the ENRF to provide input.

↳ Conclusion

Nursing research has been shown to play a vital role in driving resilience in our health systems, and in so doing ensuring ongoing access to life-saving care. Investing in research and innovation remains important for the prosperity of the European region, for continuing knowledge generation and development of solutions that can improve our way of life peri and post the COVID-19 pandemic. Many lessons were learned during the pandemic, including the important role of citizen participation in health policy development. It is clear that research will continue to be a main driver for policy developments, not least in the health sector. As such, the ENRF will continue to follow on these EU developments, bringing valuable information to the EFN Members and the ENRF Reference Points, and getting closer to the EU policymakers bringing at EU level the nursing research evidence on key policy topics, thus supporting EFN daily lobby work.

V. EFN DATA COLLECTION

To gather quantity and quality evidence, the EFN uses data collection (through email, online surveys, or during the EFN General Assemblies with the Tour de Table item) as key component in its daily lobby work. The information shared by the EFN Members strengthens EFN position statements and lobby work with the EU institutions. This allows to provide the EU institutions and key EU stakeholders with up-to-date information/data to take informed decisions and consider the next steps on crucial topics, and make sure that the EU health policies reflect the nurse's reality to better shape fit-for-purpose solutions and initiatives in the healthcare sector. As such, in 2022, the EFN undertook some key surveys/consultations:

✎ **Challenges in nurses' education, workforce and quality & safety, including digitalisation**

The [State of the World's nursing 2020 report](#) is calling for the education and recruitment of 6 million more nurses. 'Nurses are the backbone of any health system' as recently stated Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director General. Even if the European Union presents better level of nursing personnel per inhabitants, the report shows that 'many wealthy countries are not producing enough nurses to meet their own healthcare needs, and are therefore reliant on migration, exacerbating shortages in poorer countries', which is the case for several European countries. The EU must educate more nurses to cover its own domestic needs and supports other countries in the world to do the same. In this context, and to have a better insight on the frontline reality, the EFN requested its members to report during the April 2022 EFN General Assembly Tour de Table item on the challenges in nurses' education, workforce and quality & safety, including digitalisation.

The data collected shows that the nursing profession is suffering from two major challenges induced by the increased stress triggered by the COVID pandemic: the shortage of nurses and the poor working conditions, namely low pay commensurate with high workload, overwhelming pressure and elevated risks to personal safety of nurses. The direct consequence of staff shortage and poor working conditions is that many current nurses are leaving the profession or considering to do so in the near future; many young adults decide to pursue professions other than nursing, even when expressing interest in becoming a nurse. As a consequence, the inability to attract and retain nurses is challenging the sustainability of national healthcare systems, at large. The report is available at the [EFN Website](#).

✎ **Education, working conditions, quality & safety challenges and initiatives related to long-term care**

The provision of long-term care services of good quality, in particular homecare and community-based services, is a priority for the nursing profession, advocating for a paradigm shift in long-term care policies to improve the quality of services and quality of life for long-term care patients. Taking into account the new European Commission initiative on a European Care Strategy, and knowing that the nurses play a fundamental and indispensable role in the provision of health and social care, in particular in prevention and long-term care, the October 2022 EFN General Assembly was asked to provide key data on their activities/best practices/experiences related to education, working conditions and quality & safety related to long-term care, including digitalisation to support the design of the 2023 Council Recommendation on Long-term care, within the context of the European Care Strategy. The report is still being drafted and should be made available soon on [EFN Website](#).

