

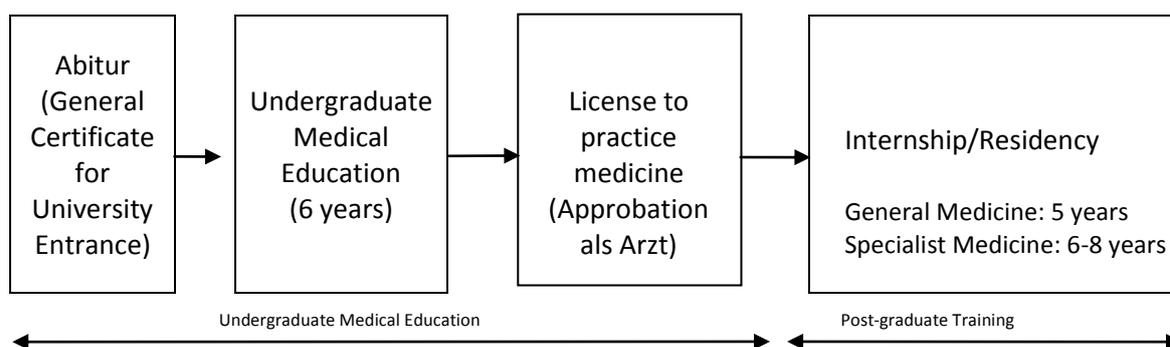


## Trends in Medical Education and Training in Germany

### 1. Brief Overview of Medical Education and Training Pathways

- To access any university education programme in Germany, students are required to have completed first the general certificate for university entrance (i.e. the Abitur). Admissions to medical education are organized by a central national office, the Foundation for University Admission (*Stiftung für Hochschulzulassung*). The admission process depends on several factors, including the weighted-average of grades from high-school (20%), waiting time following initial application (20%) and a set of criteria defined by universities themselves (including pre-university qualifications, interviews and written tests) (60%). Some medical schools have reintroduced a nationwide medical admission test (which is not mandatory). The total number of students admitted to medical education is determined on an annual basis by a *numerus clausus* policy, initially introduced in 1972 by the Federal Constitutional Court (Chenot, 2009).
- There are 37 faculties of medicine in Germany offering medical education, including a private university. Admission to medical studies remains highly competitive. In 2011, 37,400 students applied but only 9,432 students were admitted (roughly one out of four) (Mestres-Ventura et al., 2012).
- Following their entry into a medical school, students will usually pursue six years of studies to obtain a medical degree. After obtaining this degree, new graduates carry out the second part of the medical licensing examination in order to proceed to post-graduate clinical training. The title that is awarded upon successful completion of this exam is a License to Practice Medicine (*Approbation als Arzt*). This is followed by a period of five to eight years of post-graduate training as intern or resident, with the length of clinical training depending on the area of specialisation.

**Figure 1. Medical Education and Training Path, Germany**

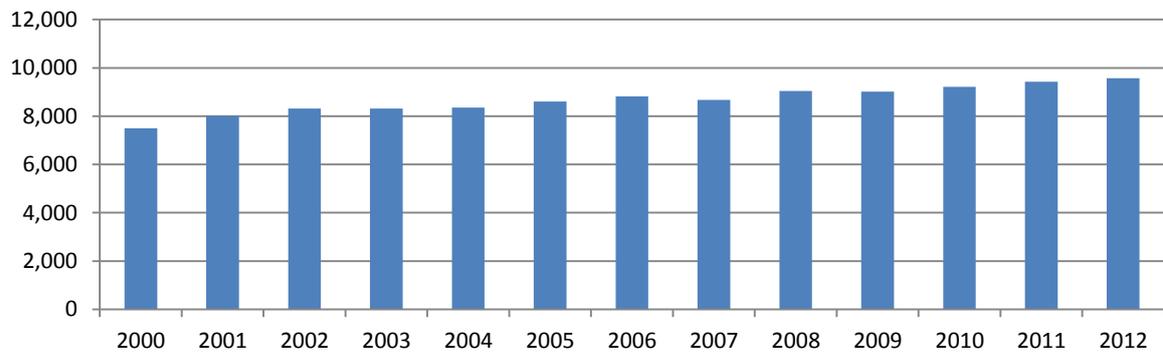


Source: Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research: [www.faimer.org/](http://www.faimer.org/).

## 2. Trends in Admissions to Medical Schools

- Figure 2 shows trends in admissions of first-year students in medical schools in Germany since 2000. Between 2000 to 2012, the number of students admitted to medicine in Germany increased steadily, rising from around 7,500 in 2000 to 9,600 in 2012, a growth of 28%.

