Work-related psychosocial risks in health and long-term care sectors: Sources, factors and prevention
Structure of the presentation

• Scope & methods of the ETUI study ‘Psychosocial risks in the health and long-term care sectors: Evidence review and trade unions’ views on sources and prevention’

• Main findings

• 3 Key messages
Scope
- Investigate and conceptualise work-related PSR sources and factors
- Explore prevention and mitigation measures

Methods
- A review of scientific literature using PubMed and Scopus databases
- Semi-structured online interviews with trade union officials in Germany (n=9), Spain (n=6), and Sweden (n=8)
- Online focus groups to verify the findings
Main findings: The context

“PSR is the first cause of unhappiness, demotivation, and absenteeism from work. It is already and will be the big cause to fight for trade unions in the 21st century, it is what is coming, and we need to tackle it.” (Spain)

- Increasing demand for healthcare
- Lack of staff
- Devaluing health and care work
- Austerity measures; Privatisation and commercialisation of care
Main findings: Psychosocial Risk Sources in HC & LTC

High
Job insecurity
Working conditions insecurity
Emotional demands
Quantitative demands
Work-family/life conflict

Low
Control over working conditions
Social support
Recognition and rewards

* Violence and harassment
Main findings: Sources - Factors - Prevention

“The [care] gaps have been filled mostly with inexperienced or untrained staff, that faces high job insecurity because of zero-hour or otherwise limited contracts. They never know when a restructuring or change in management puts their livelihood into danger.” (Sweden)

“There is a wave of dismissals and elimination of posts that were created due to the [Covid-19] crisis. But we see that we need those workers. They have been working during the most difficult times and now they’re being fired.” (Spain)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>PSR factors</th>
<th>Preventive measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High job Insecurity</td>
<td>Zero-hour contracts</td>
<td>Unionisation</td>
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<td>Involuntary part-time work</td>
<td>Collective Agreements</td>
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<td>Unpredictability of salary</td>
<td>Establishment of works councils</td>
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<td>Uncertainty of being re-employed after temporary hiring</td>
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ETUI study Psychosocial Risks in Healthcare and Long-term Care Sectors EU-OSHA Webinar, 4 May 2022
“It is not uncommon that ‘everybody does everything’, which can put carers and auxiliaries at risk - and legal boundaries are broken – this adds to the already high level of stress experienced [by the workers]...most healthcare workers fear the constant changes - many are not explained to them and they don’t know what the next day will bring, perhaps yet again new staff, mostly auxiliaries who come and go...” (Germany)

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<tr>
<td>High working conditions insecurity</td>
<td>Conflicting demands and lack of role clarity</td>
<td>Providing clear and detailed description of roles and responsibilities</td>
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<td>Frequent changes in the content of the work</td>
<td>Collective agreements on working conditions/Company agreements on working conditions</td>
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<td>High number of “floating” staff reassigned from one unit to another</td>
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<td>Hiring untrained staff</td>
<td>Involving workers and their representatives in decision-making processes</td>
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<td>Poorly managed organisational change</td>
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<td>Ineffective communication</td>
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Key messages

1. Negative impacts of PSRs on workers’ health are evident in the healthcare and long-term care sectors.

2. While the sectors, work contexts, and job roles are diverse there is convergence in terms of the sources, factors and health outcomes of PSR.

3. The discourse must shift from a focus on individual mental health to the prevention on work-related psychosocial risks.
Thank you