

## Empowering Practitioners in Social Work from Rural Communities – EPSWRA Report for Greece

**INFO about SOCIAL WORK SYSTEM IN GREECE** – 2-3 PAGES

### 1. Research methodology

#### 1.1. Research objectives

This study aims to identify:

- Social workers’ opinions on social work as a profession, social problems and difficulties daily faced in their work, interaction ways with the people in need,
- the extent of the social workers’ self-care practices, stress and frustration from failures and moral distress and explore its causes,
- the meaning of concepts like self-care and reflective practice and if those concepts are used in practice,
- social workers’ needs for professional training and education,
- the extent of networking practice and the relations social workers’ have with the community members, with local private or public institutions representatives (schools, local authorities, NGOs) and with other specialists from the professional community.

#### 1.2. Participants

The sample consists of 50 social workers and psychologists from rural areas. They are 8 men (16%) and 42 women (84%). Table 1 shows the participants’ age distribution.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	26-35	12	24.0
	36-45	26	52.0
	46-55	11	22.0
	>56	1	2.0
	Total	50	100.0

Participants’ experience in Social Work ranges from 5 to 31 years (average 18 years).

Table 2 shows participants’ education level.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Highschool	0	0.0
	BA degree in social work	28	56.0

	BA degree in another field	12	24.0
	MA in social work	6	12.0
	MA in another field	4	8.0
	Total	50	100.0

### 1.1.Measure

We will provide a description of the questionnaire and its construction

## 2. Results and discussion

The first section of the survey intended to explore social workers' opinions on various aspects of their job, social problems and difficulties daily faced in their work, the sources of occupational stress.

**Table 3. Descriptive statistics for social workers' opinions on their job**

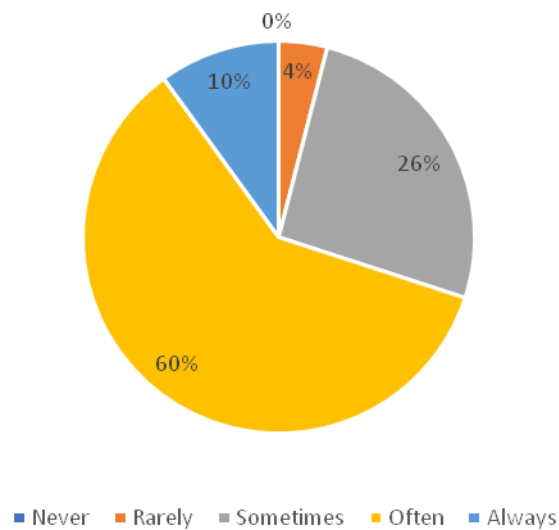
	Total No of Participants	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
		%	%	%	%	%
I deal very effectively with my clients' problems.	50	0%	4%	26%	60%	10%
I have the occasion to consult another professional when I have difficult cases.	50	0%	0%	64%	32%	4%
I have too much work to do.	50	0%	0%	22%	56%	22%
I have a difficult collaboration with the authorities.	50	0%	8%	68%	24%	0%
I can organise my work by myself.	50	8%	38%	40%	10%	4%
I feel emotionally drained from my work.	50	10%	22%	34%	28%	6%
I face the lack of understanding and cooperation from my clients.	50	0%	20%	24%	42%	14%
I solve the work tasks by myself.	50	0%	0%	18%	46%	36%
I feel tired when I wake up in the morning and I have to face a new work day.	50	16%	26%	44%	10%	4%
I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.	50	30%	32%	28%	10%	0%
I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work	50	2%	16%	22%	36%	24%
I have the support of my colleagues in my activity.	50	0%	12%	32%	44%	12%

I have the support of my boss/bosses in my activity.	50	0%	8%	54%	24%	14%
My work tasks are clear to me.	50	0%	0%	16%	48%	36%
I feel I treat some clients as if they were impersonal objects.	50	16%	42%	24%	18%	0%
Working with people is really a strain for me.	50	0%	54%	28%	16%	2%
I accomplish tasks which are not in my responsibility.	50	0%	12%	64%	24%	0%
I really don't care about what happens to some clients.	50	0%	58%	28%	14%	0%
I feel I need to know other professional intervention methods.	50	0%	12%	42%	34%	12%
I have difficult cases to handle and solve in my work.	50	0%	6%	16%	70%	8%
I have all the resources I need to do my job.	50	10%	38%	26%	20%	6%
My work is appreciated by my colleagues.	50	0%	6%	14%	58%	22%
I feel exhilarated after working closely with my clients.	50	2%	16%	60%	18%	4%
I have to fill in many documents in my activity.	50	0%	0%	8%	50%	42%
My work is appreciated by my boss.	50	4%	6%	34%	36%	20%

