The Ghent Group is an informal group of forensic psychiatrists who are interested and experienced in training in the field, so called because the first ever meeting was in Ghent, Belgium in 2004.

The group was set up in recognition that people within the European Union (EU), subject to language proficiency, may work in any of the 27 member countries. Our aim was to be better prepared for this, given the different legal philosophies and systems underpinning forensic psychiatry, differences in siting and development of specialist services, and resultant differences in training in forensic psychiatry and its recognition as a clinical specialty.

In addition, the 47 constituent countries of the Council of Europe share many similar principles and practices, in particular as signatories to the Convention on Human Rights, an important context for much of our work. Forensic psychiatrists from all 47 Council of Europe countries are welcome to contact existing members of the group and, numbers permitting, to join the annual meeting of the group.

At an early stage, we agreed a working definition of forensic psychiatry:

- A specialty of medicine based on detailed knowledge of relevant legal issues, criminal and civil justice systems, mental health systems and the relationship between mental disorder, antisocial behaviour and offending.
- Its purpose is the assessment, care and treatment of mentally disordered offenders and others requiring similar services; risk assessment and management and the prevention of further victimization are core elements of this.

For more information, see:


**Next meeting: 24th - 26th September 2010, Innsbruck, Austria**