



Advancing Nursing Research

ENRF Newsletter

May 2019



Dear ENRF colleagues and Friends,

There is no doubt that, when setting the EU political agenda and developing the nursing profession, evidence-based nursing and EU policy-making have to go hand in hand, mainly when we see how health, and in particular nursing, fits into the overall research agenda.

To convince the European Commission, the ENRF Secretary General, Dr Paul De Raeve, has met DG Research and Innovation Director General, Jean-Eric Paquet, prior to the [conference](#) on 'Health' - the cluster 1 of the programme 'Horizon Europe' (2021-2027). He informed us on the reorganisation of DG Research and Innovation (DG RTD), aiming at breaking down silos, delivering more 'science' for EU policy-making. These changes reorganise the staff into new groupings to deliver on three policy priorities: open science, open innovation and sustainable development. This reorganisation is key as DG RTD is the Commission's fifth-biggest and oversees its third-largest budget - €77 billion Horizon 2020. The Commission last year proposed a budget increase for the programme to €94.1 billion for 2021-2027, with a new set of policy goals.

In the past, DG RTD has been criticised for being too bureaucratic and operating in narrow policy silos: competing, rather than cooperating, with other parts of the Commission as regional development, energy, transport and digital technologies. The renewed DG RTD policy focus will be linked to "Planet I" - handling ocean, earth and climate research; "Planet II" - for energy and transport; "People" - supervising life sciences and social sciences; and "Prosperity" - dealing with industrial research and investment. Two other directorates oversee 'Horizon planning' and 'implementation'. Another handles infrastructure and community outreach, while the last does budget and logistics - optimistically renamed "innovative administration". Separately, five units are grouped into a new, special "Task Force EIC" to manage the pilot European Innovation Council. Paquet also developed the "RTD Board" - a grouping of himself and his three deputies charged with coordinating the three policy goals - open science, open innovation and sustainable development.

During the Conference, we met again Sylvain Giraud, leading health systems at the European Commission Directorate General (DG) Santé (explain what this is), and Catherine Berens from DG Research, Directory Health, unit Strategy.

Disruption is all around us, and the research ecosystem is undergoing rapid and profound changes, due to a wide range of factors, from advances in technology and funding pressures to political uncertainty and population shifts. We, therefore, look forward to these changes and continue our good cooperation with DG Research, bringing nursing research at EU level.

Karen Bjørø
ENRF President

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Mapping the ENRF Reference Points

The 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 in terms of nursing research in the EU. The Foundation has the ambition to become a reference point and seen as knowledgeable about nursing research, and in using nursing research in health and social EU policy. As such, the ENRF has been closely monitoring the developments of Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe. Using nursing research to influence EU policies implies strengthening the ENRF reference points capacity to be linked closer to the EU institutions and EU Funding programmes. Therefore, mapping the ENRF National Reference Points and identifying what the topics of their interest are, linked to ENRF priorities & the European Commission research and innovation agenda has been a key priority to evaluate and develop further the nursing research capacity in the EU. The outcomes of this mapping show the value of the ENRF as central reference for the nursing research in Europe.

EU News

Upcoming trilogues! Nursing researchers to influence outcomes!

Following the vote on [compromise texts](#) by the European Parliament on 12 December 2018, and the adoption of a [Partial General Approach](#) on the Regulation by the Council of the EU on 30 November 2018, the ENRF welcomes (which? Unclear) the EU efforts to ensure a timely adoption of [Horizon Europe \(the ambitious €100 billion research and innovation programme that will succeed Horizon 2020\)](#), and invites the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to consider the following elements in order to further improve this legislative package which is of utmost importance for [European Research and Innovation \(R&I\)](#).

The ENRF supports the reassertion of the central role of external independent experts in project evaluation in order to ensure the quality, fairness, and integrity of the process, as well as both parties' intention to maintain the criteria used in the evaluation system of Horizon 2020, i.e., excellence, impact, and implementation. However, sustainable deployment and end-user engagement (with specific focus on gender) should strengthen the current evaluation criteria for the [European Research Council \(established by the European Commission\)](#) to encourage the highest quality research in Europe). The ENRF is looking forward to collaborating with the European Parliament, the Council, and the European Commission during the trilogues' phase bringing nursing research views to the debate to ensure that this new research and innovation programme - Horizon Europe - meets the needs of the scientific nursing community.

Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and a new ESF+ programme

Determining the budget spending of the EU for a period of at least five years, the current [Multi-Annual Financial Framework \(MFF\)](#) which ran from 2014 to 2020, is coming to an end. In this context, the EU institutions (European Commission, European Parliament and the European Council) and the EU Member States are [elaborating](#) the new Multiannual Financial Framework (that has a strong health dimension) for the period of seven years, from 2021 to 2027.

