

Emigration from Serbia to Germany

Case Story 2: Medical graduate from Serbia who only wanted to work abroad

Interviewee: male, 5 years in Germany, a medical doctor in residency on dermatology, regional hospital

An interviewee is a Serbian man who came alone to Berlin after his medical studies to continue his career and life here. He has been in Germany for five years. For about 10 last months, he has been working in a regional hospital as a medical doctor and as a dermatologist in residency training. Before that job, he was employed in another hospital in Germany.

He did not want to work in Serbia after graduating the medical studies, and he wanted to go abroad. Reasons, why he left home, include the poor quality of further professional training available to him and the unsatisfied financial and economic prospects of the country. He spent the first few months in an apartment organized by the hospital, and after about 5 months he found his apartment with the help of a German agency for the recruitment of professionals. That German agency helps immigrant health workers, among other issues, to organize a job, find an apartment, the translation of documents/diplomas, and the correspondence to different organizations, but for a fee. That period of the immigration process lasted about 1^{1/2} years. First, he had to meet specific requirements to practice as a doctor in Germany, such as the translation and recognition of medical studies (approbation). In addition, he had to complete a German course (at least a B2 level of language proficiency). After that, he applied for a visa. In order to get his license to practice medicine in Germany and to work as a doctor here, he had to pass a knowledge test. In that regard he commented, it is much easier for doctors from the European Union to settle and practice here than from non-EU countries.

Initially, he often faced unkind patients' comments on his integration efforts, or there were cases when patients did not want to be treated because of the dialect. Nevertheless, he had not let himself be influenced, but on the contrary, rather a motivation that this does not happen again and he has managed that excellently today.

The motivation to come to Germany was that "you get very good further education here, and good career opportunities. Also, a social system runs according to the principle of solidarity, allowing to basically have four types of insurance, including health insurance, long-term care insurance, unemployment insurance and accident insurance. The contributions are financed equally, except for accident insurance, which the sole employer himself bears." One of the most important pull factors of immigration to Germany was the attractive existential factors, these are, for example, the better pay of the job, the stable construct of the country, the economic efficiency, and the structure of the country. The interviewee described "It is nowhere optimal and perfect condition, but the most important thing is to have opportunities for self-fulfilment and to make confident plans and decisions for the future". From his words, it is understood that he is satisfied with his current life in Berlin and still has no need to emigrate from Germany, especially not to his homeland. Nowadays, the routes from Germany to Serbia are so well connected that you can reach Serbia in a few hours by plane. Of course, every now and then there is the feeling of homesickness or generally missing family and friends, but it is amazing how consistently you are enabled to follow a goal and can get a high motivation here. In principle, he mentioned minor disturbing factors in Germany such as the long waiting time at the immigration office, the license to practice medicine itself and it was a bit sluggish process. However, work is being done successively to be able to handle everything online, currently there are also authorities that process some processes only online. He hopes that it will not be so in the future. In fact, the respondent has further goals, his goal after his further training and the specialist examinations is to settle down and open his dermatological practice and to work both as a statutory health insurance doctor and as a private doctor. In Berlin there is a lack of dermatologists, especially doctors licensed as statutory health insurance doctors, most are all known as private doctors and can or only accept patients who can pay for private services.