



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

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1. Working time

As per 01.01.2018, several new regulations regarding doctors' working time have entered into force: According to the Hospital Working Hours Act, the average weekly working time is now 55 hours, subject to a corresponding employment agreement and an individual opt-out declaration. From 01.07.2021 onwards, the average weekly working time will be limited to 48 hours (no possibility for opting out after this date). Prolonged duties (32 hours or 49 hours) are no longer permitted; until 31.12.2020 duties must be limited to a maximum of 29 hours. From 01.01.2021 onwards, duties will be limited to a maximum of 25 hours.

There is strong pressure from the different federal countries who run most public hospitals in Austria on the government to prolong the current regulations after 2021.

2. Reform of the social insurance system

The current reform plans of the new Austrian Federal Government envisage a fusion of the current 21 social insurance institutions into five. In total, three separate funds are planned for employees, the public sector and the self-employed sector. In addition, the pension insurance institution (PVA) and the accident insurance will continue to exist. The nine regional health insurance funds are to be merged into one Austrian Health Insurance Fund (Österreichische Gesundheitskasse). The government expects the planned reform of the social insurance system to save one billion euros by 2023 and plans to reinvest the saved budget in health care.

The Austrian Medical Chamber regards the argument of cost savings as quite critical and sees the nationalisation of the health insurance system as the primary motive of the government, which would make it easier for politicians to take influence. Furthermore, the Medical Chamber doubts that a revolution from above will lead to a sustainable result in this project and stresses that the solidarity-based financing, social medicine and self-government of the health insurance funds must not be called into question or even be abolished. The reform plans are also causing great concern among doctors.

3. Proposal on the reduction of social insurance expenditures

On 5 July 2018, the National Council adopted a proposal on the reduction of social insurance expenditures, which was also approved by the Federal Council. The aim of the proposal is to ensure that no excessive expenditure is incurred in the next six months until the planned social insurance reform is in place.

The Austrian Medical Chamber fears that the saved budget of reduced expenses in the social insurance sector won't be to the benefit of patients, but will push private medicine which a large part of the population can't afford.