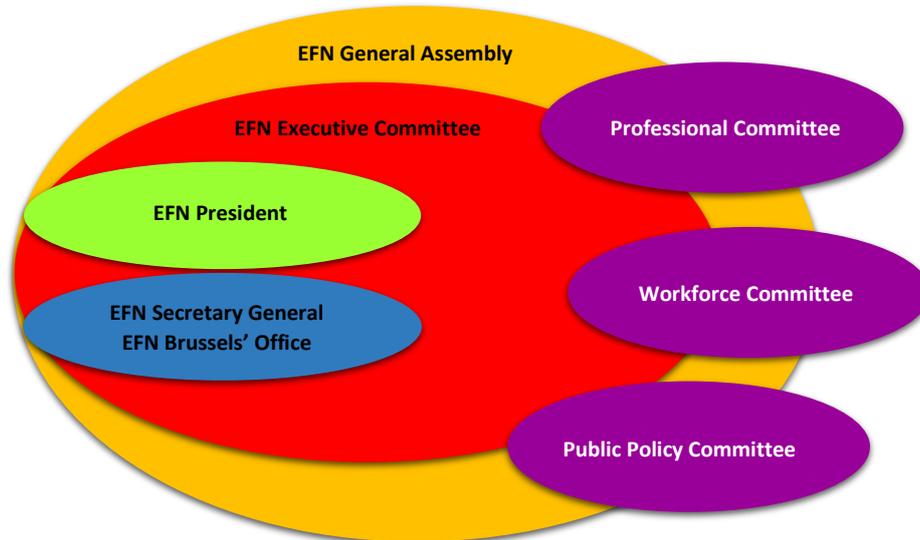
✎ **European Nursing ratios**

The EFN members noted the challenges inherent in lobbying for more nurses, to meet the nursing shortage, when there is no agreed nurse/patient ratio at EU level. The nursing shortage is on everyone's agenda, and having an EFN statement on nurse/patient ratio is seen as having a huge asset for the NNAs to lobby at national level. The challenge lay with reaching consensus at EU level when there are different workforce plans and strategies, and doing so in a way that will be beneficial to all EFN Members. As such, in this context of the EFN Working Group on nursing ratios established at the October 2022 EFN General Assembly, the EFN collected data on the European Nursing Ratio, that is still being analysed. The report will be available in 2023.

VI. EFN GOVERNANCE

A. EFN STRUCTURE

The EFN governance structure consists of the General Assembly, which includes 36 National Nurses' Associations, supported by the Executive Committee, the Professional, Workforce and Public Policy Committees, and the EFN Brussels Office.



B. EFN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As the EFN governing body, the General Assembly meets twice 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:

- ↳ **Members** - drawn from the [National Nurses' Associations](#) from the twenty-seven EU Member States + Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, UK, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, AUVB-UGIB from Belgium.
- ↳ **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](#).

In 2022, due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the EFN Members could only meet face-to-face at the October General Assembly, that took place on 13-14 October, in Slovenia, the April one being held online, with a reduced agenda, on 21 April. The minutes of the General Assemblies are not publicly available. The EFN Members can access them via the [Members' section of EFN Website](#). In 2023, the EFN General Assembly will meet on 13-14 April 2023, in Croatia, and on 19-20 October 2023, in Spain.

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 Council of Ministers (EU Presidency), the three EFN Committees meet twice a year during the EFN General Assemblies in order to discuss and produce recommendations to the General Assembly on the steps forward to achieve concrete outcomes related to specific issues. In 2022, due to the ongoing pandemic and that the April EFN General Assembly was organised online, the 3 Committees could only meet face to face at the October EFN General Assembly. But the 3 Committees' leads made sure that, even if online, the April General Assembly discussed, amended/approved in plenary (online) the most important EFN Policy Statements (ONE per Committee), to allow the EFN

Office to take its lobby work further. As such, in 2022, the 3 Committees discussed/approved the following key documents/topics:

