

Theme	Sub-theme	Objective	Deliverables
I. Labour shortages	New models of care, roles, and skills for sustainable future healthcare systems	Explore the role of social partners in the design and delivery of healthcare services to meet future needs, and in particular how to foster the skills needed for resilient services	Identification of the main trends and models in delivering healthcare services and exchange of the good practices on the impact of such models on the quality, delivery and efficiency of healthcare systems Organise a discussion on skills mix and competences at one of the SSDC-HS meetings with examples from social partners
	Recruitment and Retention	Exchange on how to promote and attract young people into employment in health services while valuing and retaining experienced workers' skills and expertise to build a resilient and patient- safe healthcare workforce and services	Assess the implementation of the Framework of Action on Recruitment and Retention
	Ageing of the healthcare workforce	Exchange good practices between social partners on how to address challenges related to the ageing of the healthcare workforce ¹	Update the good practice examples annexed in the EPSU-HOSPEEM guidelines and examples of good practice to address the challenges of an ageing workforce
	Management of the diversity without any discrimination on any grounds of workforce, such as gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, culture, disability, under-represented group and refugees	Continue exchange on role and successful initiatives of national social partners in the field of diversity management	Joint recommendations for promoting inclusive workplaces through social dialogue

	Migration and ethical international recruitment, integration of migrants in the workplace	Give due consideration to recent developments at the EU ² and global levels ³ on ethical cross-border recruitment and retention	Update the EPSU-HOSPEEM code of conduct and follow up on Ethical Cross-Border Recruitment and Retention in the Hospital Sector
	Integration of refugees and asylum seekers with a professional qualifications (background) in health into the hospital and healthcare sector	Address the challenges linked to the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the hospital and healthcare sector and identify good practices in this field for cross-country learning and inspiration from experiences and measures	Organisation of a technical seminar for a knowledge and good practices exchange about fast-track programmes and issues such as the validation of professional qualifications, skills, competences
	Joint project work	Continue delivering the project “Tackling staff shortages and ensuring future-proofing skills in health”	Publication of the project reports
	Work-life balance	Exchange of good practices of social partners in the field of work-life balance	Presentation of exchange of good practices at one of the SSDC-HS meetings
	Individual flexible working patterns	Exchange of good practices on individual flexible working arrangements via collective bargaining to support recruitment and retention of workers	Identify solutions in individual flexible working agreements negotiated by social partners
II. Skills: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Lifelong Learning (LLL)	Promotion of CPD and LLL for all healthcare staff, including service personnel, also in the context of the digitalisation of the hospital and healthcare sector	Follow-up activities to the HOSPEEM-EPSU Joint Declaration on CPD and LLL for All Health Workers in the EU (2016), and the joint project conference on CPD and LLL (2017) and resulting suggestions for	Joint conference Active participation in the European Commission Union of Skills

¹ According to the OECD [‘Health at a Glance: Europe 2024’](#) report “over one-third of doctors and a quarter of nurses in the EU are aged over 55 and expected to retire in the coming years”.

² [EU Talent Pool - European Commission](#)

³ [WHO Global Code of Practice: an overview](#)

		possible follow-up: How can CPD and LLL programmes relate to a changing world of work and service provision Exchange about attractive career paths within clinical work Exchange of good practices on reintegration of healthcare workforce returning after a prolonged absence	
	Ensuring future-proofing skills	Explore future skill needs and share good practices that address them	“Tackling staff shortages and ensuring future-proofing skills in health” project workshop summary
III. Gender Equality	Mainstreaming gender equality in the SSDC-HS activities	Exchange of good practices on addressing gender equality ⁴ and gender balance through social dialogue (making the occupational health and safety regulations gender sensitive)	Presentation of good practices at one of the SSDC-HS meetings
IV. Resilience and preparedness of the Hospital and Healthcare sector	Preparedness and resilience of the hospital and healthcare sector for future emergencies	Follow-up on relevant Commission initiatives and active participation in the relevant consultations such as the EU Preparedness Union Strategy Follow-up on the Joint Policy Orientation on a three-year basis during SSDC-HS meetings and identify the need for updates	Follow-up on the Joint Policy Orientation on a three-year basis and jointly agree any requirements for updating the document that may have arisen in that period
V. Social Dialogue	20th anniversary of the SSDC-HS in 2026	Create an overview of the work achieved in the past years	Organise a conference to present the most significant achievements over the past years of the SSDC-HS

