



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

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## **NATIONAL REPORT – SLOVENIA – FIDES for the FEMS General Assembly in Lisbon, June 2018**

Autumn 2017 was characterized by the activities of FIDES, which were related to monitoring the implementation of negotiated Annexes to the Collective Agreement for Doctors and Dentists in the Republic of Slovenia during the general medical strike, which essentially represented the implementation of standards and norms for the work of doctors and dentists into the practice and/or there, where this is not possible due to the staff deficit and the additional remuneration of doctors and dentists and higher rankings of doctors and dentists in so-called higher evaluated job positions of senior doctors and senior specialists (for approx. 20%), higher salaries and elimination of so-called duty job positions, which were introduced in the time of austerity measures of the Government, according to which doctors and dentists were not paid according to their salary grade and including full extras.

Due to inadequate progress of the strike activities implementation in individual institutions the Main Board of FIDES made the decision on September 28, 2017 (just before the date of application of both signed Annexes to the Collective Agreement for Doctors and Dentists in the Republic of Slovenia and to Special Tariff Part of CADD) to convene an extraordinary annual FIDES Conference, which was held on November 15, 2017.

Before that, a meeting was held also with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, who ensured us that the Government is ready to realize all strike demands of FIDES, which undoubtedly comes out also from the Agreement on Temporary Suspension of Strike Activities dated to December 5, 2016 (elimination of limitation for salary grade 57) and Agreement on Temporary Suspension of Strike Activities dated to March 24, 2017 (retention of achieved number of salary advancement grades for doctors when assigned to job positions of doctors specialists) and that, in order to reach the soonest possible harmonization of the proposal for alterations and supplements of SSPSA with the majority of trade unions in public sector and thus to sign the statement on the harmonization of the proposal for alterations and supplements of SSPSA with the representative trade unions in public sector, a special working group was nominated, whose members were representatives of both the government and the trade union, with the goal to work intensively on the text of legal solutions and to submit the draft law to the legislative procedure yet in the year 2017.

The extraordinary annual FIDES Conference therefore took the decision to terminate the general strike of doctors and dentists in the Republic of Slovenia and called on the responsible ones to start solving the opened issues. The deadline was set until the end of 2017, otherwise the strike activities would be started again there (at the local level), where the agreement would not be respected. We emphasized that we support the changes in the legislation in terms of salary system flexibility (variable remuneration according to work performed on the basis of standards and norms) and expressed as an option to withdraw from the public sector salary system.

By the end of the year we had several meetings with politicians from different parties and we tried to present them our views on the functioning of the health care system and our role in it. Unfortunately, politics has negatively surprised us during this period with some corrections of the health care legislation (amendments to the Health Service Act), which were made without any participation of the experts and despite many protests expressed by the interested public. In our opinion, the legislation has caused harm to both sides, the users (patients) and the providers (healthcare providers - doctors). Consequently, we can note prolonged waiting periods for certain examinations and operations, which in some fields exceed all limits. The lack of doctors still remains the key problem. This is the most pressing problem on the primary level.

Until the regular Annual Conference, which was held at the beginning of March, some of the issues have been settled. In particular the assignments of doctors to the job position superior specialist and thereby the increase in salaries

was more or less fulfilled in the majority of institutions. Unfortunately, those doctors who have already had salary grade 57, remained without salary increase, as this is currently the upper limit of salaries in public sector, except for politicians, officials and employees in jurisdiction. However, the Government cancelled the project of variable remuneration for reducing the waiting times. Especially for secondary and tertiary level rather unsuccessful project has ended quite poor. That is why we supported the request for adoption of a governmental regulation, which would allow a variable remuneration based on the quantity and / or quality for doctors who exceed the standards and norms, as required with the article in our Collective Agreement for Doctors and Dentists. At the same time we pointed out, that at the collapsing health care system and conditioning of other trade unions (other trade unions in public sector have conditioned their consent to the elimination of the salary grade top limit with the requirements that have demanded long and painstaking negotiations with the Government, with the unclear goal...) the strike would not be accepted well from our side, as doctors, unlike other professions, cannot strike without consequences for patients. But we will certainly monitor the realization of conclusions on the Annual Conference and reactivate the trade union activities at the right time, if necessary.

In this year, FIDES with Konrad Kuštrin as the chairman took over the presidency of the Coordination of Medical Organizations (Medical Chamber, Medical Association, Private Doctors Association, FIDES trade union). Unfortunately, the energy from the previous years has diminished and the Coordination is no longer so loud and striking as it was once. There have been several changes in management which influenced on the thinking of individuals and consequently on less coordinated activity. However, we all agree with the finding, that the situation in our health care is alarming poor and has become even worse recently. Corruption, clientelism, poor organization and management of the Ministry and institutions, lack of doctors, failure to implement the health care reforms have led to an enormous increase in waiting times for examinations and operations. For this purpose, the Coordination of Medical Organizations organized the Forum and each of the medical organizations presented the problems from its field and offered the solutions. These solutions have been written on the paper for several years, but the responsible policy does not care about our opinion. Also the response to this expert meeting was similar, as the politics has already been fully engaged with the forthcoming extraordinary elections and showed poor interest for this expert meeting. Namely, following the resignation of the Prime Minister the Government is only carrying out the routine business. For all these reasons also our requirements stayed in the air and we are now waiting for the new Government, which will certainly not happen by the end of the summer.

Ljubljana, May 14, 2018

Prepared by Damjan Polh, Vice President of FIDES