

Physicians' brain drain in Greece: A perspective on the reasons why and how to address it

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Abstract

This review study explores the “brain drain” currently evident amongst physicians in Greece, which is closely linked to the country's severe financial woes. In particular, it shows that the Greek healthcare labour market offers few opportunities and thus physicians are forsaking their homeland to seek jobs abroad. The main causes generating or greatly inflating the brain drain of Greek physicians are unemployment, job insecurity, income reduction, over-taxation, together with limited budgets for research institutes. It is argued that, to stop the evolving mass exodus of skilled medical staff, policy-makers should implement fiscal and human-centred approaches, thoroughly safeguarding both the right of skilled Greek physicians to work in their homeland with motivation and dignity, but also of Greek citizens to continue receiving high-quality healthcare by skilled physicians at times when this is mostly needed.

Keywords:

Financial crisis, Austerity, Brain drain, Health care, Physicians, Greece