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## **Androula Vassiliou proposed by the Republic of Cyprus for a new 5 year term as European Commissioner**

At the moment these lines are written it has been confirmed that the current EU Commissioner for Health, Ms. Androula Vassiliou is going to remain a member of the College of EU Commissioners for the period 2009-2014 (five year term).



*Ms. Androula Vassiliou and Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso*

The President of the College, Mr. Barroso and the Heads of State and Government have yet to finalize the attributions of the new Commissioners. It is thus still not clear whether Ms. Vassiliou is going to continue with the Health portfolio. We shall of course keep you informed on evolutions in the coming days.

## FEPI delegation meets with nurses and health professionals in Serbia

On 24/10/09, FEPI Senior Policy Adviser, **Dr. Theodoros Koutroubas** and **Dr. Anne-Marie Ryan**, Chair of FEPI Working Group on Education, Training and Competences have addressed the 'Symposium of Health Workers of the Republic of Serbia' which took place in Zlatibor, following an invitation from **Mr. Dragan Sasic**, Director of FEPI's Observer Member the Serbian Chamber of Nurses and Medical Technicians.

The conference gathered representatives from all health workers' organisations of Serbia, as well as a number of international attendees, including representatives of EFN. Dr. Koutroubas addressed participants during the official opening ceremony of the Symposium. He presented FEPI's role at the European scene and underlined the necessity of nursing regulatory bodies' work for patient protection, emphasizing the good work already carried out by the Serbian Chamber of Nurses and Medical Technicians.

On the second day of the meeting, Dr. Ryan has addressed the conference on the issue of nursing education, sharing with the participants the conclusions and ongoing labor of FEPI's Working Group Education, Training and Competences. The event gave FEPI the opportunity to raise awareness over its works and projects and to underline its essential role at the European level.

Dr. Koutroubas has also attended two other meetings in Serbia. The 22<sup>nd</sup>, he presented FEPI's activities to the regional presidents of the Serbian Chamber of Nurses and Medical Technicians at a meeting in Belgrade, and, the 23<sup>rd</sup>, he has along with Dr. Ryan informed the Mayor of Kragujevac on FEPI's work, at the kind initiative of the President of the regional chamber of Sumadija.



These three days of meeting gave the opportunity to Dr. Koutroubas and Dr. Ryan to become acquainted with the very important efforts currently undertaken

by the Serbian Chamber of Nurses and Medical Technicians, in order to assure the nursing profession a high quality of education in the country.

## **THE HRBofN (ENE) OBTAINED CATEGORY B MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE**

*Text by **Aristidis Daglas**, HRBofN General Secretary, Quality Assurance Officer.*

*“In the period 2007-2013 the objective of both the National Strategy for Health and Social Solidarity and the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) is to develop an efficient and financially viable health system to offer effective prevention and care to all citizens. Under the Community and national institutional framework for the new period, sectoral projects are integrated, in the Strategy after requests for proposals announced by the sectoral Special Authority and other sectoral and regional Special Management Authorities and **are implemented by bodies which have first successfully completed the competence certification process (such as the HRBofN)**”.*

The possibility of the **HRBofN applying for European funding** and thereafter taking immediate action so that the multiple benefits accruing could be enjoyed initially by nurses, and by extension by citizens, was considered in every detail from October 2008 for a whole year and generated the expected results with HRBofN services and structures receiving ISO 9001 certification.

At the same time, we have also succeeded in organising and implanting a comprehensive and **rigorous training programme** subsidised by the 3rd CSF which provided training to **500** nurses on the early diagnosis of mental diseases.

At present, we are in the process of implementing **another extensive project** financed by the 3rd CSF on **information** to nurses to **raise their awareness** regarding Integrated Information Systems and **40 one-day events** have been planned for the largest hospitals in Greece.

Once all the necessary certificates were obtained, after many hours of work and dedication, the HRBofN succeeded in achieving what no other health-sector Regulator in Greece (such as the Hellenic Medical Regulator) has achieved: **to obtain category B management competence certification**. (Category B includes bodies interested in certify their competence to implement projects with no technical scope such as action projects to **procure and install equipment**, to develop and install **IT systems**, to procure and install IT hardware, to outsource consultancy and other services no related to the implementation of technical projects, or **training** and **counseling** and other projects).

These matters are, furthermore, relevant to the objectives for which the HRBofN was established.

Given that **no other professional regulator or association** has succeeded in gaining the right to apply for any available European funds, the HRBofN was able to improve the overall situation for its members **by organising subsidised activities, by assigning research programmes to working groups or by organising info-events.**

## European Commissioner for Health calls EU Members-States to invest in their health budget

Speaking at the 12th European Health Forum which took place in Gastein, Austria from 30/09/09 to the 02/10/09, European Commissioner for Health, Mrs. Androula Vassiliou, warned against deep cuts in the national health budget of the 27 EU Members-States. According to her *'health services across Europe will come under increasing pressure during the financial crisis'*, but it is urgent for health ministers not to slash public spending on health care.



In her speech, Mrs. Vassiliou called on EU countries to step up investment in medical technology and eHealth amid growing concerns that national governments are cutting expenditure in health and social services. The Commissioner pointed out that *"there is now a risk that decision-makers are being tempted to think short-term and to make cuts in the health budget. The crisis is causing increased psychosocial stress and in many cases an increase in hazardous behavior such as alcohol abuse, smoking and unhealthy nutrition. For this reason the demand for health services will significantly rise as a result of the crisis"*.

Mrs. Vassiliou said the EU executive supports cooperation at national level in evaluating new technologies, adding that further development of eHealth external solutions will usher in significant productivity increases.

*"In the crisis we should be investing in health rather than cutting budgets," the commissioner insisted. "But we also have to seek favorable cost solutions just as much and grant prevention and health promotion, in particular, a greater priority."*

## **European Commissioner for Development opens a consultation on the EU role in global health.**

On the 14/10/09, the European Commission Directorate General for Development opened a public consultation on the 'EU Role in Global Health'. This consultation is based on the paper recently issued by the European Commission aiming at 'raising a number of issues that are at the heart of the debate on global health. It is based on studies carried out by leading research organisations and international agencies as well as on the European Commission's own research'.



This paper, available on the European Commission' website ([http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/files/europa\\_only/EU\\_role\\_global\\_health\\_issue\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/files/europa_only/EU_role_global_health_issue_paper_en.pdf)), enumerates the possible ways to develop the role of the European Union in the global health scene, with a special attention to its collaboration with third-world countries.

The public consultation in question aims at gather pointers and views from relevant stakeholders regarding the rationale, scope and strategic objectives for an EU role in global health. The consultation is open to all relevant stakeholders Individuals, organisations and countries that wish to participate in the consultation process are invited to reply to a questionnaire annexed to the issues paper. This questionnaire can be downloaded at the following website: ([http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/files/europa\\_only/EU\\_role\\_global\\_health\\_issue\\_paper\\_annex\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/files/europa_only/EU_role_global_health_issue_paper_annex_en.pdf)).

Contributions to this consultation can be submitted until the 09/12/09, to the email address: [DEV-GLOBAL-HEALTH@ec.europa.eu](mailto:DEV-GLOBAL-HEALTH@ec.europa.eu), or by post mail at: DG DEV, Rue de la Science 15, 1049 Brussels, Belgium.

Should you think FEPI can contribute to this consultation, please contact the FEPI Secretariat.

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