



Health Workforce Projects Cluster launch webinar

Brief report

The official launch event of the **Health Workforce Projects Cluster** took place on the 20 September 2021. More than 100 participants registered to the event held on the EU Health Policy Platform.

The opening speakers **Andrzej Rys** – Director, Health systems, medical products and innovation, DG SANTE, European Commission and **Miklós Szócska** - Director, Health Services Management Training Centre, Semmelweis University highlighted the importance of investing into health workforce, particularly in light of COVID-19.

Dr Szócska said that „We are happy that the Commission considers the **health workforce strategic issues as critical topics**” in his welcome speech. He underlined that **evidence-based** projects need to provide tangible results to support policy makers in the EU, and these times we are moving towards strengthening innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems. He emphasized to have a common understanding about **the necessity of coordinated efforts in Europe** for strengthening health workforce.

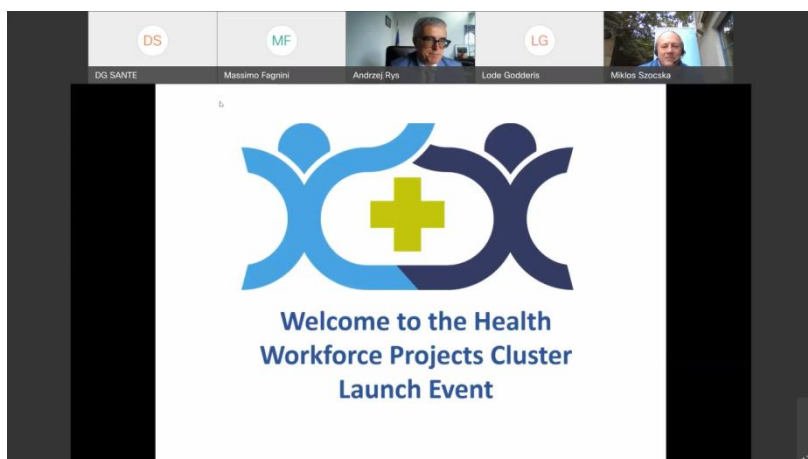
As a continuation of SEPEN five projects were launched under the umbrella of “Support the health workforce field”. The **major challenges in the field of health workforce today are similar** in many Member States: shortages and uneven distribution of workforce, aging health workforce, mentally exhausted health and care workers, missing professions, and adapting the digitalisation of healthcare.

He highlighted **that we need practical deliverables for supporting the EU Member States**, tangible tools, methods, practices for EU health policy. All these will lead to health workforce strategic planning and human resources strategic management.

Dr Rys in his speech highlighted that COVID showed us how important is to focus on health workforce and health systems. This **projects cluster is a perfect way to share knowledge** and experiences at the same time it is a good place to learn from each other.

He informed the audience that last year **president Van der Leyen called for a stronger Health Union** and there are some major steps made in this field, such as:

- Package of regulation for the new cross-border healthcare
- ECDC – use of European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
- New pharma strategy for Europe





- New health emergency response authority
- European health data space was proposed
- The work is finalised on EU for health programme
- Finalising work on a number of country proposals on EU funds to recover resilience facility

He underlined that **health workforce supporting EU initiatives are vital for health systems**, as the capacity of health services is strongly dependent on health workforces.

It is important to build on the experiences of the previous projects such as SEPEN, at the same time **proactive health workforce planning makes health systems resilient** and prepared for the future shocks. In order to support this aim and improve the health workforce planning and forecasting the **Commission is planning a new Joint Action starting in 2022**. The main focus points will focus on adapting allocation needs, reform of allocation system, continuous professional development, to equip the professionals with skills which are critical in saving lives in times of crisis.

Dr Rys mentioned the **cross sectoral plan to increase opportunities for training health workforces**, which involves the fields of health, employment and industry. In the frames of this initiative a **partnership** will be built to mobilise the resources and actions to address the health needs in rapid digital transformation.

After the welcome speeches Mr Massimo Fagnini from HaDEA moderated the session, in which five projects were introduced by the project leaders in the three key topics of retention policies, mitigating medical deserts and task shifting.

If you missed the event, you can read again the [Invitation and agenda](#) and further information about the projects on the Cluster's online forum, the dedicated project websites and you can also watch the recording of the event: [HERE](#)

Action for Health and Equity - Addressing Medical Deserts: [AHEAD](#)

MEnTal hEalth: fOCUS on Retention of healthcare workers: [METEOR](#)

prOmoting evidence-bASed rEformS: [OASES](#)

Empowering EU health policies on Task SHifting: [TaSHI](#)

A Roadmap OUT of mEdical deserts into supportive Health WorkForce initiatives and policies: [ROUTE-HWF](#)

Report prepared by the TaSHI WP2 team