

90th EFN GENERAL ASSEMBLY – 16-17 April 2009 - Brussels
EFN MEMBERS TOUR DE TABLE
“THE INFLUENCE OF THE FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC CRISIS ON NURSES AND NURSING”

| Country | Organisation | Profession | Public Policy |
|----------------|--------------|---|--|
| Austria | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › New government – wants to have 2.000 new posts for nurses by 2010. › There is no pay for specialised nurses or specialist posts. › Lower educated workers are entering healthcare. › Salaries are higher in hospitals than in community health systems so nurses are staying in the hospitals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Austria is facing budget cuts in the areas of Public Health and Education. |
| Belgium | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › For Belgium the crisis is having a positive impact on nursing: › There is a project to establish a Belgian Regulatory Body which has been confirmed. › The nurses’ salaries have increased. › There is a budget of 2.5 million Euros for nurses - 5 years plan. › Nursing shortage is moderated. › There will also be increased financing of nurse specialisation and of Professional Associations. › Regarding Education – reform of higher education, in line with Bologna. › Under discussion – creation of a University level Master degree for nurses. › 2010-11 – Implementation of an agency for quality control for nurses and midwives. › Study on nursing needs and skill needs. | |

| Country | Organisation | Profession | Public Policy |
|-----------------|--|---|--|
| Bulgaria | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bulgaria has been successful in achieving 100% salary increase in hospitals, however this only amounts to €350 & 10% for Primary care nurses. › 10.000 nurses have moved out of the profession altogether - 2.500 nurses have moved out of the country in seeking better working conditions – Recruitment of nurses seems not to be a priority for the government for the moment. › Currently there are no recruitment efforts while there is a block on specialisation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › No health insurance for many people. › Government elections in July. |
| Croatia | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Started reforms in the Healthcare system. › Nursing shortage and increase of nurse workload have raised questions regarding issues of patient safety within healthcare service delivery. › Budget is being limited in hospitals and overtime not paid. | |
| Cyprus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Other issues raised (EFN Web): › National Nursing Conference November 2008 accredited by the ICN. Theme: "Expanded Roles and Modern Challenges" - More than 500 Nurses, Midwives, and Students attended. › March 2009 - ICN and EFN presidents visited Cyprus. Meetings took place at the Parliament, Ministry of Health and Visits at the New Nicosia General Hospital. Round Table with presentations from ICN, EFN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › No direct cuts in health budget for nurses for the moment. › This is the first time that the public sector will not absorb all the new graduated – only 50% will be employed. This has also created difficulties in maintaining safe nurse-patient ratios. › Other issues raised (EFN Web): › CYNMA participated in consecutive discussions of the Health Committee (parliament) concerning: a) the NHS legislation, b) the harmonisation of the Nursing and Midwifery law (EU directive 2005/36) and c) workforce issues (Shortage, Nurse: patient ratios, quality control in private hospitals). Many of CYNMA's views and proposals have been accepted and adopted on almost all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Other issues raised (EFN Web): › Meetings with the Health Insurance Organisation are in progress. Relevant suggestions concerning the contribution of Nurses and Midwives in the new NHS are about to be discussed later this month. › Provided feedback to the National Bioethics Committee on various Important Ethical issues. |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| | <p>and CYNMA on the critical issue: "Nursing Workforce: Problems and Perspectives" - Key stakeholders present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ To participate in the forthcoming EFPC Meeting and Conference in Cyprus on May 2009. ‣ Organising events for the IND in May. | <p>important issues raised).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ Meeting with the Nursing Department of the University (together with the regulatory body and the Union) to discuss the existing Nursing Educational Curriculum and make recommendations in accordance to the Bologna and the provisions of the EU directive (2005/36 EC). | |
| Czech Republic | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ The crisis is not so drastic – large cities are benefiting from it – unemployed people are coming to work in the hospitals. ‣ Increase in the nursing workload. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ Cuts on the health budget. |
| Denmark | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ DNO have worked hard in cooperation with our umbrella organization Confederation of Professionals in Denmark (FTF) to make it possible for unemployed adults who wants to start an education as nurse, to have the economical possibility to do so. By now it seems as we will be successful in this achievement, at least there is political willingness to make it possible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ The instability in the private sector has caused many nurses to move to the public health sector instead of working in temporary employment agencies or private clinics. We see an increase in applicants for jobs in the public health sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ In Denmark we see it as a serious threat, that economical help to the financial sector is given, but the Danish State has not financed all of these expenses, this will give an increasing pressure on the public sector. ‣ Moreover the unemployment rate is increasing, and many private companies have closed, this will cause a reduction in tax income, which will make it difficult to maintain or develop the public health sector. ‣ The Private Hospitals (which for the most are public financed) have been downsizing, but the government has reintroduced the free choice of Hospitals from first July this year, that will probably be a lifeline for the sector. Many small private clinics doing plastic surgery for self paying patients have closed down due to lack of patients. |
| Finland | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ Reduction in nurses' salary in some cases while in others there will simply be no pay rises. ‣ No overtime paid. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ More Finish people are working in the Public Sector. |

