

HOME & FAMILY EMPLOYMENT AND HOME CARE IN THE EU: 10 PROPOSALS FOR A SOCIAL AND INCLUSIVE EUROPE

CONCEPT SUMMARY



EUROPEAN WHITE PAPER



A CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVE

We have observed that EU and its Member States are currently facing difficulties in finding shared solutions to tackle current challenges and concerns of its citizens. European elections have rarely been as uncertain as those planned for May 2019. The lack of trust currently placed by citizens in European institutions proves the importance for European public authorities to return to a more social Europe.

In many ways, European citizens tend to organise themselves in order to create and implement the solutions they need. They are no longer mere consumers of public policies but rather their initiators. By so doing they assert their key role for Europe's future.

However, today's situation shall not mislead us into forgetting how far EU has gone. Public policies have proven their ability to provide adequate responses and practical measures anytime the EU citizens have pointed them out e.g. the European Pillar of Social rights, the reinforcement of the protection of posted workers, Youth' guarantee, etc.

All Member States are currently facing a common demographic challenge that ought to be addressed with a cross-sector European political response. In this context, jobs created by citizens in their home are being developed.

The home employment sector encompasses activities directly paid for and declared by households, and include a wide range of occupations from housekeeping to care services. By all means, this sector is citizen oriented: two private individuals decide to work together, thus ensuring a solution to one's needs and a job to the other.

The sector accounts for several million of jobs according to current Eurostat statistics. Due to its position on the edge of the informal economy, its potential remains substantial as long as EU countries set up concerted public policies so as to support job declaration in the sector.

This should enable families to recruit qualified persons to assist them, as well as to grant social rights and decent working conditions for workers.

Such jobs do not only face economic (competitiveness, work-life balance, posting of workers), social (new jobs, new skills) or societal challenges (integration and social cohesion) in the European Union, they also accompany more global, geopolitical and geostrategic issues such as this of tackling large migration streams in the EU.

Though domestic jobs are not the sole solution to the various crises the EU is currently undergoing, they somehow make up for a significant amount to it, with regard to the direct impact on fundamental evolutions of the European way of living.

Further to this observation, EFFE has drawn up the European White Paper "*Home & Family Employment and Home Care in the European Union*" with the aim to contribute to the development of new horizons for a political and social Europe, while recognising this sector as an employment sector in its own right. ■



HOME EMPLOYMENT: A RICH SOURCE OF JOBS CROSSING DAY-TO-DAY REQUIREMENTS OF EUROPEAN CITIZENS

Europe's demographic situation is evolving considerably due to several factors: participation of women in labour market, decrease in fertility rate, increasing life expectancy and risks of skills shortages.

The share of ageing population is likely to keep increasing in the forthcoming years, reaching a consequent 34.5% of overall EU population over 60 and over 70% relying on social protection. Increased mobility, both geographical and social, is also bound to strongly alter the life and cohesion of private households as well as on the models of elderly care. Such prospects should be regarded as an opportunity to foster innovation and public policies' integration within the EU.

Home employment sector in Europe is a job creator not only as it blends in future digital and robotics innovations for private use, but also as it is inclusive of new family structures and integrating migrant populations while ensuring their professionalization.

This kind of employment relationship between household employers and domestic workers stresses out major social challenges the EU is engaged to address in a near future: tackling population ageing, supporting women participation in the labour market, fostering birth rates,

creating declared jobs, enhancing social rights, acknowledging new skills for domestic workers and granting decent integration to migrant populations. By organising and implementing the solutions to their own living requirements, households provide a citizen response to collective stakes of first importance. ■

1/ A necessary recognition of home employment in EU policies

To enable the organisation of an efficient social dialogue

EFFE supports the creation of a EU legal framework that will raise new opportunities of collective bargaining for private employers and domestic workers on a first hand, and enable a large share of informal jobs to be acknowledged as formal on a second hand. The economic sector represents million of socially useful jobs on a European level.

To guarantee a better work-life balance and a better access of women to the labour market

Home employment is a solution to the evolving needs for an adequate work-life balance, as it enables to outsource a part of the household tasks and care to professional domestic workers, chosen and paid by the families. The evolution in society encourages the creation of new jobs which favour social cohesion and parenthood.





To efficiently fight undeclared work, predominant in this sector

EFFE supports a vision of Europe that creates inclusive labour markets, along with employment policies in favour of the largest number of people, without being prejudicial to vulnerable populations. Fighting against undeclared work and insecure working relationships, **must be part of a coordinated European policy in favour of decent professional and social standards for all workers**, respecting the prerogatives of the Member States.



The recognition on a European level of the status of household employer and domestic worker shall be a relevant basis for the development of the future European social dialogue.

To grant better working conditions for domestic workers

Home employment is currently made up of a large share of migrants, most of which being female workers, undeclared, working on European soil in poor conditions and for low wages. Their integration will go through professionalization and the recognition of their social rights.

To ensure formalization of their professional duties **Member States must encourage households to declare them, to make them aware of the domestic risks their worker might be exposed to and to simplify the administrative formalities and provide financial support for these jobs.**

Social welfare guarantees protection for the employee in the case of occupational accident, illness or unemployment, but also guarantees income upon retirement age and provides the worker with the opportunity to take training to avoid accidents and professional burnout..

The social dialogue must enable the **creation of a universal skills' account** to ensure recognition of the professional skills acquired in relation to home employment and thus encourage social integration of less-qualified populations. **Professionalization is also crucial for a dignified and successful integration of migrants**, particularly in the current geopolitical context.

Domestic jobs rely on relational and technical skills that are accessible to persons with few or no qualifications, or persons whose qualifications acquired in their home country are not always recognised in the host country.

