



*Making dementia a priority:
changing perceptions, practice and policy.*

Alzheimer Europe response to the Strategic Dialogue on the EaSI strand of the ESF+ Work Programme 2024

29 June 2023

Background

On 28 June 2022, the European Commission held a Strategic Dialogue meeting on the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand of the ESF+ Annual Work Programme 2024, inviting relevant stakeholders to discuss the initial proposals of Commission. The following day, stakeholders were invited to submit additional comments and suggestion for the areas of focus.

As part of ESF+, EaSI is aligned to the European Pillar of Social Rights as main framework, with a particular focus on:

- Employment and skills
- Labour markets and labour mobility
- Social protection and active inclusion
- Working conditions.

Alzheimer Europe's response calls for a strong focus on long-term care, highlighting the need for an increased health and social care work force, which is trained and has the ability to deal with the increasing demands from the shifting demographics (with more people living with complex health conditions such as dementia).

Alzheimer Europe response to proposals

Alzheimer Europe broadly supports the measures outlined in the background note. In particular, we are pleased to see the references to the Recommendation on access to affordable high-quality Long-Term Care, the European Year of Skill, ESSPASS and the European Disability Card, as these have the potential to have the greatest positive impact on the lives of people living with dementia, their families and carers.

In relation to long-term care, we believe that there is a need for additional focus on this area, particularly with regards to changing demographics, increasing numbers of people living with complex health matters (such as dementia) and the challenges facing care services. Specific attention should be paid to ensure services meet the specific needs of people from the LGBTQ+ community¹ and people from minority ethnic groups².

In addition to those measures foreseen within the background note, we would welcome initiatives, workstreams and/or dedicated measures relating to the following areas:

- Upskilling of the health and social care workforce, to meeting the increasingly complex needs of populations as they age and their health declines
- Supporting Member States to increase the size of their health and social care workforce, especially where there are shortages within specific sectors (e.g. care homes, personal care etc)

¹ Alzheimer Europe (2023). Sex, Gender and Sexuality in the Context of Dementia: A guide to raise awareness amongst health and social care workers. ISBN 978-2-919811-06-9, Luxembourg, Alzheimer Europe (https://www.alzheimer-europe.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/sex_gender_and_sexuality_in_the_context_of_dementia_a_guide_to_raise_awareness_amongst_health_and_social_care_workers.pdf)

² Alzheimer Europe (2018). The development of intercultural care and support for people with dementia from minority ethnic groups. ISBN 978-2-9599755-5-1, Luxembourg. Alzheimer Europe (https://www.alzheimer-europe.org/sites/default/files/alzheimer_europe_ethics_report_2018.pdf)

- Dedicating specific resources to the gathering of data on the socioeconomic inequalities experienced by informal caregivers as a result of their caregiving role
- Gathering and dissemination of good practice examples to reduce the socioeconomic inequalities experienced by informal care givers
- Analyses of the different definitions of disability³ across Members States, with a specific focus on the extent to which “invisible” disabilities, such as cognitive impairment, are included and addressed by disability policy in the country.

It is noted that there is the potential for synergies with other EU level funds – for those issues related to long-term care, it would be useful for the EU4Health programme to align with the EaSI workstreams, as many of the issues associated with long-term care require a multifaceted approach dealing with issues relating to workforce, practice and structural issues of systems, which cut across the responsibilities of these programmes.



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³ Alzheimer Europe (2017). Dementia as a disability? Implications for ethics, policy and practice – A discussion paper. ISBN 978-999959-995-1-3, Luxembourg, Alzheimer Europe (https://www.alzheimer-europe.org/sites/default/files/alzheimer_europe_ethics_report_2017.pdf)