



# PERHOUSE

## Final Conference

Enhancing Personal and Household Services in Europe: Lessons from Central and Eastern European Countries

**Date:** 21 June

**Time:** 9:30 - 12:30



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OF TARTU



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Faculty of  
Social Sciences



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University

EFSI  
European Federation  
for Services to Individuals

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2025



EUROPEAN  
FEDERATION  
FOR FAIRLY  
EMPLOYMENT  
& HOME CARE



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european trade union institute



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Project number 10105234



# WEBINAR



- This webinar will be **recorded** and made available on EASPD's social media channels.
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# PERHOUSE

## Final Conference

Enhancing Personal and Household  
Services in Europe: Lessons from  
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# PERHOUSE PROJECT

Marta Kahancova, Founder and Managing Director, CELSI



**Relevance:** The care sector is crucial for EU-level policies, addressing social inclusion, gender equality, and economic growth.

**Limits:** Diverse national regulations hinder integrating personal and household services, leading to disparities across the EU.

**Complementary policies:** Current policies like the Minimum Wage Directive and the Pay Transparency Directive also need to be applied to these services.





# PERHOUSE PROJECT

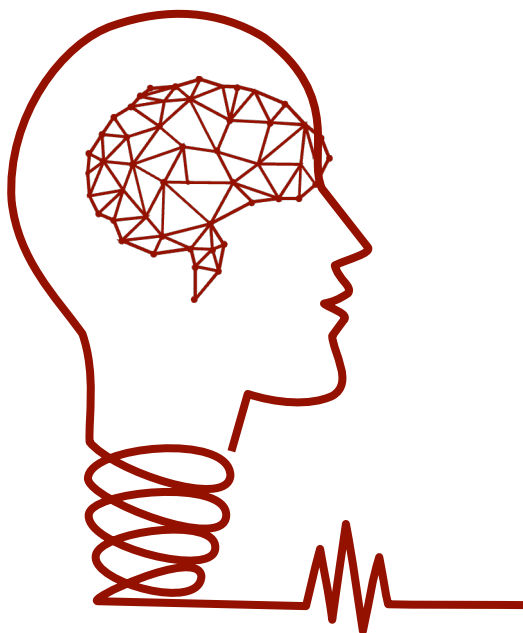
Marta Kahancova, Founder and Managing Director, CELSI



**Mission and Focus:** CELSI aims to be an internationally recognised hub for research, providing evidence for policymaking and talent development in labour studies, focusing on Central and Eastern Europe.

**Research Areas:** Key areas include 'Caring Societies' (care work, reproductive work, unpaid and underpaid work) and 'Social Dialogue and Collective Bargaining' (collective bargaining, trade unions, wage bargaining).

**Perhouse Project:** Combines research on care services with social dialogue, addressing deinstitutionalizing elderly care, work-life balance, and reducing the gender employment gap in CEE countries.





# PERHOUSE PROJECT

Marta Kahancova, Founder and Managing Director, CELSI



## CELSI's leading role

**Project Coordination and Framework:** CELSI, as the lead partner, set the analytical framework and research design, coordinating six national partners from CEE countries.

**Advisory Role:** The project benefits from the advisory role of EU-level social partners in personal and household services.

**Research Design:** Utilizing a mixed research design, the project includes two online surveys, interviews with EU-level and national stakeholders, focus groups with domestic workers, and national workshops.

**Varied Deliverables:** The deliverables are varied and impactful, comprising national reports, policy briefs, leaflets, videos, EU-level stakeholders' views, and comparative reports.



**COMPARATIVE  
REPORT  
VIDEO**









# EU State of play and stakeholders' view



Chair: Ángela Corbí, EASPD

- Keynote address, Magdalena Zachlod-Jelec, European Labour Authority
- EU level views report, Petra Ezzeddine & Olga Gheorghiev, CUNI
- Comments, Prof. Eleonore Kofman, Middlesex University



# Activities in Personal and Household Services to address undeclared work

## European Labour Authority



**Magdalena Zachlod-Jelec,**  
*Enforcement and Analysis Unit,  
European Labour Authority*





[Platform seminar:  
Tackling undeclared  
work in the care and  
personal and  
household services  
sector](#)



Online, 10 March  
2022



68 participants



Chaired by ELA

## Event content:

- Existing practices, tools and approaches towards undeclared work in the care and personal and household services (PHS) sectors in EU/EEA countries were explored
- Short review of the development and trends on undeclared work in the care and PHS sector
- Deterrence / preventative approaches and coordinated cross-agency operations targeted at the care and PHS sector were discussed
- Recommendations to address undeclared work in the care and PHS sector at national and EU level were examined



