

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001540/25
to the Commission
Laurent Castillo (PPE)
(15 April 2025)**

Subject: Shortages of health workers in France and the EU

According to a survey carried out in April and May 2022 by the Hospital Federation of France (Fédération hospitalière de France) among more than 400 public health establishments, 99% of establishments face recruitment difficulties, in particular for nurses and night services.

The shortage of doctors, nurses and caregivers in the EU is estimated at 1.2 million. Without action, the shortfall could reach 4 million by 2030. This is a deep and widespread crisis which is primarily the responsibility of each Member State, but in which the EU can play a role:

- through the use of artificial intelligence to optimise patient referral, diagnostics and treatment, simplify administrative procedures and provide better prevention through predictive analysis;
- through training, with the recognition of diplomas and professional experience or the development of skills. However, care must be taken not to create geographical distortions that would leave some territories without health practitioners because a neighbouring country might pay more.

1. Is the Commission considering a European action plan, in line with its competences, to address the shortages in the health workforce?
2. What specific measures does the Commission intend to implement to promote these innovations in order to reduce the burden on healthcare professionals and improve patient safety?

Submitted: 15.4.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Minzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(23 June 2025)**

The Commission is currently implementing an Action Plan on labour and skills shortages of 20 March 2024 ⁽¹⁾. The action plan sets out 87 actions or commitments that the EU, Member States and social partners will or should take to tackle these shortages.

It contains a call to Member States to develop policies to attract and retain nurses through improving working conditions and mentoring young professionals, with the support of the EU4Health Programme.

The collection of data for a survey on the health professionals' mental health was carried out by the World Health Organisation (WHO) with EU4Health funding, and its results are planned to be published in October 2025. The WHO will then develop a set of proposed policy actions to protect the mental health of the health workforce, planned for publication before the end of 2025 ⁽²⁾.

The Commission's Expert Group on Health Systems Performance Assessment ⁽³⁾ is mapping various approaches to ensuring safe staffing levels in healthcare.

The Commission also helps Member States, including France, in seizing opportunities from the digitalisation of health systems. Among others, the European Health Data Space initiative ⁽⁴⁾ aims to establish a common framework for the use and exchange of electronic health data.

Through the European Semester, the Commission provides country-specific policy advice to support health system reforms, including those related to the health workforce. Substantial EU funding ⁽⁵⁾ is available to support skills development programmes ⁽⁶⁾ and planning and forecasting tools ⁽⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Communication on Labour and skills shortages in the EU: an action plan, COM(2024) 131 final (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0131>).

⁽²⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/european-health-union/comprehensive-approach-mental-health_en.

⁽³⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/health-systems-performance-assessment_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/ehealth-digital-health-and-care/european-health-data-space-regulation-ehds_en.

⁽⁵⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/2024-eu4health-work-programme_en.

⁽⁶⁾ Erasmus+ programme funded actions: AMR EDUCare <https://www.amreducare.eu/>, 'BeWell' <https://bewell-project.eu/>, DDS-MAP <https://ddsmmap.easpd.eu/>, DigiCanTrain <https://digidcantrain.turkuamk.fi/contact-us/>, e-Hospital4Future <https://eh4future.eu/>, EHMA <https://hpass.healthworkforce.eu/EU4Healthtraining> https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/2022-eu4health-work-programme_en; GESEA Educational Programme <https://gesea.eu/> and TRANSITION <https://ehma.org/projects/transition/>.

⁽⁷⁾ EU4Health Programme funded Joint Action Heroes: <https://www.agenas.gov.it/ricerca-e-sviluppo/ricerca-internazionale/personale-sanitario-ri/heroes-health->

In the context of the Union of Skills ⁽⁸⁾ and its Skills Portability Initiative, the Commission will explore common rules for recognising the qualifications of third-country nationals, and thus facilitate the integration of non-EU workers into the EU labour markets, including in the healthcare sector.

The forthcoming Quality Jobs Roadmap will support progress on the various dimensions of job quality in the evolving world of work.

⁽⁸⁾ workforce-to-meet-health-challenges.
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5c5c5399-fa8a-11ef-b7db-01aa75ed71a1>.