



ESNO STATEMENT ON THE EROSION OF DIVERSITY POLICIES

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URGENT: ESNO Statement on the Erosion of Diversity Policies

The European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO) expresses deep concern over the recent trend of major industries, including global healthcare companies and institutes, retracting their diversity and inclusion commitments. These decisions, driven by external political pressures and regulatory shifts, threaten the fundamental progress made in advancing equal rights, workplace equity, and fair representation.

Diversity policies are not merely symbolic gestures—they are crucial for fostering inclusive workplaces, strengthening professional communities, and ensuring fair access to opportunities across all levels of employment. For the healthcare sector in particular, a diverse workforce enhances patient care, promotes equitable health outcomes, and contributes to scientific innovation by incorporating a broad range of perspectives. But also respect for those patients and members of the civil society in all its diversities.

The decision of companies to scale back diversity initiatives and remove inclusive hiring panels is not just a corporate strategy—it signals a concerning shift away from long-standing efforts to build fair and representative workforces and respect for those in the spectrum of diversity. The dilution of these commitments undermines the principles of equality and inclusion enshrined in the first legislative acts on equal rights across many democratic countries around the globe.

As nurses in Europe, we must stand firm in our commitment to diversity—not only as a matter of principle but as a necessity to protect the integrity of healthcare as a safe haven for the full spectrum of society. ***The healthcare profession embodies care, inclusion, and trust, and it must continue to be a space where both professionals and patients are valued and respected, regardless of background, gender, ethnicity, or any other dimension of identity.***

ESNO calls on policymakers, industry leaders, and professional organizations to reaffirm their commitment to diversity and inclusion as fundamental pillars of a resilient and ethical workforce. We urge companies to recognize that equity-driven policies are not liabilities but essential components of a thriving, forward-thinking society. **The healthcare sector, in particular, must lead by example in preserving and reinforcing these values to ensure that both employees and the communities they serve benefit from a truly inclusive environment.**

“We remain committed to advocating for a healthcare system that values all patients, members of civil society, and professionals equally, ensuring that diversity and inclusion remain central to the delivery of patient-centered care. We invite others to follow our example and join us in building a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system.”

About ESNO: The European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO) is a non-profit organisation and the goal is to facilitate and provide an effective framework for communication and co-operation between the European Specialist Nurses Organisations and its constituent members. ESNO represents the mutual interests and benefits of these organisations to the wider European community in the interest of the public health. Members of ESNO consist of individual European specialist nurses organizations.

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