| Country | Organisation | Profession | Public Policy |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| France | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The NNA participate actively in the discussions on education reform – there will be a move towards an all degree level for nurses by September 2009 - the nursing profession requests to have a Bachelor degree to enter into the profession, as well as the establishment of a Master and Doctoral degrees. › The French Nursing regulatory Body is now implemented. Ms. D. Leboeuf is the President. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Lots of reforms implemented and a lot planned › The effects of the economic crisis on the health of the wider population have resulted in increased Nurse Workload – in hospitals and community care. › Shortage of nurses and physicians. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Discussions in the national Parliament to reform the healthcare provision (project HPST). |
| Germany | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Many nurses left their jobs – shortage is now officially recognised. › Adversely with other countries 17.000 nursing positions are being reinstated within hospitals. › There is an ongoing educational reform in an attempt to drive nursing into higher education. | |
| Greece | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The effects of the economical crisis in Greece are not clear as yet. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › There is an increase in early retirement for nursing personnel. › Low salaries. › Low rate nurse/patient ratio. | |
| Iceland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The main object of the association will be protecting nurse jobs and salary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Last year when negotiations went on in Iceland according to nurse directors all over the country we were lacking about 600 nurses for already funded positions. The median nurse was holding a position of about 75% of a full position and around 20% of their salary came from overtime. › Since then the Icelandic nurses, partly due to their fear of their spouses might lose their jobs, have gone up in percentages in their positions from the 75% to a near 100%. This actually leaves the system in a situation where all positions are fulfilled. The health system is supposed to cut down | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Since the collapse of the Icelandic banks on the first days of October, when EFN was meeting in Cyprus, the kronas value has fallen by about 49% adding to the earlier devaluation of 36% since March 2008. The total cost of the bank collapse is being calculated but estimations say that the state dept will change from 900 euro pr/capita to between 75.000 and 118.000 EUR per capita. › Health centers are being closed down and their services moved out to homecare. › Shortening of patients stays in hospital will |

| | | | |
|----------------|--|--|--|
| | | <p>costs by 10% in this year meaning it has to be done in the coming 8 months and in the next 2 years another 10% each year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Jobs for new nurses graduating this summer are quite unsecure since there are no positions. › School nurses are experiencing student consultations going up by 35% › There will be layoffs caused by ward mergers and wards changing from being 7 days to 5 days a week wards. › Structures of shifts are changing. | <p>cause sicker patients being attended to in their homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Psychiatric problems will be piling up. › |
| Ireland | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Moratorium on recruitment – no replacement/recruitment of any new staff for any reason leading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - loss of 4.000 nursing posts; - 1.200 new graduates without jobs; - Closure of beds & hospitals; › Nurses’ overtime is not paid. › Nurses are moving out of Ireland, for example towards Canada. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Government Incomes are being gathered through taxes. › Cutting on Public Sector Services – nurses can take early retirement. › Primary Health Care funding has been cut. |
| Italy | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Many nurses close to retirement age are being invited/forced to retire without being replaced. › There is no salary differentiation between general and specialist nurses. › Although there is legislation on the necessity of top management positions for nurses, the call is very slow and only few positions have been set up. › Health professionals are faced with competition for resources. › Nursing education is under financed – the funds go mainly to the medicine. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The crisis is affecting the entire country with Health being considered by the government as a “cost cut” area. › To save money some hospitals are facing closure. |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The government is discussing the possibility to group the health professions' disciplines (5) in one or two, in order to save money. › There is increased recruitment of lower paid nurses from abroad while limited nursing posts are announced. › Closing hospitals and units became a way to save money | |
| Latvia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › NNA is asking for international support regarding this financial and economic crisis affecting nurses, nursing and the patients. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 13 hospitals have closed with many nursing jobs at risk. › Healthcare staff is not being paid overtime. › Many regional hospitals close and nurses lose their jobs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Healthcare budget has been reduced by 40%. › Hospital prices have risen (150%). › Primary Health Care is to be implemented but no support nor financially or administratively. |
| Lithuania | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Less health services for nurses; › Nurses' salaries to be decreased – discussions with Ministry of Health but no positive answers. › Increased migration – Nurses sometimes the NNA to know the procedure to work in another country. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 6% decrease in healthcare budget. |
| Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Low level for nurses' education; › Less qualified nurses are in competition for resources with higher qualified nurses; › Recruitment on temporary basis – with lower salaries; › Low salaries. | |
| Malta | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Concerns about the appearance of "hybrid" healthcare workers who are taking over the nursing posts. › Low nurses' salary structure. › Nurse managers are seen as wasted resources (they should be next to the patients) while there are currently no | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Geriatric and primary care are particularly suffering. |

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|---|--|
| | | <p>recruitment efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › New trend – make nurses lose some privileges – specialisation, management, etc. | |
| The Netherlands | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 2010 will be the year when the impact of the financial crisis will become visible while there is expectation for budget cuts and reductions in social funds and pensions – 1/3 of the finances will be reduced but a rescue plan is being developed. |
| Norway | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Norwegian nurses are currently in discussions concerning pensions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Norwegian government has launched a number of recession initiatives. › Norway has a large oil funds in reserve and some of these resources have now been invested in public expenditure, such as construction and maintenance of buildings, schools, nursing homes, hospitals etc. › No cuts or downsizing in the healthcare sector - As health is a public domain the public funds are being used to counteract the financial/economic crisis. › The national collective bargaining process may be a challenge, as the private sector is trying to cut back and reduce labour costs and budgets and show overall restraint in their forecasting. › As a general comment it must be said that it would be very counterproductive to cut down costs and lay off people in the health sector, given that this is a sector which at the same time is experiencing shortages and increasing demands of their services. |
| Poland | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › There had been strikes for nursing salary without success while overtime is not paid. › Severe shortage of Primary Care nurses – leading to nurses not going on pension even in age of it. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › There is also a concern that there is currently low interest about nurse education with potentially alarming implications. |

| Country | Organisation | Profession | Public Policy |
|-----------------|--|---|--|
| Portugal | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › In Portugal, crisis is not new. Nevertheless there are new trends: no authorisation to hire new nurses – which impacts on nurses’ overtime (no longer paid). › No jobs for the new graduated nurses – some offer to work on a voluntary basis. › Specialised nurses – most of them continue working as general nurses as the hospitals do not support or pay for them. | |
| Romania | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Romania has no clear view on the impacts of the financial crisis as yet – more information will be provided next General Assembly. | | |
| Slovenia | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 2 nursing Universities and 6 nursing schools – this will be a problem in the future as the new graduated nurses will not have jobs. › The Health Ministry is trying to establish a new law for nurses and a new regulation system – implementation will start with Specialist nurses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › No direct funds cuts as regards health but it will be reduced. › Certain hospitals have had to turn to job cuts to remain economically viable while it is becoming obvious that there are serious issues in the inadequacy of workforce planning at national level. › Elderly – are being taking care by their families. |
| Spain | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The crisis is affecting nurses in terms of employment & workload - increasing workload, mainly due to a rise in social deprivation issues. › Management roles in primary care have been reduced in some regions. › The private sector is currently recruiting less qualified nurses & nurses are asking for less sick leave days as they are afraid to lose their jobs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Health Ministry decided not to cut the health budget. › The government is analysing social funds for pensions – people need to work much more year to get pension. |