- **Professional Committee:** Led by Nina Hahtela, from the Finnish Nurses Association, the Professional Committee discussed and approved in April 2022, in plenary, the EFN Policy Statement on "[EU Advanced Practice Nursing](#)". At the October General Assembly, the Professional Committee discussed and provided recommendations to the EFN General Assembly on the findings of the EFN Study on Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) and on EFN working group workplan on APN - short/medium/long term strategy - focusing on the educational aspects of APN; and discussed, amended and approved the revised EFN Policy Statement on "[Nursing Planetary Health](#)", adding to the Policy Statement approved in April 2022, the nurse education component.
- **Workforce Committee:** Led by Aristides Chorattas, from Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association, the Workforce Committee discussed and approved, in April 2022, in plenary, the EFN Policy Statement on "[Building and Sustaining a Resilient EU Nursing Workforce](#)". At the October General Assembly, the Workforce Committee discussed and provided recommendations to the EFN General Assembly on the findings of the EFN Study on Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) and on EFN working group workplan on APN - short/medium/long term strategy - focusing on the workforce aspects of APN; and discussed, amended and approved the EFN Policy Statement on "[ILO Guidance on Nursing Profession Data Collection](#)".
- **Public Policy Committee:** Led by Monika Azman, from Nurses and Midwives Association of Slovenia, the Public Policy Committee discussed and approved in April 2022, in plenary, the EFN Policy Statement on "[Nursing Planetary Health](#)", reviewed in October 2022 by the Professional Committee. At the October General Assembly, the Public Policy Committee discussed and provided recommendations to the EFN General Assembly on the findings of the EFN Study on Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) and on EFN working group workplan on APN - short/medium/long term strategy - focusing on the quality & Safety (including digitalisation) aspects of APN; and discussed, amended and approved the EFN Policy Statement on "[European Care Strategy](#)".

D. EFN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The [EFN Executive Committee](#) is constituted by seven members: President, Vice-president, Treasurer and four delegates elected by the EFN Members National Nurses' Associations. They meet at least twice a year (in between each General Assembly) to discuss key issues for the EFN, to prepare recommendations for the General Assembly, and to follow-up on the General Assembly decisions. An extraordinary Executive Committee meeting usually takes place the day before each General Assembly to set up the last recommendations for the meeting, and anytime needed to take any urgent decision or discuss a key topic.

a. Meetings

In 2022, the EFN Executive Committee met several times: on 4 February (Online) and 6 September (Online) for their regular meetings, and on 12 October 2022, in Slovenia, for an extraordinary meeting. In 2023, the Executive Committee will meet for their regular meetings on: 2 February and 7 September.

b. Elections

Following the resignation of one of the EFN Executive Committee members - Susan Aitkenhead, who left the Royal College of Nursing (elected by EFN members in October 2021 but resigned before attending the first meeting of the Executive Committee), the EFN EXCOM decided to fill this open position during the EFN April General Assembly. The elections took place from 15 to 20 April 2022, online. Pat Cullen, from the Royal College of Nursing (UK), was elected with 42 votes in favour & 3 abstentions, for a term running from April 2022 to October 2023 (when the election for this position is due).

At the Autumn EFN General Assembly held on 13-14 October 2022, in Slovenia, the EFN members elected the following members of the EFN Executive Committee, as per EFN Constitution & Internal Regulation: EFN Vice-President: Aristides Chorattas, Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association (Cyprus) (50 votes in favour); and 2 Members of the Executive Committee: Wolfgang Kuttner, Austrian Nurses Association (33 votes in favour) and Monika Ažman, Nurses and Midwives Association of Slovenia (42 votes in favour), for a two-year term 2022-2024.

As a result, the new Executive Committee is constituted as follow:



President: Ms Elizabeth Adams, Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation, *Ireland*



Vice-President: Mr Aristides Chorattas, Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association, *Cyprus*



Treasurer: Mr Yves Mengal, Fédération Nationale des Infirmières de Belgique (FNIB), *Belgium*

Four Executive Committee Members:



Mr Wolfgang Kuttner, Austrian Nurses Association, *Austria*



Ms Philomena Ni Sheaghda, Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation, *Ireland*



Ms Monika Azman, Nurses and Midwives Association of Slovenia, *Slovenia*



Ms Pat Cullen, Royal College of Nursing, *United Kingdom*

E. EFN BRUSSELS OFFICE

In 2022, the EFN Brussels Office, consisting of the Secretary General, the Secretary, and the Communication & Social Media Advisor, supported by consultants in the area of Accounting, Social Security System, Web and IT management, Legal Affairs and on specific policy areas, especially during the EFN General Assemblies, continued focussing on implementing the EFN Strategic Lobby Plan 2021-2027.

