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Medical occupation and mobility of medical personnel in the European Union

The harmonisation of the system for further education (the Bologna process) has constituted a milestone in the promotion of mobility within the European Union.

The Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications was created in order to ease the mobility of employees and assure the free movement of people through Europe. It simplifies and thus fosters the mobility through automatic recognition of medical degrees within the EU Member States.



By Dr. med. Gerhard Polak

Doctors as well as medical personnel or persons with other healthcare qualifications are able to pursue their profession in a member state other than the one in which they have obtained their professional qualifications.

To work as a medical doctor in another EU country, it is necessary to submit an application to the supervisory authority, providing the evidence required and documenting qualifications acquired, as a first step.

Motivation for mobility of medical professionals

Many young doctors and recent graduates of medical schools are willing to start their medical specialisation in another EU-State because of the long waiting times in their own countries.

In addition to these cases, more and more medical specialist and assistants move abroad, seeking opportunities outside their home countries. Those who are well informed are more likely to reach their career goals such as positions as consultants, senior physicians or head physicians. The willingness to change from one place of work to another is often an asset and facilitates a rapid career advancement.

Mobility flows in the EU

Migration flows in the EU move primarily from east to west and from the south to states located in the north-west. The main destinations are Germany and Switzerland followed by the Scandinavian countries Denmark, Norway and Sweden as well as Great Britain and Ireland.

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The implementation of the EU Working Time Directive results in additional job offers.

Most of the job offers target medical specialists who have already been trained successfully. In Scandinavia, general practitioners are in highest demand. In Germany, the job offers more often target anaesthesiologists, neurologists, psychiatrists and general practitioners. In Switzerland, surgeons and psychiatrists are particularly in high demand. In Great Britain, you can find attractive job offers in a variety of these fields.

Most of the job offers around the EU mentioned before are probably a result of the implementation of the EU Working Time Directive for physicians and less likely caused by obsolescence.

The EU Working Time Directive allows a maximum of 25 hours of continuous work. The working time per week should not exceed 48 hours.

Exceptions: Some EU-States are still dilatory in the implementation of the EU Working Time Directive, because the implementation of this directive means higher costs in the health care system since they will have to employ considerably more medical personnel in the clinics and hospitals.

In Austria for example, the Working Time Directive of medical institutions still allows physicians to work in a hospital 72 hours or more per week. Another “negative” example is Greece, where physicians usually work more than 64 hours per week and in some public hospitals even 90(!) hours.

Salaries:

Physicians with 8 to 12 years of vocational experience receive the highest salaries in **Great Britain**, followed by **Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark** and **France**. The best salaries for young physicians and new entrants to the profession are paid in **Switzerland**, followed by **Denmark, Germany, Sweden** and **Norway**.

(Source: [Deutsche Krankenhausgesellschaft e.V.](#))

Career on course:

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Further tips, information and consulting services:

GOING INTERNATIONAL provides specific information and consulting services to physicians and people in other medical fields like nursing and public health.

- We provide advice regarding postgraduate training.
- We inform you about opportunities for your career entry, career-advancement or career changes.

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- On our [website](#) you can find personal accounts on working and training in different countries, they offer useful information and feedback from personal experiences.

If you have questions concerning a job in the EU, please contact us. You can call us at +43-1-798 2527 or send us an e-mail to office@goinginternational.org

REFERENCES and SOURCES:

[The European Union](#)

[The European Job Mobility Portal](#)

[European Medical Association](#)

[European Medical Mobility](#)

Kind regards,

*Gerhard Polak MD, DTMH
Going International*