



8TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

ON PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD SERVICES

SYNTHESIS REPORT

Innovation in Personal and Household Services

JUNE 2020

The event was co-organised by the European Federation for Services to Individuals (EFSI) and the Consultative Committee on Industrial Change (CCMI) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). The views expressed in this conference's report are not necessarily those of the organisers.

Event materials and speakers' presentations are available online on EFSI's website (www.efsi-europe.eu).

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About the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI)

Part of the EESC, the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (known by its French acronym of CCMI), examines changes in industry across a wide range of sectors. The CCMI promotes coordination and consistency of EU action on the main changes in industry within the enlarged European Union and ensures the right balance between the need to make changes that are socially acceptable and maintaining a competitive edge for European industry. The CCMI focuses on how to predict changes in the economic and social environment and find ways of keeping pace with these and tackling them in a way consistent with the values of economic, social and environmental sustainability that underpin the European social model and dialogue. The CCMI is committed to ensuring that the industrial dimension is properly reflected in all the initiatives taken by the relevant directorates general of the European Commission and at the European Parliament and the Council. In particular, it scrutinises the interplay between all the policies, which have not always been ideally coordinated.

More information: www.eesc.europa.eu

About the European Federation for Services to Individuals (EFSI)

EFSI brings together national federations and associations as well as private companies that are involved in the development of Personal and Household Services (PHS) in Europe. Through its members, EFSI is present in 21 EU Members States. As such, it promotes, defends, develops and creates opportunities for PHS providers and stakeholders while giving them voice on the EU scene.

PHS include a broad range of activities that contribute to well-being at home of families and individuals: child care, long term care for the elderly and for persons with disabilities, ironing, cooking, cleaning, gardening, remedial classes, small repair work, and home administrative tasks.

More information: www.efsi-europe.eu

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HIGHLIGHTS

On the 29th of January 2019, the eight edition of the European Conference on Personal and Household Services gathered about 65 participants who discussed innovative practices in the Personal and Household Services (PHS) sector. PHS cover a broad range of care and non-care activities that contribute to well-being at home of families and individuals such as child care, long term care for the elderly and for persons with disabilities, cleaning, remedial classes, home repairs, gardening, ICT support, etc.

Co-organised by the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Federation for Services to Individuals (EFSI), the event addressed innovative practices in PHS linked to the digital revolution notably in the home care sector. It also questioned how innovation can solve some challenges face by the sector, namely the problems raised by current statistical databases; and the work-related risks – and in particular dangerous substances - face by PHS workers. The event's agenda can be viewed [here](#).

WELCOME MESSAGES

A lot of progresses have been observed in PHS in recent years, but the quality of the delivered services remains the main concern of organisations, companies as well as public authorities active in the sector. Knowledge on the sector has also considerably improved thanks to several EU-funded projects. Despite these progresses, there remains some way to go. Jacques Glorieux stressed that the CCMI – which he presides - shares with EFSI the preoccupation of adequately developing the PHS sector. With this new edition of the European Conference many pending issues will be tackled. *“How does innovation look like in the sector, what challenges it meets and creates will be the key questions addressed today”* said Philippe Symons, EFSI President.

Being a labour-intensive sector *“most aspects of PHS delivery cannot be standardised or automated thanks to technical equipment”* stressed Aurélie Decker, EFSI Director. It is generally accepted that PHS is a sector for which the potential for innovation is rather limited. However, a [survey](#) conducted by EFSI revealed that for 65% of the respondents innovation is considered as being crucial or very important. Working conditions; work organisation and services design were highlighted as areas under the most intensive processes of innovation. Respondents neatly pointed the growing needs of an ageing population as the main driver of innovation, whereas the lack of financing for innovative PHS solutions is considered to be the main obstacle. Finally, the most significant past change identified is the emergence of online platforms and respondent also shared the idea that technology-related innovation processes will be the most intensive for the sector in the next three years.

1ST ROUNDTABLE | DIGITAL REVOLUTION MEETS PHS. WHAT'S NEXT?

The first panel explored the various challenges faced by the PHS sector and how – from the perspective of both PHS users and providers – these challenges could be overcome in order to make the most of digitalisation. Firstly, the technological changes witnessed in the PHS sector and different solutions to transform them in successful development opportunities have been discussed. Co-creation and co-production have been mentioned as a safeguard to ensure an adequate coverage of users' needs. Whereas the diversity of solutions offered by advanced technologies were stressed, Dirk Jarré, President of EURAG underlined that *“it is not only assistance that can be offered but real support and real care”*. Speakers also underlined the need for ethical parameters, for carers' new knowledge and to bridge the gap between the availability of technologies and their take-up. On this last point, partnerships between providers and platforms developers was stressed as an opportunity.

Focusing on online platforms emergence and their concrete impact on working conditions, a typology of existing platform jobs elaborated by Eurofound were presented to participants. Whereas the challenges raised by this new type of work has not yet been addressed by Member States in legislation, solutions are already emerging on the ground. Concrete practices related to the PHS sector have demonstrated how platforms can facilitate workers' empowerment. Collective agreements implementation is also possible as shown by the Danish 3F Trade Union and the online cleaning platform Hilfr. It was also stressed that platforms can be a proactive way to better answer challenges faced by home care

providers such as workers' retention and service quality. It also contributes to the reduction of undeclared work by easing the way to formalise cash situations.

2ND ROUNDTABLE | INNOVATING STATISTICS ON THE PHS SECTOR

During this second roundtable, focus was put on the research conducted by EFSI in the [PHS Industry Monitor](#). The imprecision and inadequacy of statistical categories for the PHS sector lead to a limited range of estimates rather than precise figures on the sector. Panellists held a fruitful discussion on how it could be improved. As such, a new statistical definition of domestic work adopted in October 2018 at the International Conference of Labour Statisticians should enable more precise estimates once it has been adopted in the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Furthermore, the forthcoming adaptation of the NACE¹ would allow in the future a better reflection of the PHS weight in the economy.

Participants stressed that various surveys conducted by Eurofound such as the European Working conditions Survey (EWCS) and the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) should be looked at. Indeed, they explore issues directly related to the PHS sector such as access to care services, work-life balance of workers as well as work intensity and skills. Finally, the possibility of relying on national data was also debated but it raises comparison issues at EU level.

3RD ROUNDTABLE | INNOVATION IN PHS: PREVENTION OF RISKS POSED BY DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

The last roundtable explored the work-related risks faced by PHS workers. Indeed, they face psychological hazards (e.g. solitary work, mismatch between the time allocated and the service/assistance required by the client); ergonomic hazards; physical hazards (e.g. heavy loads and repetitive work); as well as chemical hazards (e.g. cleaning products chemicals, substances present in dust, dirt or soot, disinfectant, patient's medications). The chemical risks are currently subject to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (OSHA) "Healthy workplace campaign". This campaign aims at making challenging aspects understandable by stakeholders and therefore improve prevention thanks to the development of various tools.

The intrinsic nature of domestic work (e.g. private home as a workplace, solitary work, etc.) and the challenges it raised when putting in place prevention programs and controls have been underlined by many speakers. Furthermore, current European OSH legislation benefits only to a small share of PHS workers. However, the ILO Convention No. 170 provides a blueprint for the sound management of chemicals that can be applied to domestic work. Furthermore, the concrete example of a Belgian Service voucher company demonstrated that effective and comprehensive prevention programs can be implemented in the sector.

CONCLUDING PANEL | SUPPORTING INNOVATION IN PHS, WHAT ROLE FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

The panellists agreed that a discussion on the challenges encountered by the PHS sector and its benefit to our society is very important. A lot of opportunities to improve working conditions and access to PHS, have arisen in the past years, notably thanks to new technologies. Nicholas Costello from the European Commission's DG EMPL expressed its optimism in the short or medium term. He considered that public authorities should contribute to the emergence and dissemination of good practices on the sector, thanks notably to the financing of European projects. In this regard, the newly launched [Ad-PHS project](#) will contribute to this goal.

For her part, MEP Maria Gabriela Zoană recalled the adoption by the European Parliament last November of a [report](#) on care services for improved gender equality. The report invited – inter alia – the European Commission to strengthen the provision of funding for care services and to develop guidance for Member States on developing employment-friendly, person-centred, community-based and accessible care services. She highlighted the impact of austerity measures on the sector and the necessity to increase public investment in care services.

¹ NACE stands for "Statistical definition of economic activities in the European Community".

Finally, Jean-Pierre Haber, CCMI delegate, presented the ongoing preparatory work for the EESC opinion on “*Economic, technological and social changes in advanced services for the elderly*”. He underlined that the main problem encountered by the sector is the solvency of the demand which requires public authorities to act as market regulators. He notably stressed the necessity to launch an Observatory on services for the elderly to better monitor their evolution and opportunities. The recognition of PHS workers professional qualifications and wage increases, as well as a coordinated approach between health and care services were also mentioned as areas in which public action are required.

WELCOME MESSAGES

CCMI is the French acronym of “*Commission Consultative des Mutations Industrielles*” reminded the Commission Co-President **Jacques Glorieux**. Created in 2002 in the aftermath of the dissolution of the European Coal and Steel Community Consultative Committee, the CCMI is part of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and gathers members of the three groups² as well as external delegates³. Whereas the CCMI has started its work by investigating questions related to delocation, relocation and restructuring of coal and steel industries, Jacques Glorieux underlines that it has quickly enlarged its fields of study and research to other industries such as textile, automotive, shipyards, defence, aeronautics, wood, glass and services. Thus, cooperation with the European Federation for Services to Individuals (EFSI) started five years ago following the adoption of CCMI’s [own initiative report](#) on “*personal social, sanitary and educational services industries*”. This collaboration materialised first in November 2013 with the fifth European Conference on personal and household services (PHS) and was quickly followed in November 2014 and November 2016 by the sixth and seventh edition of the event. Jacques Glorieux underlined that CCMI is pleased to pursue this collaboration with EFSI on the shared preoccupation of adequately developing the PHS sector, with this new edition of the European Conference focused on the issue of innovation and the forthcoming own-initiative opinion on “*economic, technological and social changes in advanced health services for the elderly*” which will later be discussed.

