PESSIS+ Final Conference
"European Social Dialogue for the Social Services Sector -
state of play and ways forward"
27 June 2019
Social services – a driving force for growth in Europe

The social services sector directly employs over 10 million workers in Europe. Over 1.4 million jobs were created between 2008 and 2015. This makes it the largest sector creating jobs in Europe. Together with health services, social services account for 7% of total economic output in the EU-28 and about 10% of the labour force in the EU-28.
Shaping EU health policy socially with ver.di!

Challenges using the example of nursing care for the elderly

Dramatic changes in care requirements

- Increase in the number of very old, dementially ill, multimorbid people in need of care,
- Increase in older people with a migrant background,
- Disproportionate increase in the proportion of old and very old people,
- Decrease in the number of persons in employment: Attract and retain well-trained nursing and social care staff.
Quality of work in social services - Effects on employees

- High turnover rates
- High proportions of psychological stress and musculoskeletal disorders
- Close link between working conditions and burnout
- Stress and frustration due to the fact that high expectations as to the quality of own work for the patient/user cannot be realised
- Low social esteem is also expressed by poor pay
- Low coverage by collective bargaining and agreements
Social partners bring together the practical experience of workers and employers

- Social partners are involved in the definition of vocational training, professional profiles, etc.

- The jointly elaborated digitisation paper between the Social Employers and EPSU is a good example and important result of the cooperation; ver.di, however, points out that digitisation/robotisation, etc., must serve the goal of good work and contribute to relieving stress, burden and workload from the social care workers.

- In Germany, we could recently attain better refinancing conditions for collectively agreed wages and an agreement on a move towards a needs-based organisation of the services/benefits of the long-term care insurance.
Together for good solutions

Shaping in a social manner the social economy as a growth sector

- No "brain drain", i.e. no depriving other countries of their urgently needed skilled workers

- Introduction of binding minimum wages in all EU countries and rules that prevent the expansion of precarious employment relationships and promote good working conditions/decent work

- Realisation of principle ´Equal wages for equal work at the same place´

- Ensuring occupational health and safety for all employees in Europe
For Germany:

- Statutory/legally defined save and effective staffing levels

- Nationwide collective bargaining for nursing care for the elderly in Germany is politically supported, the Federal Association of Employers in the Care Sector (Bundesvereinigung der Arbeitgeber in der Pflegebranche/BVAP) has been founded

- More public investment through taxes and social security contributions in high quality care – in order to safeguard the public/general interest
Social partners and collective agreements:

- Elaboration and signing of collective agreements that help reducing stress and high workloads and promotion of occupational health and safety through comprehensive risk analyses

- Investments in further training and education/continuing professional development (CPD) – the employers have the responsibility to enable these further training courses/CPD in a way that they don’t lead to even more staff shortages or work overload

- Creation of good working conditions in the sector, increasing the attractiveness of employers in the sector with the aim of recruiting and retaining staff

- Higher appreciation for employees
Together for good solutions

In the social dialogue it is possible to fall back on/make use of:

- Binding and sustainable structures, coordinated lobbying at EU level, both on legislative initiatives and on political initiatives, studies, pilot projects, etc.,
- Opportunity to work on topics of common interest
- Opportunity to exchange good practices/procedures and tried and tested solutions
- Opportunity to reach binding agreements that can lead to an EU directive, on the basis of an agreement and proposal by EU level employer organisations and trade union federations; positive effects in the social dialogue of hospitals, e.g. due to the directive on the prevention and protection of injuries and infections with medical sharps (Directive 2010/32/EU)
Thank you for your attention!

www.gesundheitspolitik.verdi.de
dietmar.erdmeier@verdi.de