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EUROPEAN AGEING NETWORK

Newsletter Spring 2024

My dear colleagues and friends,

At EAN, we are living busy times. We have our next Board and GA meetings in Tallinn at the end of this month, we have the European elections in June and we are working hard on the Athens conference in September. We are producing and preparing outputs in several working groups and in between we continue to contact and visit new and potential members.

This year started productive. And we still have a lot of things to do. At our next General assembly we will calibrate our compass again and see where we can do more - or differently - to even better represent the interest of our members, their organisations and, ultimately, their serviced older persons.

Looking forward to meeting you all in Tallinn!

Jiří Horecký,
EAN president

EAN welcomes three new members

The nursing home "Pogodna Jesień" in Poland offers innovations that support seniors in performing everyday activities, while ensuring safety and comfort of their caregivers. The innovations it implements make life easier, are good for the planet and have a positive impact on the environment. Pogodna Jesień wants its care to be friendly for everyone: for seniors, caregivers, and the environment.

For more information see the website of Pogodna Jesień. The EAN contact person is Agata Mrózek.

Since 1977 Lopital has specialised in the product development, production, marketing and distribution of medical and rehabilitation devices such as, hydraulic and electric operated adjustable shower-toiletchairs, showertrolleys, changing tables and an active sit to stand aid. Lopital products are now available in more than 25 countries in the world and has its headquarters in The Netherlands.

For more information see Lopital's website. The EAN Contact person is Jan van Megen.

The University of Nîmes is a key actor in higher education and research in the south of France. Located between Montpellier and Marseille, it has developed its originality and its difference, allowing it to offer a variety of options to young people wishing to pursue higher education. Via the Institut méditerranéen des métiers de la longévité (I2ML) it develops expertise for companies and public utilities to provide customised services in order to improve senior citizen's quality of life.

For more information, see the i2ML website. The EAN contact person is Jean Marc Blanc.

La Hulpe Declaration sets out the future of Social Europe

The High-Level Conference on the European Pillar of Social Rights of 15-16 April in La Hulpe (BE) has adopted an interinstitutional Declaration signed by the EU institutions (European Commission, European Parliament and Council of the EU), social partners and civil society. The aim of the declaration is to prepare the future social agenda of the 2024-2029 period and to reconfirm the European Pillar of Social Rights as the EU social policy compass for years to come.

The goal of the High-Level Conference on the European Pillar of Social Rights was to bring together policymakers, stakeholders and experts to deliberate on the further implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Through engaging discussions, insightful panels, and collaborative workshops, participants will explore possible venues and actions to consolidate the Pillar's principles and ensure its further implementation in the years to come, making a difference in the daily lives of Europeans.

The La Hulpe declaration can be found here.

European Commission sets out actions to tackle labour and skills shortages

On 24 March, the European Commission presented an action plan to tackle labour and skills shortages and proposes to work together with Member States and social partners to address these issues over the coming months and years. The action plan is part of the EU's strategy to boost its competitiveness and enhance its economic and social resilience.

Labour and skills shortages have been increasing in all Member States. These shortages are driven by demographic shifts, the demand for new skills linked to technological developments and the twin transitions, the drive to develop further our own industrial sectors, defence and security needs, and challenges related to working conditions in some sectors and locations. The Commission has identified 42 'shortage' occupations, with some differences across the Member States.

The action plan is also a key deliverable of the European Year of Skills. It builds on the many policy and funding measures already in place at EU level, such as the Pact for Skills – which has so far provided training to 3.5 million workers –, the 2030 employment and skills targets endorsed at the Porto Social Summit, the adequate minimum wages and platform work directives, and the €65 billion in EU funds available to invest in skills.

The plan sets out actions in five areas to be implemented swiftly at the EU, national, and social-partners' level:

- Supporting the activation of underrepresented people in the labour market
- Providing support for skills development, training and education
- Improving working conditions in certain sectors
- Improving fair intra-EU mobility for workers and learners
- Attracting talent from outside the EU

On 31 May, EAN will organise a wokshop on Workforce shortages in social and elderly care services (see calendar below).