For a very long time, EFSI is convinced of the major importance of PHS for society in terms of job creation and an increased quality of life. **Philippe Symons**, EFSI’s President, stressed the sector’s structural impact on issues such as gender equality, work-life balance or population ageing. “*Therefore, the development and professionalization of PHS is a major issue that EFSI is committed to contribute to on a daily basis*” he said. One of EFSI’s main task is to foster the exchange of inspiring practices and to build a better knowledge on the sector at EU level, and this is the objective of the event.

Philippe Symons underlined that a lot of progress have been observed in PHS in recent years thanks to the joint efforts of multiple stakeholders. On a global level, the European Parliament adopted in November 2018 a resolution on the added value of care services for gender equality. The report calls – inter alia – for a better funding of care services at national and EU levels and for an improved monitoring of their quality. In parallel, in some countries national authorities have also decided to set up support

“The development and professionalization of PHS is a major issue that EFSI is committed to contribute to on a daily basis”
P. Symons

services as it is the case for instance in Germany and Slovakia. Philippe Symons also recalled that the creation of the European platform against undeclared work has been a very strong signal, especially as it has recently held discussions on how to tackle the issue in PHS. The quality of the delivered services remains the main concern of organisations, companies as well as public authorities active in the sector and many progresses have been made at this level. Finally, he stressed that the knowledge on the sector has improved thanks to

several EU-funded projects such as [IMPact](#) or [For Quality](#). In addition, EFSI issued mid-2018 the [PHS Industry Monitor](#) which is the first global research published about statistical estimates on PHS and a modest contribution to knowledge building on it. “*We hope that this initiative will be resumed and extended in the next years by other stakeholders*” he added.

Despite these progresses, there remains some way to go. New regulations are under preparation such as the new VAT framework, a new standard on quality of services for elderly care, or initiatives to increase parents’ access to childcare services. The need for PHS is increasing in parallel with a higher rate of women active in the labour market. Therefore, the labour force available in our markets has become a key challenge along with the recruitment of right employees and trainings. Philippe Symons considered that “*the functioning structure of the PHS market will also evolve with the progression of*

² EESC members work in three groups, representing “*Employers*” (Group I), “*Workers*” (Group II) and “*Diversity Europe Group*” (Group III).

³ Delegates are appointed by the Bureau of each of the three EESC groups, according to their skills, expertise and experience.

digital platforms. Those platforms have a place in the future of the market, but they will need to pay attention to the quality of delivered services as well as of the jobs”.

Therefore, this 8th edition of the European Conference on PHS will address upcoming perspectives and will specifically explore innovation in the sector. *“How does innovation look like in the sector, what challenges it meets and creates will be the key questions addressed today”* said Philippe Symons. On behalf of EFSI, he concluded by thanking all EFSI’s partners and in particular the CCMI for hosting this event and as well as Mr Glorieux and Mr Jarré for their long-time support.

INNOVATION IN THE PHS SECTOR

PHS is a sector facing many challenges. It's expanding due to an increase of needs, but it suffers from insufficient public investment stressed **Aurélie Decker**⁴, EFSI's Director. PHS are also a sector in which undeclared work still prevails in most EU countries and in which adequate staff trainings need to be ensured. PHS is a labour-intensive sector therefore *"most aspects of the service delivery cannot be standardised or automated thanks to technical equipment"* she added. It is generally accepted that PHS is a sector for which the potential for innovation is rather limited. Within EFSI, it has been considered whether it was really the case, what was the potential for innovation, and if there was one what was it. So EFSI conducted a survey with the aim to grasp PHS actors' vision and experience of innovation.

Firstly, Aurélie Decker indicated that innovation was broadly defined as *"any ideas, products, services or models which are new or applied in new contexts, which are designed to satisfy a specific need, and which must be replicable"*. The survey was conducted online between October 2017 and March 2018. 75 replies from 12 Member States were collected.

"Most aspects of the service delivery cannot be standardized or automated thanks to technical equipment"
A. Decker

To the question *"is innovation important for the sustainability and future development of PHS?"*, 65% of the respondents shared the opinion that innovation is crucial or very important and 27% that it was of medium importance. This is in line with the need for the sector to upgrade to tackle the various challenges identified. Then, trying to identify the areas under the most intensive processes of innovation, three areas were highlighted: working conditions; work organisation and services design. Aurélie Decker stressed that ICT and artificial

intelligence (AI) were rather considered by the respondents as an innovation tools than areas in which innovation is needed per se.

Secondly, the survey tried to identify incentives and barriers to innovative practices. As for what is perceived as a driver of innovation, respondents neatly pointed at the growing needs of an ageing population, followed by the competition on quality of services and the ever higher budgetary constraints affecting PHS purchase. She highlighted the fact that 80% of the respondents considered all the incentives listed as being of high or medium importance which reinforce the idea that the challenges face by the sector are forcing it to evolve. On the other hand, lack of financing for innovative PHS solutions is the main obstacle to the sector's innovation. PHS users' unwillingness or inability to pay for new services and the lack of key staff necessary to effect change were also mentioned.

Finally, people were asked which aspects of PHS have changed the most in the last three years and what are their expectations for the next three years. It reveals that the sector has undergone only slight changes. Thus, the most significant change identified by respondents was the emergence of online platforms. Likewise, respondents predominantly shared the idea that technology-related innovation processes will be the most intensive for the sector in the next three years. When respondents' perception of innovation in the last three years and expectations of innovations in the next three years are compared, technological innovation comes first, followed by the way in which PHS providers communicate with their customers and the organisational structure of PHS providers.

Aurélie Decker highlighted that despite the fact that 88% of the respondents identified PHS' workers qualifications as an area in which innovation is of high or medium importance, this is not reflected in the last set of question. Indeed, the skills of the workforce is the area in which innovation is the least expected in the near future.

⁴ Aurélie Decker's Power Point presentation is available [here](#).

DIGITAL REVOLUTION MEETS PHS. WHAT'S NEXT?

In recent years we have witnessed the emergence of new technological solutions to facilitate independent living of older people in their own home said **Delphine Chilese-Lemarinier**, European Affairs Delegate at Edenred. One can mention telecare, robots or other technological devices such as safety alarms. These new technological solutions also ease user-provider relationships and work organisation, and they can also be used to train carers and workers. *“If the digitalisation of the sector aims at satisfying an ever-increasing demand for more person-centred, more accessible and more*

“If the digitalization of the sector aims at satisfying an ever-increasing demand {...}, it also raises many questions and challenges”

D. Chilese-Lemarinier

affordable PHS, it also raises many questions and challenges” she underlined. When it comes to service design, there is often a concern about the quality of services, the fear that these ICT solutions will substitute human intervention or that some PHS users will be left behind because they lack digital skills and access. Delphine Chilese-Lemarinier added that working conditions and work organisation are also affected and it gives rise to new type of jobs which are not defied yet.

Therefore, the aim of the debate was to explore the various challenges faced by the PHS sector and how –

from the perspective of both PHS users and providers – these challenges could be overcome in order to make the most of digitalisation. Firstly, the technological changes witnessed in the PHS sector and different solutions to transform them in successful development opportunities have been discussed.

Thereafter, **Dirk Jarré**⁵, Delegate of the CCMI and President of the European Federation for Older Persons (EURAG) gave a ground presentation on advanced technologies serving older people at home. He recalled that by 2040, one third of Europeans over 65 will be 80 and plus which obviously will have several political, social, economic and organisational effects. Sociologists have found that 80% of older person prefer to age at home rather than in institutions. On the other hand, care and nursing facilities are generally very costly and not sufficiently available. Furthermore, ageing “in the family” is rarely the preferred choice and informal carers are becoming rarer (youth migration, more women at work, etc.). Dirk Jarré stressed that “at home” does not necessarily means one’s own home but it’s the environment that matters. *“We must therefore consider that “home” is a complex physical and social space”* he added.

Above all, older persons’ desire for independence and self-determination must be recognized. However, the older you get, the more you need assistance and care, and in this regard, home may be very work-intensive and uncomfortable. He regretted that home care services are mostly insufficient and/or unaffordable, and that professional and competent carers are scarce and hardly considered in our society. Dirk Jarré underlined that it is thus logical that we turn towards Ambient/Active Assisted Living (AAL) solutions as they can significantly improve living conditions by making our homes safer, smarter and more comfortable. Indeed, living at home can be supported by detectors, sensors, assistance devices as well as voice-commanded and intuitive home appliances. Advanced technologies can in particular *“offer individualised responsive support technologies because older persons are not an homogenous group as well as information systems and communication tools facilitating exchanges with other persons which is very important when it comes to self-determination”*. He added that they are also important in covering medical needs thanks to tele-medicine and tele-care methods. As such, our future will be robots with imbedded artificial intelligence, able to immediately detect older people’s needs and to learn everyday how to better respond to it. Dirk Jarré underlined that *“it is not only assistance that can be offered but real support and real care”*.

He listed the numerous advantages of advanced technologies such as taking better account of older people’s diversity and different needs and preferences; easing the implementation of individually tailored assistance and care; encouraging independence and self-determination as well as delivering real-time answers to specific needs. Furthermore, Dirk Jarré added that it will ease cooperation between diverse stakeholders as well as local partnership and will reinforce decentralisation and resilience.

⁵ Dirk Jarré’s PowerPoint presentation is available [here](#).

