

Personal and household services in Czechia Improving working conditions and services through industrial relations

Project PERHOUSE



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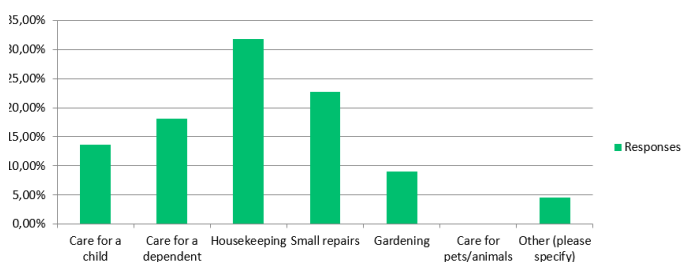
Policy Brief

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The main characteristics and challenges of the personal and household services

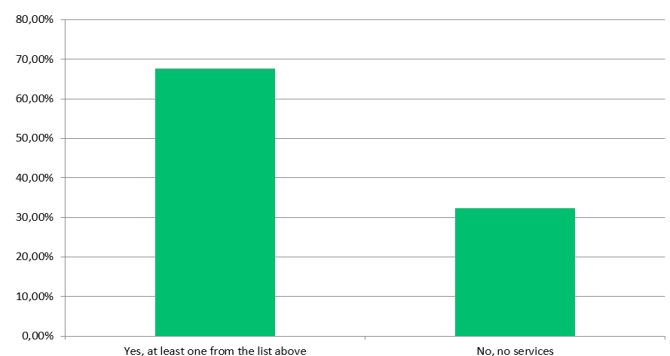
- PHS activities either relate to care, as in caring for someone, or non-care, as in activities taking place within the household environment as, for example, gardening, cleaning or small repairs.
- PHS can be classified as either public or private based on the sources of financing.
- PHS employment arrangements can have formal, semi-formal and informal nature.
- In regard to the demand for home healthcare services, in 2007, 134,436 patients used home healthcare services; in 2017, that number increased slightly to 138,303 patients and, according to the latest data, the number increased to 145,796 until 2020 (ÚZIS, 2021).
- In regard to home social care services, approximately 100,480 people utilised the services in 2020. Specifically, there were 1,694 children, 30,319 men and 68,467 women who used home social care services that year. This means that the average number of persons utilising home social care services was 9,6 per 1000 residents.
- There were 10,191 persons using personal assistance services in 2020, with 1,152 children, 3,198 men and 5,841 women comprising this group of clients.
- The demand for non-care PHS is very hard to assess due to the fact that this part of PHS sector does not fall under governmental funding schemes which disincentivises governmental bodies from collecting official data or maintaining statistical records.
- Overall, according to the demand survey, around 67,7% of respondents have purchased PHS in the last 5 years at least once.
- The reasons behind purchasing PHS, according to the demand survey, is in half of the cases (50%) no time of respondents to do the activities by themselves, or their inability, in the sense of imposition of necessary skills (36,4%)
- The majority of respondents find the service providers upon recommendations from someone (45,5%), which is followed by 18,2% of respondents who find contacts on providers' websites.
- The public sector provides homecare services through two registered agencies - the Ministry of Health's Agency of Home Healthcare Services (Agentury domácí péče) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs's Providers of Social Care (Poskytovatelé pečovatelské služby).
- There were 675 social care providers providing home social care registered with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2024 and 677 home healthcare service providers registered with the Ministry of Health in 2024.
- Overall, spending on long-term care services in Czechia accounts for around 12,6% of all spending on healthcare and social services, with CZK 73,4 billion spent on long-term care in 2021.
- Home healthcare service workers make CZK 33,789 (EUR 1352) on average, according to data from 2021, which is much less compared to the average salary of nurses – CZK 54 663 (EUR 2787), in the same year.
- In home social care services, the average salary is between CZK 27,000 and CZK 29,000 (EUR 1080 – EUR 1160), which is below the average salary in the country – CZK 43 341 (EUR 1734).
- According to the demand survey, respondents (clients) claim to pay between CZK 250 and 350 (EUR 9.9 – 13.8) to PHS workers, with the average being CZK 325 (EUR 12.8).

Graph 1: The most frequently purchased type of service in the last 5 years



Source: Demand Survey on the use of the personal and household services

Graph 2: The use of PHS in the last 5 years



Source: Demand Survey on the use of personal and household services

The biggest challenge in PHS sector is shortage of workers that results from other problems facing the sector, such as low financial compensations, ineffectiveness of work, undermined social status etc.

Key findings on social dialogue in personal and household services

- In the Czech Republic, there is no social dialogue that is especially directed towards PHS workers and if so the majority of issues addressed by social partners pertain to the public care sector's operations.
- The main social actors are the Association of Social Care Providers (APSS) that represents providers, the Trade Union in Healthcare and Social Care (OS ZaSP) and the Trade Union of Employees in Social Services (ALICE) that represent trade unions, and various NGOs such as A doma, Pečuj doma or the Association for Integration and Migration (SIMI).
- However, trade unions have limited influence in the care sector, and this is especially true for PHS, although the position of the public sector PHS workers within the limited space is relatively strong due to private healthcare and social care providers relying on state funding.
- Also, the problems and working conditions in the non-care sector are rarely discussed or addressed by social dialogue practices, mainly due to lacking involvement of trade unions.
- In addressing the specific problems faced by workers in the non-care PHS sector in Czechia, the trade unions continue to be less active. More specifically, because the majority of trade union organising techniques in post-socialist nations are centred on class or occupational identities, trade unions remain incompatible with the situation of informal PHS workers, who identify more with their gender, race, or immigration status.
- Challenges detected by social partners as well as workers within the care PHS sector are:
 1. shortage of workers
 2. low financial compensation
 3. ineffectiveness of work
 4. undermined social status
 5. lack of quality
 6. legislative barriers
 7. social isolation of workers
- Challenges in the non-care PHS sector include:
 1. precarious employment contracts
 2. exploitation
 3. insufficient workplace safety

In the Czech Republic, generally undeveloped social dialogue framework also influences the nature of social dialogue in PHS sector.

Solutions and policy implications

- to enhance support for personal assistants, whether in terms of provided qualification and training or financial support
- to raise wages in order to make the sector attractive, preventing and possibly reducing further workforce shortages
- to encourage the establishment of tripartite consultation mechanisms to facilitate dialogue and consensus-building on key policy issues
- to enhance capacities of trade unions and focus on PHS in their agendas
- to implement policies and initiatives to formalise informal work arrangements in the PHS sector

Project information

Project outputs include a comprehensive report on personal and household services and social dialogue in [country] and a comparative report for 12 Central European Countries. All project outputs are available at <https://celsi.sk/en/projects/detail/209/>
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