According to the table 3 the overall perception of social workers' on different aspects of their job is positive:

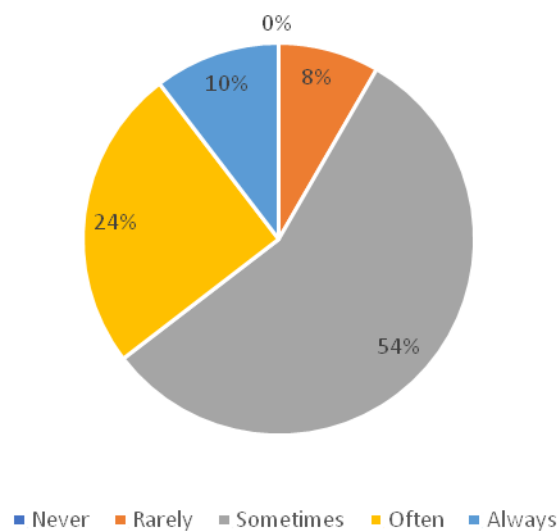
- In the question "I deal very effectively with my clients' problems" 60% of them answered "Often"

### I deal very effectively with my clients' problems

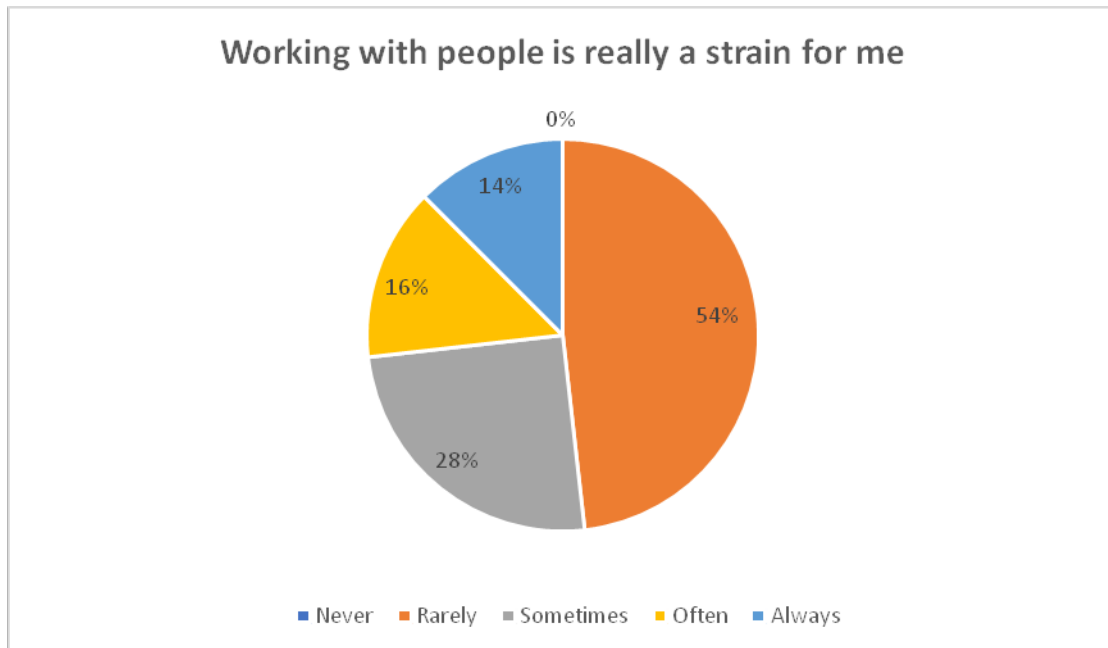


- In the question "I have the support of my boss / bosses in my activity" 54% of them answered "Sometimes"

