



**EAN General Assembly Meeting**  
**Congress centre of the Hotel Ramanda Naples, Naples, 5-6 May 2026**

# **Good practices for supporting carers' resilience and mental wellbeing: the WELL CARE project**

**Marco Socci**

Maria Gabriella Melchiorre, Gabriele Morettini, Beatrice Ietto, Sabrina Quattrini, Elizabeth Hanson

IRCCS-INRCA - National Institute of Health and Science on Ageing  
Centre for Socio-Economic Research on Ageing  
Via Santa Margherita 5 – 60124 Ancona, Italy  
E-mail: [m.socci@inrca.it](mailto:m.socci@inrca.it)



## Contextual backdrop

In the EU, it is estimated that...

- ✓ **about 6.3 million people work in the long-term care (LTC) sector**, representing 3.2% of the EU's workforce
- ✓ more than 52 million people, i.e. **14.4% of the adult population aged 18-74 in the EU provide informal care** on a weekly basis
- ✓ **80% of all LTC is provided by informal (family) carers**
- ✓ **about 80% of informal carers and LTC workers are women**
- ✓ LTC workers and informal carers are at high **risk of developing mental health problems** (e.g. anxiety, depression, burnout) which was **exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic**

## Key issues and project goal

There is the need...

- ✓ **to consider LTC workers and informal carers as “two sides of the same coin” and to develop care partnerships**
- ✓ **to strengthen the supports available to LTC workers and informal carers for improving their resilience and mental wellbeing**
- ✓ The **WELL CARE project** has the goal to address the above issues



# WELL CARE Horizon Europe project overview

Project number	101137468
Project name	Investing in the mental wellbeing and resilience of long-term care workers and informal carers through the identification, evaluation and promotion of good practices across Europe
Project acronym	WELL CARE
Destination	4 - Ensuring access to innovative, sustainable and high-quality health care
Call	HORIZON-HLTH-2023-CARE-04: Ensuring access to innovative, sustainable and high-quality health care (Single stage)
Topic	HORIZON-HLTH-2023-CARE-04-02: Resilience and mental wellbeing of the health and care workforce
Type of Action	RIA
Project starting date	1 January 2024
Project duration	48 months
Total budget	5.999.895,00 Euro

Project website: <https://wellcare-project.eu/>



Transforming care,  
empowering lives,  
the WELL CARE project

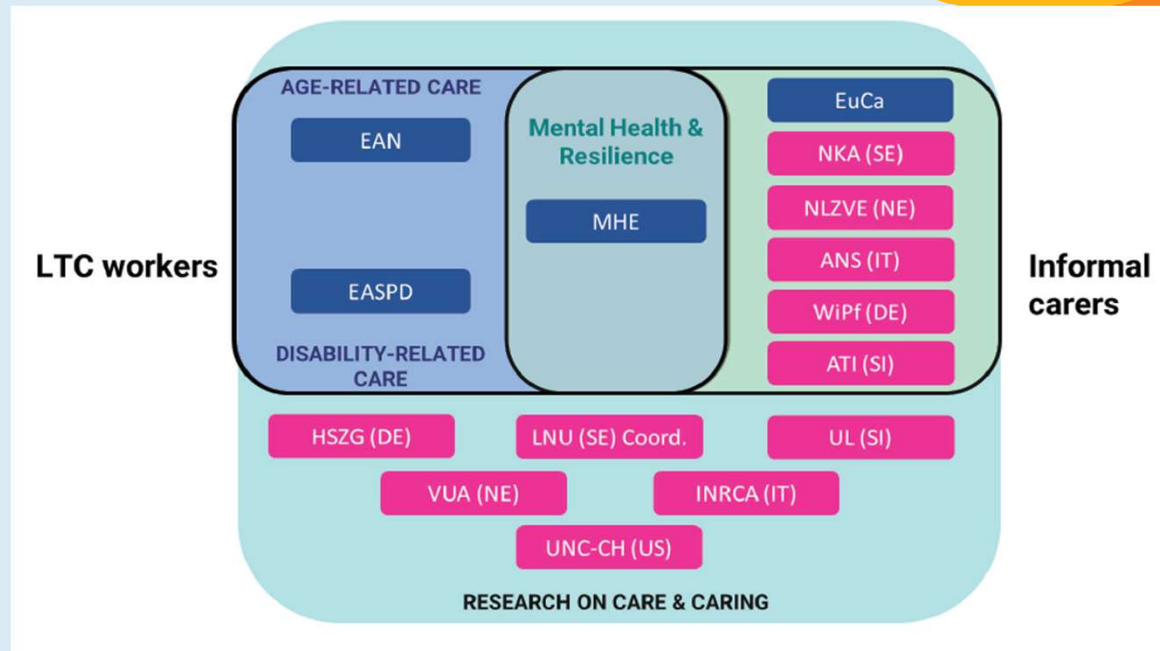
[About](#) [Partners](#) [Definitions](#) [Good practices](#) [Solution priorities](#) [Policy recommendations](#) [Blended learning networks](#) [News](#)

Caring for someone can be mentally draining and exhausting. Both informal carers – who provide unpaid care to a close one outside a professional or formal framework – and professional LTC workers, face the potential risk of compromising their mental health and well-being over time.

