

EN
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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.10.2024)

According to Article 168(7) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union¹, the definition of national health policy and the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care including in the field of mental health, is a national competence. The Commission supports Member States in strengthening their health workforce via the EU4Health, Erasmus+ and the Third Health Programme. Examples are a joint action on forecasting and planning of health workforce²; projects on workforce retention, task shifting and medical deserts³; actions on skills development under the BeWell project⁴, projects on training programmes and digital skills⁵ and an action on shortages of nurses⁶. The Cohesion Policy Funds^{7, 8} and the Recovery and Resilience Facility⁹ may provide additional support.

The Commission supports Member States via the EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025¹⁰ and its Action Plan¹¹, which identify the priorities, including on health-related aspects of drug use and drug-related harm. Strengthening access to treatment and care services including evidence-based targeted prevention interventions for people who use drugs is a priority area¹². The EU Drugs Agency promotes evidence-based interventions to raise awareness on the adverse effects of drugs¹³. The Commission is evaluating the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan.

The Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030¹⁴ calls on Member States to implement good practices of deinstitutionalisation. EU labour law¹⁵ sets a broad range of minimum requirements to be transposed in national law. The Commission promotes support to the unemployed and adequate unemployment benefits, as per the principles of the European

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=en>

² Funded by EU4Health Programme; HEROES: <https://healthworkforce.eu/>

³ Third Health Programme Projects : AHEAD: <https://ahead.health/>; OASES : <https://oasesproject.eu/>; ROUTE: <https://route-hwf.eu/>; TASHI: <https://tashiproject.eu/>; METEOR: <https://meteorproject.eu/>

⁴ Funded by Erasmus+ programme: <https://bewell-project.eu/>

⁵ EU4Health programme: https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/2022-eu4health-work-programme_en; <https://www.amreducare.eu/>; <https://eh4future.eu/>; <https://gesea.eu/>; <https://digicantrain.turkuamk.fi>; <https://ddsmmap.easpd.eu/>; <https://ehma.org/projects/transition/>; <https://hpass.healthworkforce.eu/>

⁶ HS-CA-24-46 Nurses at the heart of more resilient health systems and safe healthcare, published in the 2024 EU4Health Work Programme report, p. 179. https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/c60cda6b-ad32-4909-9118-8a1f69c3cd32_en?filename=funding_c_2023_8524_annex1_en.pdf

⁷ All relevant investments should demonstrate alignment with relevant national and EU policy and legal frameworks, namely the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), respecting the principles of equality, freedom of choice, right to independent living, protection and prohibition of any form of segregation.

⁸ Cohesion Open Data Platform: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/funds/21-27>

⁹ The Greek Recovery and Resilience Plan includes a reform to ensure access to quality mental health services for specific populations suffering from mental illness and addiction.

¹⁰ EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025, OJ C 102I , 24.3.2021.

¹¹ EU Drugs Action Plan 2021-2025, OJ C 272, 8.7.2021

¹² Priority area 6 of the EU Drugs Strategy, Actions 32-42 of the EU Drugs Action Plan.

¹³ Regulation (EU) 2023/1322 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2023 on the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1920/2006, OJ L 166, 30.6.2023, Article 16.

¹⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52021DC0101>

¹⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=157&langId=en>

Pillar of Social Rights¹⁶.

¹⁶ COM/2017/0250 final, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights.