



AEIP STATEMENT ON THE EU CARE STRATEGY & LONG-TERM CARE

European Association of Paritarian Institutions - AEIP

AEIP welcomes the European Care Strategy, adopted by the European Commission on 7th September 2022, recognizing it as a first step towards strengthening the provision of long-term care and providing better support to informal carers.

In its position paper from July 2022¹, AEIP called on to the European Commission to build its strategy on the basis of two elements:

- **a people-centered approach**, taking into account not only the clinical profile but also the family, economic and environmental context.
- **an integrated approach**, which would build on the synergies between social and healthcare services providers, operating both in the private and public domain.

We have seen these two approaches reflected in the communication. AEIP supports the European Commission's commitment to help Member States in designing and implementing reforms aimed at strengthening the coordination between health, social care and long-term care and the integration of the different levels of care provision. We welcome particularly the Technical Support Instrument to the Member States under the project "*Towards person-centered integrated care*" and its mission to ensure better access and better quality of care at every stage of life.

The strategy plays a key role in ensuring the quality of long-term care starting from the formation of a skilled workforce in the sector. The quality of the provision of care services should also be measured through clear indicators and EU targets on long-term care, as specified for the revision of the Barcelona targets. Indeed, one of the main challenges remains the development of comparable data and EU indicators to support Member States in ensuring evidenced-based policies. The creation of a task force on long-term care statistics can play a key role in collecting harmonised data.

The task to set up the quality of the service as well as indicators is left to Member States. In its position, AEIP called on the European Commission to support countries in developing minimum quality requirements for long-term care providers and income protection to informal caregivers, as this would increase pressure on policymakers to better monitor the provision of services and social protection in this area. This would contribute to shed light and bring to the attention of decisionmakers a crucial feature of long-term care, which is the substantial contribution provided by the informal carers.

Furthermore, in order to guarantee the quality of life of care receivers and the continuation of their working life, AEIP calls the Council of the European Union to include guidelines for a better use of vocational rehabilitation services in its recommendation on long-term care. Vocational rehabilitation services can play a crucial role in this regard as they can help in keeping people in employment despite limitations that might be related to health and/or ageing. Policymakers should then develop a "steering ability" within social security systems, to equip them with automatic mechanisms for directing individuals who are at risk of early exit pension routes (because of disability) towards the rehabilitation services.

AEIP strongly supports the European Commission's call on the Member States to design support measures for informal carers, including counselling, psychological support, respite care and/or adequate

¹ Available here: <https://aeip.net/2022/07/04/aeip-adopts-its-position-paper-on-the-european-care-strategy-and-long-term-care-ltc/>

financial support, which does not deter labour market participation, together with policies to formalise informal care. Financial support is a turning point for informal carers as they are only partially covered by solidarity schemes and not by a proper social protection.

Importantly, AEIP urges the European Commission not only to formalise informal care, but also to recognise informal carers as a specific category. This must give also access to carers' rights, including flexible working time, and lead towards comprehensive policies to reconcile work and informal caregiving. Flexibility should be also granted in terms of working from home or from abroad. In this regards, paritarian institutions, as they are based on collective agreements, can play a pivotal role in elaborating specific flexible work schemes or social protection coverage for informal carers who exercise a professional activity.

Last but not the least, AEIP strongly supports the European Commission commitment to set up together with social partners, a new sectoral social dialogue for social services at EU level.

For AEIP's position on the European Care Strategy and Long-Term Care (LTC), please see [here](#).

For further information, please contact: giuseppe.perretti@aeip.net or visit: www.aeip.net



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AEIP represents its members' values and interests at the level of both European and International Institutions. In particular, AEIP - through its working groups - deal with EU coordinated pension schemes, pension funds, healthcare schemes, unemployment schemes, provident schemes and paid holiday schemes.

Owing to the quality of its members and to the delegation of powers conferred to its Board, AEIP aims at becoming the leading body for the promotion of balanced paritarian social protection systems in Europe. AEIP promotes and develops programs and orientations aiming at the sustainability of paritarian social protection systems at local level taking into account the national specificities aiming at ensuring social cohesion in Europe.