



**APPROVED
OCTOBER 1996**

ARCHIVED: VIENNA, APRIL 2006

Report of the Section for Psychiatry

POSTGRADUATE EXCHANGE FOR PSYCHIATRIC TRAINING WITHIN THE EU COUNTRIES

RESULTS OF A SURVEY

Under the auspices of the European Board of Psychiatry of the UEMS a survey was conducted in 1995 concerning the management of postgraduate exchange (PGE) of psychiatrists in the different member countries. The survey was effected by a questionnaire prepared by Prof. Peter König (Austria) who also compiled the following results.

Results

Altogether 18 questionnaires were sent via the Secretary's office, of which 16 were completed and subsequently evaluated. With the exception of France and Italy all other members are represented in the answers.

PGE is officially approved in 9 countries, responsible authorities for implementation are mainly government bodies (e.g. ministries), universities or local hospitals. Official approval is documented by support. There are EU countries where PGE is possible but no active official support is available.

Active support for PGE by the authorities is provided by organising exchanges or fellowships, by issuing grants or stipends, by offering information or by funding the local institutions involved.

Easy access to information on PGE, either via "information clearing houses" or active distribution of information etc. is only available in a minority of countries (5), universities, professional or government institutions are additional sources.

Eligible candidates for PGE in general are all postgraduates in psychiatry. Participation in research, clinical experience and endorsements of the individual application are important selection criteria for the actual exchange. Complete transparency of the selection-process exists in a minority of Member States only.

There is a preference for joint study programmes/exchanges, though one-sided programmes also exist. Emphasis lies on long-term schemes (months to years), as opposed to those of shorter duration.

Funding of PGE comes from quite different sources, ranging from international stipends, grants from host countries, local government grants to funding by industries. In some instances funds are targeted to travel, housing etc.

Conclusions and recommendations

Notable differences within the members states of the UEMS Section of Psychiatry in the approach to PGE can be observed. Preferably these differences should be harmonised in order to offer equal opportunities to postgraduate psychiatrists within the EU and subsequently to further enhance professional proficiency. The European Board of Psychiatry of the UEMS is in agreement that the exchange of postgraduate medical personnel thus constitutes a factor of great importance in the acquisition of additional specialised psychiatric expert knowledge.

Due to the fact that the member states of the EU have agreed on free exchange of medical services throughout their countries, the possibility of international exchange and acquisition of knowledge gains additional importance.

The European Board of Psychiatry of the UEMS therefore recommends that the member states of the EU should firstly harmonise and facilitate the dissemination of information on postgraduate exchange schemes by installing clearly defined information-clearing centres, co-ordinating the flow of, and access to, relevant data. Secondly, the harmonisation of the financial aspects such as allocation of funds, and thirdly other active support and information on selection criteria for applicants to exchange programmes should be defined.

SURVEY OF PSYCHIATRIC POSTGRADUATE EXCHANGE (PGE)

This survey covers only the general framework of possibilities in the different EU countries. When in doubt, please use the most general answer .

Country: (intl. vehicle marking) 13 answers

Is PGE approved by authorities? _____ 8
(cross YES)

Which authority is responsible for PGE? _____
(use multiple answers)

state body (e.g. ministry)	_____	3
professional	_____	1
local public body	_____	0
local university/hospital	_____	3
Other (state)	_____	1
none	_____	2

Do authorities actively support PGE? _____
(use multiple answers)
(cross YES)

Funding of foreign individuals	_____	5
(stipends)		
Organising exchanges/fellowships	_____	7
information	_____	6
funding local institutions	_____	4
no active support	_____	3

Does an "information clearinghouse" on PGE exist at: _____
(use multiple answers)
(cross YES)

universities	_____	3
professional bodies	_____	1
state authority	_____	0
local authority	_____	0
institutional level	_____	0

Is information on PGE actively distributed? _____ 1
(cross YES)

Is information on PGE readily accessible? _____ 2
(cross YES)

Definition of applicants _____
(use multiple answers)
(cross YES)

all postgraduates	_____	5
postgraduates in specialisation	_____	5
specialists	_____	1
academic personnel	_____	5
other (state)	_____	0

<u>Other selection criteria</u>		
<i>(use multiple answers)</i>	scientific research	6
<i>(cross YES)</i>	clinical training	5
	membership in scientific society	0
	endorsement by teacher	4
	endorsement by referee	2
	other (state)	1
<u>Transparency of selection</u>		4
<i>(cross YES)</i>		
<u>Types of PGE</u>		
<i>(use multiple answers)</i>	joint study programmes/exchange	5
<i>(cross YES)</i>	one-sided programmes	4
	preferably long term (months - years)	5
	preferably short term (weeks - months)	0
	no preference on duration	4
<u>Funding of PGE</u>		
<i>(use multiple answers)</i>	state/local authority	4
<i>(cross YES)</i>	other country	2
	industry	2
	intl. funds	3
	special stipends	4
	mixed	2
	other	2
<u>Funding targeted (e.g. travel, housing, etc.)</u>		4
<i>(cross YES)</i>		

As you can see, the results cluster in some areas and are rather divergent in others. I suggest, we draft a statement, proposing a certain standardisation in some points (e.g. responsibility, support) and recommendation in others, e.g. access to information.