How can we safeguard their health and resilience?  
What if improved integration of LTC could help mitigate such risks?

Investing in the mental health and wellbeing of informal carers and long-term care workers through the identification, evaluation, and promotion of good practices across Europe.

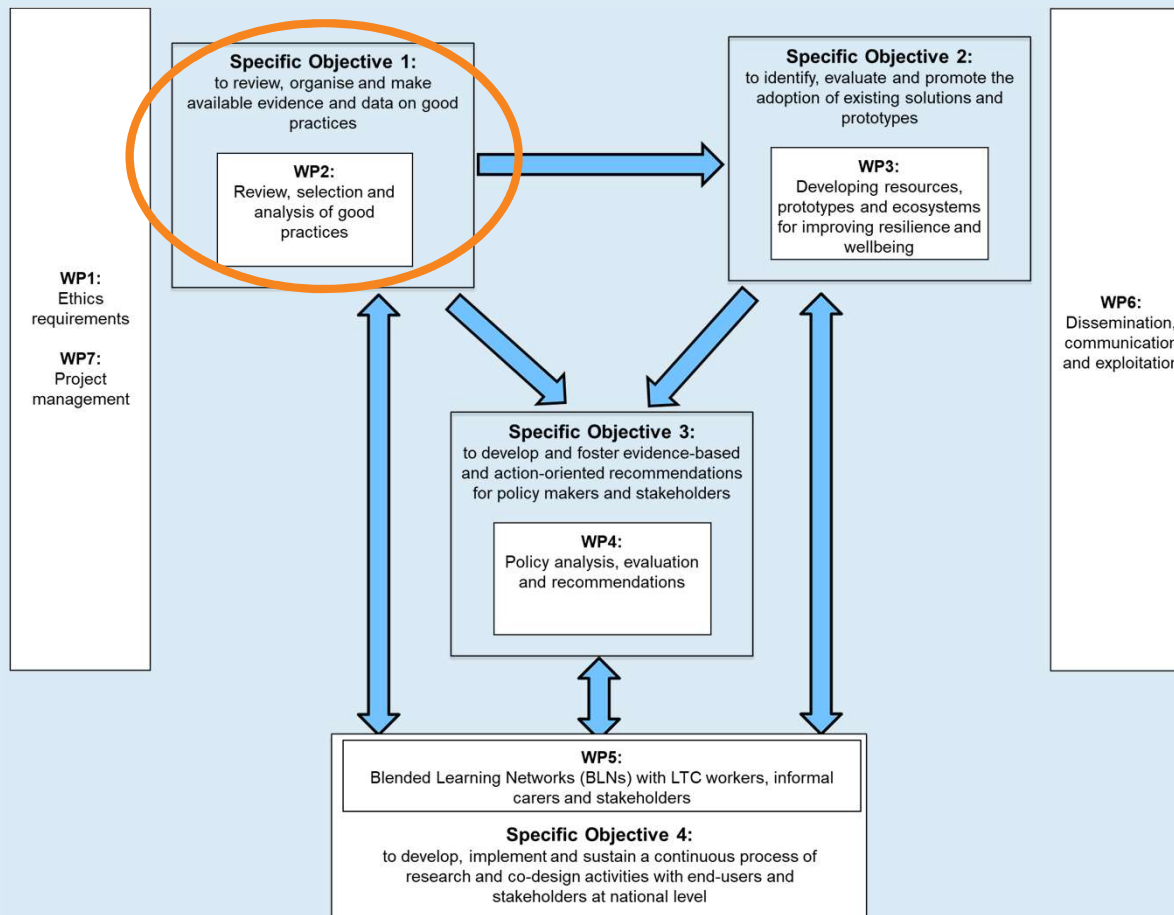
# Consortium



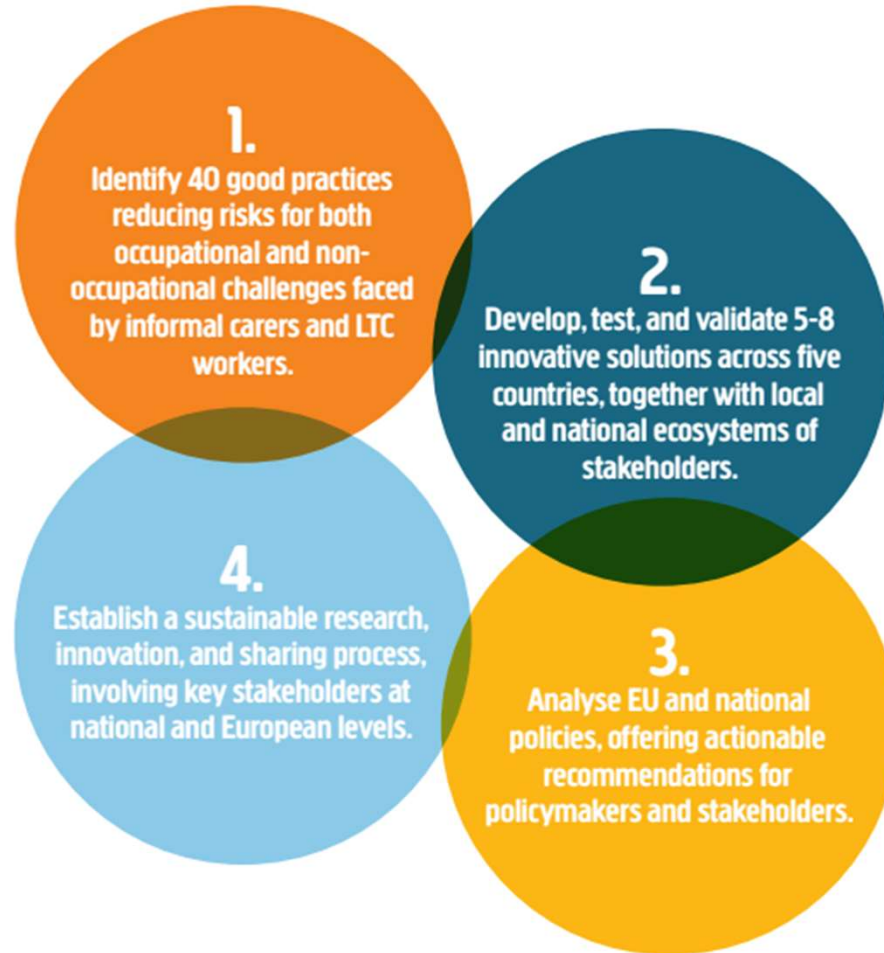
- ✓ **6 research partners**
- ✓ **4 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and 1 knowledge translation centre** with longstanding experiences in informal care and LTC
- ✓ **4 European NGOs advocating for mental health, LTC workers, informal carers, and care providers**, with over 350 national/regional member organisations across the continent



# WELL CARE PERT chart



# 4 concrete objectives to transform LTC



# **WP2 Review, selection and analysis of good practices: aims, activities, main findings**



# WP2 main objectives and tasks

- **To identify, investigate and analyse good practices** of innovative solutions supporting LTC workers' and/or informal carers' resilience and mental wellbeing in 5 European countries

## WP2 Tasks

- **Task 2.1: *Systematic review of scientific and grey literature (M1-9)***
