

NEWS FROM BRUSSELS



Word from Senior Policy Advisor Dr. Theodoros Koutroubas

Dear friends,

In this issue of “News from Brussels”, we would like to interest you on the results of a research carried out by our Croatian member, as well as on news regarding nursing in the USA and the UK. Obviously, WHO’s World Nursing Report is featuring in this issue as well.

Do come back to us with feedback.

Kind regards,
Theo

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

The Results of the Research
“Perspectives of Croatian
Nursing 2024” are Presented

USA Nursing Shortage Crisis:
How to Attract & Retain Nurses
in 2025 and Beyond

State of The World's Nursing
Report 2025 - World Health
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Nursing Workforce Investment
Needed to Tackle Emergency
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UK

The Results of the Research “Perspectives of Croatian Nursing 2024” are Presented



President Mario Gazić (HKMS),
Secretary General of ENC

The Croatian Chamber of Nurses presented the results of an extensive survey involving more than 3,000 nurses and technicians employed in hospitals across Croatia.

The best hospitals according to the quality of management (according to the views of nurses) are: General and Veteran Hospital "Croatian Pride" Knin, Clinic for Infectious Diseases "Dr. Fran Mihaljevic" and KBC Osijek

The study has shown worrying trends:

- Even 25% of nurses plan to change their employer or profession;
- 33% would not choose the nursing profession again;
- More than 70% of nurses perform tasks for which they are not educated;
- Only 14% believe they have an appropriate salary - Only 25% of the respondents have a balance between private and work life;

Nurses take care of an average of 22 patients daily, and only one third has basic work equipment provided. Communication with hospital administrations was rated low: 2.4.

The study will be conducted every three years and provides an important insight into the real state of Croatian nursing from the perspective of those who carry the heavy burden of the healthcare system

Nursing Shortage Crisis: How to Attract & Retain Nurses in 2025 and Beyond

We would like to share with you an article written by Michelle Wiffen on the nursing shortage in the USA.

“There’s a mounting issue facing our nation’s aging population: as older Americans grow in numbers, the nurses caring for them are also set to retire in record numbers. According to projections from the Census Bureau, by 2030, Americans 65 and older will make up more than 20% of the population, up from 17% in 2022. At the same time, roughly 600,000 Baby Boomer nurses are expected to retire from the workforce.

The US is already ill-equipped for the current level of stress senior care places on the health care system, but in the next five years, the situation is set to escalate. For an industry in such dire need of labour, the current state of hiring for nurses leaves a lot to be desired, with clunky, outdated applications and job postings that candidates have to hunt to find.

Without proactive strategies, implemented now, healthcare systems will find themselves scrambling to fill roles with the limited number of nurses available. Chipping away at this problem is a daunting task, but healthcare systems must start by paying attention to their employer branding and modernizing the candidate experience to keep their hospitals staffed. We’re no longer in an era where it’s acceptable for the candidate and employee experience to be an afterthought. As the most valuable asset to any organization, approaching the workforce from a people-first perspective is always the right call.

Building a Standout Employer Brand

There’s a striking imbalance in job openings and the supply of nurses, with the Bureau of Labour Statistics predicting 193,100 openings for nurses each year through 2032, and an expected shortage of 63,720 full-time nurses in 2030. With the level of demand healthcare is facing, a qualified nurse could walk into any hospital and get a job that same day, so what’s setting one employer brand apart from the next?

A strong employer brand is built upon reputation, workplace culture, career growth opportunities, and work-life balance. And at a time when burnout and stress levels are on the rise, nurses are looking for employers they trust will support them. Candidates want to see clear evidence of mental health resources, mentorship programs and long term support. But even with all these components in place, how an employer markets itself is just as important as what it offers. Even the best culture won’t attract candidates if they don’t know about it.

For a candidate pool as broad as in nursing, a simple job board post isn't going to cut it.

Employers need to be showcasing their unique brand differentiators across platforms as diverse as their candidates – connecting with them on Spotify where they're listening, on TikTok where they're scrolling, and on YouTube where they're watching.

Audio and video components offer a chance to go beyond static job descriptions and showcase real nurse testimonials, career growth stories, and behind the scenes workplace culture. The more authentically a candidate can see themselves at an organization through representation by their peers, the more that brand will resonate positively.

