



Advancing Nursing Research

# ENRF Newsletter

## April 2021



Dear ENRF colleagues and Friends,

We were hoping that 2021 would have been better than 2020, but Covid-19 waves have decided otherwise. In these very difficult times, there is a growing appreciation of the importance of research in the health field and how fundamental it is to innovate to strengthen health systems and find solutions to face any crisis. One certainty is that we all need to be prepared for any future pandemic. And nursing research is key to helping us do this.

With Horizon Europe - the new EU's research and innovation framework programme 2021-2027 – the EU aims to support research and innovation, in particular in health, with the final work programmes and the first funding applications being launched, and more EU funds allocated to health than in the past (€95.5 billion - approximately 30% more than the previous budget) to help to progress in Research and Innovation in the health sector.

As such, Horizon Europe becomes a fundamental opportunity for researchers to take advantage of these funds to strengthen nursing research, and make change happen for the EU Health systems. Nurses have a key role to play in the implementation of innovation and the development the ambitious goals of Horizon Europe 2021-2027.

Researchers from nursing can apply for these EU funds and develop innovative solutions to make the EU healthcare systems more resilient, address the frontline needs of the nursing workforce, and improve the quality of care & outcomes received by patients.

Professor Dame Anne Marie Rafferty  
ENRF President

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### ENRF News

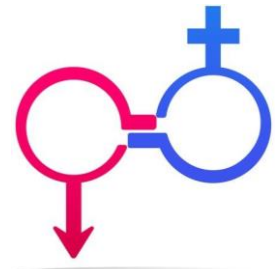
#### New Briefing Notes published

In these difficult times, the ENRF continues to seek to inform EU policy design by engaging nursing researchers to provide the evidence for the sustainability of European healthcare systems. One of the ways for the ENRF to achieve this, is to continue committed in [informing](#) its Nursing Research Reference Points on the latest key EU developments related to research and innovation, and advising the European Commission and European Parliament, bringing nursing research excellence and impact to the EU policy co-creation process. Since the beginning of 2021, the ENRF has published several Briefing Notes on Horizon Europe with the aim to engage nursing researchers in Horizon Europe, from its start in April 2021. See: [Agreement on the EU Social Fund](#); [Horizon Europe – Get Yourself Prepared and Engaged](#); [Horizon Europe for Health](#); [Horizon Europe – Follow-up](#). All the ENRF Briefing Notes are available [here](#).

#### More women in Research

On the International Women Day, on 8 March, the ENRF reminded that it is key to support women in research and to use the European research and innovation funding instruments to better integrate female researchers. The European Commission [DG Research, Science and Innovation](#) is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation, as

part of its [Gender Equality Strategy](#) for 2020-2025, which sets out the Commission's broader commitment to equality across all EU policies. *"With the Gender Equality Strategy, we are pushing for more and faster progress to promote equality between men and women,"* EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said at the launch of the plan.



Also, the European Commission is aiming at promoting equality in Horizon Europe, with excellence and impact as main criteria in evaluating the proposals, but in case of a tie, gender balance in research groups will shift the decision towards well balanced gender proposal. In that context, nursing researchers, often women, play a crucial role when building gender balanced consortia. Greater gender balance among researchers could be a deciding factor in advancing and promoting nursing research. Nursing researchers can make that difference! All institutions applying for grants must have published gender equality plans - and show they are implementing them.

The ENRF will continue following this topic very closely, knowing that the nursing workforce is constituted by 92% of women.

### EU News

#### Public consultation on gender-based and domestic violence

The European Commission launched a public consultation on how best to tackle gender-based and domestic violence. The views gathered will feed into a legislative initiative announced in the Gender Equality Strategy expected by the end of this year. Your views are important. Please provide your input to the consultation, by clicking [here](#). Deadline: 10 May 2021.

#### Horizon Europe 2021-2027: what we have to know.

The budget allocated for [Horizon Europe 2021-2027](#) is 95.5 billion, approximately 30% more than the previous programme H2020 budget. The significant increase in the money allocated to Horizon Europe is linked to the desire to overcome the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic by creating a more resilient system in Europe from all points of view. The tool through which this goal can be achieved is precisely innovation and, as we all know, there is no innovation without research. Horizon Europe will operate in several clusters including the health one. The goal is to create a high-quality health system in all member states that promote citizen well-being and disease prevention guaranteed access to an innovative and sustainable health system. In this regard, Horizon Europe becomes a fundamental opportunity for nursing researchers to achieve results which can help the community and to play a fundamental role in the rebuilding of a more resilient healthcare system able to deal any type of crisis. For more information click [here](#).

#### Bridging the gap between West and East in Research and Innovation (R&I) performance

The European Commission launched Horizon Europe, with the final work programs and the first funding applications to be released soon. The draft Horizon Europe work program covers Widening 2.0 (3.3% of the Horizon Europe budget allocated to this program) which contains the strategy to help countries to rework their research and development systems, in particular by bridging the research and innovation performance gap from west to east. R&I performance in all Member States that joined after 2004 is below the EU average (ref. [innovation scoreboard](#)), apart from Estonia.