## Development and trends on undeclared work in the care and PHS sector



- **18.0 million** declared and undeclared workers in the **PHS sector in the EU in 2020.**
  - The share of **undeclared work in the PHS sector is slightly over 50% on average**; lowest in the care sector (34%) and highest in direct household employment (almost 70%).
- The share of undeclared work **varies across EU/EEA countries.**
  - The **most prevalent form** of undeclared work in the PHS sector **is unregistered employment.**
- In the EU there is an **increasing demand for PHS work.**
- **Deterrence measures**, in general, **are less applicable** in the PHS sector than preventative approaches.
- **Collaboration between social partners** in the care and PHS sectors **is based on the common interest** to regulate compliance and set a level playing field for employers.



# Deterrence/Preventive approaches and coordinated cross-agency operations targeted at the care and PHS sector



## Deterrence:

- **Access to private households** is the main **challenge** to inspections
- Care and PHS undeclared work also **has a cross-border dimension.**
- A **common deterrence practice** among enforcement authorities is to **crosscheck of information.**

## Prevention

- **Professionalisation** of the PHS sector and recognition of the sector in its employment policies (i.e. recognising household as a workplace) **is a key to shifting undeclared to declared PHS work.**
- **Awareness-raising campaigns and education** targeting employers, workers and/or consumers can **play a key role** in tackling undeclared work
- **Social partners** can play an **important role**
- Frequently used preventative measures are **social vouchers, targeted (in)direct taxes and simplified compliance.**



## Key learnings and suggestions to address undeclared work in the care and PHS sector at national and EU level



- **Adopting a common standard definition** of households as workplaces
- **A holistic approach** to tackling undeclared work in PHS sectors is prioritised among various stakeholders
- Stakeholders need to **develop training and education activities** focused on the care and PHS sector.
- ELA can provide **practical support for increasing knowledge, by coordinating mutual learning**, and by supporting Member States to engage in **staff exchanges or carry out concerted and joint inspections in the sector**. Can provide practical support for tackling undeclared work, focusing on cross-border labour mobility, to engage MSs in staff exchanges or carry out concerted and joint inspections in the sector. By disseminating good practices, such as successful preventative measures (i.e. social vouchers).



## ELA – Platform published Report on PHSs



### **Tackling undeclared work in the personal and household services sector.**

*March 2022*

- Employment in the personal and household services sector
- Undeclared work in the personal and household services sector
- Types of undeclared work in the personal and household services sector and their drivers
- Policy approaches for tackling undeclared work in the PHS sector
- Conclusions and recommendations





## ELA – Platform published Practice fiches focused on PHSs

### Inspiring Practice fiches:

- ❖ Household Service Vouchers, Austria
- ❖ Undeclared work in Personal and household services (PHS) Investigation Campaign, Spain
- ❖ Mini-job Centre, Germany







Thank you  
for you for your attention!

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EUROPEAN LABOUR AUTHORITY


[ela.europa.eu](http://ela.europa.eu)



# EU level views report

**Petra Ezzeddine PhD. and Olga Gheorgiev PhD.**  
Charles University in Prague



- a.) How are **regional specifics of PHS in CEE region** reflected in relevant policy documents and by stakeholders?
- b.) How do **relevant stakeholders advocate** on the problems related to PHS at **the EU level**?
- c.) How do EU **stakeholders communicate and cooperate** with regional/national **partners in CEE**?
- d.) How have **contemporary care crisis cases** aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine **shifted the PHS agenda** at the EU level and in the CEE region?  

- e.) What are the main thematic priorities involved in the PHS agenda at the EU level related to the **European Care Strategy**?



# EU level views report



## CEE region in the European PHS agenda

In policy documents, CEE regions **are rarely addressed beyond** the quality of their countries of origin.

**Empirical data** on PHS sector in CEE countries **remained scarce**, making it difficult to conclude whether the drivers of PHS are consistent across all EU countries.

**'The PHS Employment Monitor'** (the European trade union federations UNI Europa and EFFAT, and the employers' organisations EFFE and EFSI):

- collected responses from more than **6 500** PHS workers, employers and service users from 26 countries (including selected CEE countries **Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Latvia and Croatia**).



