



# EFN Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) implementation toolkit

*EFN Working Group on Advanced Practice Nursing*

European foundation of nursing  
associations – 36 countries  
Advanced practice nursing working  
group – 17 countries



Five-year strategy for advanced practice nursing across continent  
of Europe & Global research participation.

## Advanced Practice Nursing Working Group

- i) Austria
- ii) Albania
- iii) Belgium
- iv) Croatia
- v) Cyprus
- vi) Estonia
- vii) Finland
- viii) Italy
- ix) Luxemburg
- x. Norway
- xi. Portugal
- xii. Spain
- xiii. Sweden
- xiv. Switzerland
- xv. United Kingdom
- xvi. Czech republic
- xvii. Bosnia



# Five-year strategy outline

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## Goal:

To increase advanced practice nursing across the continent of Europe, reduce variability of approach and influence the development of transferability.

## Short term actions (1<sup>st</sup> year)

- Publish the advanced practice survey results
- Update the EFN 3+1 Core competencies for advanced practice
- Commence work on developing a set of principles for advanced practice nursing and a road map for countries with no current advanced practice.

## Medium term actions: (2-4 years)

- Publish a set of Principles for country specific frameworks
- Publish a Road map for advanced practice nursing and a series of suggested trouble shooting routes for counties based on different implementation stages. For example, how to move advanced practice from a concept to reality, moving from some examples of advanced practice nursing towards having a national agreed program and recognition.
- Develop a resource that could be used by individual country regulators and how these could be transferrable
- Consider the influence that EFN holds to promote change to facilitate advanced practice nursing development and legislative change within countries regarding prescribing etc.

## Long term actions (within 5 years)

- Development of a memorandum of agreement for individual country regulators to achieve transferability inc potentially prescribing rights.
- Map of advanced practice across Europe. This would need to include workforce mobility & have qualification recognition across countries.
- Carry out a feasibility study for a common training framework to be progressed (EU).

# EFN Advanced practice working group



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## Welcome to European Federation of Nurses Associations

E-mail us: [efn@efn.eu](mailto:efn@efn.eu)  
Tel: +32 2 512 74 19

[EFN Competency Framework](#)

[EFN Workforce Matrix 3+1 Executive Summary](#)

[Advanced Practice Nursing \(APN\)](#)

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Healthcare Summit from Politico live "From pandemic to permacrisis? Europe's next health care challenge" - 24-25 October 2023

Think piece on nursing workforce crisis launched

European Day for Nursing Informatics in Gothenburg

CGFNS Event on Nurse Migration, Gender Equality & Economic Empowerment

New book published "Perilous Medicine: The Struggle to Protect Health Care from the Violence of War"

## ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSING (APN)

### A. Background

The nursing profession has evolved with the advancements in technology, evidence-based research and new care options, and the increasing and changing health needs of the patients and citizens of Europe require nursing to take the leadership on advanced practice roles to support safe and effective health service delivery.

To meet this demand nurses have advanced their education and practice to deliver innovation and lead change. Interprofessional care is becoming more important with a strong focus on professional collaboration, which opens opportunities for nurses to advance and contribute their expert knowledge and practice to improve safe and effective care. It is important for nurses to achieve higher levels of education and training to support the development of new and advanced nursing roles with greater professional autonomy.

It is evident that the role of nurses is advancing rapidly and needs to be guided within a framework to evolve the new scope of advanced practice based on evidence and lessons learnt from similar contexts. Advanced nursing roles will positively contribute to the ambition of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#).

### B. Some key developments

#### 1. EFN Working Group on Advanced Practice Nursing

Believing on the importance of the Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) for the delivery of positive health outcomes, the EFN has been committed to ensuring the nursing profession evolves effectively in response to patient needs and care demands. Examples of this include the [EFN Workforce Matrix 3+1](#), and the EFN Working Group on APN dedicated to advance practice developments, created in 2018, and constituted by EFN members representatives from the following countries NNAs: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom (Chair).

#### 2. Evidence-based data

Evidence-based data and an EFN Policy Statement on APN was seen as essential for the EFN members to advance the developments at national level and to guide the EFN in lobbying the EU institutions. As such, in 2021, the EFN Working Group undertook a mapping exercise of current Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) frameworks across Europe, collecting data from the 35 EFN Members countries, that is now being analysed and should soon be published as a meta-analysis, and which identified a significant level of variation in how those countries that reported having an APN framework defining what an APN means and how it is regulated at education and practice level.

The EFN Members fed back on 60 items, concerning key features of advanced practice nursing, with a view to mapping existing developments and understanding state of the art. The aim was to update and consolidate the EFN Members' work on advanced practice nursing over the years, intending to assess progress to date and identify avenues for future efforts to focus on developing standardisation of advanced nursing practice across Europe. The report uncovered a high level of variation in how implementation has taken place across the 20 EFN member countries which reported having an established APN framework. This goes from the definition adopted by the country to the level of training required to qualify and practice as an Advanced Practice Nurse. For instance, only

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## ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSING (APN) – European Federation of Nurses As

## Advanced practice nursing in Europe— Results from a pan-European survey of 35 countries - De Raeve - 2024 - Journal of Advanced Nursing - Wiley Online Library associations (efn.eu)

**Core competencies:**

- 1) To have a minimum of master's degree with a protected role/ title and ongoing continued professional development at advanced level.
- 2) Autonomous practice, built on nursing principles and clinical expertise. This includes building a partnership with people and enabling person-centred care. Have authority and responsibility for complex clinical decision-making for individual patients, families, and communities.
- 3) Advanced nursing practice which includes excellent communications skills, with a holistic, ethical, equality view of each patient's health and care needs, coordination of care, critical thinking, self-reflection, decision making, planning, treating and evaluation which may include non-pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical prescribing. Also, skills relating to digital services and nursing informatics.
- 4) Clinical expertise and capability to autonomously assess, judge and having diagnostic reasoning skills to evaluate care and interventions.
- 5) Guide, counsel, educate and delegate to other health professionals about latest practice interventions, act as a mentor and role model, and actively engage in knowledge, transfer with patient communities
- 6) Initiate and Lead – policy making, development and facilitation, innovation, and strategic change.
- 7) Research development in nursing and quality improvement that includes initiating, leading, fostering implementation and dissemination of evidenced based practice.
- 8) Perform health promotion, prevention, and risk reduction.

## Country Level Principles:

i) Advanced practice courses should be a minimum of a full master's degree. (EQF level 7 in minimum) \*

Covers competencies: 1, 3-8

*\* This could be a Master of Science or equivalent and include leadership, research and educating as well as clinical competencies such as assessment, diagnostic reasoning, non-pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical prescribing inc health promotion.*

ii) Protection of the role/ title of advanced practice nurse.

Covers competence 1

iii) Recognise advanced practice nurses as clinical experts with autonomy and enable to use their full scope of practice including relevant rights such as diagnosis, prescribing, referral, and discharge.

Covers competencies: 2, 3, 4

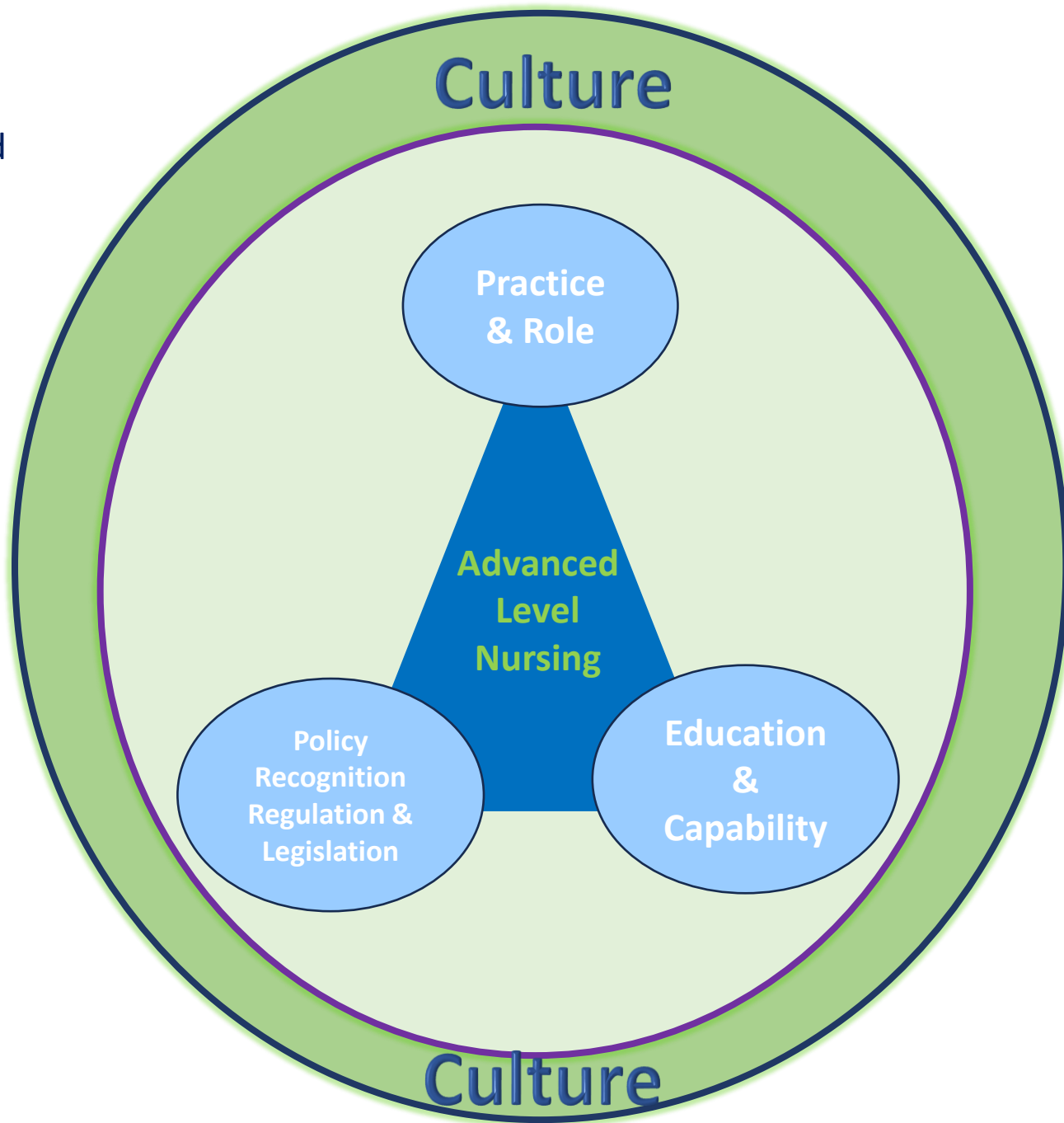
iv) Legislate independent nurse prescribing.

Covers competence 3

v) Recognise advanced practice nurses and have a system in place that assures ongoing CPD, competence and currency of level of practice.

Cover competence 1-8

Proposed model for implementing advanced practice nursing.





EFN Advanced Practice Nursing: Road Map to country level implementation.



<b>Strategic country level objectives (aligned with country level principles)</b>	Recognise advanced practice nurses as clinical experts with autonomy and enable to use their full scope of practice including relevant rights such as diagnosis, prescribing, referral, and discharge	Advanced practice education should be a minimum of a full master's degree. (EQF level 7 in minimum)	Protection of the role/ title of advanced practice nurse. Legislate independent nurse prescribing	Recognise advanced practice nurses by having a system in place that assures ongoing CPD, competence and currency of level of practice.
<b>Audience</b>	Public Nursing profession* Medical and other professions Policy makers and politicians. Employers.	Nursing profession especially APN's/ aspiring.* Academics and education organisations. Regulators Professional bodies. Employers.	Public Nursing profession* Medical and other professions Regulators & Professional bodies. Policy makers and politicians. Employers.	APN Nursing profession* Employers Academics and education organisations Regulators and professional bodies.
<b>Activities to support achievement</b>	Host a summit for APN with audience of ministers, academics, students, and nurses. Show the benefit of having APN with evidence and examples in 3 areas: patients, health system/employers and health professionals/nurses. Consultation on introduction.	Repository of examples where countries can see the research and impact. Established resources on APN, utilise links with EFN and also ICN APN network. Develop national standards – for APN and education that includes a competence framework.	Regulator recognition of advanced level of nursing practice. Prescribing legislation (determine a separate roadmap). Recognition of rights: diagnosis, prescribing, referral and discharge. (including funding implications such as reimbursement for prescriptions)	Regulation and revalidation/ maintainance of currency and CPD. APN posts commissioned within health care systems and organisations. APN pay scales recognise the senior decision maker clinical role. Leadership for advanced practice nursing nationally.
<b>Milestones</b>	National level discussion. National events such as a summit. Consultation and consideration. Recognition and implementation plan. Established APN's	Consideration of education requirements. National standards for APN's. National education standards. Commissioned education.	Politicall agreement for implimentation. Legislation change mandated. Legislation for independent nurse prescribing.	Roles piloted and evaluated. Roll out nationally/ regional. National recognition in job description, evaluation and pay. APN leadership nationally.

\* Nursing Profession – this includes engaging with Nursing leaders including managers, nursing informatics, nurse educators and researchers.

# Country level principles

- To be used to support country level change inc legislation
- Reduce variability
- Mobility across continent and globally
- Recognition of level of practice & methodology could be transferable to specialties

