



Future Outlook on Labour and Skills Needs: Social Work MONITORING REPORT 2025

Key findings

The analysis revealed that in recent years, significant progress has been made: the number of study places has increased, the salaries of care workers have been raised, efforts to improve the public image of the field have been supported, and steps have been taken to enhance the quality of leadership.

At the same time, several challenges remain: continuing education does not reach all target groups, the professional qualifications system needs updating, and cooperation is often hindered by the lack of a clear lead coordinator. Most of the recommendations made in the previous study are still in their early implementation stages, but the sector is ready for change, and several important developments have already begun.

The 2021 study projected significant employment growth in key occupations within the social work field by 2030. This forecast was influenced by several factors, notably population ageing, increased life expectancy, and rising societal expectations regarding the volume and quality of social services.

The 2025 analysis confirms that employment has indeed grown, but the pace of growth is somewhat slower than predicted. One possible reason is the high comparison base in 2020 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which particularly affected care workers in healthcare and welfare institutions. It is possible that after the pandemic subsided, employment decreased slightly before beginning to grow again, mainly as a result of the ongoing care reform.

One of the most critical development needs highlighted in the 2021 study was the shortage of care workers. This issue has been addressed on several levels. The increase in the number of accepted students, salary increases, and the introduction of quality requirements for services indicate systematic progress. However, the need remains high, and continued efforts are required to meet the projected labour demand.

Looking ahead, the number of graduates from formal care worker training programmes is expected to increase, as the number of new admissions has significantly grown over the past two academic years.

Most of the recommendations from the OSKA study are either in the early stages of implementation or are already being carried out. Major changes are likely to take place within the next few years.