

PESSIS+ Final Conference

"European Social Dialogue for the Social Services Sector - state of play and ways forward"

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*Gesundheit, Soziale Dienste
Wohlfahrt und Kirchen*

**Vereinte
Dienstleistungs-
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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.



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



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Together for good solutions

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



Together for good solutions

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



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Together for good solutions

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



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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!



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