Having a proactive approach to setting the EU health and social policy agenda by influencing the major policy initiatives from the European Institutions, which in turn impacts on nurses and the nursing profession, is the core business of EFN. Translating this political journey into the 'language' of the EFN members, through the EFN Updates, Press Releases and Briefing Notes, bridges the distance between Brussels and the governmental capital of the Member States where national policies are developed. Informing and keeping the EFN members up to speed is essential in putting them in an advanced position vis-à-vis their national governments. But equally important is the engagement of the EFN members in the Brussels' lobbying process 'to put a human face to policymaking'.

As such, having an EFN Office in Brussels equipped with highly educated and motivated staff, and empowering members to exchange views on specific EU policy areas, thus enabling them to go back home with the capacity to influence national governments is, in fact, the 'raison d'être' of EFN.



Paul De Raeve
EFN Secretary General



Fatima Pereira
EFN Secretary



Alessia Suma
EFN Communication
& Social Media Advisor

VII. COMMUNICATION

For the EFN, it is essential that its members have the necessary information, knowledge and experience to take informed decisions on the key issues related to the nursing profession, not only during the EFN General Assemblies, but also when an item is being discussed and/or needs urgent attention, decision and/or action. 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, and articles. Most of these documents are made available to the public via the EFN Website: www.efn.eu

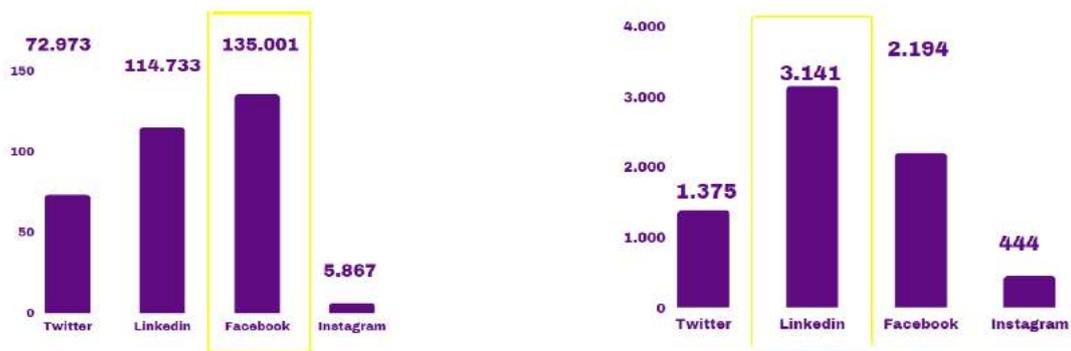
➤ EFN Website

The [EFN website](http://www.efn.eu) is used as a key communication channel to disseminate information to the EFN members, the EU health stakeholders, key decision-makers, and the public in general. Updated on regular basis, the EFN Website reflects the EFN on-going activities and relevant information which shows the dynamics and impact of EFN on EU policymaking. Being a key tool, the EFN launched in April 2022 an updated version of the EFN website with a new domain name - www.efn.eu, to make it more up to date, and with a more recent open-source content management system (WordPress) to make sure the system is compliant with the software latest developments).

➤ Social Media

Social media is nowadays an important tool to share and exchange information within the EU lobby arena. In order to be more visible in the social media network and to get EFN messages closer to the European stakeholders, the MEPs, the European Commission representatives, and the nurses all over the EU, the EFN is using [Facebook](#); [Twitter](#); [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Overall, we can say that in 2022, **EFN social media campaigns reached 328.474 people from all over the world**, with a top of 135.001 people on Facebook, 72.973 people on Twitter, 114.733 people on LinkedIn, and 5.867 people on Instagram. 7.154 people interacted or reacted to it, with a top of 3.141 reactions on LinkedIn, followed by Facebook with 2.194 reactions (See [here](#) the EFN Social Media Summary report for 2022). See below more details.

