



Joint Action Health Workforce  
Planning and Forecasting

## Joint Action Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting Conference and Stakeholder forum, Bratislava, 28-29<sup>th</sup> January 2014

PROGRAMME MANAGERS' WELCOMING SPEECH  
January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 - 14:00

Excellences,  
Directors generals,  
Professors,  
Dear Colleagues,

It is an honour for me to open this first conference & stakeholder forum of the Joint Action of Health Workforce Planning & Forecasting.

It is even more an honour to see here many people present who are devoting their working lives to sustainable healthcare systems for Europe. I see around me many faces convinced that Health Workforce is a key factor in our quest to healthy and affordable living in an evolving world. I also see the countries & regions behind those people that are willing to propose and implement robust policies. And I hear and see Unions, international organizations & Universities behind those faces, who put forward legitimate concerns and look forward to work out solutions with us.

The Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning & Forecasting consists now of 25 associated partners and a raising number of collaborating partners, reaching 37 today. These numbers illustrate how acute the feeling is that the Health Workforce issue has to be solved urgently. And even more, these numbers claim for action.

Well, the time for action has come and many countries and regions have not ignored this agenda. Europe has a plan for the health workforce and the Joint Action is moving it forward. It has been a long way until today, starting from Policy dialogues in Leuven in 2009 to the tender for the Joint Action in March 2012, the Kick Off of the Joint Action in April 2013 up til here, today, in Bratislava, at the start of the first conference. I have personally witnessed and sponsored all that, together with the Belgian Federal Public Service of Health, and I can assure you that I am vey pleased to see you all in this room today, bringing the Joint Action in action.



Funded by  
the Health Programme  
of the European Union





Joint Action Health Workforce  
Planning and Forecasting

This morning, the plenary assembly took note of what the Joint Action has achieved until now, and took good notice of the challenging planning that we have before us in 2014. For this afternoon and for tomorrow, we prepared a short but effective working conference and we, as organizational team, are looking forward to hear your input and use those workshops and sessions to feed our work.

This conference puts an emphasis on the following 5 themes:

1. International Data and trends, with the EU observatory and the OECD, and I thank both Mathias and Gaëtan for taking the floor very soon;
2. Sharing local experience, with special attention to mobility and anticipated planning;
3. Stakeholders involvement with 2 stakeholders forum sessions, and three countries' specific stakeholder meetings.
4. The synchronization of the projects within the EU plan, with a workshop of the important study on recruitment and retention, and with the presence of the project leader HealthWorkForce4All.
5. A big and important specific workshop organized by Italy & Portugal, to plan the future pilot projects.

I would also want to highlight the side session by WP4 on the implementation of the WHO Guidelines for ethical recruitment planned on Thursday.

I believe our conference & stakeholder forum reflects what we stand for:

- very concerned about international trends, and still convinced that sharing of knowledge and local expertise and moving towards action will address those global challenges.
- very practical, trying to discuss next steps and build on proven experience, trusting your voice and expertise.
- very close to you, opening dialogues, fostering networking and counting on your input as much as on ourselves.

From now on, this is no longer our conference but your conference.



Funded by  
the Health Programme  
of the European Union





Joint Action Health Workforce  
Planning and Forecasting

It is not only the official workshops that will provide added value to the challenges we are all facing, but also the networking opportunities. We didn't want to overload the agenda, and we tried to allocate quality time for meeting, comparing, exchanging. I would like to welcome the many regions and country officials present today and I hope they will be able to talk to each other, and to other countries facing the same challenge. I'm delighted to welcome a Brazilian delegation, headed by Dr Menezes da Silva, but also prof. Yoswa Dambisya from South Africa, showing that knowledge is global, must be exchanged and must be used locally. I welcome you all to attend the sessions, the evening lunch, the professional speed dating organized tomorrow and the stakeholder discussions, and make any moment enjoyable and profitable. We know about global and local unbalances and some acute shortages in the Health Workforce distribution, we also know that some countries are lacking experts to support their policies.

This Joint Action will build a network of experts during this year 2014. This conference is a first step and will for sure not be the last.

You will make the success of these three days, and by doing this you will set a benchmark. Then we will, as Joint Action, move forward to a full plan of workshops this year, and to next conferences. Doing so, we will start the network and support a strong dissemination process.

So today is the first day of the first conference, and for sure the first of a long set of dates.

On this event, we have to acknowledge the quality of the organization team, composed mainly out of WP2 and WP1 team, with special thanks to Zuzana Matlonova, to Lieve Jorens and to Paul Giepmans, all supported by their team.

Dear attendees, I declare this Joint Action conference open, and I hand the floor to our Guest, Dr. Mario Miklosi, speaking on behalf of our Host, the Minister of Health of the Republik of Slovakia, Ms Zuzana Zvolenská, to which I address our very special greetings.

M. Van Hoegaerden  
Programme Manager



Funded by  
the Health Programme  
of the European Union

