



Action Plan for the EU health workforce

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Health Systems in the EU

Common Trends in the EU

- Health expenditures under severe spending constraints;
- Reform of healthcare delivery systems;
- Innovative solutions through new technologies, products and organisational changes;
- Importance of high quality and well trained workforce to meet growing and changing demands of healthcare.

EU Health Workforce – Challenges (1)

All European countries face major challenges with increasing health workforce shortages due to:

Ageing health workforce

- In 2009, about 30% of all doctors were over 55 years old.
- By 2020 more than 60 000 or 3.2.% of all European doctors are expect to retire annually.
- Average age of nurses employed today is between 41-45 years (data from 5 countries).

EU Health Workforce – Challenges (2)

Difficulties to recruit and retain healthcare staff:

- In Italy 13 400 nurses due to retire in 2010, but only 8500 graduates in 2008-2009;
- Germany facing serious difficulties to train sufficient graduates;
- Unfilled specialist training places in Romania, France, Hungary and Austria;

EU Health Workforce – Challenges (3)

Changing skill needs for health professionals:

- New care patterns with shift to care closer to home and to cope with elderly patients with multiple chronic conditions;
- Growth of new technologies, new medical appliances and diagnostic techniques;
- Expansion of e-health and telemedicine;

EU Health Workforce – Challenges (4)

Shortages due to unequal distribution of health professionals:

- **Within countries** (urban versus rural areas);
- **Within the EU** – cross-border mobility with a clear east-west asymmetry for doctors, nurses and dentists;
- **Between the EU and countries** around the world with increased reliance on the international recruitment of health professionals.

EU Health Workforce – Shortages

European Commission estimates:

- Shortfall of around 1 million healthcare workers by 2020 rising up to two million if long term care and ancillary professions are taken into account;
- Impacts on patient safety and quality of care.

Scope for European action and cooperation?

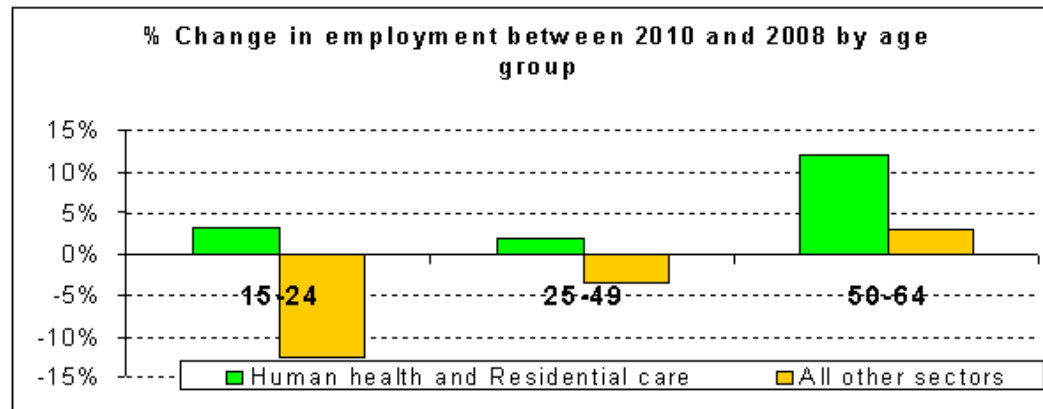
In December 2010, EU health **ministers agree on need for European cooperation** to tackle the challenges facing the EU health workforce

Public consultation with a wide range of stakeholders in the healthcare sector confirmed usefulness to **exchange best practice, develop European networks and improve European data** on the health workforce.

Action Plan for the EU health workforce

Communication « Towards a job rich recovery » adopted on 18 April, including an Action Plan for the EU health workforce.

- Health sector has high job potential even during economic downturn:



- The sector accounts for 17 million of all jobs in the EU and will remain key driver for jobs with an estimated 8 million job openings between 2010-2020.

Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce

Core Areas

- 1) Improve forecasting health workforce needs and **workforce planning by a Joint Action**,
- 2) Better anticipate **future skill needs** and skills mixes in the healthcare sector,
- 3) Development of good practice to **improve recruitment and retention** rates of health professionals,
- 4) Develop the response to support Member States **implementation of the WHO Global Code** of Practice on the international recruitment of health workers.

Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce (1)

1) Improve health workforce planning and forecasting in the EU

- Creating a **European platform** of MSs and professional organisations by launching a **three year EU joint action** on forecasting and planning
 - develop forecasting methodologies on health workforce needs and effective workforce planning
 - Estimate future needs in terms of skills and competences
 - improve EU-wide data on the health workforce;
- Developing guidance on the exchange of **education and training capacities** in health professions in order to make best use of existing capacities, mapping MS' education and training capacities in health,

Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce (2)

2) Better anticipate future skill needs and skills mixes in the healthcare sector

- **Skills Council** in area of nursing and care: review competence profiles
- Importance of **continuous professional development (CPD)** and life-long learning of health professionals to update skills and retain healthcare personnel. Mapping national systems and promote good practice.
- Fostering partnerships between education/vocational training providers and employers in the healthcare sector through the work of a pilot **Sector Skills Alliance** to be set up in 2013
- Expert **network of health care assistance** to review skills and competences

Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce (3)

3) Development and promotion of good practice to improve recruitment and retention rates of health professionals.

- Importance of non-financial factors such as **working environment and working conditions to recruit and retain health workers**. Cooperation with social partners.

4) Develop the EU response to support Member States implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice on international recruitment.

- Supporting MS' implementation of the WHO Code through the development of a common approach

EU health workforce

Thank you!

Further information:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/workforce/mobility/index_en.htm