

Common challenges, common solutions for our social services workforce?

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Social service provision to a huge part through non-profit welfare organisations

- German Red Cross
- Caritas Germany
- Diakonie
- Workers Welfare Association, etc.



Provision of care services for children and older people, family support services, debt counseling, integration services for migrants and refugees, etc.

In total 120.000 welfare facilities in the non-profit sector with around 1,9 million employees and 2,5 million volunteers

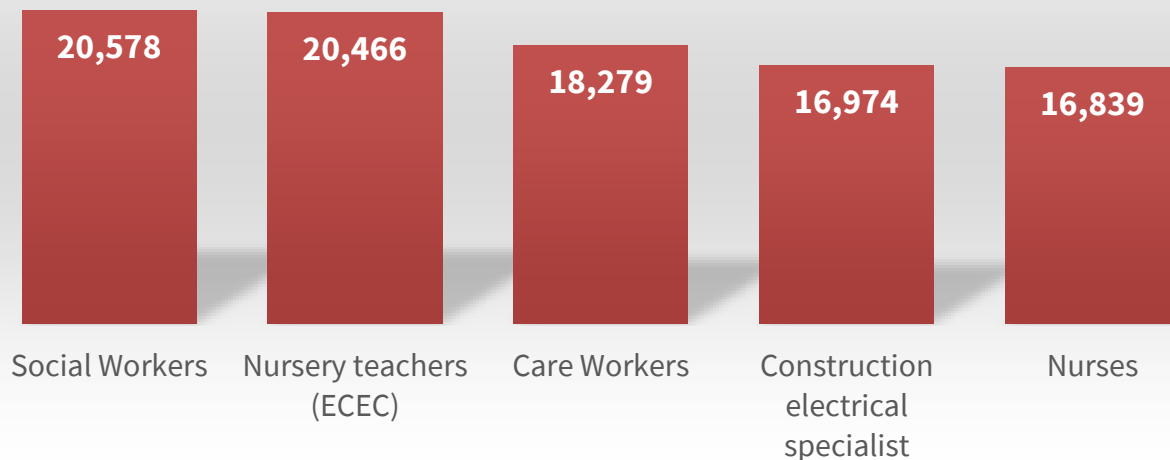
All sectors are affected by
severe staff shortage

Health and care sector are
particularly affected

Based on a study by the
German Institute of
Economic Research (DIW)

Occupations with the largest skilled workers gaps

■ Number of vacancies in 2022



Non-profit social service providers face various challenges:

- Societal trends like digitalisation, demographic changes, etc.
- Additional pressure through crisis situations like the Covid-19 pandemic, the consequences of the Ukraine conflict (migration and inflation)
- Cuts in public funding for counselling and support services, as well as operational support effective with 2024

Three-dimensional burden for social service provision:

- Beneficiaries: Increasing number of people in need of support
- Social service providers: Need for adaption of services under increased economic pressure and fast changing environments
- Increasing challenge in maintaining public funding structures

How do social service providers adapt?

National und EU funding programme tailored to the needs of non-profit social service providers

Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the national ESF programme provides funding for piloting new approaches and adaptation processes

Supports pilot projects and change processes in three areas

- **digitalisation and innovation:** promotes innovative approaches to service provision and new work models
- **personnel development:** developing new training programmes, leadership coaching, concepts for staff retention, skills development
- **organisational development:** digitalisation processes, streamlining work and administration procedures, developing new work models
- **culture change:** new ways of work and communication, adapting to new work environments

Challenges & lessons learned

- Rigid funding structures and burdensome funding administration makes the implementation inflexible
- Pilot projects only provide incentives for change processes, scaling the results still remains a challenge
- Project-based funding not suitable for permanent support, long-term institutional support and financing mechanisms would be needed
- Severe staff shortage limits activities of service providers to the necessary tasks and doesn't leave room for testing new approaches

Digital networking, exchange and work platform + social media application for recruitment

Cooperation of regional welfare association (AWO Thüringen) with four of their local sections offering different care and integrations services

Project duration: 04/2018-09/2021

- Modernising recruitment techniques via social media usage to meet increasing skilled workers demand
- Using social media platforms to increase visibility of the sectors work and create an employer brand
- Establishing a digital platform for personnel development, for peer-learning and exchange of practices

Find more information (in German) [here](#).



Evidence based training programme for new leadership models in the German Caritas association

Coordinated by Caritas Germany with outreach to all German Caritas branches

Project duration: 04/2019-03/2022



Two project phases:

First phase: Conducting a study on leadership skills in „new and digitalised work environments“ amongst all regional and local branches

Second phase: Establishing a „diversity network“ that provides training and expertise for leadership to diversify social service providers and adapt them to changing work environments

An article on the new leadership model you can find [here](#) (in German).

Further Information

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