However, many issues need to be addressed around these developments and processes. Firstly, how can we ensure that these technologies will assess the real need of the persons? Will high-tech systems and AI robots replace carers or rather be partners? The willingness of older people to accept such technologies should also be analysed. Dirk Jarré mentioned the potential barriers to their use be they psychological, cultural, social or financial. What will the State's role in ensuring that there is no issues of safety, control, abuse, and data use and protection? Finally, he underlined that at a last resort, the question of older people's ability to control and stop robots must be raised.

"It is not only assistance that can be offered but real support and real care"

D. Jarré

Therefore, Dirk Jarré considered that a totally new approach is needed in this area. Firstly, mind-set should change, and it should be widely recognised that technological progress creates opportunity. He underlined that successful engineering is not enough but that *"how to apply artificial intelligence (AI) intelligently is crucial and that is a matter of planning"*. Indeed, users' needs must be central, and we need to be more respectful. Dirk Jarré added that although AI is used in China to control and in the United-States to generate benefits, Europe has a very long tradition of balancing individual and societal interest that should be pursued when it comes to AI implementation. Thus, he advised to work on an ethical vision and coordinated strategy in that area. When doing so, he considered that it's essential to promote co-creation between users and engineers, interdisciplinary cooperation and an integration of all stakeholders in the creation and development processes. Furthermore, the State must ensure safety and equality of access to these new technologies as well as sufficient investment in professional and personal digital skills development. Dirk Jarré also pointed out the administrative, financial, market obstacles as *"80 to 90% of all start-ups in that area do not survive the "Valley of Death" hurdle, so we need to look at the right business models"*. Finally, he concluded by quoting an Oxford British philosopher teacher which said, *"I am somewhat afraid of artificial intelligence – but definitely I do not want to miss it!"*.

The large potential arising from the advent of digital technologies is also underlined by **Dr. Malcolm Fisk**⁶ from the De Montfort University. He stressed that technologies can facilitate the evolution of services provided for or accessed by users. Some new technologies can indeed be used in support of existing services and they offer a greater capacity to do things in various ways and enable people to remain independent. Going over the range of digital technologies available, Malcolm Fisk pointed out that when it comes to artificial intelligence, in the future fewer and fewer people will be able to understand how they work as the algorithms will be less able to be understood. Therefore, we must invest a lot of trust in these technologies. He stressed that control over it is also fundamental. Despite the fact that he is a supporter of robotics, Malcolm Fisk declared himself an opponent of anthropomorphic robots. *"There is a kind of fixation amongst many technologists about anthropomorphic robots – and some take it even a stage further talking about companions – this is a very tricky area there, with a lot of ethical implications"* he added. He also noted that technologies can make our homes fantastic, but their aim should be to empower older people at home and not trap them.

Do they support current service frameworks? Do they respond to urgent needs (for instance through the use of fall detectors)? Do they mean more and more surveillance and monitoring? Will they support self-management and control? Will they lead to less "personal contact" or are they a mean of facilitating contact and gaining greater companionship? Will they lead to the further inclusion of older people? These are all important questions to ask ourselves stressed Malcolm Fisk.

He added that new knowledge and skill sets are needed especially when they do relate to the provision of care services. In this regard, he acknowledged the demonstrated capacity of care workers to develop the necessary new knowledge and skills; and for them to pursue their learning. Above all, it is the care workers that can help older people, where needed, with the use of their own technologies.

Drawing from several projects including the [PROGRESSIVE project](#), Malcolm Fisk offered a list of ethical parameters that can be used to underpin digital related services and products. These included the need for digital technologies to be safe, sustainable, user-friendly ("Design for all"), interoperable,

⁶ Dr. Malcolm Fisk's PowerPoint presentation is available [here](#).

“Ethical parameters are fairly obvious, but do the designers of the technologies always recognize these?”

M. Fisk

flexible/configurable, clear/intuitive; respect privacy; facilitate care, control, empowerment; and be co-created and co-produced. *“These ethical parameters are fairly obvious, but do the designers of the technologies always recognise these? Not enough in my views”*, he remarked. Referring to formal standards coming out from organisations such as CEN and ISO, Malcolm Fisk referred to the role standards to establish a routine way to ensure that a certain minimum level of quality is met,

with a strong link to “established” practices. He mentioned three relevant standards developments within CEN: n°431 Service Chain for Social Alarms; n°449 Quality of Care for Older People; and n°450 Patient Involvement in Person-Centred Care.

Talking about new technologies, it is essential to think about their implications for new standards in the future. Therefore, Malcolm Fisk concluded his intervention by opening the debate with a list of questions concerned with the way that digital technologies fit in the world of standards. Are standards based on the ethical parameters mentioned earlier? Do they relate to the home or the wider community? Because standards formalise the way things are done, do they support the status quo even though it is changing so rapidly at the moment? Do they support social responsibility (i.e. ethical appropriate behaviour)? Are they for care or empowerment? Do they fit with our digital future?

The digital revolution also impacts the PHS sector, as it was stressed by **Didier Humbert**, co-founder of the Platform Ogust. According to him, the 4th industrial digital revolution introduced new business model based on simpler and quicker solutions. New technologies – namely digital platforms – seek to offer personalised services and targeted products. Currently in France, 88% of individuals are connected, 61% of whom are e-commerce consumers. In such hyper-connected world, Didier Humbert argued that the PHS sector is becoming more and more digital and new digital solutions provide opportunities to boost productivity and cooperation, while contributing to reduce skills shortages. At the same time, PHS digital solutions meet the consumers’ needs in terms of accessibility. In this regard, it was highlighted how important it is to take into account people’s needs in order to redesign PHS future industry efficiently.

“There will be no exception to the platformization of the economy. The question is how to make the best out of it in the PHS sector?”

D. Humbert

In 2015, PHS was the third sector ranking as per digital growth. In 2025 it is expected to rank second. Among the new digital players and tools available, Didier Humbert presented the French company Ogust, providing IT

cloud-based solutions for PHS services. The platform encourages to adopt a customer-centric approach based on innovation, while allowing service providers to start their online business quickly and effectively. With regard to web platforms operating in the PHS sector, Didier Humber also presented a recent study launched by the French Federation of PHS providers (FESP) showing that 39% of PHS platform workers are trustworthy professional and that consumers are more likely to order online services such as housekeeping and home gardening, since they do not require hiring a trusted person like childcare and elderly care.

If speed and efficiency are the main features of digital solutions, Didier Humber stressed nonetheless that there is currently a gap between the available technologies and their use in PHS: for instance, only 20% of Ogust consumers use e-signatures and only 25% of PHS companies registered in the Ogust database accept credit card payments.

According to Didier Humbert, digitalization is a worldwide phenomenon, a global trend growing at a rapid pace. Nonetheless, companies have not fully understood what is at stake and need to further digitalize and adapt to customers’ needs. In a recent survey on platformization, 62% of traditional companies stated competition from PHS platform will increase because of two main factors: accessible and affordable online services and rating. Among the companies that participated in the survey, 57% were ready to cooperate with platforms, whereas 72% supported alternative cooperation between traditional companies. Some focused on the potential risks resulting from the emergence of platforms, other embraced a more adventurous and visionary approach by supporting the platform market.

With regard to the relationship between technologies and current demographic trends – namely the ageing population – Didier Humbert welcomed senior-friendly digital tools such as the Alexa skills package, developed by Amazon. These new care assistance tools could indeed provide effective responses to tackle old age-related issues. Furthermore, Didier Humber presented Ogustine.com, a B2B2C professional platform – promoting the exchanges between businesses and consumers via an intermediary – launched in 2019.

During the following exchange of views, observations were raised on the need to statistically assess the average volume of care that people aged 80+ will need, with a view to population ageing. Furthermore, it was asked what impact digital platforms will have on workers and how this new employment model could ensure adequate social protection. Although PHS is not just about long-term care but also about childcare and overall work-life balance, Dirk Jarré argued that older people's needs should indeed be adequately identified based on specific conditions including health conditions like dementia and the context in which the ageing process occurs). Furthermore, ageing trends will impact the world of work as well as social protection systems. The current approach on how to ensure personal and societal wellbeing should therefore be reviewed, by ensuring inter alia appropriate life-long learning progress for senior workers who lack suitable digital skills and need to be trained to adapt to new employment situations.

During the discussion that followed speakers' presentations, the notion of retirement and retirement ages was questioned, namely by focusing on the need of flexible work arrangements at late career stage. **Guillaume Richard**, CEO of Oui Care Group, added that PHS is not limited to long-term care for older people, it also includes services addressed to families and employees. In this regard, new digital solutions could also improve childcare. Finally, speakers from the audience also reminded the importance of life-long learning and of innovative digital strategies for training and learning (i.e. via mobile phone videos).