The European home employment sector may be a vehicle for an inclusive integration of migrants within Member States, where the legislative context allows it. ■



2/ A favourable context

In a context of major economic and social changes, Member States must work closer together to consider the adaptations that may be made to their social structures in order to provide a better response to the upheaval of Welfare State.

The European Union must assist and accompany individuals and families in facing the social and societal challenges that they encounter on a daily basis.

EFFE believes that asserting a new civic responsibility is one of the keys to a renewed commitment of European citizens. This new responsibility may raise up through the recognition of the economic value of European households, their social roles as well as their democratic power.



Investments in long-term models of social organisation and local economic development, which give responsibilities to citizens and meet with the new societal requirements and challenges, are essential. It directly contribute to maintaining the European model. The promotion of civic responsibility as a means of improving the quality of services of care in the homes of millions of Europeans must encourage Europe to build up a new solution to the societal challenges while recognising the commitment of all actors of inclusion and integration, and while valuing the participation of each person to European democratic and economic life.

European families and households are future contributors to national and European public policies.

- ❖ **Include the sector in the European statistical classifications and create a European observatory of the home employment sector in European households,**
- ❖ **Account this sector in the national statistics,**
- ❖ **Assessing its economic weight at European level and specifying its components to facilitate investments.** Investing in dedicated policies for home employment and social cohesion, allows the development of European human resources, and generate the essential economic strengths for maintaining the competitiveness of Europe.

Furthermore, opportunities created by the use of digital tools in the sector are efficient as they increase the innovation potential within the homes. They also allow the professionalization of domestic workers and the rise of easy declaration mechanisms.

➔ **Among the reasons to not declare employment, two aspects seem to be key factors for the families: the absence of a framework allowing them to declare quickly and easily the workers, and the high cost of declared employment, in light of the average budget of European households.**

When incentive public policies are set up, they encourage workers' and jobs' transfer within formal economy without disrupting family methods and organisations, and encourage access to all social rights.

➔ **The development of new domestic uses creates new opportunities.** Families accompany these changes by relying on inter-generational solidarity which enables elderly people to remain at home for a longer amount of time.

For workers, the opportunity to develop new skills and enrich those already acquired is essential for competitiveness on the labour market. Although robotics and digitalisation lead to possible threats to employment, it will always be difficult to fully automate occupations involving care and assistance to persons, in particular in light of the high relational aspect characterizing the sector. Therefore, home employment is a source of social and technological innovation which guarantees digital inclusion.

- ➔ **A dedicated public policy for home employment within the EU refer to four main purposes:**
- ❖ The creation of quality jobs,
 - ❖ The improvement of working conditions,
 - ❖ The promotion of equality in the jobs,
 - ❖ The access for all European citizens to useful solutions to their day-to-day requirements. ■

CIVIL SOCIETY IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THE RECOGNITION OF THE HOME EMPLOYMENT SECTOR AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

Home employment is still invisible in some Member States and undeclared work is predominant in the sector, as there is no sufficient framework at national and European level.

The need for organisation is demonstrated in EFFE's White Paper "Home & Family Employment and Home Care in the European Union" and its 10 proposals to specify the positive effects and the necessary support of the European authorities in order to recognise this sector as an essential segment for the future.

1/ A citizen initiative embracing 2017 European Pillar of Social rights

Since the European Summit of 17th November 2017 in Gothenburg, a new political momentum has been given to a more protective social Europe. This momentum may turn out to be short-lived if no practical actions and proposals emerge, in light of allocating skills between Member States and European institutions. The declaration of the European Pillar of Social Rights may and must help reconciling citizens with their European representatives and the expected benefits of the construction of Europe.

On 27th June 2018, Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, clearly set forth the role as a "compass" of the European Pillar of Social Rights, specifying that, in this challenge, there was a role for each of the stakeholders: Commission, Member States, social partners and civil society.

With the European elections coming in, and with a desire to ensure convergence of the European institutions and citizen requirements, EFFE is contributing to the European debate by mobilising partners from the civil society in order to defend a social innovation model organised around

4 major stakes :



2/ Adapted public policies to meet with cross-sector stakes

An oriented public policy for the sector of Home employment within the EU must enable to meet with the following issues:

- ❖ **Foster a good understanding of the economic and social weight of the sector;**
- ❖ **Assist Member States** wishing to develop support policies on the basis of good practices within the EU;
- ❖ **Facilitate the quantification of the positive effects** and the contribution provided by the sector to other EU policies (such as fight against undeclared work, autonomy of the disabled, work-life balance, childcare solutions, stakes related to digitalisation, social protection, etc.);
- ❖ **Develop a specific status** for the household employer and for the domestic workers;
- ❖ **Develop vocational training solutions** in order to ensure better competitiveness of workers and a better career path;
- ❖ **Develop and structure employer and workers organisations** of the sector to encourage social dialogue and collective negotiations, to ensure the individual rights of workers, and to specify the rights and obligations of the employers;
- ❖ **Enable the stakes of the sector to be better pinpointed** in the next 2020 Cohesion Policy.

Through its 10 proposals, EFFE suggests the creation of a EU reference framework enabling to standardise home employment at EU level, combining social welfare for workers and easier recruitment for employers, and, secondly, to encourage conventional relations between the organisations which represent them at national and EU level. ■

**EFFE plans to structure its action in
3 stages to reach implementation of its endeavours**

1

A recommendation of the European Commission to EU Member States that would take on the **10 proposals for a European common reference framework**.

2

Initiatives taken at EU level, such as **the creation of an Observatory and a European status of domestic workers**.

3

Specific recommendations to the Member States in the frame of the European Semester.



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