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ITALIAN NATIONAL REPORT

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Since last FEMS meeting in Vienna (May 2015), Italian Government has been focusing on the following topics:

- **Public Health Cuts** a 2.35 million euro cut in the healthcare sector budget was established by law 125/2015 (approved in August 2015, also called Dcereto Enti Locali)). Such a restriction to the public healthcare system will affect purchase of medical devices, supply of some kind of blood tests or outpatient treatments. Moreover, 208 healthcare services have been abolished (for instance a part of dentistry treatments or musculoskeletal MRI for peculiar clinical conditions), economic sanctions have been established for those doctors who tend to issue inappropriate prescription or overprescription (it is not clear which guidelines or directives have to be followed in order to be appropriate). Law 125/2015 provides that public hospitals, suffering from a negative balance, will undergo to compulsory administration and sanctions such as an halt to new employments or to medical purchase. A further block to new employments means a worsening of work loads. In some health sectors (e.g. emergency department) there is a work overload that is no longer bearable and it's leading to patients' and health staff's dissatisfaction. In addition to the above, there is a possibility that italian National Healthcare Fund will not increase for next year 2016 and it should be fixed to 113.3 euros billion.
- **Collective Agreement** In June, Italian Constitutional Court judged invalid the halt to the renewal of the economic part of Collective bargaining agreement, that has lasted since 2010. This judgement affects a great number of workers. It has not retroactive effects but it gives new opportunities to trade unions to show their capability. It's necessary to wait until the approval of Economic Law 2016 for more details.

- **Medical School and PGT** At the beginning of September, Italian Medical School held their admission tests. Number of applicants is decreased in comparison with previous years, in fact this year we had 57000 aspiring students versus 75000 applications in 2013. The number of Available places for students in Medicine is 9530 and the number of available places for students in Dentistry is 792. This means that just one applicant out of six will enter an Italian medical school. It seems medical profession less attractive to students, maybe also for a well known gap between number of graduates and the number of post graduate courses available: every year only 60% of doctors can attend a postgraduate course.

Moreover, a different procedure is currently being examined with the purpose to allow medical students to be graduated and in the same time qualified to work as doctors. Nowadays, a medical graduated has to attend an additional one year training and to pass a National qualifying examination in order to be enrolled in the Medical Council.

- **Revision of the Medical Malpractice Law** Italian Government agenda includes a revision law about medical malpractice. Existing legal provisions call for a very long time for the interruption of the prescription period (10 years), burden of proof lies on the physician, doctors can be held criminally liable for their actions and reimbursement are very expensive. Legislative process will take a lot of time and Italian trade unions are ready to monitor the path in order to make physician able to work without drawing upon defensive medicine.

As a result of such a lot of struggle, Italian medical Trade Unions are preparing a strike to show their professional dissatisfaction.