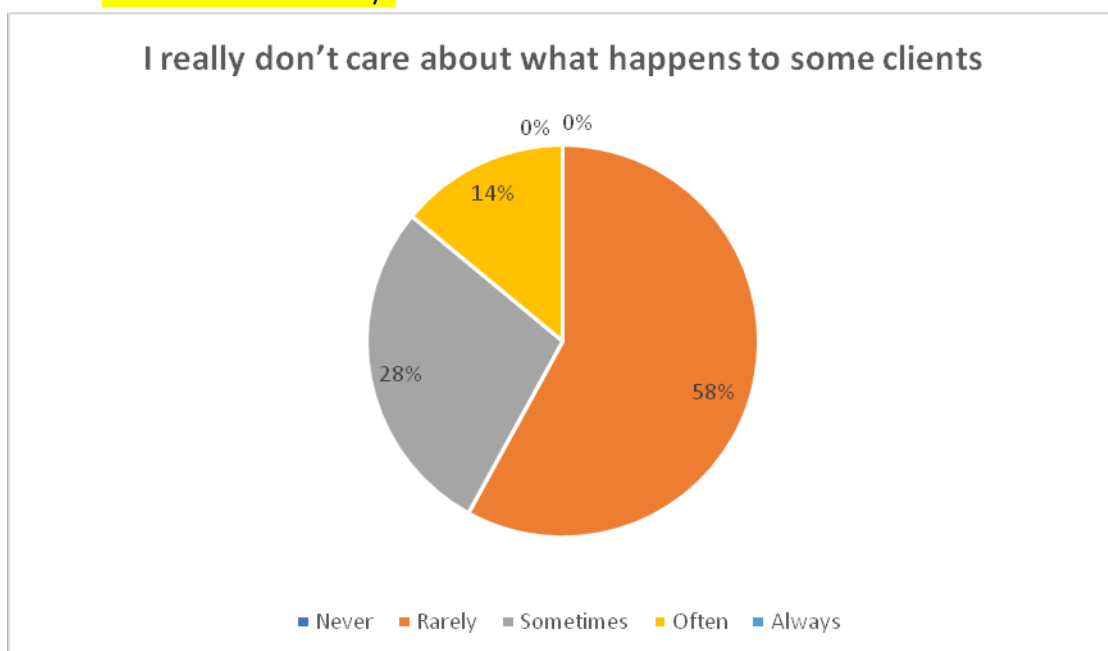
### I have the support of my boss / bosses in my activity



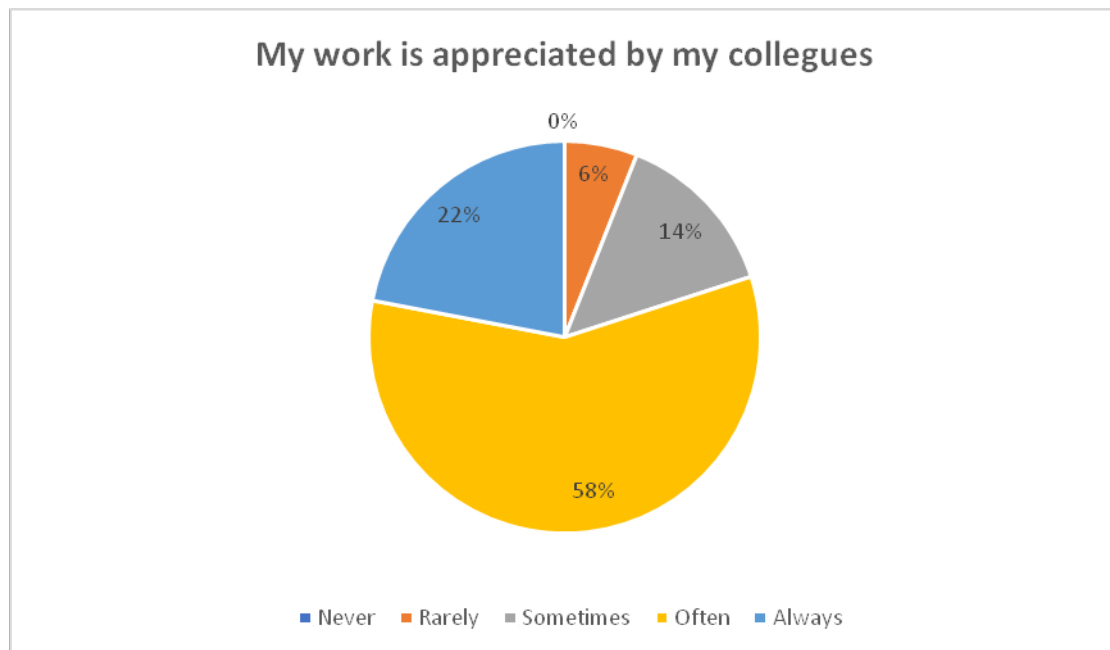
- In the question "Working with people is really a strain for me" 54% of them answered "Rarely"



