



ENRF Briefing Note

Bulgaria's Mariya Gabriel picked to run Horizon Europe

The incoming President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, nominated Bulgaria's Mariya Gabriel to take **charge of research, innovation and education**, with the portfolio called 'Innovation and Youth'. Gabriel, which we worked with for the Digital agenda, will take over the management of the €94.1 billion Horizon Europe, the EU's largest ever research programme. On November 1 she will take over the file from Moedas! In addition to Horizon Europe, Gabriel's sprawling portfolio will absorb education duties, currently performed by education commissioner Tibor Navracsics.

Now this is good news for nurses, for the ENRF and the reference points linked to ENRF, as we have always had a good relation with Mariya Gabriel, especially through our Bulgarian colleagues. ENRF has always advocated that eastern european countries will get a bigger piece of the cake and as such we have empowered colleagues who joined the EU since 2014. It took some time for capacity building but look what we have achieved!

Gabriel is also called on to work with member states "to build a true European Research Area", oversee a "tripling" of the Erasmus+ student exchange programme, and ensure the "full implementation" of the European universities initiative, all programmes currently under Navracsics. The ENRF has a key role to play in Brussels to get its reference points into the Brussels developments. Nurse researchers can bring as such files home.



The mix and match of education and research files implies changes are coming to commission services and raises the question of whether the directorates for research and education will be combined. However, Jean-Eric Paquet, director-general for research, who we met today in a Brussels meeting, quashed this idea, telling us that research and education will remain separate directorates. This is important to know, as we nurses, nurse researchers, need to know which door to open and walk through in Brussels. Anyway, the doors in Bulgaria will be important too. So, we count on the Bulgarian nurse researchers!

The rise of Gabriel is seen as a victory for Bulgaria, whose government is pushing to improve research and innovation at home from its current low standing. In its yearly innovation scoreboard, the EU classes the country as a "modest innovation performer", with R&D spending "well below the EU average".

The appointment of a commissioner from eastern Europe has a broader symbolic purpose. The EU-13's participation in Brussels research programmes remains at a low level. From 2007 to 2013, the poorer countries got 4.2 per cent of all Framework funding; from 2014 to mid-2018, it was 4.8 per cent. These countries account for about 10 per cent of all Horizon 2020 applications, but their success rate is 11.8 per cent, compared to 14.9 per cent in the EU-15.

And here comes in Health and Healthcare ecosystems! And here comes in nursing research!

Gabriel has a huge experience in the Commission, has followed the creation of Horizon Europe and Erasmus, and knows the MEPs! It is key the nursing community to supports her, and focussing on concrete outcomes, deployable research findings! In other words, creating successful change, and nurses are very good at this!

Subject Cluster	High-level impact	Milestone A	Milestone B
Health	Maximise the effectiveness of preventative medicine	Boost collection and sharing of data on risk factors for communicable and non-communicable diseases in EU member states	Identify public health policy obstacles to disease prevention
Culture, creativity and inclusive society	Promote digital inclusion	Find a fix for the urban-rural divide in access to high-speed Internet	Support digital media 'savviness' across generations
Civil security for society	Ensure resilience to cyber-attacks across Europe	Limit outage time for key services following an attack	Apply quantum security to quantum threats

Hope this Briefing is helpful for our future lobby work towards the Commission and European Parliament. Now it is the moment to strengthen our forces, getting to meet the Commissioner, at home and in Brussels, and making sure we speak with one voice, there is money enough for everybody! We just need to strengthen and support each other to get the money out of the box, and bring it their where it is most needed and where top research takes place and strong coalitions are build.

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