INTRODUCTION
Psoriasis can have a profound impact on a person’s quality of life, particularly if it is extensive, affects a visible or sensitive area, or is difficult to treat. To explore the impact of psoriasis on the quality of life of European patients and to learn about patients’ perceptions of current treatments, EUROPSO (European Federation of Psoriasis Patient Organisations) has conducted a large-scale postal survey of the members of nine European patient associations.

METHODS
A total of 50,500 survey questionnaires were directly mailed to the members of participating psoriasis patient organisations or distributed via participating dermatologists in Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and The Netherlands between March and April 2002. The response cut-off date was August 16 2002.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN
The questionnaire design was developed in collaboration with the National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) of the United States, following the design of recent questionnaires to enable comparisons of the results. The self-administered questionnaire included sections on type of psoriasis, self-reported severity, symptoms, history and current use of psoriasis treatments, as well as a validated psoriasis quality of life scale, the Psoriasis Disability Index (PDI).

RESULTS
Patient population
A total of 18,386 responses were received, representing an overall response rate of 36.4%. Of all respondents 17,990 stated they had psoriasis. 49.1% were male and 50.9% female. The majority (97%) were of Caucasian race and 33% of respondents diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis by a healthcare professional. Of those seeking care, 58% of respondents with psoriasis see a dermatologist and 34% see a family physician; 58% of respondents diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis see a rheumatologist.

PSORIASIS TREATMENT AND SATISFACTION
Forty percent of respondents were currently using some form of prescription medication. Of these, approximately 40% were using a topical treatment (e.g. vitamin D analogue, steroids or coal tar) and approximately 20% a systemic treatment. 13% were currently using some form of phototherapy, mainly PUVA (3%) or UVB (8%) (Figure 1).

CONCLUSIONS
- This survey is the largest survey of people with psoriasis in Europe, with 18,363 responses from 7 European countries.
- The results of this survey appear to be consistent with similar postal surveys conducted amongst people with psoriasis.
- 17,990 respondents had psoriasis, with 30% of respondents having been diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis.
- Satisfaction with current treatments is low, and many respondents considered treatment to be time-consuming and/or ineffective.
- 21% of respondents are not currently seeing a healthcare professional for their psoriasis.

Further analysis of the results of this survey should provide important information on patients’ perspectives on the psychosocial impact of psoriasis and the effectiveness of the management of their disease.

EUROPSO is a federation of psoriasis patient associations in Europe. It aims to raise awareness of psoriasis and achieve equal opportunities for psoriasis patients in all European countries through active support of its member associations.

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