How many people visualised EFN Social Media posts? vs How many people interacted with EFN posts?



📌 EFN Facebook: /efnbrussels

The EFN Facebook account has 3.109 followers. In 2022, the EFN was quite active on Facebook, with many posts published, with a **top of views** reached with the one published on 10/10/2022, seen by **5.162 people**, followed by the one on 25/10/2022, seen by **3.010 people**, and the one on 10/10/2022, seen by **1.998 people**.



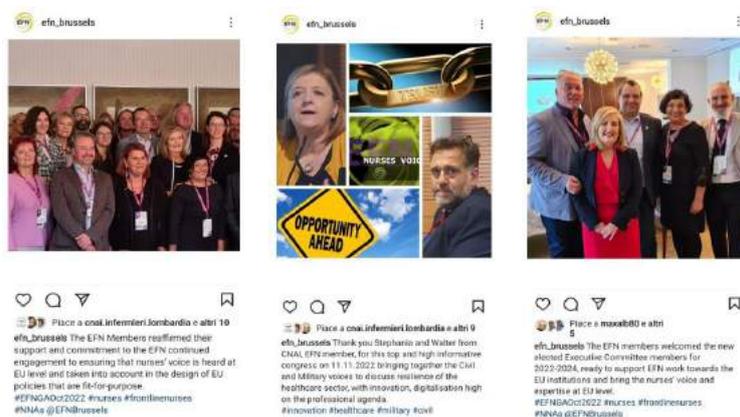
📌 EFN Twitter: @EFNBrussels

The EFN Twitter account has currently 1.453 followers. In 2022, the EFN was quite active on Twitter, with many tweets, and a **top tweet** published on 12/04/2022, **seen by 6.188 people**, followed by the one published on 04/03/2022, seen by **5.154 people** and the one on 12/04/2022, seen by **4.860 people**.



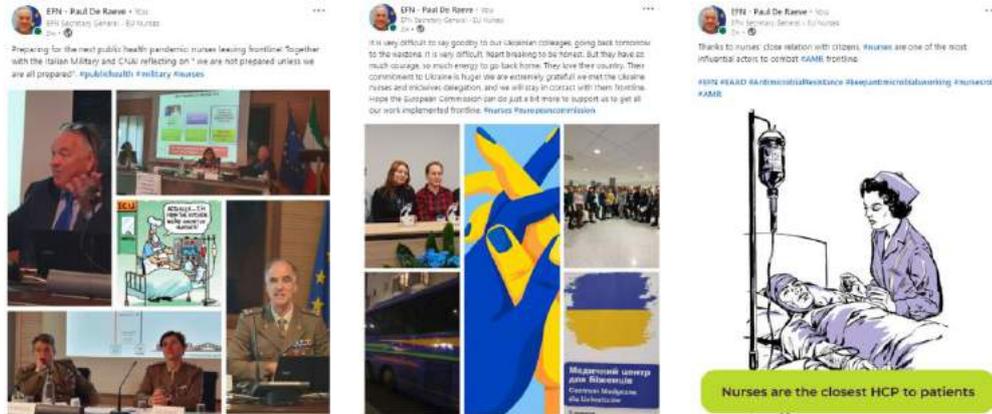
📌 EFN Instagram: @efn_brussels

As for Facebook & Twitter, the EFN is using Instagram to publish the most relevant information. The EFN Instagram account has currently 292 followers. In 2022, the EFN was quite active also on Instagram, with a **top post** published on 14/10/2022, **seen by 106 people**, followed by another one on 11/11/2022, seen by **74 people**, and one on 14/10/2022, seen by **73 people**.



