



Young mothers and entrepreneurs launch coworking with childcare

Pioneering women from Switzerland and Germany launch the first coworking spaces with childcare. While new forms of work such as coworking are becoming more and more widespread in rural areas, the issue of care (for children and senior citizens) is almost not addressed in this context. For this reason, a professional webinar with experts from the Alpine region took place on 9 June as part of the COWORCare project.

Pioneers from Switzerland and Germany presented the first coworking spaces with childcare. The mothers and entrepreneurs have become active themselves, as this topic has not yet been addressed by politics or society in connection with the new forms of work. While a crowdfunding campaign was also made in the beginning to raise the necessary start-up capital, the business model worked so well in Switzerland that another coworking space with childcare could be opened. An important aspect in Switzerland was that children are housed in the same building where the parents are working.

A young entrepreneur of the coworking space Limes Farm in Val Camonica from Italy reported that they had already wanted to set up childcare there last year but had not yet been able to implement it due to numerous bureaucratic requirements. It is hoped that this will be achieved by the end of the year. This would make it easier to keep well-educated young mothers and fathers in the rural area or to win them back after their studies and integrate them into an interesting working environment.

In times of a shortage of skilled workers, the economy is increasingly recognising the importance of care in order to integrate more women, who still do most of the care work, into the labour market. In a survey conducted by COWORCare in winter 2023 on the interest in coworking and care, around 10% of the women surveyed stated that they were unable to go to work due to a lack of childcare, even though they would like to.

During the discussion with experts, it was suggested to support more role models and also to use private-public partnerships to establish coworking spaces with care. "Even if childcare is still in the foreground now, since the coworkers are predominantly young, care for the elderly will soon become a much greater challenge in the future. This should be considered from the very beginning," states Ulrich Höllrigl, Managing Director of Plattform Land. In order to test this in practice in South Tyrol, Plattform Land is organising a pop-up childcare in the coworking space of BASIS Vinschgau in autumn. In addition, as part of the project, an interactive alpine-wide overview map of all coworking spaces with childcare options for children and seniors in the immediate vicinity will be developed and published.



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The EU project COWORCARE, with partners from the Alpine region, aims to provide an EUSALP-wide information platform for coworking spaces with care facilities in the vicinity and to raise awareness about the topic.



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