

EAN Newsletter Summer 2026



As Europe continues to navigate the opportunities and challenges of demographic change, the European Ageing Network (EAN) remains committed to working towards **a Europe for all ages** – a Europe where older people can live their lives to the fullest, whatever their needs. Today, EAN brings together **more than 13,000 care providers and partners in 30 European countries**, forming a diverse community dedicated to improving the lives of older persons through high-quality housing, care, and support services.

As a strong European network, EAN brings together knowledge, experience, and insight from across the ageing and long-term care sector. Together, we work to **empower individuals, uphold rights, support inclusion**, and strengthen the quality, sustainability, and innovation of care systems across Europe. Over the years, EAN has achieved important milestones, including strategic policy recommendations for the future of long-term care, influential reports on funding, workforce challenges, and digitalisation, as well as active cooperation with European institutions and international partners.

This newsletter presents the latest developments from across our network, showcases inspiring initiatives from our members, and provides updates on key policy, research, and sector trends. Together, we continue to build **a stronger and more resilient care sector** that enables older people throughout Europe to live healthier, more independent, and more fulfilling lives.

Thank you for being part of our growing community and for your commitment to achieving our common goals. I hope you find this edition of our newsletter informative, inspiring, and valuable to your work. **I wish you all a beautiful and relaxing summer.**

Maria Mannerholm

EAN Vice-President

Looking Back at the EAN General Assembly in Naples



The European Ageing Network (EAN) General Assembly took place in **Naples, Italy, on 5–6 May 2026**, bringing together members, partners and experts from across Europe to discuss key developments in long-term care. Participants welcomed **nine new member organisations** and adopted the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting in Lisbon. The Assembly also included the presentation of EAN's new **report on sustainable, equitable and responsible funding of elderly care in the European Union**.

The Assembly focused on **workforce challenges, ethical recruitment and European policy developments**. Discussions addressed responsible international recruitment of care workers, labour mobility partnerships and workforce sustainability, with a special contribution from representatives of Kenya's State Department for Diaspora Affairs. Updates on the **European Care Strategy**, digitalisation, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and the **European Health Data Space** underlined the growing expectations placed on long-term care providers across Europe.

Members also received updates on EAN projects, including **WELL CARE, EldiCare 2.0, Care4Skills and Care4Elders**, and discussed future priorities such as housing and living environments for older people. Preparations also continue for the **GAN LTC Congress in Prague in September 2027**.

Last but not least, participants visited the **Gianà Nursing Home in Qualiano**, where they learned about care services and the long-term care system in the Campania region. The social programme continued with a guided walking tour through the historic centre of Naples and concluded with a joint dinner overlooking the **Bay of Naples**, providing an informal setting to strengthen relationships, share experiences and foster future collaboration.

You can find meeting materials and pictures [here](#).

Elena Weber

EAN Executive Board member

You can find the contact details of all new and existing members on the interactive map on the EAN **website**, where members are listed by country.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact us at **info@ean.care**.

Our new members:

- IZWS – Institute of Health and Social Support – Poland
- RINATA Association – Italy
- AACC – Active Ageing and Community Care – Malta
- Charleston Holding GmbH – Germany



SAVE THE DATE

Next EAN Biannual Autumn Meeting

Warsaw, Poland | 21–23 October 2026



70+
participants

New members

1
EAN community

Main highlights

- Partnerships
- External experts
- Professional exchanges
- Networking 70+ expected participants
- New members
- European cooperation
- Community & networking
- Sharing experiences
- Building partnerships
- Inspirations for future

KEY TOPICS

- EU affairs update
 - Safe staffing levels in long-term care
 - Resilience and preparedness of the long-term care sector
- Housing and Living Environment of Older People Working Group
- Artificial Intelligence in long-term care – practical session
- Long-term care and senior policy in Poland – current situation and challenges
- Eurofound: working conditions, care services and current challenges in Europe
- European Labour Authority: workforce, labour mobility and long-term care



SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Time	21 October 2026	22 October 2026	23 October 2026
Morning		Social care facility visit Meeting of the Housing and Living Environment of Older People Working Group	Two-day working meeting of EAN members – Day 2
Afternoon		Two-day working meeting of EAN members – Day 1	EAN Executive Board Meeting
Evening	Coming Together – networking event with refreshments prepared by the sponsor	Gala dinner for EAN members and guests	



EAN's Work in Social Services Europe: State Aid and Public Procurement



For several years, I represent EAN in the Board of Social Services Europe (SSE). SSE is a network of 9 European umbrella organisations representing over **200,000 not-for-profit social and health care organisations**, in a sector employing over **11 million people**. All members of the network taken together, Social Services Europe is represented in all EU Member States (MS); some members also have membership all across Europe beyond the EU. The main purpose of SSE's joint policy and advocacy work is to obtain a **supportive legal/regulatory, financial and quality EU-level framework for social services**. You can find more information on www.socialserviceseurope.eu.

The **SSE-Board** is supported by a small but well-functioning secretariat. Amongst a lot of relevant issues a lot of work is being done regarding European regulation towards State Aid and the revision of the Public Procurement directives.

General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)

The EU-regulations regarding state aid are very strict. But in some situations, it is possible for MS to give state aid to organisations or sectors without first asking permission from the EU. **GBER regulates the conditions under which the MS can do this**. The current GBER is from 2014 and that is why the European Commission had public consultation on the draft proposal for a revised GBER. SSE provided input to the consultation and has advocated for a better use of state aid tools for the social services sector and to encourage and enable public authorities in MS to do so. There should be more possibilities for higher state aid for training and employment of persons with disabilities and disadvantaged workers. The new GBER will appear in 2027.

Public Procurement directives revision (PPD)

In the opinion of the SSE the revised PPD should **establish the use of the Socially Responsible Public Procurement (SRPP)** as the default approach for the award of contracts, with recourse to the lowest price or cost criterion permitted only where duly justified by the contracting authority. Also the time limitation of maximum 3 years for certain contracts must be removed. **Alternative models to procurement in the social services sector should be recognised**. The (horizontal) social clauses should be strengthened. And SSE also pleaded for improvement of the rules on contract modifications in the context of inflation or price-revision mechanisms as result of changes in labour law and collective agreements. The new PPD will be published beginning of July this year.

Knowing that many of our members of EAN are faced with **state aid** and **public procurement**, these are important issues to work on in the joint SSE network. If you are more interested in what's next, you can also find the current state of affairs on the SSE website.

Aad Koster

EAN Vice-President

Project Highlights

Marco Socci presented the WELL CARE project at the EAN General Assembly in Naples



At the EAN General Assembly held in Naples, Italy, **Marco Socci from IRCCS INRCA** presented the WELL CARE project to more than **60 delegates** from across Europe and a delegate from Kenya.

The WELL CARE project focuses on good practices supporting the **resilience and mental wellbeing of informal carers and long-term care workers**. In his presentation, Marco Socci introduced the project's background, objectives, consortium and work packages, with particular attention to the review, selection and analysis of good practices in five European countries.

He also shared first findings from the project, including examples and case studies from **Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden**. The presentation highlighted the importance of strengthening care partnerships between formal and informal carers and improving support for those who provide care in different long-term care settings.

EAN thanks Marco Socci for his valuable contribution to the General Assembly and for sharing the first outcomes of this important European project with the EAN network.

Karel Vostrý
EAN Director



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**Care4Skills project:
Future Scenarios for Long-Term Care in Europe**



A new foresight report developed in the Care4Skills project explores four **possible futures for long-term care by 2040**, highlighting how today's choices in workforce development, technology, funding and community engagement could shape future care systems.

The report presents four **contrasting scenarios**, meant to be used as tools for reflection and strategic planning.

You can find more **here**.

Vít Jásek

Project manager



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

EAN shares European long-term care expertise in Cyprus



Jiří Horecký, President of the European Ageing Network, took part in a series of meetings in Cyprus focused on the development of long-term care and the use of European experience in this field.

During discussions with **Minister of Health Neophytos Charalambides, Deputy Minister of Social Welfare Clea Papaellina**, representatives of patient organisations and other stakeholders, the participants addressed key challenges such as **ageing in place, caregiver training, workforce shortages and sustainable financing of long-term care**.

The meetings also focused on examples of good practice from other European countries and on possible models that could support a sustainable long-term care system for patients, providers and the state. **EAN expressed its readiness to support Cyprus** in further developing its long-term care framework. The meetings were organised by the **Cyprus Third Age Observatory**, led by **Demos Antoniou**.

EAN launches new report on sustainable funding of elderly care



During the EAN General Assembly in Naples, EAN officially launched its new publication **“Towards a Framework for Sustainable, Equitable and Responsible Funding of Elderly Care in the European Union.”**

The report was symbolically launched by **Aad Koster**, Chair of the EAN Working Group on Funding, together with EAN President **Jiří Horecký** and the **authors** of the publication present in Naples.

The publication focuses on sustainable, equitable and responsible funding of elderly care in Europe and offers recommendations for future funding models in long-term care.

Download the report here.

Karel Vostrý

EAN Director



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

The new European Care Deal focuses on workforce, quality, infrastructure and digitalisation

As Europe enters a new political and financing cycle, discussions in Brussels are increasingly turning from the European Care Strategy towards a broader « European Care Deal ». While no formal proposal has yet been presented, the debate reflects a growing recognition that care is not only a social service but also a strategic investment for Europe's future.

The challenges are clear. Europe's population is ageing rapidly, demand for long-term care is rising, and providers across the EU continue to face severe workforce shortages. At the same time, many care services require investment in infrastructure, digitalisation and staff development.