Irene Mandl, Head of the employment unit - European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), presented recent study focused inter alia on employment and working conditions of platform workers in the household services sector. The [report](#) drafted by Eurofound – the European agency providing information and data monitoring on work-related issues – focused on new forms of digital

“Platform work is indeed just a portion of the digital economy, a new, marginal employment mode based on online on-demand paid work, divided in tasks and implying three parties”

I.Mandl

employment. According to Mandl, *“platform work is indeed just a portion of the digital economy, a new, marginal employment mode based on online on-demand paid work, divided in tasks and implying three parties”*. In this context, an online survey led by the European Commission Joint Research Center revealed that for 2% of the digital workforce platform work is the main source of income, for 6% it is a significant source of income, while 8% perform platform work activities regularly, once a month. The survey confirmed that platform work remains a small-scale phenomenon, although it is developing quickly. The recent Eurofound research created a typology for platform work, by identifying 5 indicators: scale of tasks, skills level required, format of service provision, form of matching, selector. If combined, these indicators result in 120 types of platform work. Accordingly, the report identified 10 common categories of platform work and assessed the impact of platform work on the labour market and working conditions, in order to promote adequate policy responses. More precisely, a comparative analysis was led on three of these categories, one of which is represented by PHS digital workers and goes under the name of on-location, worker-initiated, moderately skilled work. Platforms offering services delivered in person to households represent about 4% of the total number of platforms and employ about 5/6% of platform workers in Europe. Moreover, PHS platform services mostly cover domestic rather than care activities and are provided by professionals but also by low-skilled home helpers. Those workers are generally young highly educated male, slightly older than the average, overqualified for the task, for whom platform work is as additional source of income. They aim at creating or extending their skills and a network of clients, exploring self-employment opportunities and developing new entrepreneurial skills. However, across the EU, there is a vacuum of specific regulation on the employment status of platform workers, i.e. on whether they should be considered self-employed or employee. Therefore, each platform could decide either to provide contracts in accordance with the labour law or, which is mostly

the case, to consider platform workers as freelancers. The report also identified the general characteristics of platform work: flexibility, autonomy and control. Indeed, workers create their profile on the platform, define their rates, select tasks and schedule their interventions. As a result, workers appear overall satisfied with earnings, work intensity and work time quality. Instead, workers seem not concerned about health and safety, despite the work is physically demanding and could lead to potential accidents and exposure to chemicals. When it comes to social aspects, workers have overall good relationships with clients and are satisfied with the support of the platform. However, they are not interested in developing a network with fellow workers, which make it difficult to gather them in associations. When it comes to employability and career progression, the clients' rating system has an impact on future work opportunities within the platform economy. This could become problematic in case the client wrongly assesses the scale and difficulty – therefore the price – of the tasks performed. To conclude, Irene Mandl argued that platform work entails both positive and negative aspects: on the one hand, it increases access to the labour market, employability, skills enhancement, earnings. This applies not only to individual workers but also to micro-enterprises. On the other hand, based on the absence of social protection networks, it increases the risks of excessive work time intensity and dangerous working environments. Finally, based on the challenges identified in relation to platform work, Eurofound's web repository presents a set of measures and solutions to better regulate the platform economy, in the form of recommendations addressed to policymakers on the provision of information on platform work, representation of platform workers, arbitration.

Two examples of good practices in the digital market economy and at national level were then presented:

Michael Harty, founder of Home Care – an Irish traditional home care provider – presented Home Care Direct, an online platform connecting domestic workers, carers and families. Michael Harty revealed that in Ireland the demand is increasing because of demographic challenges, accordingly it is becoming more difficult to find carers. This carers' shortage is also associated with high costs and quality issues, linked to difficulties in recruiting and retaining care workers. In this regard, the sector's poor attractiveness is due to low wages – workers are paid little above the minimum wage – and little career opportunities. Despite these challenging aspects, the Irish home care market offer significant tax relief: people can claim back roughly 50% of the costs of care. Overall, Michael Harty insisted on the need to reform the care system, considering both users' and carers' needs, towards more affordable services,

Home Care Direct is “an online platform enabling carers and families to work together without the intermediation of an agency in a tax compliant manner”

M.Harty

better quality services, and more attractive career paths. Online platform could respond to these needs, while creating a more direct relationship between carers and providers and accordingly empowering carers. For instance, in Ireland home care agencies charge 25-27 EUR an hour, but carers are paid around 11 EUR. Online platforms remove the intermediation cost. Regarding the Home Care Direct Platform, Michael Harty defined it as an “online platform enabling carers and families to work together without the intermediation of an agency in a tax

compliant manner”. Carers are recruited following a standard path: they should pass an interview and their references are checked. Once recruited, carers can work both as full-time self-employed or can combine care work with part-time traditional contracts. Carers have access both to training – also on entrepreneurial skills – and to social welfare. Finally, the platform handles administrative work in a tax compliant manner. The system is beneficial not only for workers, but also for families, who can access cheaper services, provided by highly motivated carers who feel the ownership of their job. Accordingly, Michael Harty perceives Home Care Direct as an alternative complementary market choice to traditional care. Nonetheless, he acknowledged that platforms are not suitable for all carers and for all families, since they imply more responsibilities on both sides. Instead, they could be the right solution for live-in carers (in overnight situations) who are not bound by the working time Directive. Harty concluded by presenting factual information and future goals. In 2018, Home Care Direct hired more than 200 carers, with an average wage of 20 EUR/hour, increased carers' proactivity to create a network of clients, contributed to reduce black market and informal care. In the future, Home Care Direct will seek to broaden the type of services provided within the platform, incorporate in-home technology, and geographically expand the platform outside of Ireland.

In the following debate, the audience broadly welcomed Home care Direct as a good digital practice, a complementary mode of service provision to traditional agencies. Participants also asked what kind of mechanism applies to self-employed when it comes to social protection. It appears indeed that carers are considered self-employed, still they have access to the Irish social protection system. Michael Harty replied that since carers set up their own limited company, they are considered employee of that same company, in full tax compliance.

Thorkild Holmboe-Hay, policy and communication adviser within the Danish trade union 3F, presented the Collective Agreement signed on April 10, 2018 between 3F and Hilfr, a young company providing home care online services. The Agreement was signed based on a request from the Government, which actively participates in the discussions on crucial work-related topics such as the digital market, social protection of new atypical workers. Indeed, challenges were identified in the domestic work sector: gender, age, racial labour segregation; shortcomings in the regulation on dangerous chemical substances; difficulties reaching the network of carers across the territory. After signing the agreement with the trade union 3F, the platform Hilfr increased its production by 50%. The agreement focuses on the kind of social protection to be granted to platform workers. Unusually, it provides the possibility for workers to choose whether to be self-employed or employee covered by a union agreement. It also covers wages, regulation about employment, cancellation of jobs, sick pay, pension, due notice, holiday money, maternity leaves, training and education. In this regard, a training fund was created in Denmark for platform workers. The Agreement was accompanied by a sociological study: it appeared that gig workers stop seeing themselves as workers but rather “*responsible for selling themselves as a product*”; and colleagues are perceived as competitors. Platform workers compete on service flexibility (in terms of time and availability), quality and price. Based on the high competitiveness rate of the platform market economy, workers find it difficult to organise themselves and have their interests represented by one single voice. This causes problems to the trade unions industry. Accordingly, in Summer 2019, a broader sector agreement (inspired to the Hilfr agreement) was to be negotiated between 3F and the employers’ federation.

“After signing the agreement with the trade union 3F, the platform Hilfr increased its production by 50%”

T. Holmboe-Hay

In the final discussion, **Michael Harty** reminded that platforms are often criticised for taking down labour standards and wages. In PHS it is the opposite: currently many PHS workers in the traditional market are under zero-hours contracts and could not be paid any lower. Platform economy is instead improving carers’ rewards. From the audience, a representative from the **Belgium Consumers’ Association** asked to Malcom Fisk how to address the relationship between consumers, workers and new technologies. Fisk replied that technology is a cross-cutting topic to all sectors, both health and social care. He then suggested setting standards to foster and improve cooperation between all actors. Irene Mandl added that a Code of conducts should be established, and that competition law, consumers’ and data protection should be further discussed. **Michael Hardy** reminded that standards are important but should not become a barrier to innovation or consumers’ choice.

INNOVATING STATISTICS ON THE PHS SECTOR

The second panel focused on available statistics in the PHS sectors and initiatives to improve them. **Aurélie Decker**, moderator, EFSI Director, firstly presented the [PHS Industry Monitor](#), a report published in April 2018 by EFSI in cooperation with Jean-François Lebrun, senior expert on PHS. The report provides a broad overview of the sector at European level. In Europe there are currently 8 million PHS workers, representing 4% of total employment in the EU, with 155.000 new jobs created between 2011 and 2013. Closer rates are observed in similar labour-intensive sector (hospitality, construction). Furthermore, in the sector 91% of PHS workers are women, which corresponds to 7% of total women employment across the EU. The report also explores two different types of employment models: the provider organisation model – which employs most of the workforce – and direct employment. Self-employment is a growing trend, but it is not explored in the study. Although being an expanding sector, PHS macro-economic contributions remain underestimated. This clearly appears in statistical categories which fail to cover the sector sufficiently. Accordingly, the report provides more precise statistics on PHS, using an innovative approach which combines measurement on the size of the sector, number of workers and other relevant factors.

Jean François Lebrun, PHS sector expert and former European Commission advisor, agreed on the limitation of current statistical classification in PHS. He reminded that it is important to know the number of jobs in the sector to better calculate the net cost of public interventions. Firstly, Jean François Lebrun presented a double approach to classify PHS services: based on the type of activities (care and non-care) or based on the employment mode (direct employment or public, profit, non-profit providers organisation or self-employment). Keeping in mind this double approach, he presented two different methodologies to analyse data on PHS: the sectoral and the occupational approach. Under the sectoral approach (useful to evaluate the employment model), references to PHS activities could be found in the NACE statistics, providing classification of a range of economic activities. Category 97 (*services of households employers of domestic personnel*) calculated the number of individuals employing a domestic worker and having no other activities than this one, based on the principle of mutual exclusive category of the NACE system. Therefore, category 97 is too narrow. Moreover, discrepancies are found between national data and category 97 data. Category 88 (*social work activities without accommodation*) is instead too broad, since it includes sectors that do not relate to PHS, and at the same time too narrow, since there are no figures on the 88 sub-sectors falling under this category. Moreover, the use of 4-digit data raises issues related to sample size and collection and information which could be unavailable for some Member States. Despite being either too broad or too narrow, the categories provide

“Both the occupational (type of activity) and sectoral (mode of employment) statistical approaches are either too broad or too narrow. Nonetheless they provide useful insights on the magnitude of PHS across Europe”

J.F. Lebrun

useful insights on the magnitude of respectively direct employment and providers organisations. Under the occupational approach (useful to evaluate the type of activities), references to PHS activities could be found in the ISCO categories – International Standard Classification of Occupations). More precisely, data from two categories including PHS activities were collected and mixed: category 5322 (home-based personal care workers) and 9111 (domestic cleaners and helpers). As the latter was missing in many countries at 4-digits level, the number of workers belonging to this category was estimated by subcontracting the number of workers of industrial cleaners⁷ to the number of workers belonging to the 911 category (Domestic, Hotel, and Office Cleaners and Helpers) provided by Eurostat. Like NACE, ISCO is both too broad – since it includes healthcare workers – and too narrow – as it excludes childcare workers. Like NACE, information is only at 4-digit level (raising issues on the sample size and information available for Member States). Although data are approximate, ISCO remains a good indicator providing an order of magnitude of the distribution between care and non-care workers in PHS.

