



Perennial Issue: 24-Hour Care

Ceremonial Act and International Conference, 25-27 September in Vienna

24-hour care is one of many examples of major problem areas in Austrian and European social policy. On one hand, the number of people requiring care is increasing year by year, due to rising life expectancy and the structure of the Austrian age pyramid. On the other hand, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find enough carers (mostly women, mostly from Eastern Europe) for this demanding work. The costs are partially covered by the state through care allowances. At the same time, a significant portion of the burden falls on the relatives of those in need of care, plunging many families into considerable financial difficulties. 24-hour care is expensive. No one has yet found a perfect solution.

Since the problem does not stop at national borders, Europe-wide collaboration in the search for solutions is highly appropriate. As early as 1974, Austria, then not yet an EU member, founded the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna in collaboration with the United Nations. Since then, the institute at Berggasse 17 in Vienna has been providing international expertise on pressing social policy issues and conducting innovative social research within the framework of European cooperation.

For its 50th anniversary, the Ministry of Social Affairs will host a ceremonial act on 25 September, to which Social Affairs Minister Johannes Rauch invites you. The Minister stated: “The European Centre fulfils the important task of identifying,

scientifically examining, and disseminating innovative developments – in Austria and other countries – in relation to issues such as the ageing population, social inclusion, labour market policy, and long-term care.“

On 26 and 27 September, an international conference will follow in Vienna's UNO-City, featuring prominent figures from both science and politics (including Ministers Rauch and Polaschek, as well as government members from Moldova, Armenia, and Ukraine). The forward-looking theme of the conference is “The Future of Welfare Policy and Social Research“.

The topic of care will occupy an important position in the lectures and debates. Among the speakers at the conference will be Kai Leichsenring, the Director of the European Centre known for his pointed formulations. Reflecting on the early years of 24-hour care, he says: “Thirty years ago, Austrian society made a lucky finding. Shortly before, the long-term care allowance scheme had been introduced and a few years earlier the borders to neighbouring countries had eventually become permeable. Only fifty kilometers away from Vienna or Graz, for instance, people were looking forward to a better future, but were currently unemployed or badly paid in insecure jobs. Many of them even spoke German and used the opportunity to become hired as personal assistants by Austrian families with an older person in need of care, or also directly by an adult with a disability at working age. Employment was unbureaucratic but undeclared and in any case far from real legality. This do-it-yourself care model was also discovered by those who needed to look after older family members who needed care and had space for a carer. 24-hour care was born.“

Kai Leichsenring is the Executive Director of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Vienna. The European Centre is affiliated with the United Nations and will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2024 as a centre for international research and policy expertise in the areas of social security, inclusion, health, long-term care, employment, and labour mobility.



The full text of Kai Leichsenring's "**A lucky finding with an expiry date – A brief history of live-in migrant care in Austria and beyond**" (available in German and English) can be published free of charge upon prior registration at office@binakoepppl.com.

Kai Leichsenring is already available for interviews.

Further interesting topics from the international conference will follow shortly.

The Future of Welfare Policy and Social Research

Ceremonial Act: Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection
Stubenring 1, 1010 Vienna. Date: 25 September 2024, 4 PM

Conference: United Nations Office in Vienna (UNOV), Vienna International Centre,
Wagramer Straße 5, 1220 Vienna. 26 and 27 September 2024

All press information at: <https://www.binakoepppl.com/dauerbrenner-thema-24-stunden-betreuung/> Accreditation requests by 16 September at the latest to office@binakoepppl.com

Website European Centre: <https://www.euro.centre.org/webitem/4997>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

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