- **Task 2.2: *Methodology for selection criteria and data reporting tools (M10-12)***
- **Task 2.3: *Selection, analysis and report of good practices, evidence and data (M13-24)***



## Task 2.1: Systematic review of scientific and grey literature

- **To identify practices implemented in European contexts, also with a specific focus on the 5 European partner countries and those developed or adapted after the COVID-19 outbreak**
- **To identify potential existing databases, websites, repositories (e.g. EU Public Health Best Practice Portal) already collecting good practices, evidence and data in the field**

# Main findings

- **Wide number of selected articles (139) and collected practices (103)**, focusing on interventions aimed to promote LTC workers and (mainly) informal carers' resilience and mental wellbeing
- **Care recipients are mostly older people aged 65 years and over**, who present often cognitive or psychological/mental health problems
- Among the various settings, **a significant number of practices are performed outside healthcare facilities**
- **Promising inputs of selected practices for fostering care partnerships**

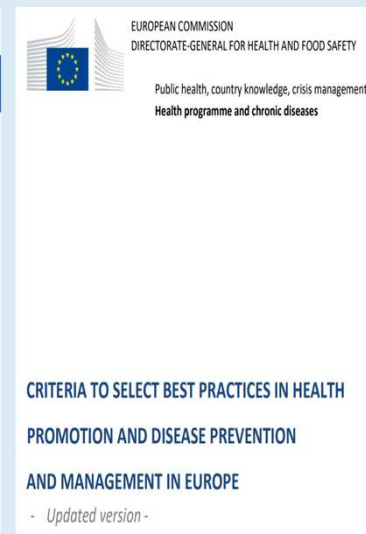
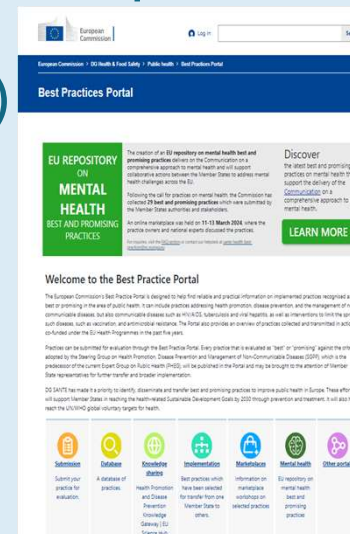
# Task 2.2: Agreed selection criteria

