

Call for Papers 2026/3

Deadline for responses to the Call for Papers: February 15th 2026

Revue de Droit Comparé du Travail et de la Sécurité Sociale 2026/3

Thematic chapter “Analytical mapping of care workers and their working conditions”

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ARGUMENTATION

Care work in France is in crisis. The alarm was sounded during the lockdown periods. Promises of wage increases, tributes to essential workers, and rounds of applause from balconies have all since faded into oblivion in the aftermath of the pandemic. Since then, several ILO reports have called for investment in the care economy¹—in its infrastructure as well as its services—so as to improve working conditions, promote gender desegregation in the labour market, and support the reconciliation of work and family life. Social protection policies lie at the heart of a care-centred approach that fosters healthy ageing and upholds the right of older persons to access long-term care.

Population ageing is a global phenomenon, and it is accompanied by a rise in the number of individuals experiencing a loss of autonomy due to age. Public authorities have placed strong emphasis on policies aimed at enabling older persons to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, thereby delaying entry into residential institutions. Since the 1990s, a "personal services" sector has emerged, made up of activities delivered in private households by employees either directly hired by individuals or working for profit-oriented organisations.

Despite certain regularities and structural characteristics, the topic of care workers encompasses a diversity of methodological and analytical approaches. These differences reflect, in part, disciplinary perspectives, but also the multiplicity of intersecting issues that shape the activity and living conditions of care workers. Mapping and understanding these issues require a variety of methodological frameworks while remaining structured by specific theoretical logics. In all cases, questions arise regarding the categories that define care, the workers who provide it, and the employers and/or clients who receive it.

Several disciplinary or thematic perspectives can be adopted to develop an analytical mapping of care work. The condition of care workers can be examined through the lens of life course trajectories. Alternatively, one may adopt an economic approach by focusing on care as a service and analysing its role and weight within the market and non-market economies, whether in formal or informal contexts.

¹ L. Addati, U. Cattaneo and E. Pozzan, *Care at work Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work*, ILO, 2022, p. 40 ; ILO, *Decent work and the care economy*, ILC.112/Report VI, ILC 112th session, 2024, p. 6.

Care work can also be understood as structured by power relations and hierarchies of domination, generating processes of symbolic devaluation or even discrimination by employers on the basis of stereotypes concerning certain populations and their presumed aptitude for care.

Finally, attention may be paid to the ways in which care workers construct a professional ethos that ascribes value to their activity despite low pay, precarious and inadequate employment conditions, and the often-arduous nature of their work.

The purpose of this call for papers is to prepare, for autumn 2026, a thematic issue presenting—through a comparative and multidisciplinary lens—current research on care workers.

FRAMEWORK OF THE CALL

Contributions may address, by way of illustration, the following points:

- 1) What do the legal categories relating to care work represent or conceal?** Do these legal categories overlap with those used in official statistics? What role do public institutions, particularly the State and social partners, play in shaping legal categories and statuses? Are there any remaining traces of domesticity in the legal framework governing care work? Do all workers enjoy the same legal protection?
- 2) The diamond shape is used to illustrate the actors involved in care.** What are its angles? In other words, what is the respective share of non-profit and public organisations, re-familiarisation, commodification of care, and platformisation of care work? How does this translate in terms of the legal status of employers and workers and in terms of quantitative and qualitative employment?
- 3) Irregular/informal work in the care sector.** Are there public policies to curb undeclared work in the care sector and how effective are they? Are there figures in other countries comparable to those of the *badanti* in Italy? What measures are being taken to limit working hours, promote decent accommodation conditions and prevent the exploitation of the workers concerned?
- 4) Labour shortages in the care sector and migration policies.** What public policies are in place to promote employment in the care sector? How do these policies relate to migration policies? What legal and contractual provisions have been put in place to make care professions more attractive?
- 5) Precariousness, poverty, family status, life trajectories and care work.** Care workers may experience multiple forms of precariousness linked to their life course. What are the social partners and public authorities/the State doing to limit the negative impacts of multiple jobs and multiple employers?
- 6) Gender, national origin and discrimination in care work.** The demographics of care workers show widespread discrimination based on gender and origin. To what extent do these inequalities reflect systemic discrimination? What measures have been put in place to combat the persistence of such discrimination/inequalities?
- 7) Health, workload, violence and harassment in the care sector.** What measures have been put in place by public authorities, social partners and employers to lighten the workload? What are the links between quality of care and quality of working life? Do autonomy policies take into account the quality of working conditions?
- 8) Family carers and care workers.** Are there any policies, experiments and/or legal standards that articulate the right to respite for family carers and the organisation of care work?

Recommendations to authors

Format of expected contributions

Contributions shall be in French, English or Spanish, and must not exceed **40,000 characters**, including footnotes and spaces.

In addition, manuscripts shall be provided with the following items:

- The title of the article;
- 5 keywords to identify the content of the article;
- An abstract of 500-characters;
- The author's institution, postal and e-mail addresses;
- The author's bibliographical references (choice of two publications).

Calendar

- Deadline for **manuscript proposals**, accompanied by a **title**, a **400-word abstract** and a **proposed outline**: February 15th 2026

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- Deadline for replies to authors: beginning of March 2026

- Deadline for submission: June 1st 2026

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