



Introduction

Dear readers,

We are delighted to send you the first edition of our newsletter in 2015. As you will note, its structure and layout have been revamped and the document is now built around five main sections – i.e. Policy developments; Research in Action; EU events and calls for proposals; News from the network; and Opinions. This new edition will provide you with information about promising and sometimes worrying developments in the EU agenda; the activities of the network and secretariat; the projects we are involved in; opportunities for direct participation in the EU debate and access to EU funding. Keeping you informed about our activities and the opportunities for work at EU and national level is key and our newsletter is at the core of our communication strategy. As a result, you can expect to receive it every two months from now on!

As you know, 2014 marked an exciting milestone for our network with the signature of a Partnership Agreement with the European Commission under the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). Following the opening of Eurocarers' first-ever secretariat in Brussels a few months ago, we are now preparing for a major re-deployment of our activities and an enhancement of our package of services to you. New exciting initiatives are therefore in store for this year and beyond, including new position papers, policy briefings, new communication tools, funded capacity-building activities for members, briefing seminars, exchange visits, etc. More details about these activities will be provided to you in our future communication and during the Annual General Assembly in September.

In the meantime, we sincerely hope that this new version will meet your expectations. As always, please feel free to come back to us with comments and suggestions!

Stecy Yghemonos

Executive Director

Table of Content

» EU Policy Developments

- » Priorities and Programme of the Latvian Presidency
- » EESC Public hearing on Long-term social care and deinstitutionalisation
- » Meeting of the EP Interest Group on Carers on Carers and EU action in the field of social exclusion
- » The future of health and social care: towards a new care pathway for Europe's ageing societies - The example of incontinence
- » Meeting of the EC Patient Safety & Quality of Care Working Group - Presentations
- » New study on chronic care in Europe
- » Health, health systems and the crisis in six countries
- » GraffPlus system, a robot that assists older people in their homes
- » UNEQUAL EUROPE Recommendations for a more caring EU
- » Canada - Report from the Employer Panel for Caregivers

» Research in Action

- » New research article on Information and communication technologies for informal carers and paid assistants
- » Caring responsibilities and labour market decisions
- » The EU Joint Program Initiative 'More Years, Better Lives' (JP-IMYBL)
- » EU project to improve the Quality of Life of Patients with Parkinson's and their Carers
- » Eurocarers' representation in the ICARE4EU and SmartCare projects

» Events and Calls for proposals

- » 6th International Carers Conference - Call for papers!
- » CARER+ project conference "Smart Homecare: Investing in skills and service delivery"
- » CARE-HUB: the one-stop shop of family and domiciliary care services - Call for papers!

» News from the network

- » New Eurocarers member: Institute of Mental Health, Semmelweis University, Hungary

- » A New Year's Message from Scotland's National Carer Organisations
- » Two main carer organisations in Ireland agree merger
- » Germany - new legislation to strengthen Long Term Care
- » Germany - News from Wir Pflegen
- » Greece – Empowering families of people suffering from a mental illness
- » Need for new directions in activation
- » Who cares for family carers?

» **Opinions**

- » Concerning article in the Dec. 2014 issue of the Eurocarers Newsletter, titled "CARERS IN ACTION - Family carers: definition and recognition"

EU Policy Developments

Priorities and Programme of the Latvian Presidency



Latvia holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2015. The Presidency is an opportunity for every member state, regardless of its size or length of membership, to influence the EU agenda and guide EU endeavours.

The strategic framework and priorities of the Latvian Presidency will be three-fold:

[Read More »](#)

EESC Public hearing on Long-term social care and deinstitutionalisation

The Latvian Presidency of the Council has asked the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) to prepare an exploratory opinion on long-term social care and de-institutionalisation, as a civil society contribution to the implementation of social services reforms and the improvement of long-term care. Once adopted, the opinion will be presented at the conference on "De-institutionalisation practices and further development of the European social care policy" scheduled for 15 June 2015 in Riga.



[Read More »](#)

Meeting of the EP Interest Group on Carers on Carers and EU action in the field of social exclusion



The European Parliament's Interest Group on Carers, coordinated by Eurocarers, met on the 4th February in Brussels to discuss how the EU could support action towards the social inclusion of carers. Since 2009, the number of people living in poverty and social exclusion has increased by 10 million in the EU, now amounting to over 124 million, or one in four people. Unpaid carers are disproportionately affected by poverty and social exclusion.

