

# **ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION SYSTEM, SCOPES OF PRACTICE AND OCCUPATIONAL AUTONOMY AMONG PHYSIOTHERAPISTS IN EUROPE.**

*Key words: education, regulation principles, European labour, rehabilitation, professional competences.*

## **Introduction**

The education system, scopes of practice and professional autonomy should be closely related. A good education system guarantees broad competences, which should be associated with increased professional independence. Aforementioned should be referred to in legal provisions. This applies in particular to the professions of public trust. Physiotherapy has a different status in Europe, but patient is always in the center of attention, and his safety should be guaranteed by national government or self- government law regulations based on current labour needs. Characteristics of the profession is being based on different sectors, developed statistically and subjected to a global comparative analysis. On the basis of the emerging social trends in Europe, a debate on the importance of rehabilitation took place.

Physiotherapist as a part of an interdisciplinary team has a real impact on the global improvement of public health. Treatment with physical factors has already been used in ancient times. Today's physiotherapy has existed in Europe since the eighteenth century. The model of a rehabilitation team involves the cooperation of many specialists, such as: a physician, physiotherapist, psychologist, speech therapist and others. The European Union guarantees free movement of employees. In the interest of equal distribution of specialists across the EU, Directive 2005/36 / EC was introduced and amended for the needs of the evolving market to Directive 2013/55 / EU. Physiotherapists are the fourth largest professional group emigrating among regulated professions. The World Confederation for Physical Therapists has been conducting researches for years, setting directions for development and marking labour needs. Within the European region WCPT supports PTs activities, aiming at unique regulations, common education system, competences and professional independence.

## **Method**

The survey covered 32 countries (from 41 WCPT members of the European region) which responded to an on-line questionnaire by E-mail. The survey included six key sections charac-

terizing physiotherapy profession. The results developed with basic statistics are depicted in the form of original maps.

## **Conclusions**

- 1) The profession of physiotherapy is regulated differently in Europe. In most European countries, PTy is classified as regulated professions. However, there are large differences at various legislative levels. Considering the education system, the scopes of practice and professional independence in terms of legal provisions, despite the existing recommendations, there are visible deficiencies in regulations or its large discrepancies. A similar and structured statutes of the profession occurs in countries with a professional self-government. The need for chambers (managed by specialists in the field of physiotherapy), is therefore proposed. to develop and unify the profession in Europe in terms of real market needs.
- 2) There are no reliable and transparent studies on the characteristics of the profession in European countries. There is a need for regular publications of the labour data concerning physiotherapy, both in the public and private sectors, with global statistical comparative analysis. An essential element in running the aforementioned databases seems to be the existence of a mandatory professional register covering all employees in a given country, run by a body composed of physiotherapists. Due to the dynamically changing market, these data should be updated regularly.
- 3) Due to the emerging market and social trends affecting the quality of life and health in the European population; growing demand for rehabilitation services; uneven distribution of specialists in the region, and the increasing level of migration of physiotherapists, the need to unification PTy market in Europe occurs. The common education system, an amendment of the Directive, alignment distribution of regulated professions, and similar social and economic parameters, favor the unification of the market.
- 4) PT's global professional autonomy and direct access to its services leads to the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of physiotherapy. Another goal is to develop preventive care, increase access to PT's services, relieve a medical staff and increase financial savings. Despite the unified PTy standards of qualifications imposed in the EU-28 by the Bologna system, there are differences in basic and advanced scopes of practice. There is a need to draw a common definition of advanced physiotherapy practice (APP).