By comparing these two complementary approaches, the PHS Industry Monitor report provides an overall perception of data in PHS. Another approach could be further integrated in the next PHS Industry Monitor: the national approach. In this regard, Jean François Lebrun concluded that national data

⁷ 9112 category provided by the European Cleaning and Facility Services Industry (EFCI).

provide more accurate but less comparable figures at EU level, and that such data could be collected from the Ad-PHS project.

Michael Mietzner, statistical methodologist at Eurostat, further explored the European Economic Activity classification (NACE), how statistics cover the PHS sector, and how statistical classification will be revised. Firstly, Michael Mietzner presented statistical classifications at world (ISIC), EU (NACE), and national levels (national NACE), going from more aggregated to more detailed. Furthermore, he also named statistics

“In the PHS sector, there are no harmonized EU data on households as employers”
M. Mietzner

which cover economic activities, but also products and services (CPC/CPA). Overall, statistical classification should be exhaustive, mutually exclusive (avoiding overlapping categories), and should consistently allocate each element to the corresponding category. Furthermore, statistics cover all activities with no distinction between legal or underground activities; could be conducted either via technological instruments or by hand without distinction of value; and are not demand or end use based. As for PHS in statistics, there are no harmonized EU data on households as employers. Indeed, Eurostat run a research on the Structural Business Statistics (SBS), excluding micro-enterprises (i.e. including PHS companies but no households). Another limit concerns the difficulty to compare administrative data between countries, since such data cover different areas in different countries. For instance, in Germany NACE categories include *inter alia* general cleaning, social work activities without accommodation for the elderly and disabled, child day-care activities. Furthermore, in the German *Statistik der Bundesagentur für Arbeit* a new statistical category on non-specialised household service activities was created. French statistical categories (PEA - *Produit particuliers employeurs périodes anonymisées*), instead, include activities of households employing domestic services (97.00), home help (88.10) and care for young children (88.91). When it comes to childcare, the field defined is both too broad and too narrow: it includes activities carried out outside the home (such as childcare in crèche and day-care centres), but many organizations are not counted because they are classified according to their activities, for example education, tutoring, or home computer support. As mentioned above, the CPA classification – which provides more detailed data compared to NACE – was also explored: among its categories, many cover services for dependent, elderly or disabled people (subcategories 88 and 97). Moreover, the CPA system was recently revised, contrarily to the NACE, linked to the world ISIC statistics, which have not been revised either. Finally, Michael Mietzner announced that NACE statistics will be updated in the near future, as the economic structure has changed since the last revision in 2006, and NACE does not adequately reflect the economy anymore. In this regard, Eurostat run a consultation and received proposals to update NACE. However, as mentioned above, NACE categories are strictly linked to ISIC categories: to revise them, Eurostat needs approval from the UN statistical division, since ISIC at world level should also be changed for a matter of consistency. The whole process will take approximately 3 to 5 years.

“Although the ILO 189 definition of domestic work is useful for legal purposes, it remains too vague for statistical purposes. Statistics should measure the number of domestic workers; shifts over time in the share of paid and non-paid/informal domestic work; and shifts on the type of employment contract”

D. Hunter

David Hunter, senior consultant and managing director at StatClass Sàrl, expert in the development of national and international data classifications, presented the resolution adopted at the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in October 2018. The resolution focused on the revision of the International Classification of Status in Employment, defining the distinction between paid employment, self-employment, and also dealing with new forms of employment including in the platform economy. Furthermore, the resolution includes the first definition of domestic work and workers for statistical purposes. Accordingly, the resolution focuses on approaches to measure domestic work at global level. In this context, David Hunter mentioned the ILO Convention 189, which defines domestic work as the set of activities

performed in or for a household, and domestic workers as those providing domestic services under an employment relationship (either with households or agencies). Although this definition is useful for legal

purposes, it remains too vague for statistical purposes. Statistics should indeed measure the number of domestic workers and their characteristics; shifts over time in the share of paid and unpaid domestic work, and the impact of women's employment on the externalisation of domestic services; and shifts on the type of employment contract namely direct employment by households, employment through third-party agencies, and for-profit employment (or self-employment). The latter category had increased recently based on the development of the platform economy. In a 2013 report on domestic work, the ILO estimated that there were 52.6 million domestic workers across the world⁸, representing 7.5% of women's wage employment worldwide. Since the sector is little regulated, they appear vulnerable to exploitation since they are often employed informally. They are among the lowest paid workers across the world and do not enjoy of the same social and legal protection of other workers. Like Jean François Lebrun, David Hunter presented an overview on the existing statistical approaches to measure domestic work. The industry-based approach (based on ISIC Revision 4) covers activities of household as employers and services-producing activities of households for own use. Information is collected from administrative sources, employers and labour surveys (employer surveys and administrative records are relevant sources but may provide incomplete data since they exclude domestic workers employed informally). Statistics show that the rate of domestic workers in the total workforce can reach higher levels in non-OECD countries than in the OECD (where the highest level of 4.5% is recorded in Mexico, and the lowest in Nordic and Eastern EU countries). The task-based approach concerns the classification of occupations (based on ISCO-08): category 5152 covers domestic housekeepers, including also operators of small accommodations, guest houses and Airbnb (this issue will be reviewed in the next revision), category 5322 covers home-based personal care workers, both healthcare and social care workers, category 9111 covers domestic cleaners and helpers. According to the status in employment approach, mostly used in Latin America, domestic workers are considered as a broad category. Accordingly, statistics do not provide disaggregated data on sub-categories besides not including some relevant job categories like drivers and security guards (which alter statistics from a gender perspective). Finally, these statistics only rely on the perception of respondents. However, the industry-based and status in employment approaches provide similar results. Finally, the household roster approach only captures live-in domestic workers. Therefore, all these approaches have limitations.

Against this background, David Hunter presented the official definition of domestic work for statistical purposes adopted at the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians: domestic work should be intended as *“all work performed within households to provide services mainly for consumption by household members”*. It could either be performed with payment or unpaid (by household members or persons not residing in the household such as family members, neighbours, volunteers). In statistics on employment, domestic workers are defined as *“workers of any sex employed for pay or profit, including in kind payment, who perform work in or for a household or households to provide services mainly for consumption by the household”*. Their activities may be performed within the household premises or in other locations, which includes the case of drivers. Domestic workers are identified in statistics by their type of occupation, their employment status and their workplace i.e. the household. Accordingly, they are divided in sub-categories: live-in and live-out domestic employees; domestic workers employed by service providers; domestic service providers employed for-profit (independent workers, dependent contractors including platform workers). This latter category was introduced to better frame the employment area between self and paid employment. It includes workers in their own micro-enterprise who are dependent on another entity that exercises control over their activities and benefits from their work. The definition adopted at the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians also provides criteria for inclusion and exclusion from the category of domestic workers. To conclude, David Hunter advises that domestic employees can be measured in labour force and other surveys through the industry approach and that other domestic workers can be identified based on the classification of occupations and place of work. This approach could also allow measurement of workers not considered to be domestic workers, but who perform services frequently provided by domestic workers (such as laundry, childcare and personal care) in settings such as their own home or workplace, or in the workplace of agencies providing such services. This latter category was of particular interest in developing countries who want to measure the extent to which domestic work is moving outside the household; and to measure the extent to which women are still performing domestic-type work.

⁸ ILO 2013, Domestic workers across the world: Global and regional statistics and the extent of legal protection, Geneva.

In the following discussion, **Aurélie Decker** asked to David Hunter if there will be new official figures from ILO on domestic work in the near future. David Hunter could not tell in detail what would be ILO plans to compile statistics, however it would be possible to run analysis in the EU labour force survey using Eurostat data and testing the Industry approach. He also added that now that the resolution has been adopted, many countries will apply the statistical definition. For many countries relevant information is already available in statistical databases, but other will have to make adjustments, namely on workplace data. Furthermore, Aurélie Decker asked if such methodology (the industry approach) would allow to obtain disaggregated data on domestic workers (on gender, occupation, etc.). David Hunter replied that generally labour force survey data include this type of information, although it is frequently restricted to main jobs and that limitations imposed by sample size would impact on the possibilities for meaningful analysis. The fact that some EU countries do not code occupational data at 4-digit level could also be a problem but combining data on the workplace plus the 3-digit code would allow accurate and comparable results to be achieved. **Michael Mietzner** asked David Hunter how much the new categories of domestic work and workers take undeclared work into account. David Hunter replied that outside the EU most of domestic employees are employed informally. The rate is significant also in the EU, but it is difficult to calculate the share of formal and informal. The Labour Force Survey includes both. Moreover, respondents are reluctant to tell national statistical bureaus whether services are performed informally, since they fear that such information will be transmitted to taxation offices. In this regard, **Jean François Lebrun** added that the PHS Industry Monitor includes one chapter on the undeclared economy, based on the collection of data from Eurobarometer and national statistics. Also, the website of the Platform tackling Undeclared Work – to be integrated in the European Labour Authority – outlines measures to decrease the number of irregular workers in PHS. Jean François Lebrun was later asked if he considered other exercises to track the sector besides NACE, for instance, by matching statistical data with a qualitative approach (under the sectoral approach), or by combining the sectoral and occupational approach? No other approaches than NACE have been considered yet, however further data have been used to complete the PHS Industry Monitor, namely regarding work-life balance. Jean François Lebrun also added that good suggestion to extend the scope of the research will be welcomed. **Guillaume Richard** stated that the third survey on undeclared work led by OuiCare in France (2008 – 2013 – 2019) showed an increase in grey work: from 3% ten years ago, it moved to more than 41% in older people care and 22% in domestic care. A representative from the **German Minister of Family Affairs** argued that it is crucial to measure the employment rate and GDP contribution of PHS. He also asked whether there are studies focused on working hours. David Hunter clarified that the Labour Force Survey includes information on working time. However, labour force surveys do not usually provide info on multiple-jobs holders (which is the case for domestic workers working for different households), so the number of hours worked in total is not necessarily accurate. Jean François Lebrun finally added that this information is available at national level for workers employed by households.