[Read More »](#)

The future of health and social care: towards a new care pathway for Europe's ageing societies - The example of incontinence

On 28 January 2015, AGE Platform Europe and Eurocarers hosted a breakfast meeting at the European Parliament on "The future of health and social care: Towards a new care pathway for Europe's ageing societies. The example of incontinence." The meeting was co-chaired by three leading members of the European Parliament:



[Read More »](#)

Meeting of the EC Patient Safety & Quality of Care Working Group - Presentations



An estimated 8 - 12% of patients admitted to hospital in the EU suffer from adverse events whilst receiving healthcare, such as:

- Healthcare-associated infections (accounting for approximately 25% of adverse events)
- Medication-related errors
- Surgical errors
- Medical device failures
- Errors in diagnosis
- Failure to act on the results of tests.

[Read More »](#)

New study on chronic care in Europe

The rising burden of chronic illness, in particular the rapid increase in the number of people with multiple health problems, is a challenge to health systems globally. Associated premature mortality and reduced physical functioning, along with higher use of health services and related costs, are among the key concerns faced by policy-makers and practitioners.

Assessing chronic disease management in European health systems

Concepts and approaches

[Read More »](#)

Health, health systems and the crisis in six countries



The financial crisis of 2008/2009, and subsequent fiscal austerity policies, have created concerns that public health and health systems will be adversely affected. While a significant body of work has attempted to evaluate the susceptibility of health status to economic crises, there is relatively little analysis of how these downturns influence policies on health systems.

[Read More »](#)

GiraffPlus system, a robot that assists older people in their homes

An EU-funded team has developed the GiraffPlus system; a robot that assists older people in their homes, connects them to family, friends and healthcare professionals, while wearable devices and sensors throughout the home keep an eye on the person's health and activities.



[Read More »](#)

UNEQUAL EUROPE Recommendations for a more caring EU

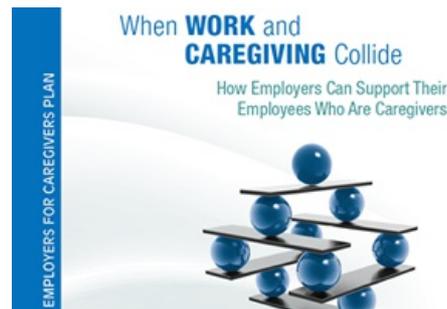


The European think-tank Friends of Europe recently published a set of recommendations for a more caring EU. This is the result of more than 1 year work of a high-level working group including the 3 last EC Commissioners for Employment. The report calls, among many other things, for credible 'social contracts' that would support inter-generational solidarity with the financial sustainability and adequacy of pension systems, and a life-cycle approach to social policies, intrinsically interwoven.

[Read More »](#)

Canada - Report from the Employer Panel for Caregivers

Many Canadians are juggling the demands of full or part-time employment with the need to provide regular informal care to family and friends. Caregiving can affect the well-being of employee caregivers, and lead to increased costs for their employers by impacting job performance, absenteeism and productivity.



[Read More »](#)

Research in Action

New research article on Information and communication technologies for informal carers and paid assistants

The Joint Research Centre, Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (JRC-IPTS) just published a new study entitled 'Information and communication technologies for informal carers and paid assistants: benefits from micro-, meso-, and macro-levels' in the European Journal of Ageing.



[Read More »](#)

Caring responsibilities and labour market decisions



Reconciling care and work is a major and daily challenge or even a burden for millions of carers. Yet, relatively few research studies have been published so far on this area, although substantial research needs have been identified.

In the framework of the Joint Program Initiative More Years Better Lives (JPI-MYBL), a report was recently presented in Berlin on the significance and influence of domestic and household factors on individual labour market decisions at older ages, among others (including a focus on early retirement and working part-time).

[Read More »](#)

The EU Joint Program Initiative 'More Years, Better Lives' (JP-I MYBL)

On the 4th and 5th February, meetings of the Societal and the Scientific Advisory Boards (SOAB resp. SAB) of the Joint Program Initiative 'More Years, Better Lives' were held in Berlin. As a member of the SOAB, Henk Bakkerode attended the event on behalf of Eurocarers.



[Read More »](#)

EU project to improve the Quality of Life of Patients with Parkinson's and their Carers



"My PD Journey" is the name of the Europe-wide project of the European Parkinson's Disease Association (EPDA), which aims to improve the Quality of Life (QoL) of Patients with Parkinson's disease (PwP) and their Carers.

[Read More »](#)

Eurocarers' representation in the ICARE4EU and SmartCare projects

Last November, Marja Pijl participated in meetings of both the ICARE4EU and SmartCare projects. Icare4EU does not include a special User Advisory Board, but representatives of the AGE Platform Europe and Eurocarers have nevertheless been invited to join the meetings of project partners in an advisory capacity.



[Read More »](#)

Events and Calls for proposals

6th International Carers Conference - Call for papers!