- In the question “I really don’t care about what happens to some clients” 58% of them answered “Rarely”



- In the question “My work is appreciated by my colleagues” 58% of them answered “Often”

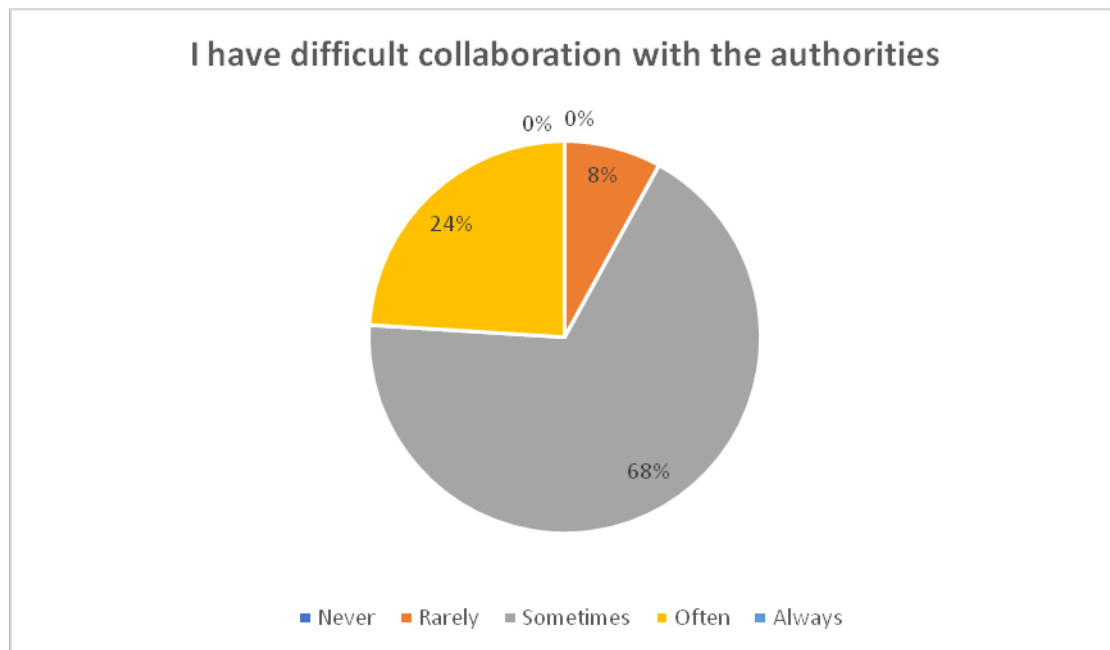


But There are also negative aspects in social workers' opinion:

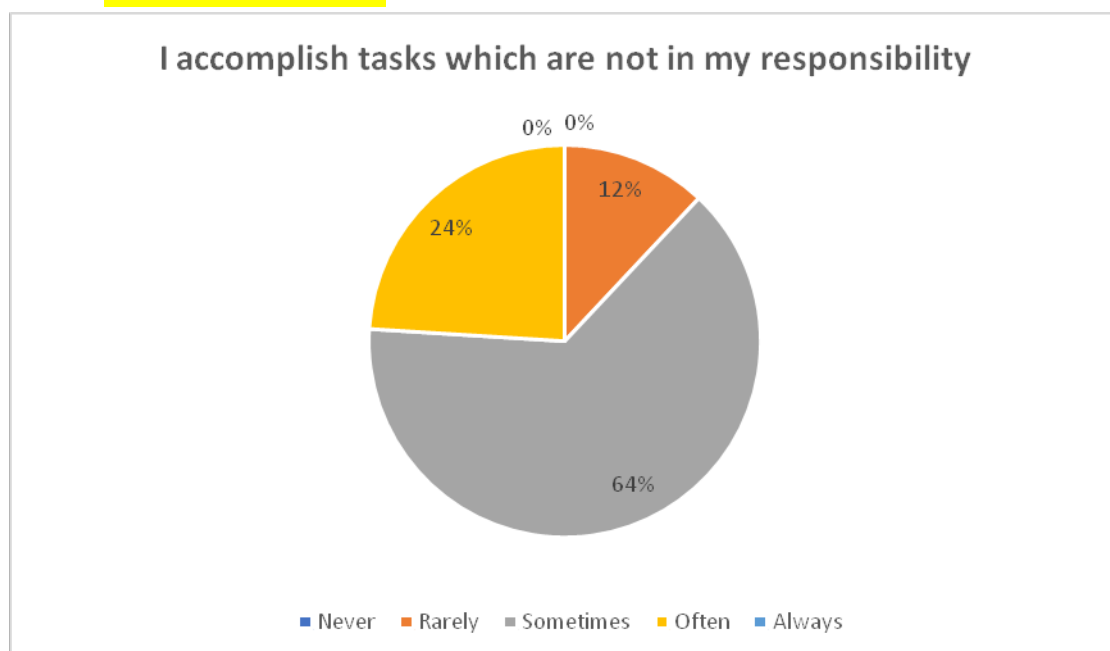
- In the question "I have too much work to do" 56% of them answered "Often"



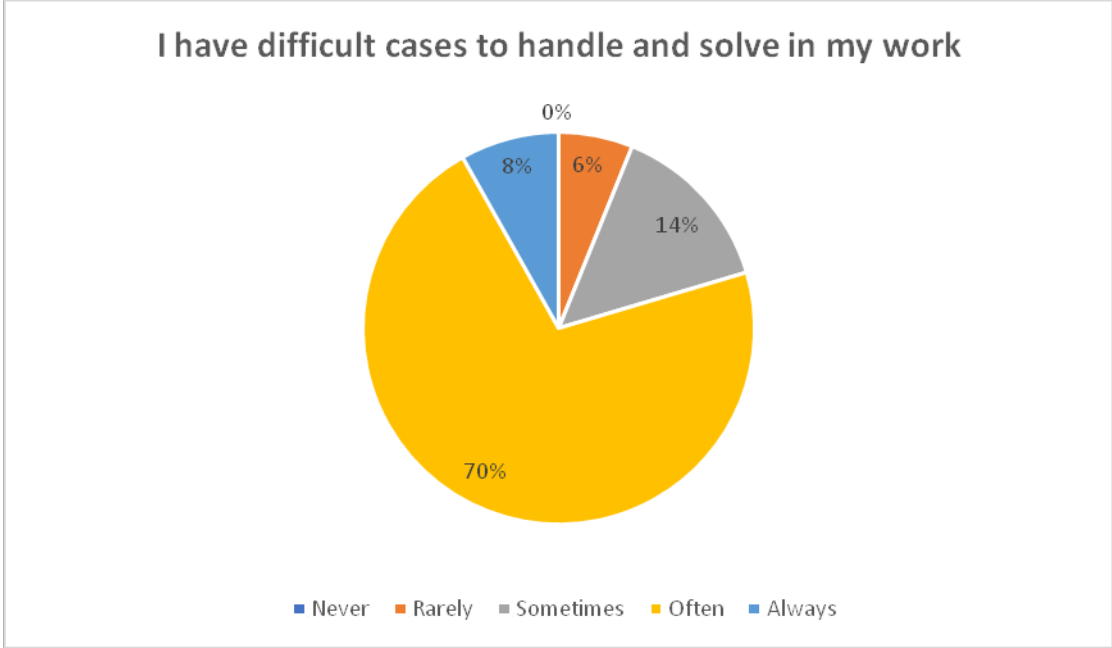
- In the question "I have difficult collaboration with the authorities" 68% of them answered "Sometimes"



