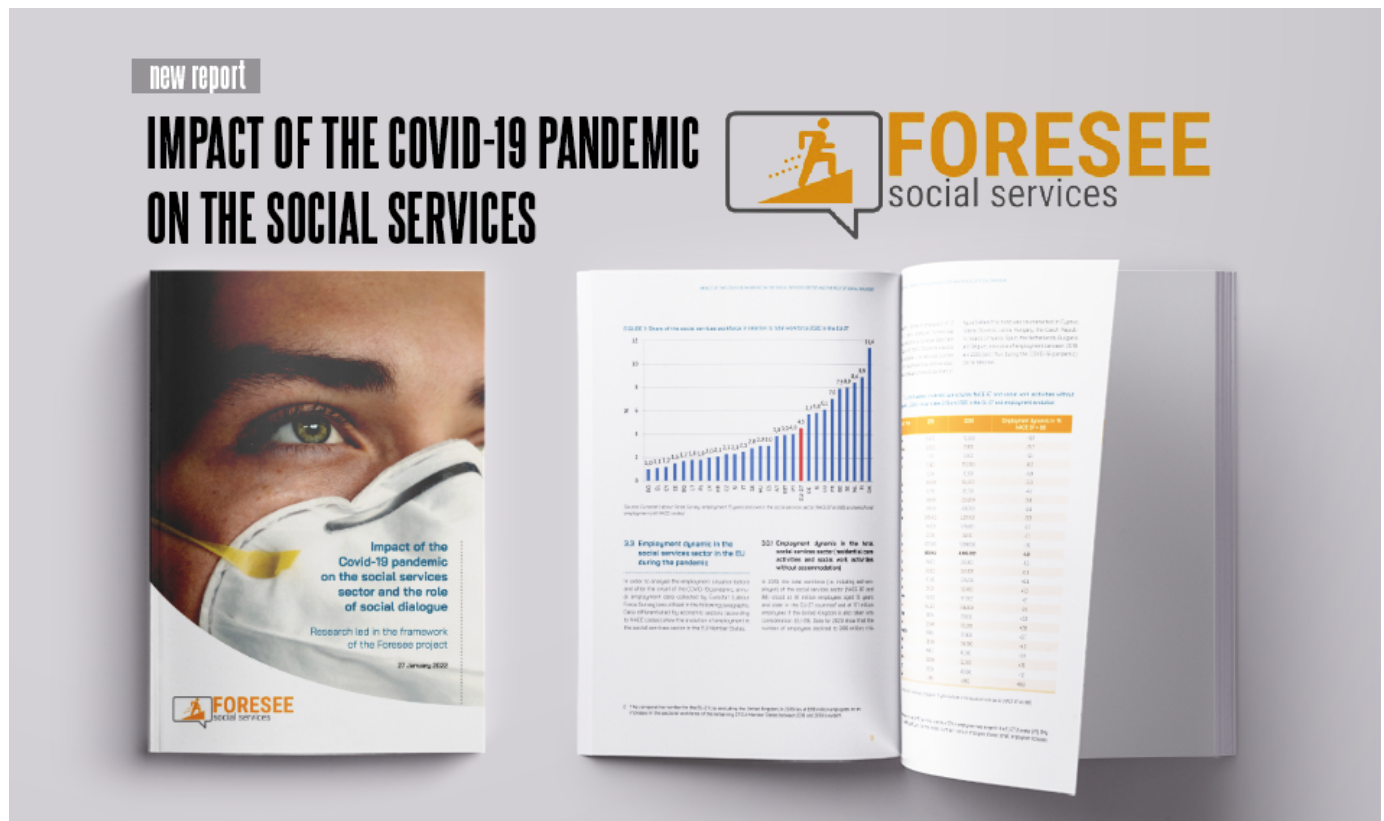


New report: Impact of Covid-19 on the social services sector and the role of social dialogue



(10 March 2022) The FORESEE project consortium launches a new, extensive report on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on social services and the role of social dialogue in alleviating the crisis.

The report was drafted by the Working Life Research Centre ([FORBA](#)) and includes an analysis of expert interviews carried out with employers' organisations and trade unions.

The report shows that pre-existing difficulties and a lack of anticipation worsened the negative impact the pandemic had on the social services sector and its workforce, leading to an increase in staff shortages. For the future, a more **integrated care approach and better preparedness for crises are crucial, as well as a better image and visibility of the sector**. The perception of social services as essential services needs to be further established at all levels.

In addition, **more funding is necessary to respond to workforce challenges, improve working conditions and reinforce the sector's attractiveness**. This includes better staff-user ratios, working times and schedules, wages, safety standards, as well as training and career paths, etc.

The study also puts in evidence that the pandemic **accelerated the digitalisation process in the sector**. Care providers and workers showed great flexibility to adapt their services. This should be reinforced, including through education and training on digital skills.

The data collected also demonstrates that in countries with structured social dialogue in social services, **social partners took prompt actions and found pragmatic solutions** to face the effects of the crisis. **Further capacity building for social dialogue at EU and national level is needed**, to address workforce challenges, tackle consequences of the crisis, and improve anticipation.

- [The final report is available in English](#)
- The executive summary is also available in: [French](#), [German](#), [Spanish](#), [Italian](#) and [Polish](#). It contains the main findings of the study, including the key lessons learned.
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