

**"EMPOWERING HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS FOR A RESILIENT  
EUROPEAN HEALTH FUTURE"**

**14** JAN & **15** JAN

EUROPEAN  
ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL COMMITTEE

EUROPEAN  
PRESS CLUB

**ESN**  
EUROPEAN SPECIALIST  
NURSES ORGANISATION

*"Exploring the  
critical intersections  
of policy, politics and  
economics in today's  
health landscape".*

[www.esno-congress.eu](http://www.esno-congress.eu)

## Shaping the Future of Healthcare: Building a Sustainable Paradigm for Nursing and Beyond

*Tuesday 14 January*

*Location: European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)*

*Address: Rue Belliard 99/101, 1040 Bruxelles, Belgium*

*Link to Register: [REGISTER HERE](#)*

09.00 – 10.00

ACCESS TO VENUE BUILDING AND REGISTRATION

10.00 – 10.30

WELCOME COFFEE

10.30 – 11.00

OPENING SESSION: HEALTH CHALLENGES IN EUROPE—THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF SPECIALIST NURSES

11.00 – 13.00

*Exploring the critical intersection of policy, politics, and economics in today's health landscape.*

Europe's health sector faces mounting challenges, from an aging population and chronic diseases to rapid medical advancements and the climate crisis. **Economic constraints and the need for sustainable solutions further complicate the landscape, creating complex demands on healthcare systems.** These issues extend deeply into the health workforce, with nursing professionals bearing a significant burden. Just skills improvement are not enough, as they come and go and are not sustainable.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed critical vulnerabilities in both the quantity and quality of nursing staff, underscoring the urgent need for systemic change, it was and still is a huge European and global shock. However, despite recognizing this, many institutions continue to cling to outdated paradigms, missing the chance to implement meaningful, transformative solutions. A collective shift to a "new DNA" for healthcare professional workforce is required—one that redefines how we work together, fosters collaboration, and develops fresh narratives for a sustainable future. **Are we smart enough to utilise the huge potential, the right tools and best mechanisms?**

Persistent inflation and financial strain compound these issues, intensifying workforce shortages and operational challenges. Addressing these intertwined problems requires a unified strategy that considers

economic realities, workforce dynamics, and the evolving role of nurses in healthcare. Specialist nurses, in particular, are essential not just as care providers but also as leaders in public health, policy advocacy, and health system resilience.

***This opening session will delve into the political and policy aspect of the critical role of specialist nurses in navigating these challenges.*** We'll explore how they contribute to patient outcomes, health system efficiency, and sustainable solutions, even amidst political, economic, and regulatory pressures.

Key topics include:

- **Policy Frameworks:** Understanding the European policies that influence nurse roles and healthcare delivery, including legislation around workforce autonomy, certification, and cross-border cooperation.
- **Economic Factors:** Analyzing the impact of economic instability on the healthcare workforce, job security, and the resources available to nurses, as well as the role of sustainable investment in advancing specialized nursing competencies.
- **Political Landscape:** Addressing the role of advocacy and collaboration in shaping policies that recognize and empower the specialist nurse's contribution, from preventive care to advanced interventions, and supporting a healthy workplace.

This session sets the stage for discussions on how specialist nurses can further strengthen their impact, despite economic and political pressures, and highlights the need for cohesive, cross-European efforts to support their essential role in achieving equitable, sustainable, and resilient healthcare.

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#### SPEAKERS AND DEBATES

- Adriano Friganovic, ESNO president
- MEP Andras Kulja, EPP and vice chair SANT and EMPL
- MEP Vytenis Andriukaitis
- Ber Oomen, ESNO director
- Commission DG Sante, Katarzyna Ptak Bufkens
- Commission Growth confirmed (Speaker in process)
- Peter Preziosi (USA) of CGFNS <https://www.cgfns.org/>
- Jacqueline Bowman, Founder of Foundation for the Rights of Citizens with Obesity - [Pactev Adiposité – Adipositas Pact](https://pa-ap.org/en) <https://pa-ap.org/en>
- Anca Toma, director European Patient Forum <https://www.eu-patient.eu/> .