- To identify and define shared and agreed inclusion criteria to be used to assess whether a practice implemented in LTC organisations/settings or in informal care working contexts can be considered as a good practice
- The criteria to review and select best practices for the EU Public Health Best Practice Portal, have been used and then adapted

✓ 3 Blocks of criteria (General, Core, Qualifier)

✓ 12 Criteria

✓ 20 sub-criteria



## Task 2.3: Selection, analysis and report of good practices

- **23 Expert interviews**

- ✓ To gather opinions, insights and knowledge mainly concerning: a) other existing (potential) good practices; b) drivers and barriers, suggestions and recommendations

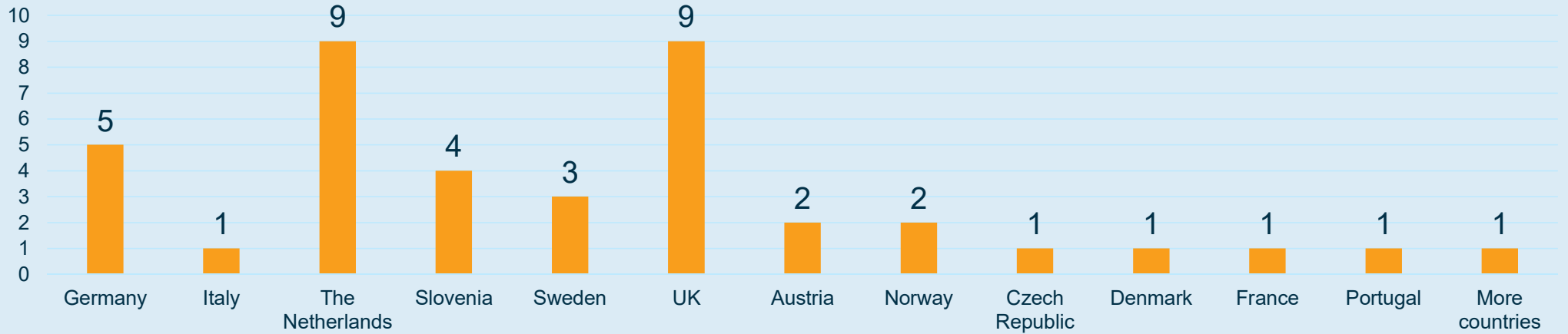
- **Reporting good practices (40 in Europe)**

- ✓ To select/identify and report findings, evidence and data of good practices at country level implemented in informal care contexts and/or in LTC organisations of (ideally) different settings

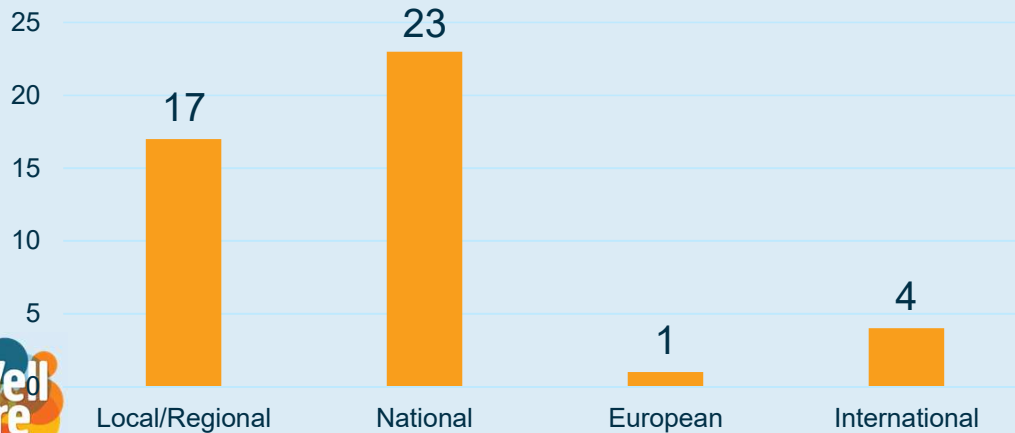
# Main results of the evaluation process

Practices	SLR	GLR	Total
Total	134	119	253
Not relevant	5	15	20
Relevant	129	104	233
Good Practices (GP)	80	90	170
Fostering Care Partnerships (FCP)	30	51	81
GP & FCP	28	46	74