⁴ 78 percent of workers in the sector are women: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/edn-20210308-1>

		Address capacity building needs of social partners in the hospital and healthcare sector to explore how the work of the SSDC-HS can be reoriented to address these needs	Follow up on EPSU-HOSPEEM project “Strengthening social dialogue in the hospital sector in the East, South and Central Europe” (2019-2021)
	Role of EU-level SSDC-HS and sectoral social partners with regard to the European Economic Governance (European Semester / Annual Growth Survey) ⁵	Improve involvement in the European Economic Governance by the EU-level SSDC-HS	Technical seminar on participation in the European Semester and presentation of good examples of national social partners’ initiatives
	Strengthening the role of the Social Dialogue Committee on the Pan-European Level	Consolidate and strengthen cooperation with international organisations such as WHO, OECD, and ILO also in light of the International Platform on Health Worker Mobility and the “Working for Health” action plan	EPSU and HOSPEEM receive Non-State Actor Status in the WHO-Europe
VI. Occupational Health and safety	Third-party violence and harassment related to work	Disseminate and promote the implementation of the Updated European Multi-sectoral Social Partners Guidelines to prevent and tackle third-party violence and harassment related to work (adopted in 2025)	Exchange on good practices on the state of play (2027)

⁵ As stated by the Joint Policy Orientation on creating a resilient hospital and health sector after the COVID-19 Pandemic: “Social Partners are convinced there is a need for more investment in the sector and a change of perception that healthcare funding is seen as a long term, ongoing investment rather than an expenditure. To that end and to protect the health of the European population healthcare sector should be excluded from any potential austerity measures.”

	Psychosocial Risks at Work	Continue contributing to the matter with our knowledge, such as during the EU consultations aiming to address psychosocial risks at work Improve collaboration among social partners in the field of mental health and work-life balance	Collection of good practices in the project “Tackling staff shortages and ensuring future-proofing skills in health” (TaSSEFSH) Become an Official Campaign Partner to the EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Campaign
	Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)	Continue to follow the current regulatory framework on MSDs, assessing potential gaps and loopholes in the legal framework	Exchange on the relevance of the current regulatory framework on MSDs, assessing potential gaps and loopholes in the legal framework
	Health-related risks of (night) shift work ⁶	Exchange of good practice on the reduction of risks linked to the night work	Collection of national examples and presentation on the reduction of risks of night work
	Support for workers after work-related injury	Exchange of good practices on supporting workers after work-related injury	Presentation of the good practices at one of the SSDC-HS meetings

⁶ EU-OSHA provides comprehensive information on various work-related physical health conditions. These encompass cancer (including breast cancer) (<https://osha.europa.eu/no/publications/exposure-carcinogens-and-work-related-cancer-review-assessment-methods>), obesity, cardiovascular disease, peptic ulcers, gastro-intestinal problems, and blood-sugar regulation (<https://oshwiki.osha.europa.eu/en/themes/effects-shift-work-health>)

VII. Digitalisation and artificial intelligence ⁷		Collecting good practices on how digitalisation and artificial intelligence can be integrated, involving all employees, including administrative personnel in the planning process Request EU research bodies to explore the impact of digitalisation and artificial intelligence on the workers and care delivery while acknowledging that digitalisation will not replace human care delivery rather than will lighten the workload and contribute to the effective and quality care	Prepare a report and organise a joint conference
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⁷ As stated by the Joint Policy Orientation on creating a resilient hospital and health sector after the COVID-19 Pandemic: “During the pandemic digitalisation enabled reduction in exposure to the virus, and easing of administrative burdens. While human care delivery is irreplaceable, digitalisation can afford time savings which enhance the ability to offer improved quality of care. More research is required to discover the impact of these new technologies on workers and care delivery.”