

## REVIEW PAPER

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### **European Diploma Examination in Poland - Evolution or Revolution?**

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### Summary

Since the inception of the European Diploma Examination in Anesthesiology and Intensive Care (EDA) in 1984, thousands of European anesthesiologists sat the exam. The effect of the exam in training programs; promotion and evaluation of foreign medical graduates is increasing permanently. The agreement of mutual recognition with the Royal College of Anaesthetists in Great Britain and Ireland, and adoption of the EDA as mandatory or part of the curriculum in many European countries made the EDA very popular. Poland decided to adopt the European Exam part I officially from October 2008. *Anestezjologia i Ratownictwo 2008; 2: 238-242.*

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The European Diploma Examination in Anesthesiology and Intensive Care (EDA) began in 1984 in Strasbourg. The exam was created by the European Academy of Anaesthesiology (EAA) with the main purpose of harmonizing and raising of standards in anesthesiology and improving of training [1]. This necessity aroused with opening of the Iron Curtain and incorporation of colleagues from Eastern European countries to mainstream Europe. Soon it was agreed by the founders to plans for the introduction of an international, multilingual, postgraduate diploma examination. A need was perceived for an internationally recognized diploma which would serve as a means of identifying well trained anesthesiologists from any European country. After the amalgamation between the European Academy; CENSA and the previous ESA, the main European bodies in Anesthesia, the new ESA (European Society of Anaesthesiology) is the organizer of the EDA, and diplomates are called DESA (Diplomate of the European Society of Anaesthesiology).

As mentioned above, in 1984, the EDA, a five-language, two parts diploma examination was introduced. The main objectives of the examination are:

- testing of knowledge,
- effect on training programs,
- effect on promotion,
- evaluation of foreign medical graduates,
- competition for permanent posts and mutual recognition of other diploma examinations [2].

**Part I** comprises two multilingual MCQ papers (one on basic science and one on clinical topics).

The 5 original languages for the written exams were: English, German, French, Spanish and Italian.

Russian language was introduced later, and after a pause was reintroduced. With the adoption of the EDA Part I as mandatory in Hungary and Poland, Hungarian and Polish languages were introduced. From 2009 Portuguese language will be used as well.

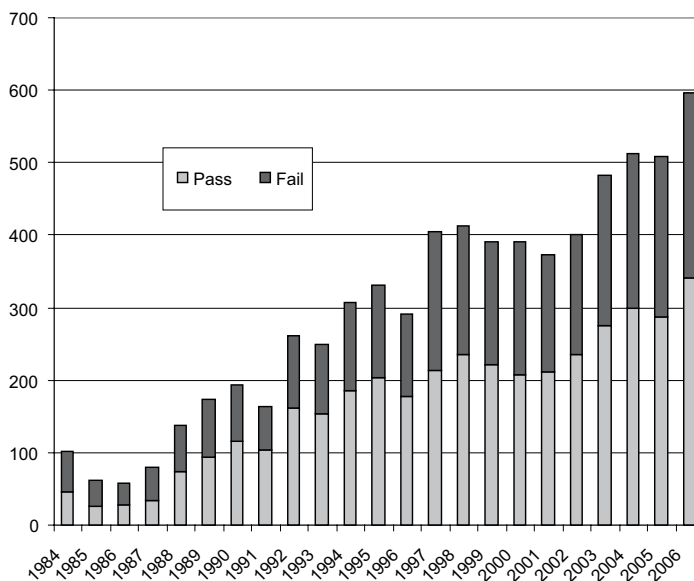
The model of MCQ used for the exam is the British T (True) or F (False) model.

The Negative Marking System (use of negative marks for wrong answers) was abolished from this year on [3] and no penalty is given for wrong answers.

From less than hundred candidates in the first year, the number of candidates raised to 620 in 2007, and 900 candidates registered for Part I in 2008.

**Anestezjologia i Ratownictwo – Polska i Świat / Anaesthesiology and Rescue Medicine – Poland and the World**

PART I (MCQ)				
Year	Total sitting the exam	Pass	Fail	% Pass
1984	102	45	57	44,1
1985	61	25	36	41,0
1986	57	27	30	47,4
1987	79	34	45	43,0
1988	137	74	63	54,0
1989	174	93	81	53,4
1990	193	116	77	60,1
1991	163	103	60	63,2
1992	262	161	101	61,5
1993	250	153	97	61,2
1994	307	185	122	60,3
1995	331	204	127	61,6
1996	291	177	114	60,8
1997	405	214	191	52,8
1998	412	235	177	57,0
1999	391	221	170	56,5
2000	391	207	184	52,9
2001	373	211	162	56,6
2002	400	235	165	58,8
2003	482	275	207	57,1
2004	513	300	213	58,5
2005	509	287	222	56,4
2006	596	342	254	57,4
2007	620	378	242	61,0
TOTAL	7499	4302	3197	57,37