THE AD-PHS PROJECT

The afternoon session was opened by **Asel Kadyrbaeva**, research and development Officer at the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), who presented the [Ad-PHS](#) project (*Advancing Personal and Household Services in Europe*). Ad-PHS is a pilot project started in December 2018, requested by the European Parliament and managed by the European Commission's DG Employment. Its overarching goal is to create a single point of contact to provide guidance to public authorities in the development of PHS policies. The project will indeed create a

“Ad-PHS overarching goal is to create a single point of contact to provide guidance to public authorities in the development of PHS policies”
A.Kadyrbaeva

platform of relevant PHS stakeholders at EU level. The project involves several partners including civil society representatives (EASPD), academic partners (IWAK, Goethe university), trade unions umbrellas (Uni Europa and EFFAT), representatives of enterprises providing services to individuals (EFSI), of enterprises in the social economy (Diesis) and of family employers (EFFE). Other stakeholders will be connected through the advisory board. As for the methodology, firstly the project will outline the state of play of PHS in Europe and at national

level for 21 selected countries. Secondly, discussions will be held at national level to identify existing practices. The first round of discussions will take place in countries with advanced PHS policies in order to collect promising practices and develop tailored guidance. The second round of national events will focus on countries with less developed PHS policies to spread the good practices and tailored guidance identifies.

Finally, all stakeholders will join the single point of contact and continue to share and spread relevant info. As for the deliverables, the project will produce 21 reports on PHS state of play at national level; a report on promising practices; a set of six guidelines on social dialogue, social vouchers, professional profiles, rights and obligations, digital platforms and workers cooperatives. As for the events in the framework of Ad-PHS, partners will organise national workshops as well as a final Conference in May 2020. Finally, EASPD in the quality of project coordinator called on the audience to join the Ad-PHS advisory board.

INNOVATION IN PHS: PREVENTION OF RISKS POSED BY DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

In his introductory remarks, **Ben Broeckx**, Director Public Benefits and Public Affairs in Sodexo Belgium, stressed that only a small percentage of the 8 million of European PHS workers have the ability to benefit from occupational safety and health (OSH) preventative measures and trainings. However, they are confronted with important work-related hazards, the first of which being physical risks. Indeed, PHS workers lift heavy loads and do a lot of repetitive work which leads to back strain or joint and muscle pain. Ben Broeckx indicated that they are also exposed to chemical risks, not only by inhalation or ingestion, but also by skin exposure when they are doing wet work. Finally, the psychological risks are often overlooked despite the fact that PHS workers are sometimes working in almost structural isolation and they may be under pressure to provide services within timeframe that are just not realistic. Ben Broeckx underlined that the effectiveness of OSH preventative measures developed are limited by the sector intrinsic characteristics. Firstly, the workplace is a private home and they are not many things that one can ask private individuals with the organization of their own home. Therefore, PHS workers are exposed to cold, heat, poor ventilation or a smoking environment. Furthermore, they have fewer opportunities to exchange with colleagues on both issue they encountered and learning. Ben Broeckx stressed that the relationship between the PHS workers and beneficiaries is often a de-facto asymmetry. *“They may not feel adequately capable of asking for certain changes in habits or use of other products”* he added. Finally, the number of different workplaces – about a dozen – in which PHS workers operate weekly should not be underestimated. Therefore, *“a full control as to adequate preventative measures in place is a challenge”* concluded Ben Broeckx.

“A full control as to adequate preventative measures in place is a challenge.”
Ben Broeckx

Being a Senior Project Manager within the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), **Lothar Lieck**⁹ indicated that the [2018-2019 “Healthy Workplaces Campaign”](#) deals with dangerous substances. Targeting non-specialist, the Campaign aims at raising awareness of people working with chemicals who do not have prior knowledge on how to adequately handle them. He specified that EU-OSHA’s tasks are to collect, analyse and disseminate background information for the political level, the Member States level and for practitioners. The Agency published in 2014 a report which identified the main biological and chemical risks in home care. Biological risks comprise of unsanitary conditions, patients’ health conditions, poor-quality water, sharp instruments and animal bites. Lothar Lieck underlined the importance of biological risks as most of them are fought against with chemicals. Therefore, biological and chemical risks are often combined risks. When it comes to dangerous substances, the major types of products are cleaning agents and disinfectants. Another risk area is the management of medical equipment and pharmaceutical waste. Following the publication of the report, a “risk assessment for care workers” was issued. It includes a paper-based checklist for all interested persons. Lothar Lieck indicated that hereafter, OSHA co-produces with interested national authorities Online Interactive Risk Assessments (OIRA) in which anyone can provide data based on a checklist and receive recommendations tailored to its specific situation and identified needs.

During the “Healthy Workplace Campaign” national events are organised in order to make OSH issues more present in the media and in the public. More than 232 of them were conducted in 2018. Nine campaign messages were developed. Lothar Lieck noted firstly that regulation is well developed and complex, and implementation is weak. *“Regulation requires that you first eliminate the risk, then substitute the chemical and at the end you use personal protective equipment. The reality is normally the other way around”* he stressed. Therefore, OSHA message is to raise awareness on the issue so as to induce small and progressive changes. The main entry point to the campaign is its website (www.healthy-workplaces.eu) on which different tools are available. For example, a language free figure and a database have been developed. The database gives access to documents already existing in Member States. There are also campaign info sheets which provide basic information on OSH legislation, risk assessments and prevention measures. They are deliberately illustrated with

⁹ Dr. Lothar Lieck’s PowerPoint presentation is available [here](#).

“Regulation requires that you first eliminate the risk, then substitute the chemical and, at the end, you use personal protective equipment. The reality is normally the other way around”
Lothar Lieck

professions that are not well-known for working with dangerous substances such as hairdressing. Learning from examples might be the best, therefore several case studies are available. They provide a detailed description of good practices in managing dangerous substances at workplace, outlining what actors did, the obstacles encountered and how they were overcome. Lothar Lieck recommended two specific case studies from the cleaning sector which are the closest from the PHS sector. *“In general, all apply a mix approach: firstly, you have to inform the people and to train them. Then, the*

specialists deal with substitution by selecting the least dangerous substance and they explain the use of personal protective equipment”. The workforce being very diverse, he underlined the usefulness of language-free videos to ensure that every workers – even those not speaking the language of the country in which they are – will be adequately informed.

Finally, an interactive e-tool dedicated to dangerous substances has been launched by OSHA. Targeting non-specialists, it is based on a Swedish tool called “KEMIGuiden”. Users have the choice between a short or a long questionnaire. They give input on the risks, the practices and the measures taken in their workplace. Then they receive a tailored report on their situation including recommendations for improvements and a checklist for easier follow-up. Lothar Lieck specified that at present the e-tool is only available in English, but it should be translated in other EU languages in order to integrate national specificities. Indeed, Member States can upgrade the requirements stated in the European OSH Directive in order to meet their national objectives.

Ana Catalina Ramirez, OSH Specialist within the International Labour Organisation (ILO) pointed out that due to its intrinsic and sociodemographic characteristics, putting in place OSH prevention programmes in domestic work is really challenging and therefore invited us to be innovative. *“We need to fight against common sense and common sense tells us that our home is safe, that cleaning is part of daily life and that there is thus no risk or hazards involved in doing it”* she added. Private homes and domestic work expose workers to common work-related hazards such as psychosocial, ergonomics, physical and chemical hazards. ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers addresses OSH in its article 14. It states that every domestic worker has the right to a safe and healthy working environment and at the same time calls ILO members to take effective measures to ensure the occupational safety and health of domestic workers. Nevertheless, Ana Catalina Ramirez underlined the gap in terms of legislation as very often national OSH legislation do not offer the same level of protection to domestic workers or even exclude them from their scope. This additional challenge must therefore be taken into consideration.

Are chemicals used for house cleaning, as friendly as their colourful packaging suggest asked Ana Catalina Ramirez. Packaging highlight cleaning products magical effects whereas collateral health effects are only mentioned at the bottom in small print. The ILO Convention 170 defines the term chemicals as *“chemical elements and compounds, and mixtures thereof, whether natural or synthetic”*.