# EU level views report

## CEE region in the European PHS agenda



- a.) The PHS agenda is conceptualised in a transnational manner and **does not account for regional specifics, including CEE.**
- b.) The development of the PHS agenda and the voice of the **region depend on active participation on European platforms.**
- c.) An alarming fact in the region is **that not a single CEE country has ratified ILO Convention** on Domestic Work No. 189.
- d.) The CEE region is perceived only as a **'sending region', rather than a 'receiving region'** for female migrant care workers (e.g. from Ukraine) who often work in undeclared jobs in the PHS sector
- e.) Although the CEE region is identified as a **'sending region' for intra-EU migrant (live-in) care workers, their situation is not sufficiently addressed in the PHS agenda at the EU level (due to their large numbers).**



# EU level views report

## Recommendations



- **Enhance the expert knowledge** of PHS sector in the CEE region.
- **Raise awareness** of PHS sector in CEE region.
- **Intensify the support** of ILO Convention no.189.
- **Revise** the European Care Strategy.
- **Focus** on the situation **of intra-EU live-in care workers** from CEE countries.
- **Continue to monitor** the situation of Ukrainian refugees in PHS sector in CEE countries.



# **PERHOUSE**

## **Final Conference**

**Coffee break**  
**10:30 – 10:45**





# National report

## North Macedonia



**The project is funded by the European Union; Ref. 101052340.**



# National report

## Slovenia







# CEE countries' voices on the social dialogue in PHS – challenges and potentials



Chair: Monika Martišková, CELSI

- Anna Sadowska, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (Poland)
- Nikica Mojsoska-Blazevski, MK2025 (North Macedonia)
- Bembič Branko, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)
- Jaan Masso, University of Tartu (Estonia)
- Lenka Hanulová, CELSI (Czechia)
- Barbora Holubová, CELSI (Slovakia)

<https://prezi.com/p/vsukoeg02aft/?present=1>



# EU-level social dialogue and EU-level industrial relations system



Chair: Thomas Bignal, EASPD

- Grace Pappa, EFFAT
- Aude Boisseuil, EFFE
- Aurélie Decker, EFSI
- Alina Pavicevac, FESE
- Mark Bergfeld & Alessandra Giannessi, UNI





# Grace Pappa

**EFFAT**







**THANK YOU**



**Evaluation questionnaire:**

<https://forms.gle/5Ak4s8ozej8tyHot7>

# Central and Eastern European Country Voices on Social Dialogue in PHS




## Introduction

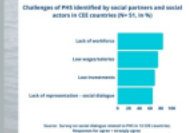
Key facts on PHS and social dialogue in PHS in Central and Eastern European Countries



## Key challenges in the PHS sector by country




## Challenges of PHS identified by social partners and social actors in CEE countries (EU, EU-10)



Poland

Difficulties to find stakeholders who deal with PHS

So what opportunities for improvements in the sector were found in Poland?



## Challenges and opportunities for social dialogue



## Let's talk!

POLAND  
Key message - The sector working conditions and salaries are still low, and there is a need to improve them. The sector is struggling to attract and retain staff.

Source: [unreadable]

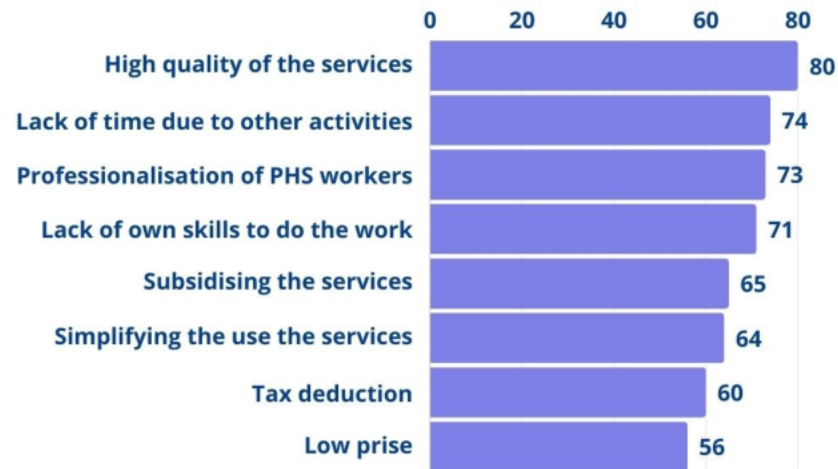


# Introduction

Key facts on PHS and social dialogue in PHS in  
Central and Eastern European Countries

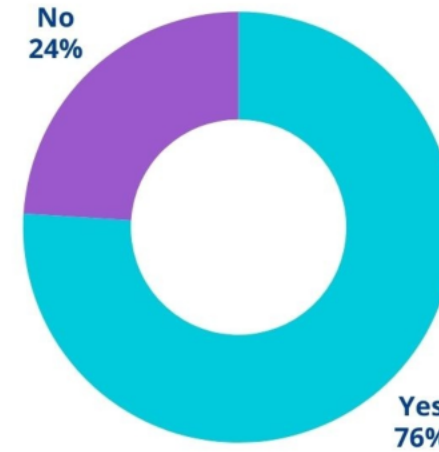
76% of respondents used at least one PHS service in the last five years, mainly for small repairs and housekeeping.