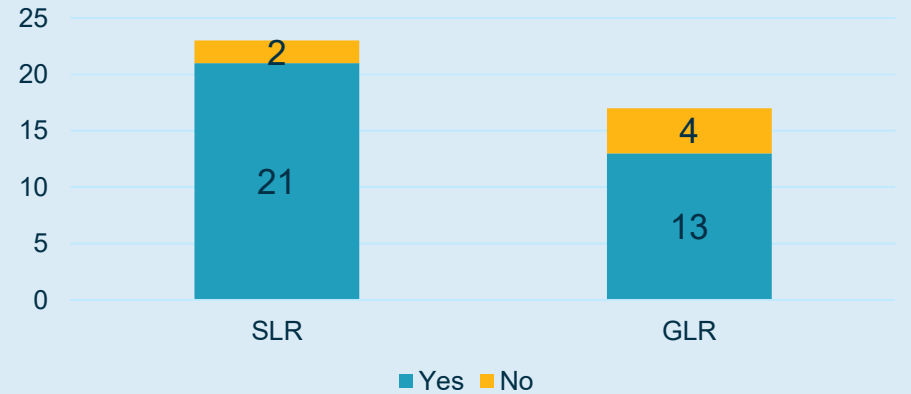
### Top 40 ranked good practices, by country of implementation (a.v.)



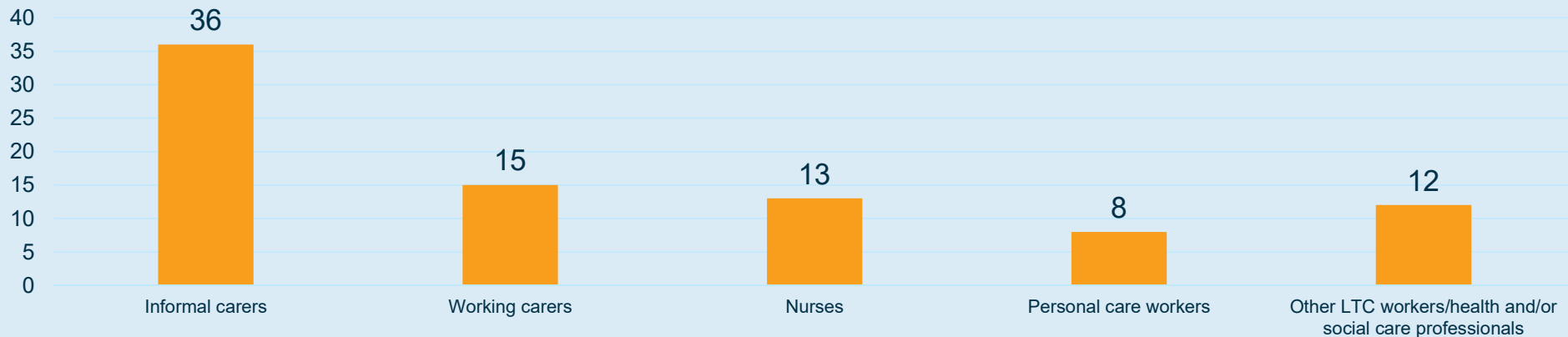
### Top 40 ranked good practices, by geographical coverage (a.v., multiple responses: total=45)



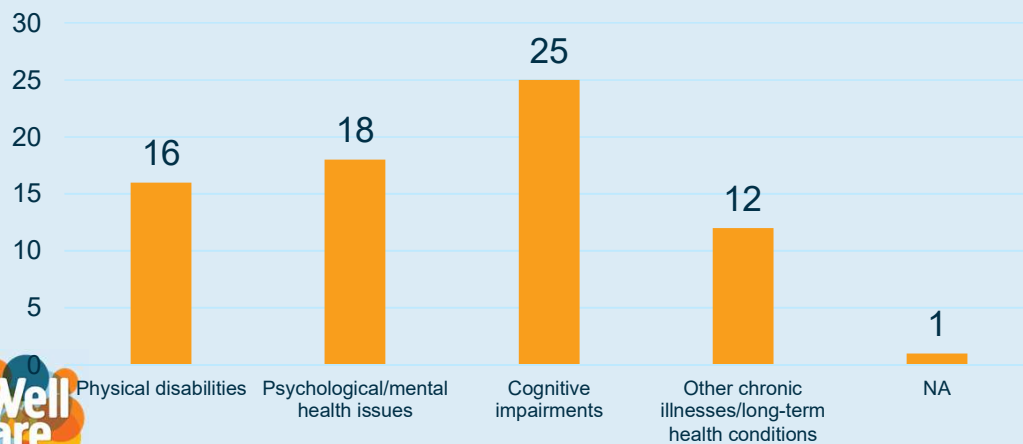
### Top 40 ranked good practices, by dataset (SLR and GLR) and care partnerships (number of practices with care partnerships sub-criteria met or not)