“We need to fight against common sense and common sense tells us that our home is safe, that cleaning is part of daily life and that there is thus no risk or hazards involved in doing it.”
Ana Catalina Ramirez

The use of chemicals at work means any work activity which may expose a worker to a chemical throughout the whole process of chemical manufacturing. Therefore, there is no doubt on the involvement of chemicals in domestic work. The common hazardous chemicals substances founded in domestic work are bleach, ammonia, insecticides, glues and medications. They can be absorbed through inhalation, ingestion or skin absorption. They cause health effects such as allergies, suffocation, cancer and death by intoxication. They can also have physical and environmental effects

like flammability and contamination of water. In order to assess the risk of these substances in domestic work, Ana Catalina Ramirez put forward a series of questions: 1) what are the substances used (adequate labelling, mention of side-effects, workers’ knowledge)? 2) How is the task performed (kneeling, inhalation, use of water, etc.)? 3) What is the frequency of exposure (incl. for live-in workers)? 4) What is the intensity and time of exposure (mixture of different chemicals, overuse)? 5) What are the

characteristics of the area of work (ventilation, enclosed room, etc.)? 6) Do we have enough information and training available? 7) Is there any personal protective equipment provided and used?

ILO Convention 170 on Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work provides a blueprint for the sound management of chemicals. The Convention determines employers', manufacturers and suppliers' responsibilities as well as workers' duties and rights, including the right to information. Ana Catalina Ramirez stressed the difficulty of implementing a sound managing system of chemicals in the domestic sphere. She identified how the management programme put forward by the Convention could be translated to the sector. Firstly, when it comes to identification, labelling and safety information, it's important to know who buys the products (or chemical inputs) as it will influence access to information and the choice of the chemicals used. In practical terms, she stressed that the labelling and safety data should be clear and simple (pictograms), culturally adapted and be language pertinent due to the important migrant background of PHS workers. Regarding the operational control measures that could be putted in place, their primary objective should be elimination. *"The real valuable question here is to ask ourselves: is it really necessary to use a chemical product to perform that task? Can we use an alternative option with low toxicity level?"* noted Ana Catalina Ramirez. If "green" products are currently subject to a lot of initiatives, she highlighted that these products are also chemicals products and they are not allergic reaction free. Looking at the way work is designed; a general ventilation of the workplace should be ensured, and the ergonomic aspect should also be considered. For example, kneeling exposes workers to different routes of inhalation, so avoiding it should be considered. Another question to be asked is whether or not tools can be used to avoid direct skin contact. Finally, chemicals storage and handling are important as well as the availability of sound areas for rest and food consumption, especially for live-in domestic workers. Ana Catalina Ramirez stressed that personal protection equipment should be provided free of charge as well as trainings on their correct and systematic use.

When it comes to information and training, a lot of things should be done and not only towards workers but also at household and community level. *"We really need to raise awareness on the risks these chemicals are exposing workers too {...} and we need to create a demand for safer products"*. Common myths should also be targeted such as the one according to which the more products are used, the cleanest home will be. Emergency procedures and first aid are also crucial and domestic workers should be granted access to them and they should be aware of the procedures in case of any type of dangerous exposure.

By way of conclusion, Ana Catalina Ramirez highlighted five opportunities for more policy action towards the improvement of OSH prevention, especially regarding the use of chemicals. Firstly, there are platforms for dialogue which can incentive the use of safer substances. In this regard, agencies in cooperation with suppliers and manufacturers have a key role to play in providing adequate information. Then, she considered that social dialogue could contribute to the identification, selection and provision of safer substances. Regular medical and technical checks on the effectiveness of substances used (e.g. "green" products) are also an important opportunity for continuous improvement of OSH preventative measures. Then, partnerships with environmental policies and programmes represent a huge opportunity, notably at community level which should not be underestimated. Finally, Ana Catalina Ramirez indicated that advantage must be taken from new technologies to improve training and information availability in a user-friendly way.

Grace Papa, member of the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) and Member of the Executive Committee of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), presented the critical situation of occupational safety and health in the PHS sector. Indeed, domestic workers use housekeeping chemicals without any protection, which exposed them to several health risks. Firstly, Grace Papa provided a broad overview on the state of play of PHS across the world: domestic workers account for 10% of the developing world's total workforce. Domestic work is therefore an important source for employment, especially for women, either in their countries or abroad. Moreover, domestic work is often considered "women's work," because women are less likely to have alternative ways of earning a living. Despite its importance in economic and social terms, the domestic work sector offers lower wages than other sectors employing groups of informal workers. More precisely, domestic workers earn only 41 per cent of the wage others in the urban workforce make. In order to further protect them, several countries have started including domestic workers in labour legislation, to offer them with protection such as maternity leave, sick leave and social security. However, most countries fall behind

“Despite the health and safety risks to which domestic workers are exposed, they remain excluded from relevant EU legislation in this field. The International Domestic Workers Federation adopted a resolution to further protect this vulnerable category”

G.Papa

when it comes to domestic workers' protection, especially in sensitive policy areas. In this context, low earnings and no access social protection make domestic workers vulnerable and more exposed to the risk of being fired when they become ill or injured and cannot come to work. This situation seems particularly unfair to workers whose jobs caused their sickness or injury in the first place. Secondly, Grace Papa presented the serious health risks to which domestic workers are exposed. Households present a number of health and safety risks, related to equipment, substances, physical condition of work, organisation of work. More precisely, domestic workers may use chemicals, carry heavy loads, cutting

equipment, gas, perform repetitive tasks resulting of bad facilities of household equipment. Besides security and ergonomic factors, also psychological and sociological factors increase OSH-related risks for domestic workers. Despite these risks, the European Directive on occupational health and safety cover all workers employed by employers, including trainees but excluding domestic workers who work in private homes. Accordingly, the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) adopted an OSH resolution in November 2018 to reaffirm its commitment to protect domestic workers whose health and safety is not sufficiently preserved in their working environment. The resolution recommends to consider the health and safety of domestic workers in their duties; develop an instruction manual of occupational safety education at work; offer training on health prevention and occupational safety; raise awareness as well as education on the use of protective equipment by domestic workers.

Thirdly, Grace Papa presented the state of play on domestic workers' OSH in Belgium. In Belgium, the service voucher system is a declared and subsidized domestic work sector employing 125.000 workers. Each worker benefits from an employment contract in accordance to the collective agreement which regulates working conditions and access to social security. In this context, a training fund was created to provide training sessions for domestic workers on work related ergonomics (cleaning and ironing); safety and hygiene; prevention of back pain trainings; safety regarding cleaning products. Furthermore, a new sustainability fund has been created in the Belgian service voucher system, with focus on how to use chemicals and green products which are not necessarily safe. Further trainings will be organised for domestic workers on this topic. Also, a study led by Brussels University focused on the health risks in the cleaning industry. The study provides significant insights namely on differences in the mortality rate between cleaners, manual and non-manual workers, showing that the death toll is higher for cleaners. Mortality appears to be caused by lung cancer, pneumonia, ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease. Although the study did not investigate further the causes of bad health conditions, it is reasonable to argue that cleaners may be exposed to chemical products, biological hazards, difficult physical working conditions and various psychological risk factors. As a unionist, Grace Papa concluded with two recommendations: access to information, training and OSH services is essential to reduce domestic work health and safety risks; and social representation and social dialogue play a key role to improve work conditions especially regarding health and safety.

Liesbet Everaert, unit manager, introduced Start People Services, specialised in service vouchers in the domestic work sector. The company exists since 2013, when the service voucher system was launched in Belgium. Accordingly, Start People Services clients are private households who hire domestic workers. Since private homes are legally protected, Liesbet Everaert argued that it is impossible to have a risk analysis for all domestic workplaces. Nevertheless, it is important to avoid any physical, psychological and chemical risk related to domestic work, by making domestic workers more responsible for their job and accordingly minimize the risk of injuries. In this regard, training is important. Furthermore, not only workers but also clients should have a good product knowledge to minimize chemical risks. Attention should also be paid to potential psychological risks. In this context, Start People Services leads awareness-raising activities, including a project led in cooperation with the sector training fund to train housekeeper coaches who can inform their colleagues about the potential risks of the job. In this context, Start People Services produced a number of toolkits addressed to both clients and workers, such as: a communication booklets for clients, where they could note their request for special services, and a toolkit for workers to file comments and questions on these requests; a leaflet for new

clients with good-to-know advices and operational-based information on safety issues; since 2018, discounts on ecological products; newsletters sent both to clients and to workers containing articles on topics including health and safety; a safety booklet drafted for workers in cooperation with the insurance company; personal protection equipment for workers; a number of trainings on several health-related themes including safety basic training and product knowledge etc; a service of psychological support and a socio-medical team supporting workers in long-term illnesses. Finally, trainings are also provided to job consultant and managers to better manage the employment relationships. They are also invited to participate to housekeepers' training. Liesbet Everaert concluded by mentioning a number of actions and initiative launched by Start People Services. In 2018, the company organised the "Fit4Work Days" with focus on no-smoking, good-sleep and nutrition. They run two surveys on a regular basis – respectively a psychosocial risks analysis and a workability scan – and participated in a campaign against smoking. These last two actions were led in cooperation with the sector training fund. For the near future, Start People Services wanted to translate training in other languages (e.g. Spanish and Polish) and launch a collaboration with an external partner to provide anonymously psychological, legal and social support to workers, not only on work-related issues. Finally, Start Services also planned exit conversation to understand why workers leave the company and foster workers' retention.

"Start People leads awareness-raising activities, sometimes in cooperation with the sector training fund, and trains housekeeper on a number of topics including the potential risks of the job"

L. Everaert

In the final debate, **Guillaume Richard** presented a critical approach to the service voucher system in Belgium: since the cost per hour worked is fixed, the only way for companies to increase benefits is to cut employment costs. Accordingly, the fixed price works as a deterrent for investment in the professionalisation and training of workers, occupational health and safety, and overall better working conditions, since investment would imply higher costs and companies would have less margin. In France, instead, the absence of fixed price allows to invest and invoice at higher price. From the audience, a question was raised about the responsibility of beneficiaries, besides that of workers and providers. Liesbet Everaert argued that all three parties should commit to respect health and safety criteria. Ana Catalina Ramirez agreed on the three-parties responsibility but argued that ensuring safe working conditions is the employer's responsibility in the first place. She added that the challenge is how to ensure the participation of all actors, especially when the worker is not directly employed by the household. In this regard, awareness-raising at community level should be further developed.