### Reasons for starting to use personal and household services (N= 279, in %)



Source: Survey on demand for PHS in 12 CEE countries;  
Responses for agree + strongly agree

### Respondents using at least one type of personal and household service in the last five years (N=359, in %)



Source: Survey on demand for PHS in 12 CEE countries

Demand for PHS is driven by more factors than low prices or state subsidies



National social partners and other actors have identified challenges affecting the quality of PHS in Central and Eastern European countries. These include low public service investment, lack of social dialogue, low wages, and workforce shortages.

**Challenges of PHS identified by social partners and social actors in CEE countries (N= 51, in %)**



Source: Survey on social dialogue related to PHS in 12 CEE countries; Responses for agree + strongly agree

**Views of social partners and social actors on how to address the challenges in PHS (N= 51, in %)**



Source: Survey on social dialogue related to PHS in 12 CEE countries; Responses for agree+ strongly agree

To address these issues, national stakeholders from 12 CEE countries suggest improving regulation, ensuring compliance with standards, and subsidising services to increase availability for those in need. Improvements in social dialogue in the PHS sector are also recommended.

# Key challenges in the PHS sector by country



# POLAND

Key message - the sector is widely informal and invisible for policy makers.  
What does this imply for workers in the sector?



# Slovenia

Slovenia emphasized importance of public sector financing and providers in the personal and household services, which increases also chances for better regulation of working conditions.

What is the difference in terms of working conditions and quality of services between public and private providers?



**FDV**

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Faculty of Social Sciences

# Czechia

Observed continuum of public - private - informal scale of quality of working conditions. What type of services prevails in each of the PHS subsectors? What type of workers and in which services are the most vulnerable?

# Estonia

Informality seems to prevail  
the in the sector, where  
important role is played by  
family care givers.

How does this influence the  
size of the sector and working  
conditions?



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# Slovakia

Informal care is associated with women to undertake it. But this is not only informal care, but also paid formal work in the sector which is affected by unrecognized importance of the care work.

How does the high level of feminization impact working conditions?



“We do everything like a housewife. What the client can't do, I do. It means cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, dressing the client, washing her, helping her shop, and so on. We do everything. Sometimes, I even had such a problem that I was already repairing the toilet or driving out mice.” (FG1)





North Macedonia emphasized care drain (migration of workers) as the main challenge affecting the working conditions.

North Macedonia is the prevailing sending country of care workers.

How does this impact home care services in the country?



# Challenges and opportunities for social dialogue



# Poland

Difficulties to find stakeholders who deal with PHS.

So what opportunities for improvements in the sector were found in Poland?

# Estonia

In Estonia, social dialogue takes place in healthcare sector, which covers also homecare workers, but not the others.

Estonia is quite a small country, and the sector of PHS has fragmented actors.

Do you see the way out - towards collective bargaining in the sector?





Situation in Slovenia is different. Stakeholders and collective bargaining found at least in part of the sector.

How the social dialogue in Slovenia for PHS workers looks like and are there opportunities for improvements?

"Funding in social care is problematic anyway. (...) When the funds run out, the price of the service must be raised, which is an unpopular measure for every employer. And then it is better to squeeze the workers than to squeeze the users and risk some service cancellation and so on. (...)

Raising the price (...) is the last measure used by the employer. Instead, they try to economise." (INT1)

In Czechia, social partners found but only limited collective bargaining.

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Where the collective bargaining takes place and is there potential for level up?



# PHS social dialogue in Slovakia

Social partners play a role but not so much via collective bargaining.

What stakeholders did you find in the field, and what kind of interactions do you see there?

Might it be a role model for other countries to give stakeholders voice, although not via collective bargaining, but rather through participation on policy dialogue?



# North Macedonia

What prevails in the sector: social dialogue between trade unions and employers, or is it more a multi-stakeholders dialogue?

Where do you see avenues for the improvement in terms of higher coverage, inclusion of uncovered workers, etc.?





Let's talk!