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Zagreb, Šubićeva 9, Croatia

National Report Croatia (HLS)  
(October 2013- May 2014)

Croatia has been in recession for five years in a row so far and this is an unusually long period of time. We are expecting a mild recession this year and the MMF anticipates the decrease of the economic growth for 0.5 to 1.0 per cent. The main reason for this long economic crisis is the over-indebtedness of the system. According to the recommendations of the European Commission, Croatia should decrease its budget deficit for 2.3 percent of the GDP.

The Health Minister has been announcing the reform of the health-care system for a long time now. The public discussion thereon was closed at the end of April. The proposed master plan for the hospitals has not been adopted yet. According to the opinion of the Croatian Medical Union, it shall bring about no benefits, neither for the doctors, nor for the patients. It shall cause additional difficulties in the functioning of the health-care system, it shall decrease the level of the health-protection and make the working conditions even harder. The interest of the medical doctors to leave Croatia and to find a job abroad is increasing. At this moment, in Croatian hospitals we have 5,713 medical doctors-specialists per 4,437,460 inhabitants, which means 129 medical doctors-specialists per 100,000 inhabitants. The trend of the caving-in of the Croatian health-care system is continuing.

The social dialogue between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the trade-unions is ineffective and unsuccessful. Two important acts are being amended at the moment - Labor Act and the Act on the Trade Union Representativeness. The Government is trying to decrease the workers' rights. At the same time, it is attempting to exclude the medical doctors from the negotiations on the collective agreement.

In December, 2013, the Health Minister signed an unfavorable collective agreement for medical doctors, without the participation of the trade union of medical doctors, with the trade union of ancillary personnel and medical nurses. The strike started in September, 2013. The Government broke the strike with the introduction of the work duty which was cancelled by the Constitutional Court in December, 2013, allowing the Croatian Medical Union to continue with the terminated strike. The strike is temporarily in the stand-by mode until 31st of May, 2014 when it shall be decided on the future destiny of the strike.

With the Act on Cutting Down on the Rights of Employees, the Government decreased the rights of employees in the public and state sector, although these rights were contracted with

the collective agreements. There are some lawsuits going on, instituted by trade unions against the Government.

The European Doctor's Action Day -15 May 2014 shall be celebrated and noted by the Croatian Medical Union by putting up of posters and by distribution of leaflets in all the health-care centres, by summoning of medical doctors on 15th of May, 2014 so that they could get acquainted with our requests, and by holding of press conferences in order to make the citizens and the politicians aware of the ongoing problems.

In Zagreb, 28 April, 2014

Written by:

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**Fédération Européenne  
des Médecins Salariés**  
European Federation  
of Salaried Doctors