Ben Broeckx asked what the responsibility of the chemical industry in increasing awareness with regard to the exposure to dangerous substances is. In this regard, Lothar Lieck called for a renewal of the function of labour inspections, namely regarding the online trafficking of dangerous substances. He added that chemical companies are responsible from removing from the general market dangerous substances. Furthermore, customers/users should be made aware of risks, which is the case for trained domestic workers, but is more difficult for independent workers and general users. Regarding training, Liesbet Everaert added that domestic workers who followed an education programme on chemical risks spread this knowledge across clients.

CONCLUDING PANEL: SUPPORTING INNOVATION IN PHS, WHAT ROLE FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES?

Aurélié Decker introduced the concluding by presenting the main take-aways of the three previous panels. The first panel discussed the digital revolution and opportunities created by new technologies, but also challenges namely at ethical level. A partnership between providers and platform developers was mentioned as a potential solution to better meet PHS users' needs, while creating a level-playing field among PHS actors. Besides offering an overview on how to develop platforms in a worker and user-friendly way, it was also reminded how the platform economy could contribute to tackle undeclared work. The focus was then put on PHS workers' digital skillset, that should be further developed in order to stay abreast of new technologies. Finally, the agreement between the Danish trade union 3F and an online cleaning company was identified as a promising practice. The second panel focused on improving the research and data-collection led in the PHS Industry Monitor report. First, based on the new statistical definition of domestic workers adopted by ILO, new and more accurate figures should be collected from the EU labour force survey. Secondly, it was suggested to consult Eurofound surveys, namely the EU Company survey, which could provide figures on care services and work-life balance. Thirdly, the collection of national data could lead to a more precise overview. This solution raises issues of comparison of data at EU level. Aurélié Decker announced that an update report will be released by 2021. The third panel provided an overview of risks – namely chemical risks – faced by domestic workers, and deplored legal shortcomings in this regard. As part of the OSHA Healthy Workplace Campaign, Aurélié Decker promised to continue the reflection on occupational health and safety in the domestic work sector, tacking stock of the exemples presented in the panel: the Belgian company Start People Services, ILO and IDWF recommendations and OSHA tools. EFSI's aims at publishing an awareness-raising brochure on the risks of the exposure to chemical substances in the domestic work.

Nicholas Costello, Deputy Head of unit E.1 "Job creation" at the European Commission's Directorate for Employment, social affairs and inclusion, expressed his optimism about the future of PHS and the role of innovation in improving working conditions in the sector. Nonetheless, he acknowledged current challenges and the need to further develop the sector namely on issues such as the exposure to dangerous substances, labour participation to the hidden economy and low-career prospects. He argued that there is currently both a political and an economic appetite to improve the sector. At economic level, it was observed how some measures (social vouchers, tax incentives) could have a positive economic effect, especially for public authorities, while reducing at the same time the share of black labour. Furthermore, the sector contributes to work-life balance and women's inclusion in the labour market: in economic terms it fosters growth and helps improve the fiscal situation. Finally, the high proportion of migrant in the sector is both a political and economic matter of interest: in economic

"There is currently both a political and economic appetite to improve the PHS sector"

N. Costello

terms, they represent a resource and it would be therefore positive to improve the position and working conditions of these workers in the domestic sector. When it comes to digitalisation, Costello argued that new technologies are blurring the distinction between the private and public sphere, while creating an in-between area. This could have a positive impact on PHS: by

opening the traditional household sector to the public sphere, it will be easier to get information from private households and avoid abuses on domestic workers. Accordingly, public authorities should support the digitalisation of the PHS sector. Public authorities can also contribute to improve working conditions in the PHS sector though targeted calls for proposals on specific objectives. In this regard, the Ad-PHS pilot project is an example of good practice to develop the sector, since it brings together the European Parliament and Commission and both Institutions must be involved to outline regulatory frameworks and to allocate subsidies.

Maria Gabriela Zoană, Member of the European Parliament (S&D, Romania), member of the FEMM Committee on Women's Right and Gender Equality, and shadow rapporteur of the report "*Care Services for improved gender equality*", firstly highlighted that PHS play key role in family life: while long-term care increases the wellbeing of dependent people, childcare guarantees children's development. From a gender perspective, the provision of care services will encourage a gender-balanced take-up of family-related responsibilities, increase women employment and foster economic growth. The work-life balance Directive paves the way towards these objectives. Accordingly, the report – adopted in October 2018 – insists on the need to ensure accessible care services mentioning a wide range of activities: from early childhood education and care and long-term care for the elderly or people with disabilities. The report also indicates that care services could be provided publicly, privately or by informal carers, and recipients should be able to select the type of provision based on their needs. When it comes to recommendations, the report calls on the Commission to offer guidance to Member States on the promotion of care services; harmonise the definition and develop indicators on PHS; and revise the Barcelona targets. In the quality of the S&D group's shadow rapporteur, Maria Gabriela Zoana made 52 amendments on improving quality, affordability, and accessibility of care services. She – *inter alia* – stressed that quality should be understood under a double angle, of services and of working condition. She called on Member States to further develop the profile of domestic workers to attract and retain them and should increase public investment in the PHS infrastructure. In this regard, she underlined that the S&D Group urged to reduce the impact of austerity measure on care services, however the point was taken out from the final vote by the EPP. Member States should also be encouraged to revise and improve their frameworks on childcare; services should be made accessible, particularly for vulnerable social groups, to prevent child poverty. Overall, 300 amendments were filed, focused on youth carers, work conditions, professional training, adequate payment, calls to include data indicators on care services in the European semester. Above all, the report urges to meet the needs of an ageing society and set up quality indicators for monitoring the care sector. EFSI welcomed the report, which created a link between PHS and work-life balance and gender equality.

"The report on Care Services for Improved Gender Equality urges to meet the needs of an ageing society and set up quality indicators for monitoring the care sector"

M.G. Zoană

Finally, **Jean-Pierre Haber**, delegate representative of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (CCMI) of the EESC, presented the opinion "*Economic, technological and social changes in advanced services for the elderly*" that he drafted as co-rapporteur and that was adopted in 2019. Overall, he acknowledged that the biggest problem related to PHS is the solvability of the demand. Also, he stated that the privatisation of PHS influences the role of public authorities, which are increasingly playing a market regulatory role. In this context, the report should be considered as a political statement: the more important needs of the elderly become, the less they are faced. The impossibility to anticipate long-term care needs represents indeed big ethical problem. For instance, elderly people are forced to enter retirement houses against their will and are forced to pay for their hospitalisation. Accordingly, Jean-Pierre Haber deplored the practice of building dormitory for seniors through structural funds. Instead, the report study calls for a combination of ageing and adequate housing policy. On users' side, the report proposes to establish a national observatory on ageing, not only to monitor the impact of technology on the elderly population, but also to assess overall life conditions. Still, the report remains focused on technological issue by seeking to increase autonomy through artificial intelligence (AI). On the workers' side, and with regard to professionalisation, the report acknowledges that care workers are often not qualified but have atypical empirical knowledge. Accordingly, the report calls for a common framework on training, comparing existing training systems in the Union, in line with Directive 2005/36 and 2013/55 on the

"The impossibility to anticipate long-term care needs represents indeed a big ethical problem. The EESC Opinion should be considered as a political statement calling for a stronger legal framework and for an integrated approach in coordinating health services and social care for older people"

J.P. Haber

combination of ageing and adequate housing policy. On users' side, the report proposes to establish a national observatory on ageing, not only to monitor the impact of technology on the elderly population, but also to assess overall life conditions. Still, the report remains focused on technological issue by seeking to increase autonomy through artificial intelligence (AI). On the workers' side, and with regard to professionalisation, the report acknowledges that care workers are often not qualified but have atypical empirical knowledge. Accordingly, the report calls for a common framework on training, comparing existing training systems in the Union, in line with Directive 2005/36 and 2013/55 on the

recognition of professional qualifications. Furthermore, Jean-Pierre Haber put forward the idea to enter atypical knowledge in the framework of a new Directive. On the institutional side, and in terms of investment, the report calls to consolidate the market since the senior economy is fragmented. Overall, the report asks for a stronger legal framework for the care sector and for an integrated approach in coordinating health services and social care. Accordingly, the report urges round-table meetings between authorities, pension funds, insurances and EU structural funds to find solutions towards further sustainability and economic accessibility of care services, and to make jobs more secure in the sector. Finally, and with regard to the observatory on ageing, EFSI suggested to consider as a solution the platform of stakeholders to be established under the Ad-PHS project.

In the following debate, issues related to migrant work in the PHS sector were raised. Some deplored that panellists did not tackle the topic of migrant women, often undocumented, working in the PHS sector. The Swiss voucher system was mentioned as an example of good practices in improving migrant PHS workers' labour condition: indeed, in Switzerland, undocumented migrant could be registered and attend trials without being denounced to labour authorities. Furthermore, it was also mentioned that the EU agency on Fundamental Rights (FRA) in Vienna made public the interviews to 273 migrants run in 2017, many of whom coming from the domestic work sector. The coordinator of a European project focused on industrial relations mentioned the one goal of the project focused on labour conditions and the comparison of national regulations with ILO regulation: it appeared that in Finland, for instance, standards are respected for standard workers, but a group of illegal workers cannot exercise these rights. More attention should therefore be paid to this vulnerable group, mostly composed by migrant undocumented women. In conclusion, Aurélie Decker pointed out that, given the high interest in the topic, migrant workers in PHS may be the object of the next PHS Conference to be held in 2021.



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