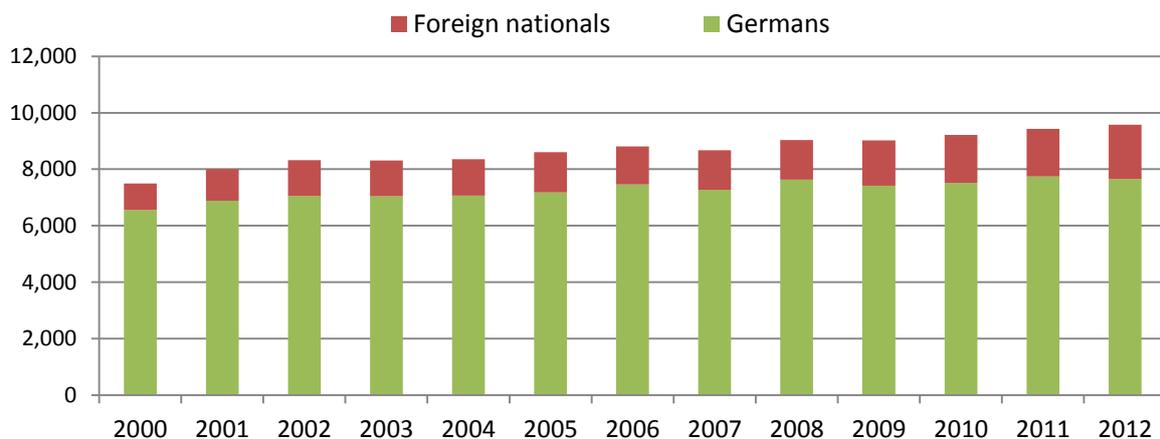
**Figure 2. Admissions to Initial Medical Education, Germany, 2000 to 2012**



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden (2015), <http://destatis.de> (accessed 02.07.2015).

- The number of women studying medicine in Germany exceeds that of men. Approximately 60% of students admitted to medical schools in 2012 were women.
- Figure 3 presents trends in the number of students admitted to medical education by nationality. From 2000 to 2012, the number of foreign nationals admitted to medical schools in Germany has doubled, increasing from 942 to 1 920 students. Out of the total number of students admitted to medical education, the proportion of foreign students rose from 13% to 20%.

**Figure 3. Admissions to Initial Medical Education by nationality, Germany, 2000 and 2012**

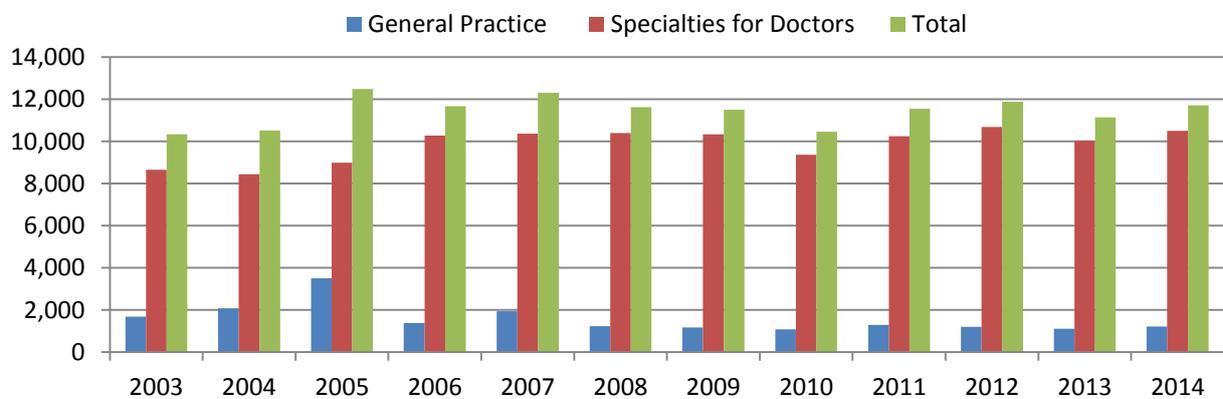


Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden (2015), <http://destatis.de>, (accessed 02.07.2015).

### 3. Trends in Admissions to Post-graduate Training

- Post-graduate specialty (*Facharzt*) training follows the completion of the first medical degree. As of 2012, 82 different specialty training programmes were offered (Miani, 2015). The time required for the completion of post-graduate specialty training varies between five years (for general medicine) to six to eight years (for different specialties).
- The training framework is set by the German Medical Board (*Bundesärztekammer*) and the respective Federal State Medical Boards (*Landesärztekammern*). The content and duration of the training programme can vary across different States (*Landers*).
- Figure 4 shows the number of graduates from post-graduate training in General Practice, other areas of specialisation, and the overall number of graduates from post-graduate medical training in Germany from 2003 to 2014. The number and share of graduates from general medicine training has come down over the past decade, with only 10% of new doctors completing their training in general medicine in 2014, down from 16% in 2003.

Figure 4. Graduates from post-graduate training, Germany, 2003-2014



Source: German Medical Association, available at <http://www.bundesaerztekammer.de/ueber-uns/aerztestatistik/aerztestatistik-2014/> (accessed on 6 July 2015).

- In Germany, as in many other OECD countries, there are concerns about a possible shortage of general practitioners (GPs), with fewer medical graduates choosing to pursue their clinical training in this area. In response to these concerns, the German Council of Science and Humanities has called for policies to strengthen interest in general practice at both the undergraduate and post-graduate training levels. One recommendation has been the introduction of more optional courses related to general practice in the undergraduate medical education curriculum (Deutch T et al., 2015). The German College of General Practice and Family Medicine (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Allgemeinmedizin und Familienmedizin*, DEGAM) has also recommended the introduction of a mandatory General Practice placement during the final year of the undergraduate medical degree. In addition, a target has been set to increase the number of post-graduate training places in general medicine to 20% of the total by 2017 (Miani, 2015).

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