**Part II**, a multilingual oral examination, consists of four separate vivas covering, broadly, the same topics.

In addition of these 2 mandatory components of the exam, the **ITA (In Training Assessment)** is a written MCQ test (same questions as Part I) held at the same date of Part I, and at reduced fees, offers residents the possibility to assess their knowledge at different stages of their residency. Thus, each ITA candidate receives a personal candidate report form with his own scores, whilst the director of Training receives a similar, composite report form giving the average scores from trainees in the department at the same stage of training.

The report is in two parts. The first part shows the number of right and wrong answers for this particular candidate. It also shows the percentage marks obtained

for Paper A and Paper B as well as providing the national and Europe wide average percentage marks of candidates at the same stage of training, against which the candidate can compare his or her performance. Finally it provides the average mark of the Diploma candidates from that particular year, so that the candidate can appreciate any difference in performance.

The second part of the report shows similar marks in subsections of Paper A and Paper B.

In addition, the candidate is informed of what the result would have been had he or she taken the Part I Diploma examination on this occasion.

Thus, both the candidates and their directors of training will have a good idea, not only of their overall performance, but also how they compare with others, and an idea of in which areas further study is needed.

### EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF ANAESTHESIOLOGY DIPLOMA CANDIDATE REPORT FORM

Candidate Name:

Candidate No.:

Hospital name:

Country:

Overall Results					
	Right	Wrong	Void	Candidates % score	Average % score of all candidates
Paper A	133	44	123	29.7%	47.4%
Paper B	154	37	109	39.0%	53.5%

Detailed Results		
Paper A	Candidates % score	Average % score of all candidates
Cardiorespiratory Physiology	42.6%	52.9%
Neurophysiology	26.0%	46.0%
General Physiology	37.2%	56.7%
Cardiovascular Pharmacology	42.5%	55.5%
CNS Pharmacology	32.7%	53.0%
General Pharmacology	30.3%	49.2%
General Physics	16.7%	33.0%
Clinical Measurement	26.2%	47.3%
Statistics	15.0%	38.7%
Paper B	Candidates % score	Average % score of all candidates
Basic Anaesthesia	43.3%	58.9%
Special Anaesthesia	40.0%	54.8%
Local/Regional Anaesth.	22.7%	37.4%
Intensive Care	42.7%	53.5%
Internal Medicine	34.2%	50.4%
Emergency Medicine	40.7%	50.9%

Candidates are reminded that they have to pass **BOTH** papers to pass the Part I examination

**NB. Each correct answer scores one positive mark. There is NO PENALTY for incorrect or left blank answers. The candidates score is the number of correct marks. The candidate's percentage score is this figure expressed as a percentage of the maximum score possible for the Paper (i.e. 180 correct out of 300 equals 60%).**

## International recognition

The anesthesia community is showing a growing interest in the EDA.

In 1990, there was an important development in mutual recognition between the UK and Irish anaesthetic Fellowship examinations and the EDA. This recognition allows for those holding the full European Diploma to be exempted from Primary FRCA and vice versa. However, the other criteria for entry to any of the examinations still have to be met.

The establishment of mutual recognition between the Royal College of Anaesthetists, the Irish Faculty and the EDA was a useful step on the path to a wider acceptance.

In Switzerland, the Part I (MCQ) examination is mandatory for all trainees. The Austrian Medical Chamber, together with the Austrian Society of Anesthesiology decided (after a transition period) to

make the Part I MCQ mandatory again for all Austrian residents

Hungary and Poland adopted as well the EDA Part I as mandatory for all trainees.

Portugal College of Anesthesia and the Ministry of Health in this country accepted the European Diploma examination as a recognized part of the official syllabus.

The Senate of the Romanian Society of Anesthesiology and Intensive Care has decided as well to adopt the EDA examination as mandatory in Romania.

The EDA Part I examination is held annually in early October simultaneously in several centers and in different languages as listed in the annual examination calendar.

The Part II oral examinations are held annually between March and October (see Part II examination calendar for 2008) in different centers and different languages.