EU institutions agree about new text of the European Health Data Space

The European Commission, Parliament and Council agreed on the European Health Data Space (EHDS) in mid-March. Following the deal, Belgian Health Minister Frank Vandenbroucke said it "will strongly support patient care and scientific research in the

EU" while EU Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides called the EHDS a "game changing moment for health in Europe and for the care our citizens receive" (cit. Euractiv).

In order to unleash the full potential of health data, the European Commission presented a regulation to set up the European Health Data Space. This proposal supports individuals to take control of their own health data, supports the use of health data for better healthcare delivery, better research, innovation and policy making and enables the EU to make full use of the potential offered by a safe and secure exchange, use and reuse of health data.

EHDS is a health specific ecosystem comprised of rules, common standards and practices, infrastructures and a governance framework that aims at empowering individuals through increased digital access to and control of their electronic personal health data, at national level and EU-wide, and support to their free movement, as well as fostering a genuine single market for electronic health record systems, relevant medical devices and high risk AI systems (primary use of data). EHDS also aims at providing a consistent, trustworthy and efficient set-up for the use of health data for research, innovation, policy-making and regulatory activities (secondary use of data).

The provisional agreement between the Council and the Parliament amends the Commission's original proposal in a number of key areas, including:

- **opt-out:** member states can allow patients to opt-out on the use of their health data being accessed, whether by a healthcare professional (primary use) or for further use (secondary use, always under strict conditions), except for purposes of public interest, policy making, statistics and research purposes in the public interest
- **restricted information**: if patients choose to restrict information, healthcare professionals will only be able to access restricted health data in situations of vital interest
- **sensitive data:** member states may put in place stricter measures governing access to certain kinds of sensitive data, such as genetic data, for research purposes
- **trusted data holders:** in order to reduce the administrative burden, member states may establish trusted data holders that can securely process requests for access to health data
- **clinically significant findings:** if researchers inform health data access bodies (HDABs) about findings that may impact the health of a patient whose data was used in the scientific research, the HDAB may inform the trusted data holder who has to inform the patient or the relevant treating health professional about these findings

The European Health Data Space is a key pillar of the strong European Health Union and it is the first common EU data space in a specific area to emerge from the European strategy for data. Trust is a fundamental enabler for the success of the European Health Data Space. The European Health Data Space will provide a trustworthy setting for secure access to and processing of a wide range of health data. It builds further on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), proposed Data Governance Act, draft Data Act and Network and Information Systems Directive.
As horizontal frameworks, they provide rules that also apply to the health sector. However, more specific rules are developed in the European Health Data Space Regulation, taken into account the sensitivity of health data.

The EAN Working group on Digitalisation of elderly care has included EHDS in its work. The Working group's report will be published soon.

European Commission presents 2024

Ageing report: old-age ratio to rise

The EU population is expected to rise: from 449 million people in 2022 to a peak of 453 million people in 2026, before falling to 432 million in 2070. As a result, the old-age dependency ratio will rise sharply in all Member States over the coming decades. This ratio gives an idea about the relative shift between potential retirees and potential workers and thus of how an ageing population alters the balance between beneficiaries and contributors. From about 29% in 2010 in the EU, it rose to 36% in 2022 and would rise further to 59% in 2070, with most of the increase expected already by 2045. Put differently, the EU would go from having nearly thirty people aged 20 to 64 for every ten people aged over 65 years in 2022, to having less than twenty people by 2045.

The Ageing Report provides detailed economic and budgetary projections for the EU Member States and Norway up to 2070 based on common assumptions and methodologies. The report provides a vast set of comparable and internally consistent information for 28 countries. These give insight into the timing of population ageing, its economic implications and the associated budgetary challenges. Such pressures are already manifest in many countries and are expected to accelerate as large cohorts of baby boomers retire, life expectancy continues to rise and fertility rates remain low from a historical point of view.

