



EUROPEAN UNION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Alment Praktiserende Lægers Europæiske Organisation – UEMO
European Union of General Practitioners – UEMO
Europäische Vereinigung der Allgemeinärzte – UEMO
Union Européenne des Médecins Omnipraticiens – UEMO
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UEMO 2003/143

Summary on Equal Opportunities Questionnaire and Return to Work Policy Questionnaire (2002/166) from Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities

Equal Opportunities Questionnaire 17 countries replied to UEMO 2002/166

- Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the UK have a policy on Equal Opportunities.
 - Austria refers to the Austrian Medical Chamber's response to CPME CP2001/099 where it says it is committed to council directive 76/207/EEC on equal female to male treatment in employment, training and working conditions.
 - Austria refers also to the UN Convention on Racial Discrimination (1963) and International Labour Organisation (1958). It has no specific law but is bound to implement Council Directive 2000/43/EEC 29 June 2000 on the principle, and Council Directive 2000/78/EC 27 Nov 2000 on the framework of equal treatment.
 - Croatia, Denmark and Portugal have national legislation on Equal Opportunities, therefore no need for NMO to have a special initiative.
 - Hungary plans a statement on Equal Opportunities.
 - Luxembourg plans a policy statement on Equal Opportunities.
 - Spain has brought the UEMO statement on Equal Opportunities to their NMO.
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- Denmark (<50%) and particularly Luxembourg (75%) have a high number foreign EU doctors.
 - The UK has the highest non-EU percentage of doctors with GPs at 16% non-EU in England.
 - Switzerland refers to a government decision to freeze new practices opening for 3 years, effectively blocking EU doctors along with Swiss.
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- The figures for the percentage of females are universally available, perhaps due to previous work on gender related discrimination.
 - The lowest number of females (17.54%) is Hungary, while in most countries, approximately one third of doctors are female.
 - Denmark, Finland, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain were 50% male to female.
 - Croatia has the highest female percentage at 64% of doctors.
 - Switzerland remarks on the increasing number of females newly entering general practice (approaching 50%).

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c/o Swedish Medical Association, P.O. Box 5610, Villagatan 5, SE-114 86 Stockholm
Tel: +46 8 790 34 52, Fax 46 8 20 57 18, E-mail: info@uemo.org

- Finland and Slovenia have 60% female GPs.

- Employment terms and conditions vary with those countries with national health systems reporting appropriately proportionate number of female doctors holding state contracts with equal terms and conditions.
- Austria, Switzerland, and Ireland where doctors do not all work in NHS or insurance contracts, the proportion of female GPs as GP principles are much lower.
- Ireland has currently 50% of female GPs employed as part time sessional workers, who do not have the same pay and pension as principle full time GPs.

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Return to Work Policy Questionnaire

17 countries replied.

- Most countries refer to their original qualifications as pertaining to reemployment.
- Germany, Norway, Spain and the UK have policies on return to work.
- Norway has part time work with continuing CME and a system where a retiring doctor for their last 10 years may share a list with a younger doctor who eventually takes over becoming full time.
- Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden now accept that flexible part time work is good.
- The UK, reflecting their concerns over GP manpower shortages, has done a lot of work in this respect. The vast majority of GPs are NHS doctors and part time work has been available (16% of GPs, 75% female). There is a Return to Work Policy and a GP Retainer Scheme where a GP may work a small number of sessions (4) but enjoy access to CME, pension, rights and a job to return to (with a golden hello payment £12,000). The Flexible Careers Scheme tailors part time work to the individual doctors circumstances, e.g. increased work in term time and less work when school holidays start. This is being extended to general practice.
- Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Spain and the UK have return to work courses.
- In Croatia returning doctors must sit an examination organised by the Croatian Medical Chamber.
- In Hungary the returning doctor must complete individual courses by the NHS before returning to work.
- In Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and the UK returned doctors are subject to CME, CPD and revalidation.

- In Spain suspended doctors must pass a re-accreditation course. They have an Integral Care Programme for sick physicians.
- In Germany these doctors work under the supervision of other doctors before being allowed to establish their own practice.
- In general, support for sick doctors is available through medical organisations with colleague's networks who will assist. This is voluntary and loosely structured. Only when conduct causes censure from regulatory bodies does more formal intervention occur.

- The Irish College of General Practitioners has an occupational health section which will advise individuals and also campaign for better conditions of work to avoid stress and burnout.
- In the UK the BMA have a 24-hour help line and the GMC produce guidelines also.
- Only Germany and the UK formally support GPs returning to work for reasons other than suspension.

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Tel: +46 8 790 34 52, Fax 46 8 20 57 18, E-mail: info@uemo.org*