In this context, the European Commission launched a discussion on investment challenges and priorities in the EU Member States, setting out first ideas on how EU funds, in particular [EU Cohesion Policy funds](#), can help in the forthcoming programming period 2021-2027. This will also

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serve to ensure greater coherence between the coordination of economic policies and the use of EU funds, which are a significant part of public investment in several Member States. Reflected throughout the European Commission [Country Reports](#) on the overall economic and social developments in each EU country, and a new annex on the possible use of future EU Cohesion Policy funds, the new programmes will need to demonstrate progress in supporting [implementation](#) of the [Country-Specific Recommendations](#). A [Reform Support Programme](#) will provide financial and technical support to the EU Member States to pursue and implement reforms identified in the context of the [European Semester](#), [which](#) enables the EU Member States to coordinate their economic policies throughout the year and address the economic challenges facing the EU. Linked to the MFF for 2021-2027, the European Social Funds Plus (ESF+) is proposed as the EU's main financial instrument for improving workers' mobility and employment opportunities and strengthening social cohesion, improving social fairness and increasing competitiveness across Europe .

Digital Europe programme for 2021-2027

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached a provisional political [agreement](#) on the first-ever Digital Europe programme, part of the EU's long-term budget (2021-2027) presented by the European Commission. Focussing on areas where no single Member State acting alone can guarantee success, and where public spending is likely to make the highest impact, the programme, [proposed](#) in June 2018, will invest in five key digital sectors: high performance computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and trust, advanced digital skills, and ensuring the wide use and deployment of digital technologies across the economy and society, in order to strengthen European industrial technological leadership.

Nursing Research – Measuring Competencies



Under the scope of a new Erasmus+ EU project - [QualMent](#) - a literature review has been done on the topic of nursing teachers' competences. The results show that there is an ongoing debate related to nursing teachers' competencies for supporting nursing students in clinical placements since specific competencies for teaching in

the clinical environment has not been yet elaborated. Also, nursing students have high expectations of their teachers and expect them to be familiar with the current reality of clinical practice.

Nursing teachers are concerned about their role ambiguity, credibility, job strain and inconsistent expectations. The review did not reveal evidence-based, rigorously validated or widely regarded competency frameworks for nursing teachers supporting nursing students in clinical placements. Therefore, a competency framework for nursing teachers may be sketched drawing on the existing literature, allowing for greater clarity in their role, as well as better management of students' expectations. Moreover, nursing teachers should follow nursing students during their clinical practice. The report is not yet available to the public.

Facts on which the project is based: 1. EU Directive 2005/36/EC amended by Directive 2013/55/EU determinates the scope and content of education for regulated profession – registered nurse; 2. Students have to complete half of the study programme contact hours (2300 hours) in the clinical environment – clinical practice; 3. Clinical practice is mentored by clinical mentors - registered nurse in clinical environments; 4. There is no unified educational programme for mentors. The aims of the project: to develop and offer quality educational programme/training for clinical mentors and to set foundations for unified mentors educational programme in EU.

Interesting Reading

Gender balance in Research

According to the recent [EU SHE figures 2018](#), published by the European Commission [DG Research, Science and Innovation](#), the number of women with a career in research is slowly growing in Europe. Still, they remain significantly underrepresented, and their potential not fully recognised and valued. Today in the EU, women are a majority among PhD graduates, and the proportion of women in the senior academic ranks has also increased, with 47.9% of women doctoral graduates. But, the gender imbalance amongst researchers remains with only one third of the EU's researchers being women. The [study highlights](#) that in the EU, women represent very slightly over 33.4% of the total population of researchers, and in the majority of the countries, women researchers are concentrated in the higher education sector.

EU Research Programme

You can access [here](#) a database of EU funded research and innovation projects and read the most recent success stories from EU Research.

What will the world of research look like 10 years from now?

A new [study](#) from Elsevier/Ipsos MORI, building on three scenarios, show that the way research is conceived, completed and communicated will change dramatically over the next 10 years. New funding models will emerge, new methods of collaboration will develop, and new ways of conceptualizing research and measuring its impact will arise, driven by advances in technology and the ideas of a new generation. The ability of the research community to thrive in this new world will depend on understanding the opportunities and the challenges these changes offer and what steps need to be taken now.

As regards nursing research, we cannot ignore the need for change and the urgent need for a strategic vision for reform and more gender balanced policy. At all levels, women can play an influential role for positive change! In the EU Member States these reforms are ongoing, but are still fragmented. Small elements of the system are changing, but a clear, innovative research plan and both medium- and long-term visions on how nursing research should become is missing. This is a real concern, as nursing in Europe is undergoing a profound change, both academically and professionally, to adapt itself and meet the new health needs arising. It is therefore key to take concrete actions to bring nursing research to the next level, and make it acknowledged as an integral part of building a healthier and competitive Europe, and make sure the EU Institutions (European Commission, European Parliament and the European Council) support Nursing Research by developing closer partnerships with European professional nursing organisations.

Mapping of European Transnational Collaborative Partnerships in Higher Education

As part of the work to conceptualise and develop the new initiative on European Universities, the [Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture](#) (DG EAC) and the [Directorate-General Joint Research Centre](#) (DG JRC) carried out a survey in order to map examples of existing transnational collaborative partnerships involving European higher education institutions. The [results](#) support the new concept of European universities as an added value as compared to what exists.

Trust in Science and Changing Landscapes of Communication

In a [new report](#), the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities ([ALLEA](#)) warns about the erosion of public trust in science. The public discourse around topics such as vaccination and climate change has been heavily politicised in the past years. To boost trust in science, the academies say researchers need to become more transparent and to present the sources and origins of their data, but also to clarify their methods of data processing and interpretation.