



## **Reflections on the EANS Winter Summit 2021**

We had a very inspiring online conference on February 19<sup>th</sup>. Of course, we would have preferred to meet in Peloponnese, Greece. However, an online conference offers new opportunities.

In the past EANS had many Winter Summits, but never before with so many registrations. In total 435 people registered for this summit. Our members have often requested such a large EANS scientific event. Now we realised it, and it went extremely well!

We welcomed renowned researchers and policy makers from distinguished organisations and universities such as ICN, Nursing Now, WHO, EFN and even the European Parliament. Since we planned this conference as an online meeting, it was relatively feasible for them to commit. Also, the topic of our summit, ‘Policy Making - How nurses could make the difference’ was appealing.

Many important things were said during the summit. For instance Paul de Raeye from EFN challenged us to get as much money for nursing research out of the European funding as possible. Moriah Ellen stated: “If there is no chair for nursing at the table, bring your own chair and join them.”

Guests from WHO, ICN and Nursing Now at the first round table raised important issues, for instance that every country needs a chief nursing officer, that we should not use terminology like nurses as ‘substitutes’ for physicians or ‘task shifting’, since nursing has its own scope. The ICN president reminded us of the nurses who died of COVID19. She said: “Never bring nurses in such a position again.” She requested preparedness as a lesson learned. She also concluded that nurses were absolute invisible in policy making during the pandemic. On the other hand, she stated that COVID19 did make the effort of nurse very visible and could lead to new opportunities for future policy development. What leadership can contribute to the development of nurses as policy makers was discussed in various situations.

The last round table was about evidence-informed policy-making. Here, our guests covered a wide range of policy makers and influential experts from five countries. A key lesson was that the position of a chief nurse officer seems prerequisite for evidence transfer to clinical practice.



We further discussed evidence-based versus evidence-informed, gender segregation, as well as the lack of relevant nursing research, and limited funding for nursing research. We also heard that we have to learn how to speak to politicians, how to lobby for relevant policies and how to effectively network.

A take home message is certainly:

*Be brave, stand up and try to get involved at all levels of decision-making.*

Finally, I think EANS can be very proud of this Winter Summit. We all took an effective step forward to make EANS and its contributions more visible.

This event inspired me and gave me the power to not get tired and – instead – to continue to argue for the contribution of nursing to health care and wellbeing of the public. With renewed energy, I expect to contribute to policy and political decision-making.

A heartily thank you to Professor Styliani Tziaferi as chair of the EANS Scientific Committee and to the Scientific Committee Members. Thank you to the Mastermind Group for running all these technical issues in such a professional way. Thank you so much to all presenters and discussants and to the facilitators.

Gabriele Meyer, 22/02/2021