



## EFN Policy Statement “How to get Nurses’ Education more Attractive”

The shortage of nursing professionals has become a reality across European countries. Consequently, it is imperative to explore avenues to attract more individuals to the nursing profession. This raises the crucial question of how to persuade both young people and mature students to embark on a career in nursing.

Further complicating matters is the ongoing demographic shift, where the percentage of young individuals in society has been on a steady decline for years. Despite this, there is a growing array of appealing training opportunities in diverse industries.

Moreover, certain sectors offer interesting career pathways that resonate with the aspirations of the younger generation. In essence, the career choices of young individuals hinge on several pivotal factors: What prospects and opportunities does the nursing profession offer? How will income potential evolve? What skill set can be cultivated in the chosen field? What are the possibilities for personal growth and development?

Adding another layer to this dilemma are societal preconceptions about different professions. This is where nursing professions find themselves under considerable strain. Thus, there is a need to paint a true and fair picture of the nursing profession as a profession that requires a wide range of both natural sciences and humanistic competencies.

Therefore, the EFN calls on the European Institutions and Member States to:

- Maintain a strong and attractive nursing education in line with the DIR2013/55/EU, strengthen clinical practice placements with protected time for mentorship, and training for clinical mentors.
- Support nursing students financially in both education and practice placements through schemes such as payment of tuition fees, allowances or travel expenses.

- Put in place recognition and financial incentives for continuing professional development as a cornerstone for the development of the nursing profession. Nursing establishments should be set to allow time for learning and reflection in practice. Public funding for advanced education, systematic and regulated three-level clinical career paths from general nurse to specialist nurse and further to advanced practice nurse, is crucial to removing financial barriers for nursing professionals seeking to enhance their skills.
- Equip educational institutions with the necessary resources and knowledge to articulate the true value of the nursing profession through campaigns to attract new entrants to study nursing. Invest in nursing education within higher education institutions to ensure that academic standards are maintained, and that academic staff are valued through both salary levels and opportunities for professional development. There should be close links between academia and practice, which can be enhanced through initiatives such as joint appointments between health and academic settings.

**Further readings:**

- Rubbi et al. (2023): The social and professional image of the nurse: Results of an online snowball sampling survey among the general population in the post pandemic period. *Nursing reports*, 2023, 13, 1291–1303
- Palsson, Y. et al. (2022): A peer learning intervention in workplace introduction – managers and new graduates perspective. *BMC Nursing*, (2022)21:12
- Berglund, M. et al. (2022): The best of both worlds – entering the nursing profession with support of a transition programme. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 2022; 36:446–455

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*EFN Policy Statement on “How to get Nurses’ Education more Attractive” – April 2024*

