

# Potential obstacles to free movement for healthcare professionals

## Ecorys

*Sound analysis, inspiring ideas*

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# Study on cross-border health services: potential obstacles for healthcare providers



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# Context of the study



- Developments:
  - IMI system
  - EPC card
  - Refinement of language requirements
- EU plays significant role in stimulating and regulating cross-border healthcare in terms of:
  - Mobility of patients (*e.g. Directive 2011/24/EU*)
  - Mobility of providers & services (*Directive 2013/55/EU*)
- EU has limited and defined role in health policy

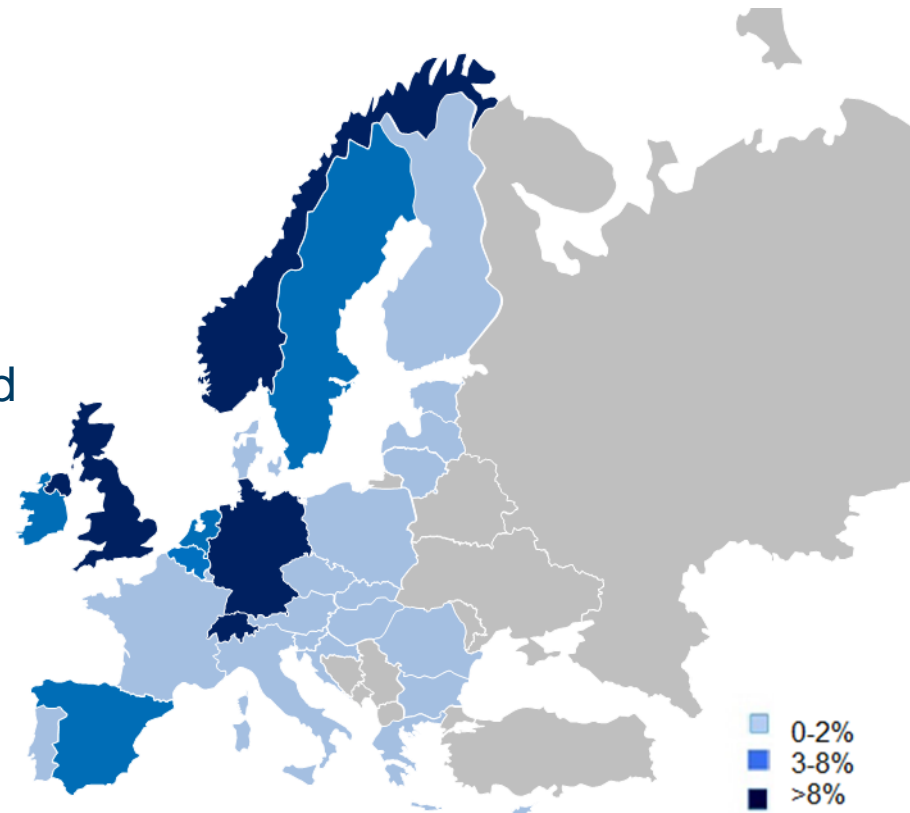
# The study in the context of health workforce planning

## *National planning vs. freedom of cross-border mobility of healthcare students and professionals*

Stats from EC Regulated Professions Database

- Countries where migrating doctors of medicine had their qualifications recognised: highest in CH and UK, followed by DE and NO
- Most of the migrating doctors obtained their professional qualifications in DE

*Access to practice → needs to guarantee the meeting of quality and patient safety standards*



