

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING OF CARE WORKERS: FIGHTING FOR DECENT WORK AND DIGNIFIED LIVING CONDITIONS

3, 4, 6 & 7 NOVEMBER

CIEP-MOC Bruxelles and WSM (We Social Movements) invite you to an international gathering of care workers, taking place in Brussels from 3 to 7 November 2026.

Through contributions and testimonies from workers from the Philippines, India, Togo, Spain and, of course, Belgium, the gathering will create a space to exchange experiences and practices and strengthen strategies for the effective recognition and protection of their rights.

Tuesday, 3 November, will be dedicated to a public conference, while thematic workshops will take place on 4, 6 and 7 November.

Women care workers: an essential link in the care chain

Women care workers play a fundamental role in sustaining people's lives and well-being. Millions of them work across the world in settings as diverse as private homes, hospitals, care homes and nurseries, forming a key part of the care economy.

Across the world, thousands of women migrate within their own countries or cross borders to support themselves and their families. At the same time, austerity policies are driving major cuts in the care sector, making both formal and informal work more precarious and increasing the burden of unpaid care work, which continues to fall predominantly on women.

Often invisible and insufficiently recognised, these workers organise collectively through social movements, trade unions and grassroots groups to fight for better working conditions and a dignified life.

Organising for collective action

Drawing on our different backgrounds, experiences and situated knowledge, CIEP-MOC Bruxelles and WSM have identified both shared and context-specific challenges in organising collectively for better working conditions and dignified lives.

The gathering also marks the 15th anniversary of the adoption of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 189 on decent work for domestic workers and takes place around the International Day of Care on 29 October.

Practical information

Venue: Maison du Travail, Aéropolis
Chaussée de Haecht, 579
1030 Brussels

Full programme: <https://mocabxl.be/wp-content/uploads/Programme-Care-A4.pdf>

Registration:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=SD7ZKYx2PUOc5ALM2LTcV6iZ0XAtqxhKpV2DYkV9ikVUM1pVS0pTVEs5RE5PSDBHNjNW5UVKVkVROC4u>

The following organisations and groups contributed to organising these event: the Care Workers Steering Committee, Iteco, the "On est là" collective, PAC Bruxelles, CSC (CSC Bruxelles, Femmes CSC, Centrale Nationale des Employés – CNE, and Centrale Alimentation et Services), EFFAT, Uniglobal, Alternative Théâtre asbl, FTU and the Nyctalope collective.

With the support of the DGD (Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation), the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and Cocof.

Tuesday 3 november

Conference followed by a drink

Maison du Travail, Aéropolis
579 chaussée de Haecht, 1030 Brussels

09h00 | Registration

09h30 | Introduction

Magali Verdier (CIEP-MOC Bruxelles) and Myllie Woitrin (WSM)

09h45-13h | Who cares for care workers, and how?

- The CSC Brussels Domestic Workers' League and the Ministry of Care: **Organising for decent working conditions and caring for the women who care**, with the support of Collectif Nyctalope.
- Florence Degavre, Professor at FOPES (UCL): To struggle is to care.
- Lovely Tagal, National Coordinator of the Alliance of Health Workers (Philippines): From staff shortages to trade union struggles in the hospital sector.

Break

- Hafida Bachir, founder of Égali-T and former President of Vie Féminine and the Federation of Maternal and Child Services: **From invisibility to recognition: 40 years fighting for the rights of home-based childcare workers.**
- Paola Santos, Coordinator of Mujeres Diversas, Barcelona: **Housing: Casa Berta, a feminist community home for care workers.**

13h-14h | Lunch

14h-17h | Shared struggles: what the Global South can teach us

- Yawa Kafui Amenunya, Togo, member of PODDED (WSM partner), Platform of Organisations for the Defence of Domestic Workers' Rights.
- Lizy Joseph, India, President of CFTUI – Confederation of Free Trade Unions of India (WSM partner).

Break

- Ernestina Ochoa, Peru, spokesperson for IPROFOTH (WSM partner), Institute for the Training and Advancement of Domestic Workers.
- Mark Bergfeld, Director of UNI Care, UNI Europa, the European trade union for service workers.

16h45 | Conclusions

Eléonore Bronstein (CIEP-MOC Bruxelles) and Antoinette Maia (WSM)

17h-19h | Drink

WORKSHOPS ON PRACTICES FOR ADVANCING DECENT WORK AND DIGNIFIED LIVING CONDITIONS

Wednesday 4 November

09h-18h | Sharing experiences of collective action (Day 1)

Venue : Maison du Travail, Aéropolis

The day will be facilitated by Sarah Graetz from Théâtre Alternative and Iteco. Through forum theatre based on lived experiences and practices of collective action, participants will identify key issues and develop possible courses of action rooted in their respective contexts.

Friday 6 November

09h-18h | Sharing experiences of collective action (Day 2)

Venue : Maison du Travail, Aéropolis

Building on the discussions from 4 November, participants will further develop possible courses of action and leave with practical lessons and new sources of inspiration.

Saturday 7 November

15h-19h | Living, housing and organising

Venue: Occupation « On est là », 53 rue Victor Greyson, 1050 Brussels

Exchange of experiences between collectives of documented and undocumented women in Brussels and Barcelona.

Practical information

- Participation is free, but registration is mandatory by Friday 16 October at the latest via the online registration form (QR code).
- Workshops on 4, 6 and 7 November: places are limited, with priority given to women care workers.
- **More information:** Myllie Woitrin (WSM): Myllie.Woitrin@wsm.be and Magali Verdier (CIEP-MOC Bruxelles): Magali.Verdier@mocbvl.be