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CROATIAN NATIONAL REPORT

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FEMS General Assembly

The lack of doctors in Croatia is still a major and current problem of Croatian health care.

It is the result of continuous leaving of doctors abroad, but also the consequence of the large flow of generations and retirement of a large number of doctors, which is not at the time provided a substitute. According to Croatian Medical Chamber data, 452 doctors have left the public health system (mostly left abroad) and 416 doctors have retired in the past 1,5 years.

The dissatisfaction of doctors in Croatia is growing due to poor working conditions, a large number of overtime hours, inadequate overtime payments, attempts to influence the courtroom in court proceedings triggered by inappropriate overtime calculations and unresolved representations of the Croatian Medical Union.

FEMS provides us with active help in trying to solve our problems. On 2 April, General Secretary FEMS, Dr. Popović, came to a working visit to Zagreb. During his visit, he was received by the Croatian Minister of Health, and the Secretary General Dr. Popović will report on the course of that meeting.

Overtime hours and Court proceedings

While the Croatian Labor Law and the Collective Agreement for Health Care allow a maximum of 180 overtime hours a year, Croatian doctors work on an average of 40 to 45 overtime hours per month (480-540 per year), and the record is 120 overtime hours per month.

Because of the lack of doctors, doctors in many hospitals in the Republic of Croatia continued to work in 24-hour duty. There is no control of compliance with Directive 2003/88 / EC, and there is no talk about the health and safety of doctors who work 24 hours in one piece.

An additional problem is that overtime hours are not paid fairly, which is why we started more than 4,000 court proceedings. Collective agreement provides for a supplement to difficult working conditions, medical responsibility and scientific title. The reason for filing a lawsuit is the fact that these supplements are paid for regular working hours but are not paid for overtime hours.

To date, in favor of doctors awarded 600 first and 200 second instance / final judgments.

The Croatian Medical Union repeatedly requested a meeting with the Prime Minister of Croatia with the intention of pointing to the seriousness of the problem, but the Prime Minister did not even reply to the request for the meeting. He did not answer us either at the request to receive the Secretary General of FEMS.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia persistently refuses to reach an agreement on this issue, and for several valid verdicts adjudicated in favor of the doctors, it requested revision to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court verdict is expected in early June 2019.

Although the Croatian Medical Union is convinced of victory in court proceedings, direct and indirect political pressure on the judiciary is enormous and we are afraid that politics may affect the negative decision of the Supreme Court.

Just in time of visit the Secretary General of FEMS, we received a document proving that the Minister of Health has already tried to influence the decision of the court in two repeatedly tried.

If the Supreme Court issues a verdict against a doctors, there is a real danger that doctors will deny consent to work above 48 hours per week. The consequence of this would be a complete collapse of the health system in the Republic of Croatia.

Law on Representation – Croatian Medical Union is still not included in collective bargaining

Dissatisfaction doctor contributes to the fact that it has not yet adopted a new Law on Representation, which the doctors get the right to collective bargaining.

The new Law on Representativity was due to be adopted by March this year, but it is still unresolved and the big question is whether this will happen until autumn 2019.

In a view of the seriousness of the situation, we would like to encourage the active support of the FEMS for the consistent application of Directive 2003/88 / EC and to protect the work, health and safety of Croatian doctors in front of European institutions under the auspices of FEMS.