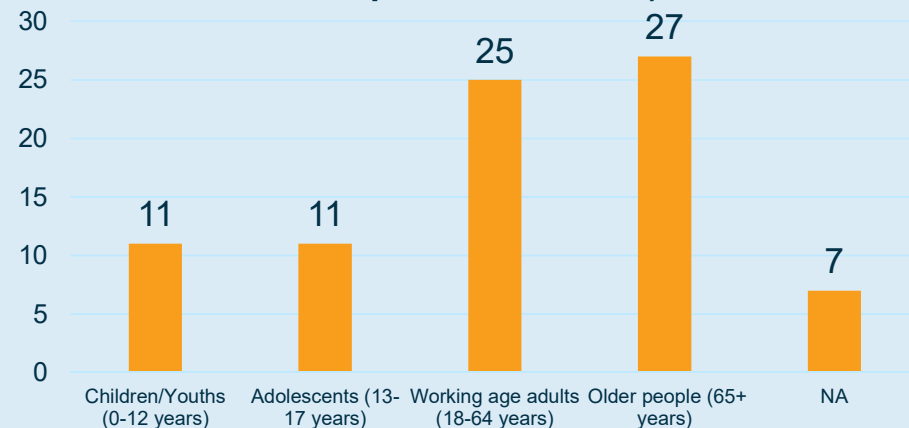
### Top 40 ranked good practices, by target group (a.v., multiple responses: total=84)



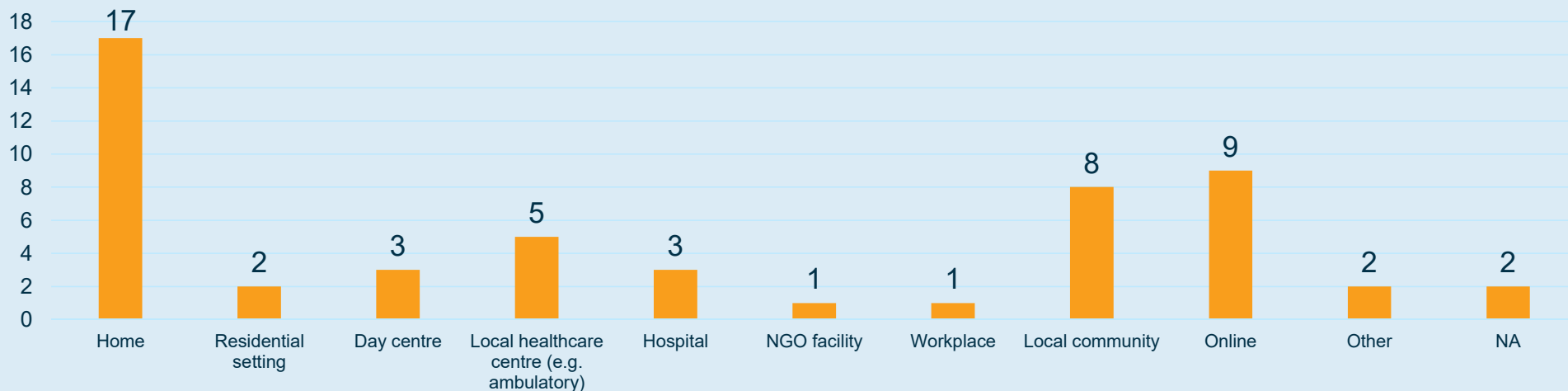
### Top 40 ranked good practices, by health problems of the care recipients assisted (a.v., multiple responses: total=72)



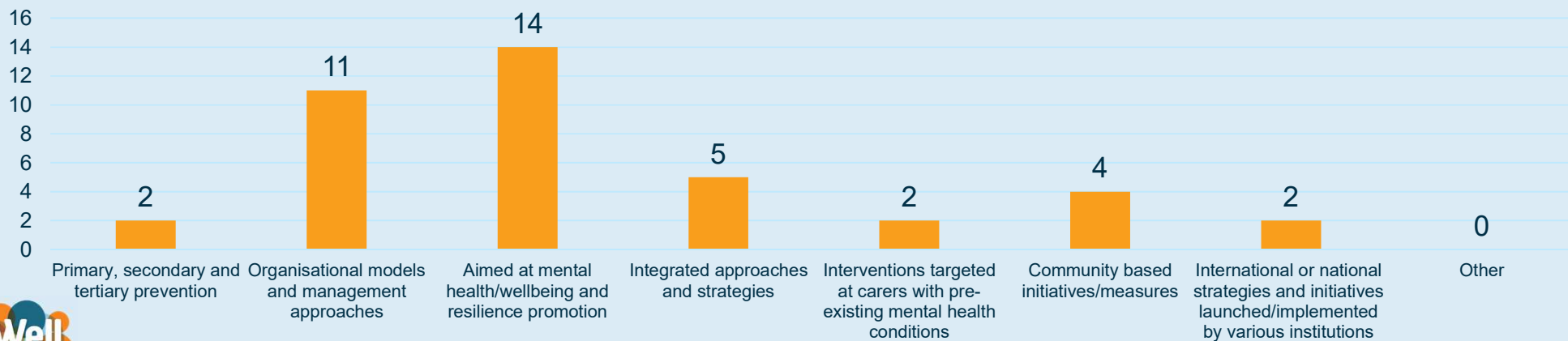
### Top 40 ranked good practices, by age of the care recipients assisted (a.v., multiple responses: total=81)



