



EUROPEAN  
FEDERATION  
FOR FAMILY  
EMPLOYMENT  
& HOME CARE

# EFFE 2024 European Electoral Manifesto

*A social Europe that works for every home*

Social care is all too often undervalued and overlooked despite widespread understanding that Europe's population continues to age, with around 30% estimated to be 65 or over by [2050](#). The 2024 European Elections represent an opportunity to change this and give the sector well-deserved recognition.

The European Federation for Family Employment and Home Care (EFFE) is one of the key actors that advocates for the home care sector at EU level – focusing on the direct employment model. In this model, the person in the need of care or domestic activities signs a contract with an individual domestic worker – helping them to maintain their agency and autonomy for as long as they wish via home care, or achieve work-life balance with professional support.

In spite of the value domestic workers bring to the lives of those they care for and to society as a whole, they experience a lack of recognition and support from European public authorities. In many Member States, they are left in legal limbo – often resorting to undeclared work – and lack the social and health rights all workers are entitled to. These are the hardworking people who look after young children, elderly people, and people with disabilities, allowing them to exercise their independence and take part in the daily life of their communities, and support women to return to the workplace by alleviating the burden of household tasks that fall on their shoulders.

Our vision of a social Europe is one where each and every citizen can choose the care model that best supports them to go about their daily lives. This matters for so many Europeans – from the elderly person seeking to stay safely in their own home, to students with disabilities looking for someone to help them get ready for university, and parents looking for a childcare worker they can trust.

**This requires urgent reform to promote and enforce fair, decent, and formally regulated working conditions in the sector.** A worrying number of home carers still face precarious undeclared work - estimated at over 45% in Germany, over 40% in Italy and between 28% and 40% in the Netherlands. By incentivising formal home care work, as is the case in countries like France and Belgium, employees can benefit from participation in the formal economy and access social protections previously denied to them.

Presently, home care workers experience a lack of official recognition and support. **These employees, the majority of whom are women and who often have a migration background, are all too often overlooked by decision makers.** Their experiences are neglected in public policy – creating a vicious cycle where there is a lack of research into the challenges faced by home care workers, and campaigners for change are met with yet another hurdle – the absence of quantifiable data to reinforce these women's stories and experiences. Without such data, decision-makers are reluctant to take action.

However, such action on reforming the home care sector – providing all home care actors with the recognition and resources they need – has the potential to transform it for the better. Improving working conditions and training will attract more people to help meet growing demand for care and support, as well as giving Europeans the chance to access affordable, high-quality care from someone they trust.



14<sup>th</sup> of November 2023  
BRUSSELS

10 years of commitment and advocacy:  
What does the future hold for the PHS sector  
in Europe for 2030?



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## Eight steps to supporting domestic services:

1. Fully recognise **domestic and home care work in all its diversity** – with a special focus on households that directly employ these workers – and fight undeclared work to ensure these unsung contributors to social Europe and the silver economy benefit from the same social rights as any other worker in the EU.
2. Continue to implement an **ambitious social agenda** to support all European workers.
3. **Promote home care integration into the wider care sector**, so that citizens can maintain their independence, benefit from flexibility and choice in combining formal and informal care services, and so that national budget sustainability is secured.
4. Empower domestic & home care workers via the **European Skills Agenda**, bringing high-quality services and their accompanying benefits to citizens all over Europe.
5. Call on the EU and its Member States to **give the home care sector the funding it needs** to provide affordable home care to every citizen who chooses it.
6. **Improve social dialogue and collective bargaining** to guarantee decent working conditions and training opportunities in the care sector, while paying workers a fair salary worthy of such an essential role and attracting committed professionals to tackle the challenges of an aging society.
7. Encourage EU Member States and the European institutions to implement policies that **recognise the vital role of the domestic sector in integration of people with a migration background** into the formal workforce, including:
  - support for migrant workers in having their professional skills assessed and certified, whether acquired informally or formally,
  - opportunities for migrant workers and people with a migration background to access fast-track skill building programs that ensure a high-quality care workforce for the future and fulfil unmet care needs.
8. Encourage EU Member States and all European institutions to **tackle the gender gap in the sector**. Women make up 89% of European domestic workers, according to the [ILO](#), and these women face daily precarity and discrimination, as well as navigation of gender stereotypes.