13.00 – 14.00 lunch

At the congress room

## SESSION 2: SHAPING THE FUTURE—REFLECTIONS FROM NURSE LEADERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

*Insights on advancing specialist nursing in response to Europe's evolving health challenges.*

Following our exploration of the broad health challenges facing Europe, this session brings together a distinguished panel of nurse leaders from national regulatory bodies, global certification and credentialing institutes, advanced nurse practitioners, and EU policy stakeholders. Together, they will provide a multi-faceted view of the strategic direction needed to strengthen and sustain the role of specialist nurses across the continent.

Through panel discussions and reflections, this session will examine:

- **Regulatory Perspectives:** Leaders from national regulatory bodies will discuss the policies required to enhance specialist nursing education, standardize competencies, and increase cross-border mobility. They will share initiatives that ensure specialist nurses can meet both national health priorities and EU health directives.
- **Certification and Credentialing:** Representatives from global certification and credentialing institutes will highlight the significance of universal standards in advanced practice nursing. This includes fostering greater alignment in certification processes to build trust, validate competencies, and facilitate recognition across borders.
- **Advanced Practice and Innovation:** Advanced Nurse Practitioners will offer insights into how expanded roles and scopes of practice can address healthcare gaps, especially in underserved and rural areas. They will share firsthand experiences on the value of autonomy, leadership, and collaboration in delivering impactful care.
- **EU Stakeholders' Vision:** EU representatives will outline relevant EU health initiatives, funding, and support for specialist nursing programs. They will address the critical need for cohesive policies that empower nurses, sustain workforce resilience, and contribute to sustainable health systems.

This session invites a dynamic dialogue to collectively reimagine the pathways, partnerships, and policy frameworks necessary for a future where specialist nurses are fully supported and recognized as essential pillars of healthcare across Europe.

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### SPEAKERS

- Daniela Lehwaldt – Advanced Nurse Practitioners Europe  
<https://www.icn.ch/resources/publications-and-reports/guidelines-advanced-practice-nursing-2020>
- Maurizio Zega, FNOPI <https://www.fnopi.it/en/>
- Professor Olle Ten Cate, Entrustable Professional, Activities and Entrustment and Decision-Making in Health - Professions Education  
<https://www.ubiquitypress.com/site/chapters/e/10.5334/bdc.p/>
- Anastasia Liossattou, Board member, European Dialysis and Renal Care Nurses  
<https://www.edtnaerca.org/>
- Cecile Dury, president FINE <https://fine-europe.eu>
- Jaap Hoekman, CEO National Specialist Nursing Association Netherlands  
<https://venvnvs.nl/information-in-english/>
- CEO, European Intensive Care Nurses EfCCNa <https://www.efccna.org/>

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## An evening dinner will be organised to meet and greet

- Members of the European Parliament,
- European Commission and Committees,
- Stakeholders in health policy environment
- European based professional health organisations
- Representatives of ESNO and their members.

Closer to the date, all those registered will receive a link to share their preference for the dinner.

The venue will be the 'Aux Armes de Bruxelles' in the city center.

<https://auxarmesdebruxelles.com/en/home-2/>

- Arriving time from 19.00 hours
- Start dinner at 19.30 hours
- End of dinner at 22.00 hours

Link to registrate and dietary requirements follow later.

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*Wednesday 15 January*

*Location: Press Club, Rue Froissart 95, 1040 Bruxelles, Belgium*

08.30 – 09.00

WELCOME COFFEE AND REGISTRATION

09.00 – 13.00

SESSION 3: ADVANCING NURSE ENGAGEMENT IN KEY HEALTH INITIATIVES—  
CERTIFICATION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND PREPAREDNESS

*Empowering specialist nurses in Vaccination, Antimicrobial Stewardship, and Health Preparedness.*

Opening session key note: Penilla Gunther

This session dives into the practical steps for enhancing nurse engagement in critical health areas, with a focus on certification and efficient program implementation. In today's health landscape, nurses play an essential role in vaccination, antimicrobial stewardship, and broader preparedness efforts. However, these efforts require structured support, streamlined certification pathways, and robust frameworks that recognize and enhance nurses' responsibilities in these domains.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Certification for Specialized Roles:** We will explore how structured certification programs can empower nurses to confidently lead initiatives in vaccination and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) management. Panellists will discuss the importance of avoiding delays in certification processes and provide practical solutions to harmonize standards, ensuring timely recognition of nurse competencies across the EU.
- **Implementation Strategies:** Drawing on case studies, we will examine the pathways to implementing specialized nursing programs in areas like vaccination and AMR stewardship. Emphasis will be placed on overcoming barriers, such as administrative challenges, resource limitations, and interprofessional coordination, that can often hinder program rollout.
- **Vaccination as a Core Responsibility:** As vaccination remains one of the most effective preventive health interventions, this session will address the critical role of nurses in promoting vaccine confidence, educating communities, and combating misinformation. Discussions will

cover the necessary training, resources, and support systems to enable nurses to lead effectively in this area.

- **Antimicrobial Resistance and Stewardship:** Nurses are vital to the success of antimicrobial stewardship efforts, helping to monitor, educate, and advocate for responsible antimicrobial use. This discussion will examine the unique contributions nurses make in AMR and outline certification and training pathways to empower them in these responsibilities.
- **Preparedness and Response:** In the context of emerging health threats, from pandemics to environmental health crises, preparedness is paramount. Panellists will explore how nurses can be at the forefront of preparedness initiatives, equipped with the skills, resources, and certifications needed to respond effectively.

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30

#### **Session 4: From Vision to Action—Concrete Steps for Program Implementation**

*Action-oriented strategies for implementing specialized nursing programs with impact and sustainability.*

In this 1.5-hour session, we'll focus on streamlined steps to implement specialized nursing initiatives effectively, from goal setting and framework building to overcoming barriers. Participants will gain the tools needed to create measurable impact and ensure sustainable success in areas such as vaccination, antimicrobial stewardship, and preparedness.

#### **Agenda Outline:**

##### **1. Setting Goals and Building a Practical Framework (30 minutes)**

- This segment covers defining specific, measurable goals for health initiatives and building an actionable implementation framework. Participants will learn the essentials of timeline creation, resource allocation, and role definition within teams. Real-world examples will be provided to illustrate successful planning, while discussing how to avoid common pitfalls and delays.

##### **2. Navigating Certification, Regulatory Steps, and Overcoming Barriers (30 minutes)**

- This part will address strategies for accelerating certification and navigating regulatory requirements, ensuring alignment with national and EU standards. Additionally, we'll explore practical ways to overcome typical barriers to implementation, such as funding challenges, interprofessional collaboration issues, and resistance to change. Facilitators will share adaptable solutions for these hurdles to enhance program success in diverse healthcare settings.

##### **3. Case Study Workshop and Interactive Q&A (30 minutes)**

- In this interactive segment, participants will work through a short, practical case study focused on implementation challenges in a key health area. Working in small groups, they will identify obstacles and propose actionable solutions. Each group will then share insights with the larger session, followed by a brief Q&A where facilitators address specific questions and provide guidance on sustaining momentum and securing long-term impact.

Outcome: By the end of this session, participants will have a concrete action plan, strategies for certification and compliance, and effective tools for turning health initiatives into sustained, impactful programs.

Participants: All of 14<sup>th</sup> event, with special participants

- MEP's (TBC)

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## THE ORGANISING TEAM AND CONTACTS

### Instictive Partners

- Contacts
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- Hana Bartakova: Associate director
- Beatriz Tome Rodriguez: Policy officer
- David ODonnel: Director

### ESNO

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- Kristian Civka: Policy advisor
- Maddalena de Maria: Policy advisor