

June 2nd, 2026

European University Hospital Alliance
Warmoesberg 26
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Dear President von der Leyen,

Dear Vice-President Minzatu,

Dear Commissioners,

We write to you as the European University Hospital Alliance (EUHA), representing leading university hospitals across Europe that are committed to excellence, innovation, and high-quality patient care. We are united in our deep concern regarding the current process to update Directive 2005/36/EC on the Minimum Professional Qualifications for Midwives.

This revision – the first substantial update in more than two decades – comes at a pivotal moment for European healthcare systems. Europe is facing severe workforce shortages, rising care demands and costs, demographic change, and emerging threats such as climate change and new epidemics. In this context, an outdated regulatory framework risks constraining our ability, as university hospitals, to rethink and reorganise care in ways that are safe, efficient, and evidence based.

The Directive's midwifery provisions have undergone almost no substantive change since 1980, and no longer reflect contemporary midwifery practice, the services that scientific evidence shows midwives are best placed to provide, or the standards recognised internationally for high-quality sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health (SRMNAH) care. Maintaining a 1980 standard in a 2026 healthcare landscape risks missed opportunities to improve quality, safety, and access, and may undermine efforts to build sustainable and resilient hospital systems, including cross-border mobility of professionals in times of crisis.

EUHA member hospitals work tirelessly to ensure timely, high-quality, and safe care, including in the field of sexual and reproductive health. An updated, evidence-based Directive would support our ability to respond to demographic changes, staff shortages and future crises, and to fully utilise the midwifery workforce to the benefit of women, newborns, families, and society at large. Within our alliance, several professors of midwifery and clinical experts from different European countries stand ready to contribute their expertise to the Commission's work on this file.

In light of these considerations, we respectfully – yet urgently – call on the European Commission to ensure a comprehensive, evidence-based and timely revision of Directive 2005/36/EC on the Minimum Professional Qualifications for Midwives. We would welcome the opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue and to support the Commission in aligning the Directive with current scientific knowledge and international standards.

Yours sincerely,

Johan Van Eldere | Secretary-General of the European University Hospital Alliance