### Part I (MCQ) and In-Training Assessment (ITA)

**Closing date for applications: 09 May 2008**

**Examination Date: 04 October 2008**

Part I Examination Centres		
Athens – Greece	Barcelona – Spain	Berne – Switzerland
Budapest – Hungary	Cluj-Napoca – Romania	Cork – Ireland
Göttingen – Germany	Innsbruck – Austria	Liège – Belgium
Lisbon – Portugal	Ljubljana – Slovenia	London – United Kingdom
Lund – Sweden	Madrid – Spain	Msida – Malta
Moscow – Russia	Oslo – Norway	Paris – France
Porto – Portugal	Warsaw – Poland	Riga – Latvia
Rome – Italy	St-Petersburg – Russia	Tel Aviv – Israel
Uppsala – Sweden	Vienna – Austria	Yerevan – Armenia

### Part II (oral)

**Closing date for applications: 04 January 2008.**

**All eight Part II centres will be open in 2008.**

Venues	Languages	Dates	Days
Barcelona, Spain	English, Spanish	15 March 2008	Sat
Göttingen, Germany	English, German	29-30 March 2008	Sat / Sun
Zürich, Switzerland	English, German	12-13 April 2008	Sat / Sun
Porto, Portugal	English, Spanish, French	17 May 2008	Sat
Uppsala, Sweden	English, Scandinavian	17-18 June 2008	Tue / Wed
Eilat, Israel	English	14 September 2008	Sun
Erlangen, Germany	English, German	27-28 September 2008	Sat / Sun
Athens, Greece	English	11 October 2008	Sat

Candidates applying for the Part I examination in a country where the Part I examination is mandatory and following a training in anaesthesia in this country with the purpose of achieving the national diploma in anaesthesia are entitled to a reduced Part I application fee. The official national bodies in charge of organizing the Part I examination in these countries and the ESA can confirm this fee to the eligible candidates, who should apply for their Part I examination through their National Society and not directly to the ESA.

## EDA guide

All details and instructions can be found at the ESA website:

<http://www.euroanesthesia.org/Education/European%20Diploma.aspx>

## EDA in Poland

The European Diploma has been organized in Poznan for years by Prof. Leon Drobnik. We have to remember that an author of this idea was Prof. Witold Jurczyk, the head of the Chair and Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy in Poznan until the year 2001.

Participation at the EDA exams was voluntary and was stimulated by Polish colleagues as a title of excellence and a way to improve training.

In year 2006 a meeting was organized in Warsaw in order to consider the adoption of the EDA Part I examination as mandatory in Poland.

Representatives of the following organizations participated at this meeting:

- Dr. Roman Danielewicz (Department of Postgraduate Training, Polish Ministry of Health)
- Prof. Dr. Leon Drobnik (President of the Polish Society of Anaesthesiology - PTAiIT)
- Prof. Dr. Ewa Mayzner-Zawadzka (National Advisor in Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy)
- Prof. Stanisław Orkisz (Director of the Center of Medical Examinations)
- Prof. Janusz Andres (President Elect of the Polish

Society of Anaesthesiology - PTAiIT)

- Prof. Przemysław Jałowicki and Dr. Marcin Rawicz (Tests edition team)
- Prof. Dr. Andrzej Kübler (Chair of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy, Wrocław)
- Prof. Dr. Jacek Jastrzębski (Postgraduate Medical Centre, Warsaw)
- Dr. Sir Peter Simpson (President of the ESA)
- Dr. Zeev Goldik (Chairman of the Examinations Committee - ESA)

After the meeting, a letter from the President of Polish Society to the Chairman of the ESA Examinations Committee expressed the readiness of Polish authorities to adopt the EDA Part I as an obligatory part of the curriculum for anesthesia specialty in Poland.

The Polish Minister of Health Ms. Ewa Kopacz expressed her intention to declare this exam official by law in the course of September 2008.

As National Consultant for Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care, Prof. Krzysztof Kusza is acting as coordinator for the organization of the new frame of the written Polish - European Examination that will be held in Warsaw for the first time in October 4<sup>th</sup> 2008.

Dr. Piotr Knapik participated at different educational events related to the EDA exams in Poland and is translating important academic publications to Polish language.

Dr. Ewa Karpel and Dr. Paweł Sobczyński act as representatives of Poland at the EDA Examinations Committee of the ESA.

As friend of Poland and permanent partner of the EDA examination in Poland I had the opportunity to see the solid progress of anesthesia education in Poland. I want to express my deep respect and admiration for all efforts invested by all participants, but specially Prof. Leon Drobnik and Prof. Krzysztof Kusza, at this amazing educational project called EDA.

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