Perfecting the Candidate Experience

Attracting potential candidates is only half the battle. Hiring them quickly is just as critical – speed and accessibility determine which healthcare systems win top talent. The majority of nurses apply for jobs on their phones, according to Indeed's Hiring Insights, yet many healthcare employers still use outdated, clunky application systems. A mobile-friendly experience should be table stakes at this point. Candidates shouldn't have to scroll through endless pages or re-enter the same information multiple times.

Keep it simple and get the relevant information out in front first: how much is the role going to pay, what are the hours, are there opportunities for advancement, etc. When building out these applications, it's also important to eliminate redundancies. Simplifying applications to under five minutes and reducing inputs (like requiring both a resume upload and manual entry) can dramatically reduce drop-off rates. Any method of meeting the candidate where they are goes a long way, from using text-based interview scheduling to implementing AI-powered chatbots that can instantly answer common questions. In the race to modernize the application process, it's the little things that make a difference in conversions.

Plan Today to Survive Tomorrow

The nursing shortage is already reshaping healthcare, and ignoring the upcoming factors contributing to its rise will only dig the hole deeper. Healthcare systems that fail to act will struggle to provide care for our most vulnerable populations. While other industries may have the luxury of endless qualified applicants, nurses continue to be in short supply. Healthcare systems that clearly respect their nurses' time, support their well-being, and make the hiring process effortless today will be primed to survive tomorrow's nursing crisis."

State of The World's Nursing Report 2025 - World Health Organisation

According to WHO, central to the achievement of the Agenda for Sustainable Development is an adequate, equitably distributed and fully supported health workforce.

Nurses are the largest occupational group and represent an indispensable force with which to combat inequities in access to health services and progress towards health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while advancing gender equality through the strengthening and empowerment of a highly feminized profession. The 2025 edition of the State of the world's nursing provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the nursing workforce.

The report features new indicators on critical areas for nursing, such as education capacity, advanced practice nursing and remuneration. In addition to the 12 policy priorities from the Global strategic directions for nursing and midwifery 2021–2025, there are five additional policy priorities and a compilation of data from each WHO region. Country profiles reflect each country's national data and are available for download from the [WHO National Health Workforce Accounts data portal](#).

The Report concludes by pointing out:

With 5 years left of the SDG era and rising geopolitical tensions, economic retrenchment and concurrent protracted crises, we are at a strategic juncture. We can continue down the path of stagnated progress on universal health coverage and slower progress in reducing the health worker shortage. Or we can seize the opportunity this report presents to drive country-level investments and actions in support of nurses providing essential life-saving services in stronger health systems.

We call on policy-makers in countries, nursing associations, regulators, development partners, partner organizations and other stakeholders to utilize this report for policy dialogue and decision-making on how and where to strengthen nursing to achieve universal health coverage and the other health-related SDGs. These next 5 years are our final opportunity to do so.”

For more information, click on the following [link](#)

UK Nursing Workforce Investment Needed to Tackle Emergency Care

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) demands more detail on how the staff needed to make new urgent and emergency care plans work will be supported

The RCN feels that the UK government must recognise that plans to tackle emergency care in England will require investment in nursing staff to deliver them. The comments were made in response to the publication of the Urgent and Emergency Care Plan in England on 6 June.

Nearly £450 million will be invested to expand urgent and emergency care facilities in England, according to the Westminster government. It says this will help provide faster care for patients, with more people set to receive urgent treatment in their community.

RCN General Secretary and Chief Executive Professor Nicola Ranger said:

'This is a plan high in ambition, but low on detail of how the nursing staff needed to make this work will be supported to deliver these changes. Investment in new treatment and assessment centres, reducing the need for admission to hospital and speeding up discharge are desperately needed, but none of this can be achieved unless there is a commitment to invest in an overworked and understaffed nursing workforce.'

'Those in government must recognise that their plans will also require investment in the nursing staff to deliver them. Failure to act will simply be adding even greater pressures to a profession that is already on the brink and the plans will fail before they have even begun.'

The RCN says the plan is a welcome admission from government that corridor care is unacceptable and an indication that nursing voices have been heard.

In January, [an RCN report](#) revealed harrowing testimony from thousands of nursing staff, showing how widespread the issue is across the UK.

Nicola added: *'The commitment in England to publish data on long waits and the prevalence of corridor care is the right thing to do. We now need to see investment put where it is needed most to relieve pressures and end corridor care across the NHS.'*

Other commitments made in the plan include delivery of around 40 new same-day emergency care and urgent treatment centres, extra mental health crisis assessment centres and almost 500 new ambulances to be rolled out across England by March 2026.