



# Foreign workers in German geriatric care

Dr. Anna Schrade, 4 August 2023



## Germany's problem: undersupply of care workers & elderly homes

- equivalent of **around 120.000 full-time workers is currently lacking** in care
- By **2060**: shortage of care workers of **350.000 and 500.0000**.
- Rise of people in need of care from 4.1 million in 2019 to around 6 million by 2060 – an **increase of nearly 50%**



## How are old people ,in need of care' cared for?

- Nursing home: 20%
- At home: 29%
  - by family members
  - by a foreign 24/7 caretaker dispatched to Germany for 2-3 months



# Foreign 24/7 care workers

- **Is it legal? Yes and no.**
- About **90% of all foreign 24/7 caregivers** (around 300,000 - 600,000) **work illegally** in Germany, without social insurance etc
- **85% of foreign 24/7 caregivers are from Poland**

# Current system of 24/7 care workers

- 1) caregiver (usually untrained) **recruited and hired by local company** (e.g. in Poland) and then dispatched to Germany (usually 3-5x a year, for about 6-8 weeks) => huge majority (80-90%)
- 2) **Caregiver finds household with care needs online** (e.g. facebook) and **works illegally** (no social insurance, not following labour standards and max. working hours)



Pflege und Betreuung zu Hause 24/7 Haushaltshilfe  
Gesellschafter

**2.350 € VB**

📍 55543 Rheinland-Pfalz - Bad Kreuznach

📅 01.08.2023 📄 10

# Why are there so many foreign 24/7 careworkers?

- It would **not be affordable to hire German workers** (2-3 workers would be needed to care for one person if all labour standards were to be met); insufficient supply
- Good source of **income** and often **welcome lifestyle** for foreign (Polish workers (most of the caregivers are women over 50 who were made redundant in their previous job => good income, long breaks in their home country)



# What did Germany do to increase caregivers?

- Make the **apprenticeship (training) more appealing** (3 year course in 'General Care' instead of specialisations; no training fees, increase in trainee salary)
- **PR campaigns**
- **Invite foreign caregivers** (e.g. from Vietnam, the Philippines, Kosovo etc.) in official programmes
- Raise the minimum wage (by end of 2023) for caregivers:
  - Helpers: 14.15 Euro,
  - Qualified helpers: 15.25 Euro
  - Qualified caregivers: 18.25 Euro

My interview partner:  
Mecasa



The screenshot shows a Google Maps listing for 'Mecasa 24-Stunden Pflege'. The listing includes a photo of two women at a table, a map showing the location near Europaplatz and EnBW City, and a street view image of the building. The listing title is 'Mecasa 24-Stunden Pflege' with the 'mecasa' logo. Below the title are buttons for 'Website', 'Wegbeschreibung', 'Speichern', and 'Anruf'. The rating is 4.9 stars with 57 Google reviews. The category is 'Häuslicher Pflegedienst'.

Fotos ansehen

Von außen ansehen

## Mecasa 24-Stunden Pflege mecasa

[Website](#) [Wegbeschreibung](#) [Speichern](#)

[Anruf](#)

4,9 ★★★★★ 57 Google-Rezensionen ⓘ

Häuslicher Pflegedienst



# Foreign care apprentices

- Rising number of young foreigners who do an apprenticeship in care in Germany
  - People from **south-eastern Europe (e.g. Western Balkans & South Asia)**
  - People from **refugees countries**
  - People from **eastern EU countries**
- 2 of my interview partners: **Nandia (Mongolian) and Saghi (Iranian)**, who are doing their apprenticeship in care

# MaxQ: care school in Stuttgart, Germany

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Sozialbranche

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Wenn Sie einen zukunftssicheren Beruf in der Pflege- oder Gesundheitsbranche suchen, sind Sie bei maxQ. Stuttgart richtig! Unser Bildungszentrum bietet seit fast 50 Jahren viele interessante Aus- und Weiterbildungswege unter einem Dach: Pflegefachkraft, Altenpflegehilfe, Alltagsbetreuung, Arbeitserziehung sowie zahlreiche Weiterbildungen für Pflegekräfte.

## Die Fachschulen von maxQ. Stuttgart



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# MaxQ Stuttgart, Class of 2025

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- **ALL 28 of the care students in the class are from abroad!**
- High number of foreign apprentices in care, rising year by year

**=> Share of foreign care workers already high, but especially rising among young people**





Case study: nursing home in Winterbach

- South Germany, 7.000 inhabitants
- Over **80% of careworkers from abroad** (over 90% excl. management)