



71st session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Provisional agenda item 6

European Immunization Agenda (EIA) 2030: Building better health for tomorrow

13-15 September 2021 (virtual session)

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) and European Forum for National Nurses and Midwives Associations (EFNNMA) welcome the EIA2030. Nurses and midwives of Europe are strongly committed to immunization programmes to ensure everyone at every age fully benefit from vaccination for good health and wellbeing and sustainable development of Europe. As a flagship initiative of the WHO European Region, the EIA2030 has the potential to drive needed renewed political commitment to immunization programmes.

Nurses and midwives are the largest clinical providers of immunization in Europe. Findings from a recent ICN survey on COVID-19 mass immunization shows nurses play a key role in increasing vaccination rates and reducing vaccine hesitancy, particularly by supporting development of education resources and tools. As the most trusted professions, nurses and midwives support community engagement, increase health literacy and build public confidence in immunization.

In many of the countries that are highly effective in immunization, nurses and midwives are involved in national strategies and committees for COVID-19 vaccination. National Nurses Associations (NNAs) and Midwives Associations (NMAs) offer important contributions to national strategies and can swiftly mobilize the nursing and midwifery workforces. NNA/NMAs can also facilitate planning and delivery of mass immunization through their established relationships with policy makers, service leaders and regulators. ICN and EFNNMA call on Member States to involve nurses and midwives and their organisations in planning, management, implementation and monitoring of immunization programmes at all levels.

ICN and EFNNMA support setting up a high-level multistakeholder immunization board by the Regional Committee to promote the highest level of political engagement and ensure that immunization stays at the top of national health agendas. As nurses and midwives are key stakeholders of the EIA2030, we strongly recommend inclusion of a government chief nursing and midwifery officer as a member of the immunization board. We also strongly recommend inclusion of a nurse on the European Technical Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization to support mobilization of nursing partners at country and regional levels and to support the coordination of technical support.

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality nursing care for all and sound health policies globally.

The European Forum of National Nurses and Midwives Associations (European Forum - EFNNMA) is the joint voice of nursing and midwifery in the WHO European Region and was established to promote the continuous development of the nursing and midwifery professions in all Member States in the region in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office.