### Top 40 ranked good practices, by implementation setting (a.v., multiple responses: total=53)



### Top 40 ranked good practices, by typology (a.v.)



## Summary remarks

- The evaluation process resulted in **170 practices classified as good practices**, mainly implemented in the five partner countries (57.6%)
- **Common main features of both the overall collected practices and the top 40 good practices**
- **85%** (i.e. 34 out of 40) **have the potential** (with different gradients and characteristics) **of fostering care partnerships**
- **Available a wide *répertoire* of good practices** which help to **inform the subsequent work activities in the project**, e.g. development of solution prototypes (WP3), policy recommendations (WP4) and broader project dissemination activities (WP6)

# Deliverable 2.1



## Annex G: Templates reporting findings of the 40 selected good practices

### Index

1. Culturally informed psychoeducational course for Charedi Orthodox Jewish Community (Charedi OJC).....	97
2. Early Positive Approaches to Support (E-PAtS) for Families of Young Children with Intellectual Disability.....	102
3. Family Carers Training.....	107
4. Carers' Alert Thermometer for Stroke Family Caregivers (CAT-S).....	111
5. Augmentative and Alternative Communication Intervention (AAC).....	115
6. LIVIND - A lifestyle monitoring system to support (in)formal caregivers of people with dementia.....	119
7. E - Qalin - Quality Management Model.....	124
8. REACT-NOR - Norwegian version of the Relatives Education and Coping Toolkit.....	128
9. Digital support for quality assurance in 24-hour caregiving at home.....	136
10. pflegen-und-leben.de (care and live).....	140
11. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams.....	144
12. Supporting Families Living with Dementia in Rural Areas.....	148
13. Rosetta: a web-based e-learning platform for informal carers of people with dementia.....	155
14. Care at home.....	161
15. Mobile Technology for Personalised Reminiscence for People Living with Dementia and their Carers.....	164
16. Video Conferencing Peer Support and Rarer Forms of Dementia.....	168
17. Partner In Balance (PIB).....	171
18. Psychoeducation program for patients with bipolar disorder and their caregivers.....	176
19. Open Dialogues.....	180
20. Act Belong Commit.....	185
21. Staff Training Programme and Family Liaison Service.....	190
22. Inclusive Culture Program.....	194
23. Meeting Centres Support Programme (MCSP).....	199
24. Care Companion Web-Based Information Resource for Supporting Informal Carers of Older People.....	204
25. Carer Supporter Programme.....	207
26. Carers Outcome Agreement Tool (COAT).....	214
27. Web-based mindfulness intervention for families living with mental health problems.....	218
28. Colourful Unburdening.....	221
29. Rehabilitation Enablement in Chronic Heart Failure (REACH-HF).....	225
30. The Renaissance of Workforce Models in France's Mental Healthcare.....	229
31. Meeting centres support program (MCSP).....	233
32. Community Care Dongen.....	240
33. Community Houses.....	247
34. Integrated care intervention for the frail elderly on informal caregivers.....	251
35. The Wulverhorst.....	258
36. MOST project - Integrated care in Krško Municipality.....	265
37. Cognitive-behavioural intervention for Dementia caregivers' coping with pre-death grief.....	269
38. The conversation with (caring) relatives.....	273
39. The online training with app for LTC workers (RESIST).....	277
40. Training informal caregivers to care for older people after stroke (InCARE program).....	281



## Task 2.3: Case studies

- **Each partner carried out 2 case studies of good practices** (identified in accordance with BLNs) **implemented in their country (10 in total)**
- **2-4 Interviews or 1 focus group with Key Informants** of the selected practice for the case study, such as:
  - LTC workers/informal carers' employers
  - HR managers
  - Health, care and mental health organisations representatives
  - Trade unionists
  - LTC workers
  - Informal carers



**Desk search, analysis of documents** shared by Key Informants

# Good practices chosen for the in-depth case studies

No.	Country BLN	Good practice	Short description	Foster care partnerships
1	DE	Care and Live	Psychosocial counselling for informal carers	No
2	DE	Familial Care	Training and counselling for informal carers	Yes
3	IT	Standard Format for the Individualised Care Plan (PAI)	A professional team plan the care with the care recipient and their informal carer	Yes
4	IT	Community Houses	An integrated organisation model	Yes
5	NL	Community Circles	Support by a limited group of neighbours	Yes
6	NL	Colourful Relief	Home support with an intercultural consultant	Yes
7	SI	Family Carers Training	A course and a volunteer self- help group for informal carers	Yes
8	SI	E-Qalin - Quality Management Model	A care quality system with the care recipient in the centre	No
9	SE	Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)	Comprehensive care and support by multi-professional teams from different sectors	Yes
10	SE	Carers' Outcome Agreement Tool (COAT)	Structural assessment, support and evaluation of informal carers' needs	Yes