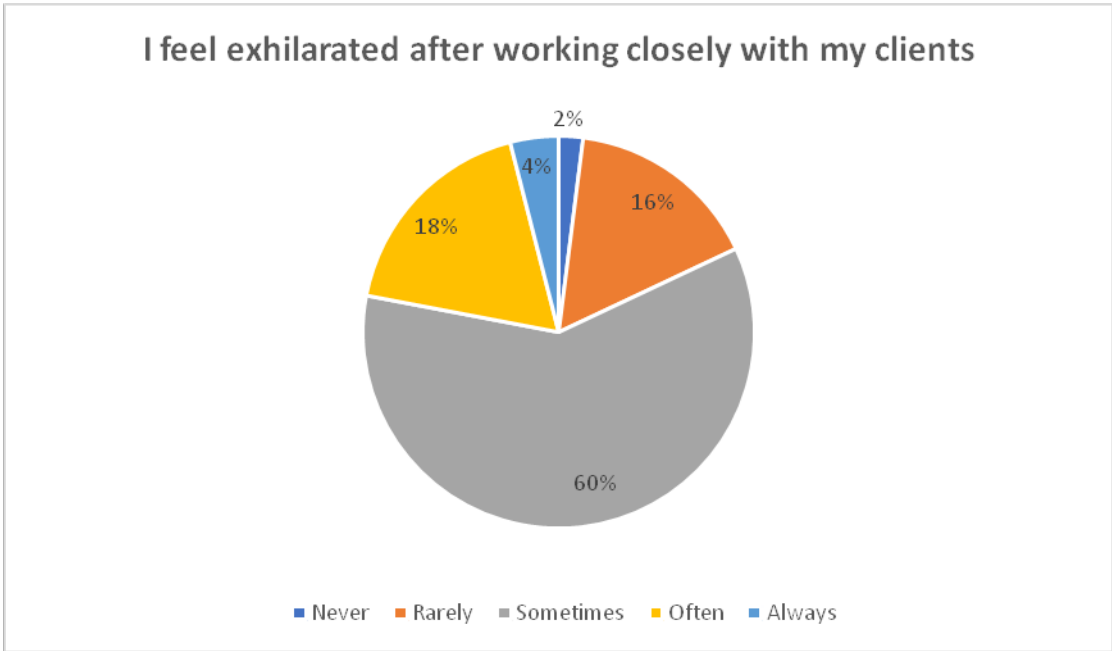
- In the question “I accomplish tasks which are not in my responsibility” 64% of them answered “Sometimes”



- In the question “I have difficult cases to handle and solve in my work” 70% of them answered “Often”



- In the question “I feel exhilarated after working closely with my clients” 60% of them answered “Sometimes”



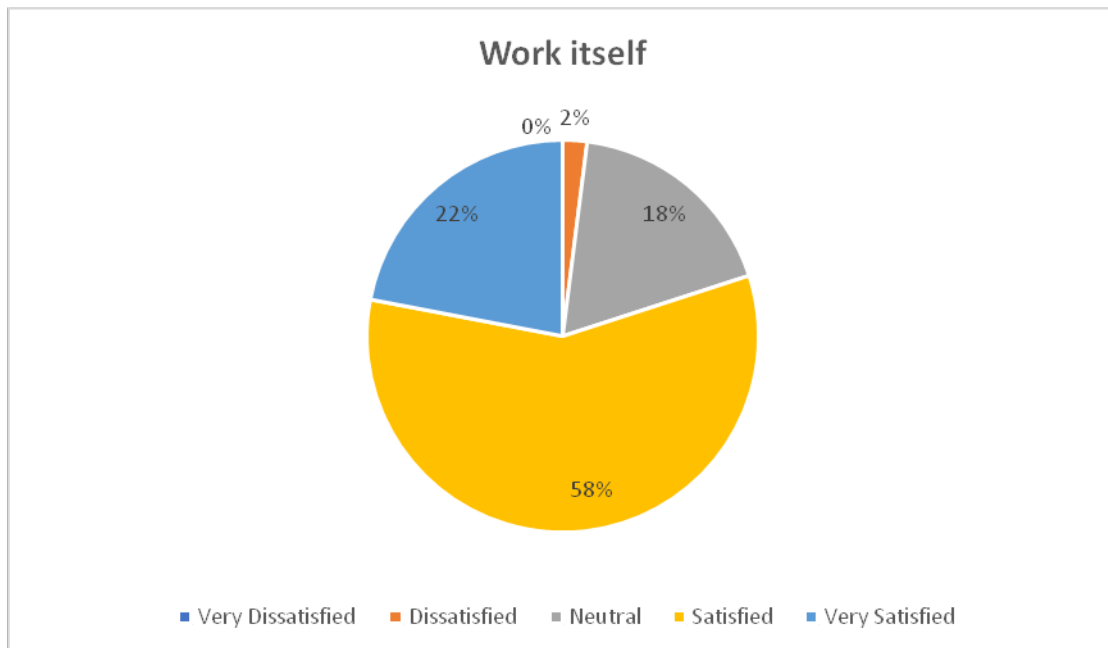
The second section of the survey intended to explore social workers’ opinions on various sources of work satisfaction.