6th International Carers Conference - Call for papers!
Papers are now being sought for presentation at the 6th International Carers Conference.

The themes for the conference are:

- Health, social care and well-being: how do modern societies and economies manage care in the face of demographic change and more mobile populations?
- Combining work and care:



[Read More »](#)

CARER+ project conference “Smart Homecare: Investing in skills and service delivery”



ICT opens up many possibilities for older people who wish to remain at home. The final conference of the CARER+ project will take place on the 27th March 2015 in Paris, France. It will bring together experts and researchers in the field as well as representatives of care workers and policy makers from all over Europe. The event will be an opportunity to discuss how the use of ITC in homecare can contribute to improving the well-being of care recipients at home and the quality of services delivered by carers.

[Read More »](#)

CARE-HUB: the one-stop shop of family and domiciliary care services - Call for proposals!

Project proposal under Erasmus + KA2 – strategic partnership in the field of adult education

Deadline for submission: March 31st 2015

Project title: CARE-HUB: the one-stop shop of family and domiciliary care services.

The idea originates from a strong need expressed by some member organizations of C'ENTRO to explore a possible expansion of the care services already provided within their territory of reference.



[Read More »](#)

News from the network

New Eurocarers member: Institute of Mental Health, Semmelweis University, Hungary

A new member has joined the Eurocarers network since the beginning of 2015. Based in Budapest, the Institute of Mental Health at Semmelweis University, is one of the leading medical universities in Hungary. Nevertheless, health care is also closely associated to social sciences and the profile of the Institute of Mental Health is also involved in this field through its scientific and educational activities.



[Read More »](#)

A New Year's Message from Scotland's National Carer Organisations



2015 is a significant year for Scotland's 953,000 unpaid carers. After 10 years of campaigning carers have been promised new rights through the Carers Bill, which will be introduced to parliament later this year.

After waiting for more than a decade carers need rights and entitlements which are substantial, enforceable and which make a meaningful difference to their lives.

[Read More »](#)

Two main carer organisations in Ireland agree merger

The Carers Association and Caring for Carers Ireland have announced that, following Extraordinary General Meetings held on 7th February, the two organisations will be merging. This will create one dedicated carer-centred organisation to help support, lobby and advocate on behalf of Ireland's family carers.



[Read More »](#)

Germany - new legislation to strengthen Long Term Care



From 1st January 2015 a German government reform package became effective in the form of the "First German Act to strengthen Long Term Care". A "Second Act" will be implemented in 2016. Under the new Act:

- Long term care insurance benefits will be raised by 4% to reflect price trends of the last 3 years.
- Short term care and respite care benefits will be extended and can be more flexibly combined with each other, e.g. by converting the entitlement to residential day/night to non-residential care benefits, either in the form of direct payments or services.

[Read More »](#)

Germany - News from Wir Pflegen e.V.

In October 2014 the most active members of Wir Pflegen e.V. met in Berlin for a strategic workshop for the year 2015.

1. Input from external guests were about:
 - Long-Term care insurance: from a partial insurance to a full insurance?
 - Carers week in Berlin 2015: an innovative approach for Germany

wir pflegen

[Read More »](#)

Greece – Empowering families of people suffering from a mental illness



On the 6th June 2014, KINAPSI (Movement of Siblings of People with Mental Health Problems) organised a public awareness event on “Empowerment of Families of People with Mental Illness” in Athens, Greece. About 200 delegates attended the conference, representing family associations from Greece and Europe, people with psychiatric experience and mental health professionals.

[Read More »](#)

Need for new directions in activation



Various European countries are experiencing a transformation process in the social sector. Relationships between government, professionals and citizens are shifting. In the world of activation the time is ripe for innovation and a focus on impact on society. In this the Netherlands is not alone.

[Read More »](#)

Who cares for family carers?

On Wednesday 28th January 2015 the local radio station Clare FM broadcast an interview with 3 Family Carers and Brigid Barron Innovation & Programme Caring for Carers Ireland.

This programme describes the reality of Family Caring from three different perspectives.



[Read More »](#)

Opinions

Concerning article in the Dec. 2014 issue of the Eurocarers Newsletter, titled “CARERS IN ACTION - Family carers: definition and recognition”

The article drafted by our colleague Brigid Barron in the last edition of the newsletter in 2014, generated quite a few reactions from our members. We are therefore publishing the following response, drafted by Frank Goodwin and supported by Marja Pijl and Sebastian Fischer, in a brand new section entitled “Opinions”. This new section aims to allow members to exchange views on matters that are relevant to the work of the Eurocarers network as a whole.



[Read More »](#)