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The European Commission aims to help these countries catch up. A "hop-on" program will support countries to take part in Horizon Europe collaborative research projects. The scheme will be introduced in April, but won't be fully implemented until 2023. Interesting to know is that the EU Member States are now allowed to spend up to 5% of [structural fund](#) money on research and innovation projects that meet Horizon Europe standards. So meeting your national contact points for structural fund is key to boost nursing research in Eastern Europe. The European Commission wants the EU Member States to use money from Widening to set up multiannual joint calls funding collaborative R&I projects.

### European Research and Innovation Days



The Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation announced the third edition of the [European Research and Innovation Days](#) which will take place virtually on 23 and 24 June 2021. The event will include initiatives to strengthen research and innovation tools to achieve a

greener and digital future and it will host politicians, researchers, entrepreneurs and citizens coming from every part of the world. This pandemic has highlighted even more the importance of research in the health sector. In this context, nursing researchers will continue to play a key role. More information is available [here](#).

### AI in the Healthcare sector

The introduction and use of AI in the healthcare sector is steadily increasing and Covid-19 has accelerated this process even more. Just think of the tracking apps created to measure in real time and monitor the spread of the infection from Covid-19. The European Commission is preparing a package of measures to address the challenges related to the implementation of AI in the health system. In 2020, the funding allocated to these projects exceeded 100 million euros. AI will help create a stronger, higher quality healthcare system by increasing the benefits and minimizing the risks for both patients and healthcare professionals. In addition, AI may help in nursing research allowing for faster and more sustainable progress over time. More information is available [here](#).

### European Parliament Panel for the Future of Science and Technology

[STOA](#), funding member of the European Parliamentary Technology Assessment, has a network of collaborations and partnership with important institutions and European organizations, as the European Commission's Joint Research Centre ([JRC](#)) and DG Research and Innovation ([DG RTD](#)). Moreover, STOA is in collaboration with the [STS Forum](#) (Science and Technology in Society), the [EuroScience Open Forum](#) (ESOF) and the [World Science Forum](#). Research in healthcare is a key topic and nurses have always been vocal in this important field. Europe needs to be more proactive when looking at how best to bring innovation into healthcare system. Nursing researchers are key in this. Active in Science & Technology policy networks on an international level, [STOA](#) is a good opportunity to promote the nursing research capabilities. For more information click [here](#).



### Erasmus+ Programme 2021-2027



The [Erasmus+ programme](#) has been one of the most successful flagship programmes of the EU and has supported more than 10 million people to have a life changing experience abroad. The new Erasmus+ programme for 2021-2027 aims to reach out to more and a broader range of young people. With a budget of over €26 billion, the new programme will be more inclusive and international, but also more digital and greener. This is where the new [Erasmus+ App](#) comes into play, aiming to help guide participants through their mobility journeys step-by-step, allowing them to complete all of the different administrative processes associated with their mobility digitally; access special deals and offers in the host community; and help them to connect with others by taking part in events, social activities and volunteering. The importance of digitalisation in education has never been as apparent as during this Covid-19 crisis.

### Assessment of Member States' rules on health data in the light of GDPR

The European Commission published a study on the "[Assessment of the EU Member States' rules on health data in the light of GDPR](#)", which shows that while the GDPR lays down horizontal directly applicable rules in all the EU Member States, variation remains in the range of national-level legislation linked to its implementation in the area of health. The study suggests that this has led to a fragmented approach in the way health data processing for health and research is conducted, which can negatively impact cross-border cooperation for care provision, healthcare system administration, public health, or research.

### Interesting Reading

#### AI Impact Assessment: A Policy Prototyping Experiment

«[Open Loop](#)» is a global program which connects policy makers and technologies companies with the purpose to bridge the gap between technological innovation and regulation. The program, supported by Facebook, is based on the collaboration of a consortium composed by regulators, governments, technology companies, academics and representatives of civil society. Its first report: «[AI Impact Assessment: A Policy Prototyping Experiment](#)» shows the results and the policy recommendations based on risk-based approach to AI regulation.

### The Horizon Paper according to Richard L. Hudson

Richard L. Hudson, a journalist from Science Business, has published an article to express his point of view and some concerns about Horizon Europe. Richard has nicknamed Horizon Europe as "Horizon Paper" precisely for all the work drafts leaked on the web which, according to his point of view, would facilitate multinationals and large universities in obtaining funds rather than guaranteeing equal access to all those who will request the funds. He urges the Commission to clarify this point and make the system fairer and more open to the brightest and most deserving projects. Find out more by clicking [here](#).



### Healthy People 2030

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published Healthy People 2030. For the first time, Healthy People includes health literacy as part of its framework and as the main purpose of the program. One of the general objectives is removing health inequalities to reach health equity and health literacy to improve the well-being of all. For more information click [here](#).