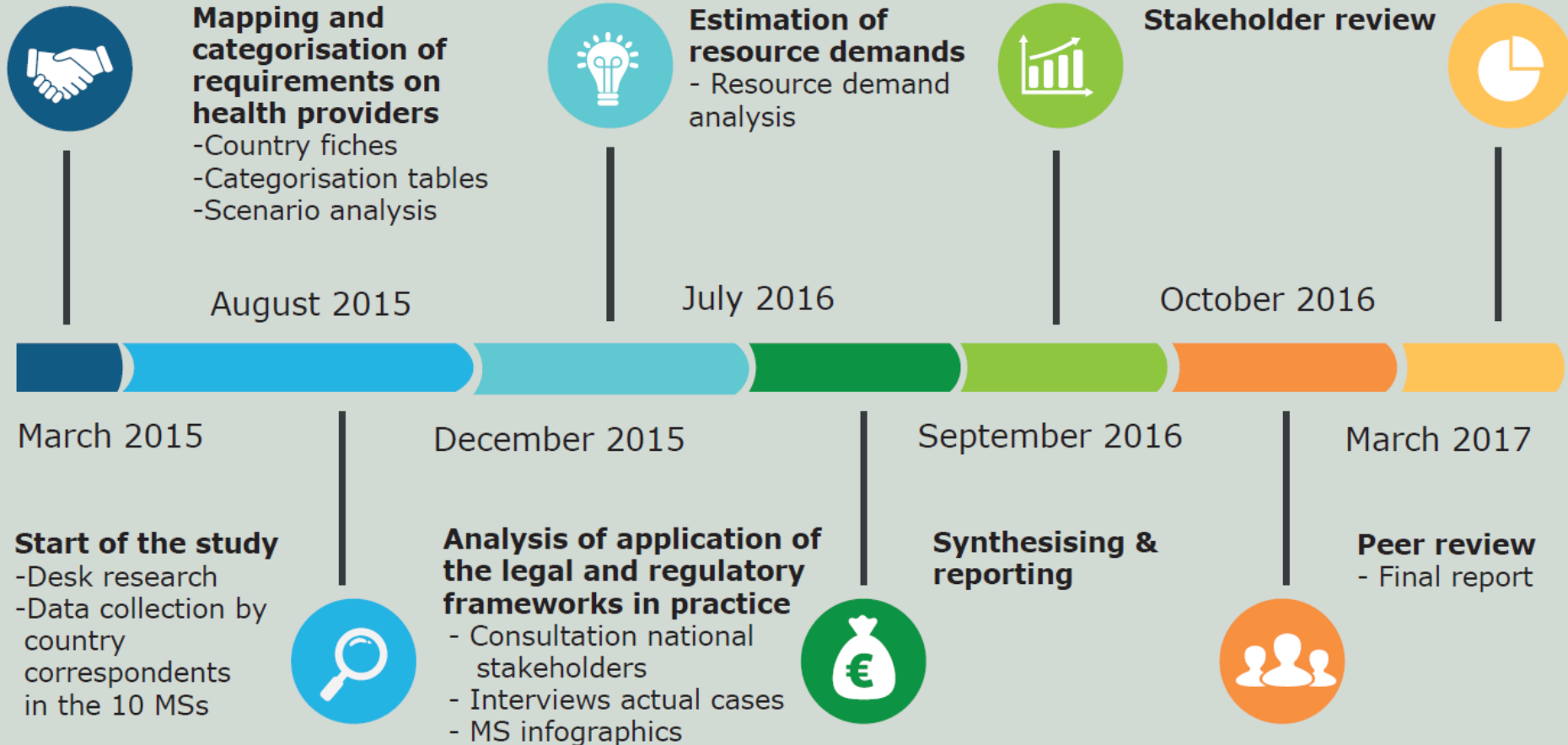
## Aims of the study

- Identify specific and cross-sectorial national requirements for providers wishing to provide cross-border health services
- Identify the main barriers to delivering cross-border health services by considering how the requirements apply in practice
- provide an estimation of the amount of resources necessary to invest as a provider in order to comply with the different requirements.



*Scope: 5 selected scenario's for 10 different Member States*

# Approach & timeline of the study



# Requirements and barriers for GPs and physiotherapists

## What to do as an EU-trained GP wishing to set up practice in the Netherlands?

This infographic provides information on the requirements for healthcare providers wishing to operate cross-border. The free movement of workers is an economic imperative and right enshrined in the treaties of the European Union. At national level, health professions are highly regulated; each Member State (MS) regulates the practice of health professions based on specific criteria, such as education, registration, application of the code of ethics and rules of the guidelines of professional practice. These requirements, and the time and costs associated with them, may create obstacles for cross-border healthcare provision.

This infographic is produced as part of the study "Cross-border health services: potential obstacles for healthcare providers", which was conducted by Ecorys together with the Erasmus University of Rotterdam and Spork (May 2015-January 2017). The aim of the study was to identify the different requirements placed on healthcare providers wishing to either establish themselves in another MS, or provide cross-border services in one MS whilst established in another.

**Mobility of 'doctors of medicine' between Member States**  
The figure shows per country the percentage of incoming 'doctors of medicine', which includes GPs, that had their qualifications recognised in the period from 1999 until 2015.



## What are issues for attention?



**Information sources**  
The study is based on desk research, input from country experts, national stakeholder consultations, telephone interviews, stakeholder & peer reviews.



