



ENRF Briefing Note

European Research & Innovation Days 2020

The [European Research and Innovation Days](#) are the [European Commission's](#) annual flagship Research and Innovation event, bringing together policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs and the public to debate and shape the future of research and innovation in Europe and beyond. By creating connections between cutting-edge scientific research and the most pressing challenges of a generation, the European Research and Innovation Days represent a unique opportunity to join the conversation and enact real change.

The ENRF has joined this year's edition of this event, which took place from 22 to 24 September, now happening virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ENRF's goal in joining was to collect insights that could be beneficial for the European nurse researchers in their work and/or disseminating research programmes to which they could adhere.

The first high-level speaker was the current EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth [Mariya Gabriel](#). She inaugurated this three-days event by reminding stakeholders that the upcoming [Horizon Europe](#) programme will be structured around several key areas, one of them in healthcare and tackling [cancer](#). It is important that nurse researchers – who are the bridge between academia and the nursing frontline – benefit from this new focus on cancer to advance and fund their research and/or open new pathways for nurses to treat this group of diseases. The Commissioner reminded that for better shaping this research area, the European Commission has done several consultations with EU citizens and the Member States. She is confident that the new Horizon Europe programme addresses their needs and expectations. The EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety [Stella Kyriakides](#) expressed her satisfaction with the way Horizon Europe will approach cancer – by tackling the whole pathway of the disease (from prevention to palliative care), and by having patients at the centre of the programme. Moreover, she reminded that the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically worsened cancer treatments across Europe – which she considers as unacceptable because the problems are more acute in some countries than in other. The way forward to reduce these inequalities and to improve patient's outcomes is to advocate for the "Health in All Policies" approach, one for which nurse researchers can greatly contribute to.



Another topic to which nurses can make a valuable contribution, and to which nurse researchers should look into the "how-to", is climate-change. The EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, [Virginijus Sinkevičius](#), said that COVID-19 crisis has been a "wake-up call" to the need to live healthier and climate-neutral – hence increasing the need to abide by healthier and more eco-friendly lifestyles.

Normunds Popen, one of the European Commission Officials ([DG Regio](#)) speaking, said that we need to make sure that the EU research and cohesion programmes achieve impact for the EU citizens. He considers key that Horizon Europe only funds programmes that achieves excellence while working in cooperation with the different European regions. This opens a great possibility for nursing researchers not only to apply to these funds but to get in touch with each other and build strong cross-European consortiums. His colleague Jean-Eric Paquet (European Commission, [DG RTD](#)) picked up on his colleague's point to continue we need to invest as much as we can in research and innovation – because it enhances productivity, green growth, etc. Research has the power to achieve societal impact and positively transform our societies. The EU's investment and reform agenda are about joining national and EU instruments and resources. We need to co-create and co-design policies to make better public policies and a better Europe.

To conclude, many other high-level speakers shed light into how EU-funded research programmes should look like and what their goals should be. Nevertheless, they all agreed with the need for building excellence and achieving concrete goals and frontline impact for the EU citizens. Certainly, as Dragos Ciuparu (Romanian Secretary of State) said, one way of achieving this is by fostering the dialogue between the European Commission and the Member States. However, using these programmes research programmes to empower nurse researchers in their job is additional support that can bridge the gap between the EU citizens, the Member States' healthcare systems, and the frontline nurse profession.



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European Nursing Research Foundation (ENRF)
Registration Number: 0533.978.961
Clos du Parnasse 11B, 1050 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 511 34 84 - Fax: +32 2 512 35 50
Email: enrf@enrf.eu – Web: www.enrf.eu