

Early Career Psychiatrists: Moving and Migrating

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Ways of travelling and means of communication have exponentially developed, while their price has dropped. It is now relatively easy for a psychiatrist to travel in different countries in the early stages of his career. The development of European programs such as Erasmus has increased exchanges during medical school. After graduation, it is possible to travel abroad for a few weeks as an observer, months a researcher, but also for one's entire life, as European legislation has made it possible for doctors to register and permanently work in many countries. The crisis in recruitment of psychiatrists that many countries face has put junior doctors in a position of finding a job almost wherever they want.

On the one hand, this phenomenon tends to drain resources in less favoured countries, and psychiatrists travelling the world might become mercenaries, looking for the best opportunities and not being able to maintain consistency in service provision. This would ultimately lead to psychiatrists only becoming technicians, providing a service for a fixed period of time, and being replaced as leaders by managers in charge of running services.

On the other hand, this constitutes a unique chance from a personal point of view, as a way to gain experience and discover other cultures. From a professional point of view, working in a different system is also a valuable experience, and the travelling doctor can bring his own culture and tend to naturally "think outside the box", benefiting the service and the patients. In addition, a growing number of patients migrating themselves and coming from diverse backgrounds will benefit from a psychiatrist with a personal experience of migration.