



EUROPEAN FEDERATION  
FOR FAMILY EMPLOYMENT  
AND 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 of care. In this model, the person seeking care services signs a contract with an individual domestic or home care worker — helping them to maintain their agency and autonomy for as long as they wish or reaching their work-life balance's needs.

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 and decision makers. In many Member States, they are left in legal limbo — often resorting to undeclared work — and lack the labour, 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's inclusion into the labour market by alleviating the burden of unpaid household and care 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. As households related activities mostly fall on women, our vision of social Europe is one where households and individuals can have access to affordable indirect care activities to reach their work-life balance needs.

This requires urgent reform to promote and enforce fair, decent, and formally regulated working conditions in the sector. A worrying number of PHS workers/domestic workers 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, domestic & 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 PHS sector — providing all domestic and homecare 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.

In this context, we call on the future EU decision-makers to adequately support the domestic and home care sector thanks to the following steps.

# 10 STEPS TO SUPPORTING DOMESTIC SERVICES

1

**FULLY RECOGNISE DOMESTIC & CARE WORK IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY THE MULTIPLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND VARIOUS EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS COEXISTING IN THE SECTOR** — 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. To empower the PHS sector to adequately address the growing demand for quality care services, all operating models must be treated equally. Fair competition between PHS providers and PHS employment models should be guaranteed throughout Europe.

2

**CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT AN AMBITIOUS SOCIAL AGENDA TO SUPPORT ALL EUROPEAN WORKERS.**

3

**PROMOTE DOMESTIC AND HOME CARE INTEGRATION INTO THE WIDER CARE SECTOR, SO THAT CITIZENS CAN MAINTAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE, BENEFIT FROM FLEXIBILITY AND CHOICE.**

4

**HOME CARE SHOULD BE GRANTED THE SAME FUNDING AS NURSING HOMES.**

5

**PROMOTE DOMESTIC AND HOME CARE INTEGRATION INTO THE WIDER CARE SECTOR, SO THAT CITIZENS CAN MAINTAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE, BENEFIT FROM FLEXIBILITY AND CHOICE.**

6

**EMPOWER DOMESTIC & HOME CARE WORKERS VIA THE EUROPEAN SKILLS AGENDA, BRINGING HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES AND THEIR ACCOMPANYING BENEFITS TO CITIZENS ALL OVER EUROPE.**

7

**CALL ON THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES TO GIVE THE PHS SECTOR THE FUNDING IT NEEDS TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE DOMESTIC AND CARE SERVICES TO EVERY CITIZEN WHO CHOOSES IT.**

**SUPPORT SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TO GUARANTEE DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PHS 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.**

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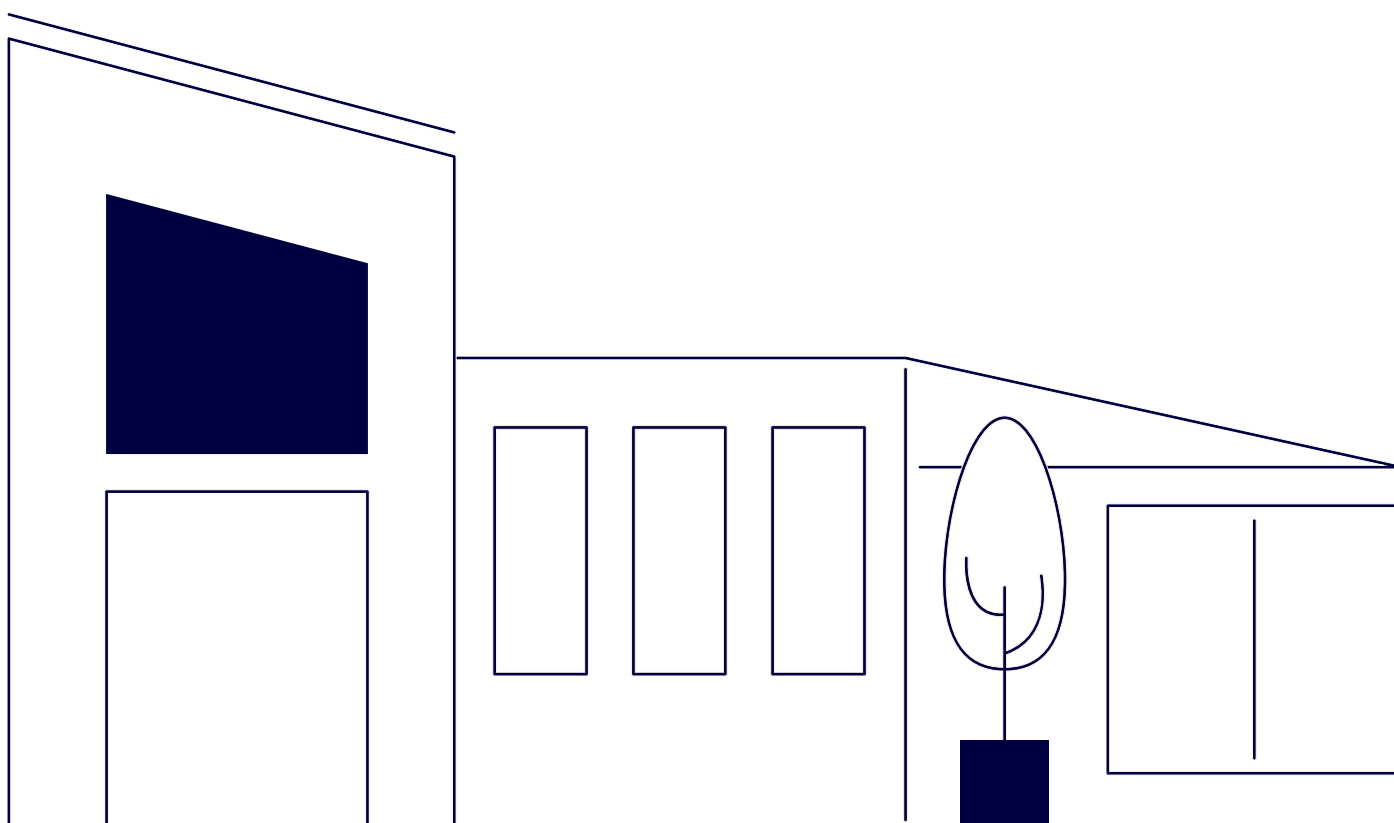
**ENCOURAGE EU MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT POLICIES THAT RECOGNISE THE VITAL ROLE OF THE DOMESTIC SECTOR IN INTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WITH A MIGRATION BACKGROUND INTO THE FORMAL WORKFORCE, INCLUDING:**

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- A.** support for migrant workers in having their professional skills assessed and certified, whether acquired informally or formally,
- B.** 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.

**ENCOURAGE EU MEMBER STATES AND ALL EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS TO TACKLE THE GENDER GAP IN THE SECTOR. WOMEN MAKE UP 91% OF EUROPEAN DOMESTIC AND HOME CARE WORKERS, AND THESE WOMEN FACE DAILY PRECARIETY AND DISCRIMINATION, AS WELL AS NAVIGATION OF GENDER STEREOTYPES.**

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