EASY COME, EASY GO

Helsinki, 2019
SERVICE PROVIDERS

➤ Educators
➤ Speech Therapists
➤ Occupational therapists
➤ Employees at assisted living units
➤ Nurses
➤ Personal assistants
➤ Employees at day-care centres
➤ Care providers in housing units for the elderly
➤ NGO/DPO staff
DANIELA, EMPLOYEE AT THE MACEDONIAN HEALTH INSURANCE FUND
“Whilst my physical disability undoubtedly played a role in me getting into special education studies, it was the urge to better understand and support others, particularly persons with different types of needs than myself, that drove me into this field. I feel like facing challenges on a daily basis makes me relate to these people more easily. I have worked for years in the NGO sector but now, in the Health Insurance Fund I am ‘at home’ - I finally feel like I can contribute in a meaningful way, by engaging with a sector that needs innovation and better direction when it comes to the access and the needs of people with disabilities”
WHAT PULLS PEOPLE IN?

➤ Having a disability
➤ Having a family member with disability/knowing someone with a disability
➤ Volunteering
➤ The idea of community service and contributing to society
➤ Good deals for temporary housing
➤ Social media activism
➤ Start up/entrepreneurship scene and technology
ADRIANA, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER IN GERMANY
“I love working in Special Ed: the joy and excitement when the student makes progress, the creativity kick I’m getting from developing new resources, working with amazing teachers...It’s also great to be able to have a formal beginning and ending of school year as well as plenty of holidays; We need them! I still, however, consider changing my job, at least temporarily. The constant back-and-forth with parents, the piles of documentation I am expected to fill out, but also the perceived greater “awareness” of special needs is often simply regarded as referring small armies of kids to me. I take my work home, I think about it all the time and it’s starting to consume my life.”
WHAT MAKES PEOPLE LEAVE?

➤ Burnout

➤ Over-saturation from working with the same person all the time

➤ Financial instability (project-based initiatives, being subjected to budget cuts)

➤ Limited variety/few opportunities for career development

➤ Loss of interest
ANETA, SERVICE PROVIDER IN AN ASSISTED LIVING UNIT IN SLOVENIA
“I never thought I was going to stay there for so long - initially I signed up just for 6 months and kept extending it, while changing my role there. In the beginning I was focused on house work, but then I got more engaged in various workshops and collaboration with external partners. The community life was amazing! I learned so much about them [people with disabilities] but about myself as well. I met some very inspirational volunteers from all over the world there too - not all of them were engaged, but most were really invested into making the place feel like a home. I’m still in touch with the people there and I am very keen on helping develop such units in my home country.”
HOW CAN WE GET PEOPLE TO STAY?

➤ Financial stability

➤ Frequent breaks, enough holidays, sensible working hours and expectations

➤ Opportunities for career development: rather than staying in the same role, changing roles/rotations, taking part in planning, managing, conducting/actively participating in research, creating materials and resources; giving ideas for improvement

➤ Fostering good relationships and nurturing the feeling of being part of a community; plenty of opportunities for collaboration, a quiet place to hang-out; opportunities to “unload”
FUTURE CHALLENGES

➤ In times when people change jobs and careers frequently, how do we keep the attention towards this sector?
➤ Can we turn high turn-over into something positive?
➤ In an era when innovation is cherished, how do we maintain the success of what we have ingeniously come up with?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION