



EFN Policy Statement on Transferring CPD Credits across the EU – Recognition of hours and credits

Building on the EFN Policy Statement on Lifelong Learning and Continuous Professional Development (2023), the EFN Position Papers on Lifelong Learning (LLL) (2019) and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) (2015), in alignment with the European Commission Pillar of Social Rights and the European Skills Agenda, the EFN supports the need to invest in a common European framework for the recognition of Continuing Professional Developments (CPD) Credits, which will be beneficial to the development of skills and competencies of nurses, and conducive to high quality nursing care.

EFN is clear that the most important competence building and specialisation for nurses must be through formal higher education on an advanced level, regulated by the Bologna Process and The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). In addition, ongoing competence development is vital for nurses to maintain their competencies in line with new knowledge, innovation and technological development.

The EU Directive 2013/55/EU, which sets the minimum training requirements for nurses, also emphasises the importance of Continuous Professional Development/Lifelong Learning for Nurses, especially in consideration of the speed of therapeutical and technological innovations which impact the daily practice of nursing care.

The EU regulatory framework, however, is currently missing a system regulating the recognition of skills and competencies acquired through CPD/LLL, which would allow nurses to have their skills and competencies acquired through Continuous Professional Development to be recognised in all member states.

Therefore, the EFN makes the following recommendations to set up an EU framework which will allow nurses to easily transfer their CPD credits through the EU:

- The European Commission should collect information on existing national accreditation systems for nursing CPD credits. According to the information collected, and taking account of best practices, the European Commission should therefore develop a common European accreditation system for nursing CPD credits, to be recognised by all the Member States, in line with existing national regulations.

The EFN, through the expertise of the National Nurses' Associations (NNAs), will support the co-design of an EU framework which can be easily implemented and which would take into account the needs of frontline nurses.

- EU Member States which are lacking a regulatory body in charge of the regulation and recognition of CPD for nurses should set it up, thus enabling registered nurses to go through regular CPD as set out in the Directive 2005/36/EC, amended by Directive 2013/55/EU.
- In the development of a common European accreditation system for nursing CPD credits, careful consideration must be given to quality assurance and the need of putting in place adequate levels of funding and resources to allow EU nurses to undergo CPD during working hours, thus not becoming an extra burden at a time when the resilience of the European nursing workforce is significantly undermined. The system must also take into consideration that some countries have mandatory CPD in connection with renewal of their license.
- It is recommended to implement the [Council Recommendation 2022/C 243/03](#) on Individual Learning Accounts. A harmonised and coordinated development of individual learning accounts at the EU level would be greatly beneficial to nurses' CPD, as it would increase access to CPD opportunities, increase motivation to undergo CPD, and reduce existing time-constraints preventing nurses from undergoing CPD.
- Fully implement the [EU Regulation establishing the EU Digital Identity Framework](#), towards the development of EU digital identity wallets, which would allow the storage and accumulation of CPD credits, ensuring their portability, and facilitating their recognition throughout the EU, and not just in the Member State where they were awarded.

Investing in the education and training of nurses through CPD/LLL, as clearly defined by Directive 2013/55/EU, is of absolute importance to ensure a well-trained European nursing workforce with the right skills mix, ready to respond to current and future health crises. To facilitate this, the EU should develop a framework for the transfer of nursing CPD credits. This would allow nurses to have their competencies gained through CPD/LLL to be recognised throughout the EU, improving their mobility. Most importantly, a framework developed in the following way would not clash with the Directive/2013/55/EU, which guarantees the minimum training requirements for EU nurses, but it builds on it, as the need to foster nursing CPD is clearly emphasised in the Directive.

Further readings:

- Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (2018). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0604%2801%29>
- EFN (2023), EFN Policy Statement on Lifelong Learning and Continuous Professional Development. Available at: <https://efn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/EFN-Policy-Statement-on-LLL-CPD-Oct.-2023.pdf>
- EFN (2015), Position Paper on Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Available at: <https://efn.eu/wp-content/uploads/EFN-Position-Paper-on-CPDFinal042015.pdf>
- EFN (2019), EU Roadmap to advance Lifelong Learning. Available at: <https://efn.eu/wp-content/uploads/EU-Roadmap-to-advance-LifelongLearning-April-2019.pdf>
- Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 amending Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications and Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 on administrative cooperation through the Internal Market Information System ('the IMI Regulation') (2013) (Online). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013L0055>
- European Pillar of Social Rights. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1226&langId=en>
- European Skills Agenda. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>
- European Education Area by 2025. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/a-european-educationarea-by-2025.html>
- Erasmus (2023), Adult Education (staff training). Available at: <https://erasmusplus.ec.europa.eu/opportunities/opportunities-for-individuals/stafftraining/adult-education-staff-training>
- Gopee, N. (2005): Facilitating the implementation of lifelong learning in nursing. British Journal of nursing, 2005, Vol 14, No 14, 761–767
- Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 as regards establishing the European Digital Identity Framework. Available at: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-68-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

- Lera et al. (2020): Nurses Attitudes Towards Lifelong Learning via New Technologies. Asian/Pacific Island Nursing Journal, 2020, Volume 5(2), 89–102
- Mlambo et al. (2021): Lifelong learning and nurses continuing professional development, a meta-analysis of the literature. BMC Nursing, 2021, 20:62

Please contact Dr Paul De Raeve, Secretary General of the European Federation of Nurses Associations, for more information. Email: efn@efn.eu – Tel: +32 2 512 74 19 – Web: www.efn.eu

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