The budgetary projections cover four items: public spending on pensions, health care, long-term care and education. They are the subject of this report. For pensions, Member States prepared projections based on national models, which were the subject of an in-depth peer review by the Commission and the AWG. This approach allows capturing the specificity of each country's public pension system, while ensuring cross-country consistency since the projections are based on shared assumptions and methodologies. Based on common models, the Commission prepared the health care, long-term care and education projections, which were discussed and agreed within the AWG. All budgetary projections were endorsed by the EPC in January 2024.

The EU 2024 Ageing report and national reports can be found here.

New rules to improve working conditions of platform workers

On 11 March, EU employment and social affairs ministers confirmed the new platform work directive. This EU legal act aims to improve working conditions and regulate the use of algorithms by digital labour platforms. In many EU member states, also social service and elderly care workers operate via a digital platform.

Although full-time contracts are predominant in the sector, a large proportion of the workforce does work part- time, especially women. Similarly, while many working in the sector have an employment contract of permanent duration, 'non-standard' employment arrangements are common too (e.g. temporary contracts, self-employment), especially among some professions (e.g. physicians). The sector is also characterised by atypical working times, like e.g. night and shift work, weekend work.

The directive will make the use of algorithms in human resources management more transparent, ensuring that automated systems are monitored by qualified staff and that workers have the right to contest automated decisions. It will also help correctly determine the employment status of persons working for platforms, enabling them to benefit from any labour rights they are entitled to.

The new directive strikes a balance between respecting national labour systems and ensuring minimum standards of protection for the more than 28 million persons working in digital labour platforms across the EU.
The main compromise elements revolve around a legal presumption which will help determine the correct employment status of persons working in digital platforms:

- member states will establish a legal presumption of employment in their legal systems, to be triggered when facts indicating control and direction are found
- those facts will be determined according to national law and collective agreements, while taking into account EU case-law
- persons working in digital platforms, their representatives or national authorities may invoke this legal presumption and claim they are misclassified
- it is up to the digital platform to prove that there is no employment relationship

EU-OSHA, the European Union information agency for occupational safety and health, recently published a discussion paper on digital platform work in the health and social care sector.

EU-OSHA considers the health and social care as a high-risk sector in terms of occupational safety and health (OSH), and in which workers encounter a combination of physical and psychosocial risks, which reinforce each other. The health and social care sector has been one of the frontrunners regarding digitalisation, and more recently the introduction of digital labour platforms. Digital labour platform workers face a combination of risks that are inherently associated with the activities performed in and risks inherent to platform work, of which many relate to the use of AM. However, AM and the 'platformisation' of work are no longer unique to digital labour platforms, but also increasingly common in traditional work contexts, notably in the health and social care sector. In such cases, existing OSH risks are aggravated, and new OSH risks emerge, while at the same time attention to OSH risks seems to decline and efforts to prevent and manage them are limited in the context of digital platform work in the health and social care sector. While digital platform work can bring jobs out of informality, there seems to be little evidence that supports this, while monitoring and enforcement of compliance with OSH regulations is difficult for several reasons (e.g. digital platform work may fall outside of the scope of labour inspectorates, the OSH legal framework may not apply in case digital platform workers are self-employed, etc.). Digital platform work in health and social care encompasses a wide range of activities and diverse worker profiles.

The EU-OSHA discussion paper can be found here.

Social employers' FESE presents manifesto for European elections

The Social Employers' Manifesto for the upcoming European elections aims to demonstrate to future European legislators that the social services sector, which employs more than nine million people in the EU-

27, represents an economic and societal investment for the future.

FESE seeks to address the increasing care needs of European populations in a manner favourable to progress and social cohesion. It prioritises directing expenditure towards the most effective measures, consistently evaluating their impact, and ensuring they generate a return on investment that benefits individuals, society, and the economy.

The Social Employers' Manifesto also urges for a new Action Plan for the Care Strategy implementation at the beginning of the next mandate. The European Parliament could contribute to elevating the ambition of this Action Plan.

Alzheimer Europe issues Helsinki Manifesto

Alzheimer Europe has recently launched its European Election Campaign 2024, in an effort to prioritise dementia as a policy issue at an EU level.