🔗 LinkedIn: @EFN - Paul De Raeve

Finally, the EFN is also using LinkedIn to publish the most relevant information. The EFN LinkedIn account has currently 13.842 followers. In 2022, the EFN was quite active also on LinkedIn, with a **top post** published on 11/11/2022, **seen by 1.835 people**, followed by another one on 18/11/2022, seen by **1.776 people**, and one on 18/11/2022, seen by **1.548 people**.



🔗 EFN Social Media Reports

You can have a detailed overview of **EFN Social Media posts** by theme, done over 2022, through the small reports developed for each of them:

- ✓ [International Women Day \(08/03/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Towards a Practical Assessment Tool for Trustworthy AI \(15/03/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [E-conférence FHP-UEHP \(16/03/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Smart4Health \(20-22/04/2022 & 29/09/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Immunisation Week \(24-30/04/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [EFN General Assemblies \(21/04/2022 & 13-14/10/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Europe Day \(09/05/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [International Nurses Day \(12/05/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [BeWell Project \(14-20/07/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Youth Policy Dialogue \(27/09/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [World Mental Health Day 2022 \(10/10/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Digital Transformation Summit 2022 \(24-28/10/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [European Antimicrobial Awareness Day \(17-18/11/2022\)](#)
- ✓ [Nurses for Peace and Support Nurses \(All over the year\)](#)
- ✓ [Final Report Social Media 2022](#)



➤ EFN Update

On regular basis, when significant lobby information is available, the EFN publishes its [Update](#), a newsletter that makes reference to the main information for nurses and the nursing profession within the European Union and to the key issues to influence the European Institutions. These 'Updates' keep the EFN Members and other key EU health alliances informed about the EFN policies, actions and relevant EU initiatives. In 2022, the EFN published 4 Updates: [January-February-March 2022](#); [April-May-June 2022](#); [July-August-September 2022](#); [October-November- December 2022](#). All the EFN Updates are available at: https://efn.eu/?page_id=875

➤ EFN Press Releases

Another approach that the EFN is using to communicate with the EU lobby arena is through its press releases. The [EFN Press Releases](#) provide the EFN members and other key EU health actors, with information on key topics that the EFN believes are important to share, at a crucial moment. These are seen as a good way to reaffirm EFN views/position on a particular topic next to the EU Institutions and the EU stakeholders. In 2022, the EFN published the following press releases: [114th EFN General Assembly April 2022](#) (April 2022); [115th EFN General Assembly – October 2022 \(Slovenia\)](#) (October 2022). All the EFN Press Releases are available at: https://efn.eu/?page_id=882

➤ EFN Policy Statements and Position Papers

The [EFN Policy Statements and Position Papers](#), highlighting the EFN members views on specific issues, and approved by the EFN General Assembly, are crucial for the EFN's lobby work next to the different EU Institutions and EU Stakeholders, and to support the EFN Members in their daily lobby work at national and EU level. In 2022, the EFN members adopted the [EFN Policy Statement on EU Advanced Practice Nursing](#) (April 2022); [EFN Policy Statement on Building and Sustaining a Resilient EU Nursing Workforce in the EU and Europe](#) (April 2022); [Nursing Planetary Health](#) (April 2022, reviewed in October 2022); [EFN Policy Statement on ILO Guidance of Nursing Profession Data](#) (October 2022); [EFN Policy Statement on European Care Strategy](#) (October 2022). All the EFN Policy Statements and Position Papers are available at: https://efn.eu/?page_id=833

➤ EFN inputs to the European Commission Consultation Processes

In 2022, the EFN inputs to the European Commission Consultation processes related to: [Antimicrobial Resistance \(AMR\) – recommendation for greater action](#) (February 2022); [Long-Term Care](#) (March 2022); [Brain drain](#) (May 2022); [European Health Data Space \(EHDS\)](#) (July 2022); [European Year of Skills 2023](#) (November 2022). All the EFN contributions to the European Commission consultation processes are available at: https://efn.eu/?page_id=873

