



NEWSLETTER NO. 2

MARCH 2024

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Joint Action on Health workfOrce to meet health challengeS

19 European countries and 51 partner organisations working together to improve the health workforce planning capacities so as to ensure accessibility, sustainability, and resilience of healthcare workforce.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2nd issue of the JA HEROES Newsletter!

Our JA HEROES Newsletter regularly brings you various interesting news from our activities, as well as regular columns. In the **Spotlight on countries** section, all HEROES countries provide space to write an article on their national HWF issue. **Viewpoint** is a space for views from EU stakeholders. **My expert opinion** offers the opinions of experts on HWF mostly from academia.





Dear readers,

I am pleased to welcome you to the second issue of the HEROES Newsletter as the new Programme Manager of AGENAS, the coordinator of HEROES Joint Action.

In this second issue, you will find information describing the health workforce strategy that Spain, Poland, and Slovakia will implement, with an overview of each country's backgrounds, challenges, and improvements. It will also include the point of view of some critical stakeholders (HOSPEEM, EHMA, ESN) and the expert opinion (Luděk Šídlo) on the main difficulties for having adequate health workforce planning, the most relevant issues in terms of governance and the appropriate modalities to manage and overcome the related constraints.

You will also find information on the main events and initiatives related to HEROES Joint Action. I am also glad to introduce you to the new main developments of the planned activities.

The process of the Joint Action involves a stepwise approach with a first phase called "AS IS", an analysis of the current situation in terms of data, tools, models and skills already existing in the countries, together with the type of stakeholder involvement; the second step, "TO BE", concerns the main goals that each country would like to achieve and the third phase, called "TO DO", represents the implementation of the actions to reach the planned objectives. The first phase ("AS IS") has finished in January.

The first stakeholder forum took place in October to discuss HWF planning issues with key stakeholders from each country. At the end of last year, face-to-face workshops were organised in Budapest, Utrecht and Porto, during which all the cluster countries worked together on the first phase of the project, asking each country to describe their current situation and collect information from each other's on HWF Data, HWF Planning tools, HWF Planning skills and Stakeholder involvement.

In January, the first Policy Board was held online. In this meeting, one decision-maker for each country discussed the state of the art of the current situation of the health workforce in starting reasoning about the sustainability of the actions. Furthermore, the consortium started to plan the following steps during a face-to-face event in Rome at the beginning of February, and you will be updated regarding the "TO BE" and "TO DO" phases by reading the following Newsletters.

For more information on Joint Action HEROES, visit our website at healthworkforce.eu.

I hope you will enjoy reading it!

Lisa Baldini



The second year of our HEROES project has started.

The first year of Joint Action is over. We have two more years of hard work ahead of us. Together we face the health challenges. Together we are stronger!

SPOTLIGHT ON COUNTRIES



Spain

We understand that Human Resources departments can and must participate in the planning and actions to be taken to determine...

[Read more](#)

Poland

Medical staff is one of the most important health care resources, and their possible lack makes it difficult to meet the health needs of society...

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Slovakia

In the intricate ecosystem of healthcare, the strategic planning and management of the health workforce (HWF) stand as pivotal elements...

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VIEWPOINT

HOSPEEM

The European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association

With a growing demand for healthcare services that are integral to the European social model...

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EHMA

The European Health Management Association

Effective and efficient health workforce planning hinges on a deep understanding of the current health workforce landscape, including the...

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ESNO

The European Specialist Nurses Organisation

On the 10th of October, the European Specialist Nurses and the European Advanced Nurse Practitioners gathered in the European...

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MY EXPERT OPINION



Luděk Šídlo

Charles University in Prague (Czechia)

Healthcare systems in many developed countries are currently facing a significant challenge...

[Read more](#)

HOT NEWS

1st Stakeholder Forum

Online, 3 October 2023

The Forum took place on 3 October. Stakeholders from HEROES countries participated together with main EU umbrella associations. We are grateful for the rich discussions and views; useful input for the upcoming Policy Board meeting.

Participants highlighted that COVID-19 created a new paradigm in health workforce planning. Besides data and models, the social dynamics related to work should be taken into consideration. A negative trend followed the pandemic causing the loss of prestige and attractiveness of the profession. Stakeholders agreed that more attention should be paid to promoting health professions and preserving the mental health of healthcare workers. At the system level lacking geographical imbalances, and introducing new models of care like task sharing or task shifting would be highly effective.



WP6 Cluster Meeting & Workshop

Budapest, Hungary, 25 - 26 October 2023

Budapest hosted the 1st two-day Cluster Meeting and Workshop of the HEROES Joint Action on the 25-26 October 2023.