A future European Care Deal is expected to focus on four key priorities:

- Strengthening the care workforce through better recruitment, retention and skills development.
- Improving access and quality of long-term care services.
- Increasing investment in care infrastructure and community-based services.
- Supporting innovation and digitalisation to enhance care delivery

For EAN members, the Care Deal debate represents an important opportunity to ensure that the voice of care providers is heard. The experience of frontline organisations will be essential in shaping policies that are both ambitious and practical. The coming years will be decisive. If Europe is serious about preparing for demographic change, investing in high-quality long-term care must become a policy priority—not only for social reasons, but for the sustainability of European societies and economies.

European Semester highlights Long-Term Care

Each year, the European Semester provides a snapshot of the economic and social challenges facing EU Member States. While often associated with fiscal and economic policy, the latest country reports also send an important message for the long-term care sector : Europe's ageing population is putting increasing pressure on care systems, and reforms can no longer be postponed.

Across many Member States, the European Commission highlights common challenges: growing demand for long-term care, workforce shortages, unequal access to services, and the need for stronger investment in community-based and home care. Several reports also point to difficulties in recruiting and retaining care workers, reflecting concerns already familiar to providers across Europe.

The findings closely mirror the objectives of the European Care Strategy. In 2024, Member States submitted national reports outlining how they intend to improve access to affordable, high-quality long-term care. These reports reveal progress in some areas, including healthy ageing initiatives, integrated care approaches and support for informal carers, but they also demonstrate significant differences between countries.

For care providers, the European Semester is more than a monitoring exercise. It

For care providers, the European semester is more than a monitoring exercise: it increasingly shapes national reform agendas and influences the use of EU funding instruments such as ESF+, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the Technical Support Instrument. Recommendations issued through the Semester often become the basis for future investments and policy reforms.

The message from Brussels is clear: demographic change is no longer a future challenge but a present reality. As policymakers look for sustainable solutions, long-term care providers have a crucial role to play in demonstrating what works, identifying investment needs and ensuring that reforms lead to better outcomes for older persons.

For EAN members, the latest European Semester cycle confirms that long-term care is moving steadily higher on the EU policy agenda—and that the voice of providers will be essential in shaping the next phase of reform.

For more information about the European semester and the country reports, click [here](#).

Marcel Smeets

EAN EU Executive Consultant

ELA launches EU4FairCare campaign on fair working conditions in long-term care



EUROPEAN LABOUR AUTHORITY

The European Labour Authority has launched its 2026 awareness and information campaign **EU4FairCare**, focusing on fair working conditions and the protection of mobile workers in the long-term care sector. The campaign aims to help workers, employers, intermediaries and households better understand their rights and obligations when working, recruiting or providing long-term care services across the EU.

On the occasion of the campaign launch, ELA also published a new strategic report on labour mobility, working conditions and enforcement challenges in long-term care across the EU and EEA. The report highlights the essential role of mobile workers in meeting growing care needs, while also pointing to structural challenges such as low wages, long and irregular working hours, and gaps in enforcement, particularly in home care.

The report is available here: **[The long-term care sector: Labour mobility and enforcement challenges | European Labour Authority](#)**

New Age-It discussion paper: Adapting to Longevity Societies

Population Europe and Age-It have published a new discussion paper, "Adapting to Longevity Societies: 21 Boxes to Check", based on dialogue activities organised in 2025 and 2026 and broader research from the Age-It programme.

The paper presents 21 policy checks for ageing and longevity societies, covering five key areas: conceptual framing, health and wellbeing, care systems, economic and technological transformation, and governance. It highlights the need to move from reactive responses to strategic adaptation, with stronger attention to healthy ageing, care, intergenerational solidarity, digital inclusion and long-term policy capacity.

The discussion paper is available here: **Adapting to Longevity Societies: 21 Boxes to Check**



14 – 15 Sep 2026 – SilverEco International Awards – Cannes

21 – 23 Oct 2026 – EAN Biannual meeting – Warsaw

27 – 29 Oct 2026 – 36th Alzheimer Europe conference – Dublin

7 – 8 Sep 2027 – GAN congress "The Future of Long-Term Care" – Prague

The Future of Long-Term Care
Setting a Global Agenda

GLOBAL AGEING NETWORK
APSS CR
EUROPEAN AGEING NETWORK

7-9
SEPTEMBER 2027
PRAGUE

- RESOURCES – SKILLS
- DIGITALIZATION
- FUNDING – NEEDS
- TRANSFORMATION
- INNOVATIONS AND HOPES

EAN Newsletters in Multiple Languages

EAN newsletters are now **machine-translated** and available in English, French, Spanish, German, Polish, and Czech.

Please **share the newsletters** with your members to help them gain a better understanding of EAN's activities.

All editions are always accessible here.

About EAN

The European Ageing Network brings together over 13,000 care providers across 30 European countries, including for-profit, non-profit, and public organizations. Together, they work to improve the quality of life for older people through high-quality housing, services, and care. Their efforts respond to major demographic shifts driven by increasing life expectancy and low birth rates, which significantly impact the economy, social protection, healthcare systems, the labour market, and more.

www.ean.care



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