

Brain Drain or Gain? Psychiatric Trainees On the Move

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Introduction:

Migration of mental health professionals is an important phenomenon influencing mental health services of host and donor countries. Data on medical migration in Europe is very limited, particularly in the field of young doctors and psychiatry. To research this hot topic, the European Federation of Psychiatric Trainees (EFPT) conducted the EFPT Brain Drain Survey.

Objectives:

To identify the impact of previous short-term mobility on international migration and to understand characteristics, patterns and reasons of migration.

Methods:

In this cross-sectional European multicentre study, data were collected from 2281 psychiatric trainees across 33 countries. All participants answered to the EFPT Brain Drain Survey reporting their attitudes and experiences on migration.

Results:

Two-thirds of the trainees had not had a short-mobility experience in their lifetime, but those that went abroad were satisfied with their experiences, reporting that these influenced their attitude towards migration positively. However, the majority of the trainees had not had a migratory experience of more than 1 year. Flows showed that Switzerland and United Kingdom have the greatest number of immigrant trainees, whereas Germany and Greece have the greatest number of trainees leaving. "Pull factors" were mostly academic and personal reasons, whereas "push factors" were mainly: academic and financial reasons. Trainees that wanted to leave the country were significantly more dissatisfied with their income.

Conclusions:

The majority of the trainees has considered leaving the country they currently lived in, but a lower percentage has taken steps towards migration.

Keywords:

Trainees, training, migration, Europe