➤ EFN Articles

Publishing [articles](#) is a good way for the EFN to increase the visibility of nurses and the nursing profession at European level, to strengthen the EFN's position on a range of key policy issues, and to increase the impact of the EFN messages and their potential influence on the policy design. In 2022, the EFN published two articles: [“A Theoretically derived approach to impact – Implementing Policy Influence Strategies”](#) (July 2022) - which proposes an approach to quantifying the impact of policy influence efforts, specifically within the context of European Public Health (EPH) advocacy; [The registered nurse shortage in Europe is a ‘ticking time bomb’](#) (November 2022) – that stresses the urgency to address the registered nurse shortage, and the consequences of political inertia. All the EFN articles are available at: https://efn.eu/?page_id=2258

➤ EFN Briefing Notes

The [EFN Briefing Notes](#), available only to the EFN members via email and/or the members' section of EFN Website, provide specific information on key lobby topics that may influence the EFN members' national policies and daily lobby work. In 2022, the EFN published some Briefing Notes on key items: Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) – A Silent Pandemic (January 2022); European Parliament deal for stricter EU rules on Hazardous Medicinal Products (February 2022); Antimicrobial Resistance: main issues and possible solutions! (March 2022); Conference on the Future of Europe – Next Steps (May 2022); European Health Data Space (June 2022); Youth Policy Dialogue on Brain Drain (September 2022); BeWell EU Project Workshop (October 2022); Conference with Ukraine nurses in Poland (November); 'Health at a Glance 2022' Report - What is the report saying about Nurses (December 2022). Next to these EFN Briefing Notes, the EFN Members also received regular [ENRF Briefing Notes](#) (available publicly) on key topics for nursing research that can also be of interest to them.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The last year has proven - in case there was any doubt - that the shortage of nurses is a real accelerating threat to health and well-being of all citizens and the prosperity of the European Union. Nurses are indispensable to the provision of safe and quality health and social care. Efforts to increase the availability of qualified professional nurses can secure timely and accessible healthcare to European populations, if adequately prioritised and resourced. The EU must require Member States to invest in building a resilient nursing workforce to protect the health of citizens and the social and economic prosperity of the European region. This includes evidence-based measurement tools to determine sufficient and safe registered nurse staffing and funding for the implementation of staffing adjustments.

Nurses are currently leaving the profession in large numbers, creating a human resource pandemic. It is not anymore about the intention to leave the profession...it is a silent resignation at an unprecedented pace, that will lead to healthcare systems in the EU collapsing. Post-COVID-19 coupled with decades of underinvestment, the daily risk to patient safety and the moral distress caused by an inability due to the poor working environments to deliver the quality of care, it is impossible to stay in the profession. Hospitals/units need to close due to the shortage of nurses or engage in aggressive and unethical recruitment - Brain Drain will increase in the coming years. WHO and the EU need to rapidly escalate their efforts to retain nurses within the profession and deliver on their priorities to address the shortage of nurses in the EU and Europe.

It is therefore crucial to have local and regional solutions to attract young people to the nursing profession, in addition to retaining the invaluable resource of experienced qualified nurses. Good practices exist that should be replicated and upscaled with the support of the [EU Recovery and Resilience funds](#). Retaining and attracting highly qualified talented individuals to the healthcare sector is a real political challenge. It is necessary to improve the working conditions and the salary of nurses, so we can retain and attract frontline nurses in the profession.

The EU institutions recognise the essential work of nurses for the well-functioning of the healthcare system and the need to improve their working conditions and salary to attract and retain young people in the nursing profession. It is now time to act and turn the rhetoric into concrete proposals and action. The short- and long-term resilience of the EU health service relies upon having a qualified pool and the optimal number of nurses in the population. Resilience can only be achieved if the EU educates and trains enough nurses, recognises and respects their unique contribution and if those nurses can apply their expertise and care responsibilities in safer working conditions.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) was established in 1971. The EFN represents over 36 National Nurses Associations and its work has an effect on the daily work of 3 million nurses throughout the European Union and 6 million in 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 and Europe.

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