## Care and live



- An online psychological counselling service for informal carers
- The service is free of charge, provided by trained psychologists, and can also be used anonymously, which makes it especially low-threshold and accessible
- It focuses on individual sessions that support carers in coping with stress, emotional strain, and crisis situations in the care process
- The intervention contributes significantly to the mental wellbeing and resilience of family carers. The service is available nationwide and financed through statutory health insurance funds



## Standard Format for the Individualised Care Plan (PAI)



- The PAI is a tool used by all public, social and health services in the Emilia-Romagna Region to identify the needs of dependent persons, formally recognise informal carers (distinguishing between main and substitute carers), and assess their needs
- Its purpose is to develop an Individualised Care Plan providing support for both the dependent person and the informal carer
- A key innovation is the structured assessment of the informal carer, with particular attention to emotional stress and psychological needs, enabling a formal recognition of the family/informal carer together with an assessment and documentation of their needs and health risks so that a personalised support intervention can be designed
- Recently, a national legislation aimed at reforming policies for older people mentions PAI as a tool for a nationally unified multidimensional assessment. Nonetheless, a national standard format has yet to be developed for this purpose

### Colourful Relief



- This is a culturally sensitive program offering in-home support, weekend respite care, Saturday respite group, and intercultural consultancy and trust-building to families, particularly those with a migration background, caring for young adults with intellectual disabilities at home
- Families are supported in navigating the care system in a way that respects their language, culture, and values
- The programme also includes training and workshops for care teams (led by the “intercultural consultant”) on culturally sensitive practices, enabling LTC workers and staff to better engage and improve communication with families



### Family Carers Training



- Training for family/informal carers (18+) of older people with physical/cognitive impairments (65+ and occasionally younger), taking the form of a course lasting eight consecutive weeks, two full hours each section, carried out in groups of 15 to 25 participants. The courses are also attended by nurses, physiotherapists and other professionals
- The course is then followed up in a self-help group, i.e. a local relatives' club, led by volunteers, providing a permanent space for the exchange of good experiences and for addressing challenges in caregiving; meetings are usually held once a month for two hours at the same place and time as the course
- It aims to improve capability of informal carers to provide good care, improving their resilience and mental wellbeing



### **Carers Outcome Agreement Tool (Sweden)**

- A structured tool consisting of four questionnaires for co-developing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating/accessing personalised support for and with informal carers of people with any LTC needs and of all ages, by carer advocates/LTC workers working in the municipality
- It offers a structured method for documentation, follow-up, and evaluation of support interventions for informal carers, and aims to reduce their workload and stress

### **Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams**

- ACT is a treatment form in which active outreach multidisciplinary teams provide comprehensive and holistic early support to people with serious mental illness and complex care needs living at home, to prevent deterioration of their condition and re-hospitalisation and promote sustained community living, also reducing their informal carer's stress and workload

# Deliverable 2.2

## WELL CARE

Investing in the mental wellbeing and resilience of long-term care workers and informal carers through the identification, evaluation and promotion of good practices across Europe

## D2.2

Final report on 10 in-depth case studies in 5 European countries  
version 1.0

### Project details

Project acronym	WELL CARE	Start / Duration	1 January 2024 / 48 Months
Project number	101137468	Topic	HORIZON-HLTH-2023-CARE-04-02
Type of Action	RIA	Coordinator	Linnaeus University (Sweden)
Contact persons	Principal investigator: Elizabeth Hanson, <a href="mailto:elizabeth.hanson@lnu.se">elizabeth.hanson@lnu.se</a> Project manager: Francesco Barbabella, <a href="mailto:francesco.barbabella@lnu.se">francesco.barbabella@lnu.se</a>		

### Annex 5: Templates reporting the complete 10 case studies

Good practice	Country
1. Care and Live (pflegen-und-leben.de)	DE 1
2. Familial Care (Familiale Pflege)	DE 2
3. Standard Format for the Individualised Care Plan (PAI) (Format Unico per il Piano Assistenziale Individualizzato - PAI)	IT 1
4. Community House (Casa della Comunità)	IT 2
5. Community Circles (Voorzorgcirkels)	NL 1
6. Colourful Relief (Kleurrijk Ontzorgen)	NL 2
7. Family Carers Training (Usposablanje za družinske in druge neformalne oskrbovalce)	SI 1
8. E-Qalin - Quality Management Model	SI 2
9. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)	SE 1
10. Carers' Outcome Agreement Tool (COAT)	SE 2



# Partners



Linnæus University  
(Project coordinator)



Funded by the European Union (Grant Agreement no. 101137468). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Health and Digital Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them



Funded by  
the European Union

**Thank you for your attention**

**Marco Socci**

**IRCCS-INRCA - National Institute of Health and Science on Ageing**

**Centre for Socio-Economic Research on Ageing**

**Via Santa Margherita 5 – 60124 Ancona, Italy**

**E-mail: [m.socci@inrca.it](mailto:m.socci@inrca.it)**