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## Requirements

### Requirements relating to the GP as an individual

Requirements	Requirements in practice	Resource demands
Recognition of qualifications	Application/registration form	No information available
	Proof of identity	
	Carried copy of professional degree	
	CV	
Obligatory BIG Registration - stems from recognition of qualifications	Cardinals of current professional status	Time: up to 1 month Costs: € 30-60 per page Costs: € 25
	Qualifying professional degree	
	Carried transcripts	
Recognition and registration Specialization Register (RGS)	Application/registration form	Time: max. 4 months Costs: € 600 (big registration) & € 150 (RGS registration)
	Proof of competence	
	Provision of sufficient language knowledge	
	Big registration (proofs of formal qualifications)	
	Provision of professional experience	
	Proof of identity	
Language knowledge	Carried transcripts	Time: up to 1 month Costs: € 30-60 per page
	Provision of sufficient language knowledge	
	Provision of sufficient language knowledge	Time: up to 200 contact hours Costs: up to € 12 per hour (total € 2400)

### Requirements relating to place of work

Requirements	Resource demands	Requirements	Resource demands
Self-employment	Time: no information available Costs: € 400 per year	Registration with national register	No information available
	Specific form of company		
	Company registration		
Self-employment registration	Time: no information available Costs: € 50	Registration costs (BIG) for practice and physiotherapists	Time: 2-4 weeks Costs: € 2
	Company registration		
Registration with national register (stems from national registration)	Time: 2 Costs: € 2		

# Main results of the study (1)

## Additional requirements - cross-border providers



Recognition of  
qualifications



Registration  
regulatory  
body



Language  
requirements

*The fact that a requirements is referred to as an additional requirement does not mean it is not proportional or without good reason*



## Main results of the study (2)

### Potential obstacles

Cross-border providers may face obstacles when they wish to provide cross-border services:

- Language requirements
- High costs associated with providing the required supporting documents
- Unfamiliarity with the specifics of the healthcare system



Recognition of qualifications



Registration regulatory body



Language requirements



High costs



Waiting time



Large # of supporting documents



Certified translations

# “A GP/family doctor wishing to set up a practice in another MS to offer standard GP services to patients”

- **Requirements relating to the GP as an individual, typically:**
  - Distinguish between nationally qualified and cross-border GPs
  - Are sectorial requirements
- **Requirements relating to the place of work and public funding coverage, typically:**
  - Do not distinguish between national and cross-border GPs
  - Are non-sectorial requirements

# “A GP/family doctor wishing to set up a practice in another MS to offer standard GP services to patients”

## Additional requirements for cross-border providers in all MS

- **Recognition of qualifications:** GPs covered by automatic recognition mechanisms, but costs and effort implications vary:
  - Fees: €0 (NL) – €494 (SI)
  - Required # of certified translations: 1 (FR, NL, UK) – 4 (DE)
  - Required # of additional supporting documents: 3 (FR & UK) – 7 (DE)
- **Registration with the regulatory body:** cornerstone requirement
  - Fees for registration vary: €20 (PL) – €538 (UK)
  - Waiting time: 28 days (PL) – 112 days (NL)
  - # of certified translations: 0 (NL, UK) – 2 (DE, FR)
  - # of additional supporting documents: 0 (NL) – 9 (DE)
- All MS have set out rules requiring cross-border applicants to prove that they have **sufficient language knowledge**, variation in required costs and time to achieve the knowledge level (B2-C1)

## “A physiotherapist wishing to establish as an independent practitioner offering physiotherapy services in another MS”

- **Requirements relating to the physiotherapist as an individual**
  - **Distinguish** between nationally qualified and cross-border physiotherapists & typically **sectorial requirements**
- **Requirements relating to the place of work**
  - **Do not distinguish** between nationally qualified and cross-border physiotherapists & typically **non-sectorial requirements**
- **Requirements relating to public funding coverage**
  - **Do not distinguish** between nationally qualified and cross-border physiotherapists & typically **sectorial requirements**

## “A physiotherapist wishing to establish as an independent practitioner offering physiotherapy services in another MS”

### Additional requirements for cross-border providers in all MS

- **Recognition of qualifications**, variations in required:
  - Fees: €0 (NL) – €200 (LV)
  - # of certified translations: 0 (FR, DE, & UK) – 1 (NL, PL)
  - # of additional supporting documents: 1 (FR, DE, & UK) – 5 (NL)
- **Registration with the regulatory body**, variations in required:
  - Fees: €40 (DE) – €257 (UK)
  - Waiting time: 13 (LV) – 112 (FR, NL)
  - # of certified translations: 0 (NL, UK) – 4 (FR)
  - # of additional supporting documents: 0 (NL) – 16 (FR)
- Variation in required costs and time to achieve the necessary **language** knowledge level (B1-B2)

# Thank you for your attention!

For more information we would like to refer you to the final report – Study on cross-border health services: potential obstacles for healthcare providers, available [here](#).

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at [kimberley.vandenberg@ecorys.com](mailto:kimberley.vandenberg@ecorys.com)

