BRAIN DRAIN OR GAIN?

PSYCHIATRIC TRAINEES ON THE MOVE


INTRODUCTION

Emigration of physicians to wealthier countries is a growing hindrance to global health and it has been suggested that less developed countries lose health capacities as a result of the loss of physicians.

OBJECTIVE

This EFPT Brain Drain study was designed as a pioneer project to investigate short-term mobility and migration amongst psychiatry trainees in Europe. Its aim was to identify the impact of short-mobility on international migration and to understand characteristics, patterns and reasons for migration.

METHODOLOGY

This is a multinational, cross-sectional study conducted in 33 countries in Europe between 2013-2014. Data collection was accomplished by an anonymous online survey and/or a hard-copy questionnaire. Data was analyzed using SPSS v20.0. National ethics commission consent was obtained in Switzerland, with the uniform research plan followed by all countries. Participants were asked to give informed consent before the questionnaire.

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. 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.

CONCLUSIONS

The majority of the trainees has considered leaving the country they currently lived in, but a lower percentage has taken steps towards migration. Trainees that wanted to leave the country were significantly more dissatisfied with their income.