European Federation of Psychiatry Trainees (EFPT) exchange programme – growing experience in Portugal

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Abstract

Introduction: The EFPT exchange programme was created in 2011 as the first exchange programme for Psychiatry Trainees in Europe. Its main goal has been to provide the possibility to undertake 2-6 weeks observational rotations in different countries.

Objectives: The authors intend to update, analyze and characterize the participation of Portugal in the EFPT exchange programme from its beginning up till now.

Methods: All the applications of trainees in Portugal who participated in the EFPT exchange were analyzed, as well as those of the other European colleagues that elected Portugal as their host country for the exchange and completed successfully the exchange in Portugal. The following variables were collected: sex, year of training, specific training programme and chosen city.

Results: Portugal has started the EFPT exchange programme since its inception, having progressively expanded the number of placements available in different cities across the country. Since the beginning, 19 applications for the exchange have been submitted in Portugal, having 18 trainees from Portugal proceeded effectively and participated in the EFPT exchange programme. The majority was female, with a median age of 28 years, and chose the United Kingdom as the preferred destination. Of the 17 applications received 11 foreign trainees came to Portugal to have their exchange. The majority was female, with a median age of 28 years, were at their 1st year of training, and most frequently came from Turkey. Moreover, Porto was the Portuguese city that received the higher number of candidates.

Discussion and Conclusions: The EFPT exchange programme provides to trainees the opportunity to contact with other mental health systems, getting contact with different intercultural aspects of psychiatry, both through clinical and research activities. The EFPT exchange programme in Portugal is having an important role in the improvement of training and psychiatric practice, supporting trainees and contributing to the expansion of the international network of professionals in this area. The increasing participation and increased programme options confirm the relevance and the prestige of this project within the Psychiatry training in Portugal, for which we want to acknowledge the associated Hospitals and Universities in Portugal that enable this.