

**International exchange of experience and good practice
in the field of professional education and recognition of health and social care professions
based on the project European JobGuide Alps region**

Group discussion – group 1: health care professions

Participants

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Main aspects discussed

1. Importance of recognition and titles...

... as regards **comparability of qualifications for patients** (or, more generally, persons using offered services). Especially in the health sector, patients' confidence can be increased if caring personnel is deployed in positions or duties according to its education. In this regard, the case of Switzerland was discussed, where the professional title „Dipl. Pflegefachperson HF“ is reserved only to persons having completed their education in Switzerland. Consequently, the designation “HF” can't be accorded to persons with a foreign education, even if their training as nurses had been recognized and they hold the same positions as nurses trained in Switzerland.

2. Recognition practice...

...as regards **EC/2005/36 directive. Problems** may occur when nurses from new member countries want to work in Switzerland, especially when their training was **accomplished before the date of conformity** (set out in the directive). As national education institutions/ministries may qualify old formations as conform to the directive, the recognizing institution is bound to deliver a full recognition and work permission, even though contents differ.

...as regards **formations from third countries in Europe** (health personnel from Vatican, Andorra). In such cases, the best way is often a recourse on **pragmatic solutions**: nurses from Vatican/Andorra are recommended to apply for a recognition in Italy/Spain, which allows them then to easier obtain a recognition in Switzerland), save money (for transcripts or translations) and time (for ex. through bilateral agreements).

3. Recognition of further education for nurses (e.g. surgical nursing) is...

...depends on the **regularization of the further education**. As for Switzerland this is not the case, it is mainly up to the employers whether they deploy applicants in field of general or specialized nursing

(provided that the general nursing training has been recognized). In other countries, f.ex. Austria, Hungary or Slovakia, this further education is regularized and consequently requires recognition.

4. Communication means between recognition institutions/experts

The group agrees on the **high importance of communication** and **informal exchange** on practice and habits in recognition. In this case, the **use and relevance of IMI** (Internal Market Information system of the EU-Commission) was discussed.

Advantages: As all relevant partners are listed and can be contacted in IMI, the system is a direct link between responsible departments in the concerned countries via which concrete and specific questions can be discussed with the respective counterpart (hot line), especially as it is possible to communicate in the mother-tongue.

Challenges/problems: If people are not willing to answer or the message is not answered, long waiting times may hinder the recognition procedure. Thus, people still prefer to have direct contact to offices and departments. As until now, IMI is not extensively used as communication channel, its impact is not unfolded yet.