As part of its campaign, Alzheimer Europe has issued the Helsinki Manifesto, which outlines the current situation in relation to dementia across Europe, whilst also detailing specific demands for the European Commission and national governments. This Manifesto will be the basis of Alzheimer Europe's campaign work in the coming years.

The Helsinki Manifesto has been undersigned by the Europea Ageing Network (EAN) and can be found here.

News from EAN-projects

The WELL CARE project aims to identify promising/good practices and innovative solutions implemented mainly in Europe to support Long-Term Care (LTC) workers and/or informal carers' resilience and mental wellbeing, with attention to care partnership (i.e. the coordination, integration, and mutual recognition of care and caring activities performed by LTC workers and informal carers, in a vision of integrated LTC).

EAN is partner in the WELL CARE project and calls on its member to co-operate and fill in a questionnaire to collect information on practices implemented from 2013 to 2024, still active/long-standing (or finished for 1-3 years) in the EU-27 Member States, the United Kingdom, and the EFTA countries (i.e. Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, and Liechtenstein), with a focus for practices in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden. The questionnaire can be found here.

WELL CARE will receive funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101137468

EAN partners in Digital Transformation of LTC Facilities for older people (DigiCare4CE)

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE
Co-funded by the European Union
DigiCare4CE

As our population ages, caring for the elderly is becoming an increasingly complex challenge. But there's positive news: innovative digital solutions are emerging to support caregivers and improve the well-being of those they care for. The DigiCare4CE project aims to develop, test, and promote new technologies that empower carers and enrich the lives of older people. EAN will play a key role in networking for knowledge transfer, communication, and dissemination of the project's results.

To learn more about the project, visit the project website.

EAN media partner of SilverEco

EAN has become a media partner of the SilverEco & Ageing well International Festival, which will take place on 16 and 17 September in Cannes, France.

The festival combines six exceptional congresses:

- Nursing Homes Summit - Towards a New Deal!
  This congress is dedicated to the nursing homes of tomorrow, Senior Living Residences, and collective housing
- Living at Home Summit - Services for Independent Living!
  This congress is dedicated to personal services, ageing well at home and home care
- Yes We Care Summit - For and with caregivers!
  This congress is dedicated to care for caregivers, and to entrepreneurial and HR approaches for salaried caregivers
- Silver Citizens Summit - Silver Citizenship!
  This congress is dedicated to the place of seniors in society, intergenerational relations, the roles of towns, territories , Silver Tourism, the fight against ageism…

- SilverTech Summit - Prospective 2030!
  This congress is dedicated to innovations, new technologies, artificial intelligence, start-up and investor meetings…
- Healthy Ageing Summit - 10 years for better ageing!This congress is organised at the SilverEco & Ageing Well International Festival as part of the United Nations / WHO "Decade for Healthy Ageing" program (2021-2030)

Upcoming conferences and meetings

May 2024

- **30-31 May 2024**
  EAN Executive board meeting and EAN General assembly (EE - Tallinn)
    - **30 May 2024**
      EAN GA members + guests joint dinner + festive evening with live music
    - **31 May 2024**
      EAN General Assembly meeting (8h30 - 14h00)
      EAN Workshop on Workforce shortages (14h00 - 14h45)
      Nursig home visit (15h-17h)

September 2024

- **16-17 Sep 2024**
  SilverEco International Festival (FR - Cannes)

- **25 Sep 2024**
  EAN General assembly (GR - Athens)

- **26-27 Sep 2024**
  EAN bi-annual conference, 21st Century Skills in Long-term Care (GR - Athens)

October 2024

- **8-10 Oct 2024**
  34th Alzheimer Europe Conference (CH - Geneva)

Partners of the European Ageing Network

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European Ageing Network (EAN)

The European Ageing Network (EAN) is the new association of the European Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (EAHSA) and the international umbrella organisation representing national associations for directors and providers of long-term care services in Europe. The European Ageing Network groups more than 12.000 care providers, is present in 27 European countries, and is servicing millions of older people in Europe.

EAN is registered in Luxembourg, has its Secretariat in Prague and a branch office in Brussels. For more information, or for a membership application, contact info@ean.care.

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Laposta