Hungary participates in the WP6 cluster on Improving Health Workforce Planning Capacity along with Croatia, Romania, Slovenia, Lithuania and Poland where OKFÓ leads cluster activities as the Competent Authority. Whereas the Health Services Management Training Centre (EMK) of Semmelweis University participates in the JA as an affiliated entity, fulfilling the role of Task Leader in data provision related activities.



WP7 Cluster Meeting & Workshop

Utrecht, the Netherlands, 15 - 16 November 2023

On November 15-16, the JA HEROES WP7 Cluster Workshop was held in Utrecht. The workshop successfully orbited the whole team into project activities, fostered dynamic learning exchanges among cluster countries, and gained a comprehensive overview of the task activities and each country's current situation.

The event featured interactive country presentations, where participants actively engaged in discussions related by the moderator, and in-depth sessions on tasks: exploring gaps and deficiencies in each context. The highlight was a hands-on simulation of HWF forecasting using Nivels Excel modelling tool, customized to each country's HWF data. The apex of the workshop were Belgium's HWF planning model, Nivels' Excel HWF forecasting tool, Malta's successful implementation of the forecasting tool, and Slovakia's innovative methodology for forecasting healthcare services demand emerged as major interest attractors.

Excitingly, numerous bi- and tri-lateral meetings are already in the works for January 2024, as countries dive deeper into these attractors, fostering knowledge transfer and pushing the boundaries of collaborative healthcare innovation.



WP5 Cluster Meeting & Workshop

Porto, Portugal, 21 - 22 November 2023

The city of Porto, in Portugal, hosted a meeting of European countries, organized by ACSS (Administração Central do Sistema de Saúde), which debated the best methodologies to respond to the problem of attractiveness and retention of human resources in Health in Europe for two days. This meeting is part of the JA HEROES, which aims to reinforce and improve planning in the area of health and human resources, and took place on the 21st and 22nd of November. In this project, Portugal, through ACSS, assumes leadership of one of the groups of countries and has Norway as a co-leader.

The WPS meeting, which took the form of a workshop involving countries such as Norway, Italy, Spain, Greece, Sweden and Portugal, aims to improve the planning capacity of health human resources in Europe, to ensure accessibility, sustainability and the resilience of health services and systems. Other countries, like Hungary, Netherlands, and Slovenia, also made an important contribution to the results of the workshop by promoting cooperation between the participants and countries.

This meeting had the merit of leading countries to "share common challenges and identify opportunities for improvement and collaboration". This meeting promoted the debate for the next developments in the HEROES Project, like the definition of action strategies such as the urgent improvement of human resources databases, the development of more effective planning tools and methods, as well as training professionals with more and better skills.



1st Policy Board

Online, 23 January 2024

The HEROES Policy Board (PB) met for the first time on 23 January 2024. The PB brings together policy experts from the 19 participating countries to provide input and feedback from their experience as policy makers.

At this first meeting, 3 topics were discussed: the main challenges of HWF planning from a policy perspective, the supportive role the EU can play to improve HWF planning, and the policy changes needed to optimise HWF planning.

The valuable input we received from these policy experts will inform the work to be carried out in the coming months. A second PB is planned for 2024.



EU Health Policy Platform - Conference:

"Health workforce challenges: ways forward for policy making"



The HWF Projects Cluster of the EU Health Policy Platform organised the Europe-wide conference to discuss relevant policy recommendations, developed on the basis of the results achieved within the cluster, and launched a call to translate them into action.

The online webinar "Health workforce challenges: ways forward for policy making" on 26 January 2024 was an exciting event dealing with essential themes on the health workforce, such as task shifting, medical deserts, and retention.

AGENAS, as coordinator of the JA HEROES, had the opportunity to participate in the second panel, discussing perspectives to meet the challenges of the health workforce and debating possible future initiatives and policies which could help mitigate the health workforce crisis.

Work Package & Task Leaders Meeting

Rome, Italy, 1 - 2 February 2024

On the 1st and 2nd of February the Joint Action HEROES coordination team had an in person meeting with the Task and WP leaders of the project in Rome, at the AGENAS headquarters.

The goal was to reflect on the first year of the project, plan the next year activities, tasks, events and timeline, also discuss the synergies between the Task and Cluster work in the next time period. The meeting was really successful and interesting, the project partners will continue the great work to face health workforce challenges!







The JA HEROES Leaflet

We would like to draw your attention to our Leaflet, where you find useful information about our Joint Action. Feel free to share it.

[Preview & Download](#)

JA HEROES EVENTS

All planned events can be found in our calendar!

[Event Calendar](#)

Check out our [JA HEROES Website](#) and follow us on [Social Media](#)!



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