| Country | Organisation | Profession | Public Policy |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| Sweden | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Currently there is no investment in new nurses, and some job cuts have been witnessed which threatens quality of care and the health of the nursing workforce. › Acting to get funds for nurses to get a specialisation. | |
| Switzerland | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › In Switzerland, health is financed by a tax – therefore the crisis impact on health and nursing is low, but in the long term the crisis and the nursing shortage may have a big impact on nursing – replacement of qualified nurses by non/under qualified workforce & migration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › |
| UK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Although the real implications of the financial crisis have yet to be revealed fully, the UK is experiencing job losses and pay cuts especially in the private sector and primary care. › The RCN Welfare Service has managed to renegotiate repayments and stop repossession for an average of five households every month. Helping combat with financial strain on nursing students The RCN is campaigning for the introduction of a non-means-tested NHS bursary of 12,500 Euros a year for all UK pre-registration nursing students. A survey of RCN student members in December 2008 revealed that almost three-quarters have had to get a second job so they can afford to study and nearly half have considered leaving their course altogether. Kelly, from Boston, who is married with two children, said: "The financial and practical demands of working a 37.5 hour week as an unwaged student nurse doing shifts, bringing up a family and fitting in coursework, usually late at night, are sometimes virtually impossible to manage. "It's ridiculous, of course, but training to | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Dr Peter Carter, Chief Executive & General Secretary of the RCN, said: "The current economic crisis is compounded by the fact that we have an ageing NHS workforce and increasing numbers of students dropping out of their courses. All this points to a recruitment and retention crisis right around the corner. During the period of NHS budget deficits nurses and other frontline staff worked hard to deliver quality patient care. None-the-less, this was also a time when nursing posts were targeted (e.g. specialist nurses) and training budgets were cut. The NHS is now in a period of significant surplus (i.e. at least 1.8 billion Euros) and so the RCN is dismayed by recent reports that NHS organisations will only be allowed to spend 415 million Euros of their 1.8 billion Euros surplus during the next financial year. It is also reported that there will be significant claw-backs on primary care trust allocations. Last year the Department of Health saved up to 900 million Euros by increasing the allocations by just 5.5 per cent, rather than passing on the Treasury's full 6.7%. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › NHS funding. The RCN is concerned about the potential negative impact on UK health spending of the current financial crisis and the subsequent economic downturn. The RCN believes it would be detrimental to patients, to staff and to the entire reform agenda if health spending were to become a victim of the credit crunch › According to NHS managers interviewed by the Health Service Journal spending restrictions and claw-backs mean that Primary Care Trusts will need to scale down their service plans. Whilst NHS managers working in the acute sector believe that this could result in bed closures, reductions in the patient length of stay, cuts in the number of agency staff, cancelling and/or delaying new services and redundancies and/or the freezing of posts. The RCN is urging the UK Finance minister to make a clear, and unequivocal, commitment to reinvest all NHS surpluses in frontline services. In particular, they could help fund the implementation of the care quality priorities outlined by Lord Darzi in the NHS Next Stage Review (e.g. supporting nurses working in new roles |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | <p>be a nurse would be more affordable for me if my husband moved out of our home because additional financial assistance would then become available to me. But that is hardly going to encourage people to come into nursing." Christina, from Sleaford, who is also married with children, said: "The lack of available child care before 8am and after 6pm is also a real barrier for many students who have children and who are expected to work shifts on their nursing placements. In Lincolnshire, those placements can sometimes be in hospitals many miles away from home." The financial difficulties that student nurses face are bound to be worrying for them personally, but what's just as alarming is the risk of more and more nurses dropping out of their studies prematurely because they can't afford to make ends meet. We must keep student nurses in training because they are tomorrow's workforce and critical to the delivery of high quality patient care in the future.</p> | <p>› NHS pay the impact of the credit crunch and the onset of recession, have caused considerable hardship for NHS nursing staff and their colleagues over the past year. Moreover, there are worrying signs of an emerging recruitment and retention crisis with around 25% of student nurses dropping out of university at one end of the age spectrum and, at the other, 180,000 nurses due to retire within the decade. Nursing students are at particular risk of debt and even house repossession as they face the prospect of meeting rising household costs on an average bursary of around £550 per month. In addition, nurses who borrowed based on 100% mortgages are finding they are unable to re-mortgage and are struggling to find extra payments to meet variable rates. When they are already struggling financially, this can lead to arrears and repossession proceedings.</p> | <p>delivering care closer to home for patients with long-term conditions)..</p> |
|--|--|--|---|