Tabel 4. Descriptive statistics for the sources of work satisfaction



	Total No of Participants	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
		%	%	%	%	%
Salary and rewards	50	10%	46%	28%	16%	0%
Promotion opportunities	50	4%	28%	40%	20%	8%
Work conditions	50	2%	16%	64%	12%	6%
Work itself	50	0%	2%	18%	58%	22%
Recognition of my work	50	6%	24%	20%	34%	16%
Work climate	50	2%	16%	64%	12%	6%
Relationship with clients	50	8%	14%	18%	36%	24%

We can see from the table that almost half of them (46%) are dissatisfied with their salary. Also, it is surprising that 64% claimed that they are neutral regarding their work conditions and work climate. Despite the general dissatisfaction of the majority of the participants, it is positive that 58% of them find their work satisfied.



The third section of the survey explored stress consequences experienced in the last year. Table 5 show the distribution of stress consequences.

	Count	%
Low motivation for work	28	56%
Low self-confidence	14	28%

Feelings of dissatisfaction	35	70%
Increased use of tobacco, alcohol, pills and/or other substance	17	34%
Precarious health	8	16%
Tense relations with others (family, friends etc.)	23	46%
Lower work productivity	37	74%
Sleep disturbances	11	22%
Weight loss or weight gain	5	10%
Weakness	41	82%
Change of eating habits	22	44%
Apathy	19	38%
Difficulty concentrating	33	66%
Difficult decision-making	12	24%
None of the above	0	0%

As we can see for table 5 the bigger percentages are gathered in 5 consequences: Low motivation for work (56%), Feeling of dissatisfaction (70%), Lower work productivity (74%), Weakness (82%) and Difficulty concentrating (66%).

The last section of the survey intended to explore ways of improving social workers' professional activity.

**Table 6. Descriptive statistic for the use of different ways to improve professional activity**

	Total No of Participants	Not at all	To some extent	Very much
		%	%	%
Emotional regulation techniques	50	14%	58%	28%
Supervision from another professional	50	64%	20%	16%
Communication with other colleagues	50	0%	44%	56%
Being a member of a professional network/ association	50	34%	52%	14%
Professional training	50	48%	28%	24%
Reading about the latest developments in the field of social work	50	16%	38%	46%
Exchange of experience with other professionals in my field (from my country or from abroad)	50	0%	62%	38%

We can see from table 6 that most of the participants use mainly 4 ways to improve their professional activity: Communication with other colleagues, Exchange of experience with other professionals in their field, Emotional regulation techniques and Being a member of a

professional network/ association. While they use less the Supervision from another professional.

**Table 7. Descriptive statistic for the need of different ways to improve professional activity**

	Total No of Participants	Not at all	To some extent	Very much
		%	%	%
Emotional regulation techniques	40	0%	44%	36%
Supervision from another professional	47	22%	54%	18%
Communication with other colleagues	24	0%	20%	28%
Being a member of a professional network/ association	43	22%	30%	34%
Professional training	47	16%	22%	56%
Reading about the latest developments in the field of social work	27	0%	24%	30%
Exchange of experience with other professionals in my field (from my country or from abroad)	40	0%	36%	44%

Regarding the need of different ways to improve their professional activity, the participants, as shown from Table 7, are concentrating more at two ways: Supervision from another professional and Professional training.

**CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS**