

“If you can afford a cleaner, you can afford to register them”: Manuela Schatzmann fights against illegal employment

Following an exposé on illegal employment among cleaners, the 36-year-old wants to take action. Starting in July, she will launch a product that should help both employers and employees in Brugg.

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Manuela Schatzmann received vocational training as a business administrator and has worked in the family business since 2009.

Finding a private cleaner to do the housework once a week is an easy task. They will often work for low pay and payments can be made cash-in-hand. However, not many people know that this type of arrangement is actually illegal.

Last February, Blick TV brought this fact to light in an investigative report. Manuela Schatzmann, owner of Perfect Way GmbH in Brugg, explains:

“The majority of people, both employers and employees, don’t know the proper steps that have to be taken upon entering into an employment relationship with one another.”

Schatzmann’s family business, which was previously owned by her mother Karin, specialises in finding placements for domestic help, nannies and au pairs, as well as in obtaining permits for foreign workers, among other things.

After analysing the problem of illegal employment, the 36-year-old realised that both the employer and employee are getting themselves into serious trouble. This provoked a desire to do something about it. Schatzmann states:

“Many cleaners have a migrant background. They often come from Portugal, Italy or from the East. They sometimes have a B permit, for resident foreign nationals, or an L permit, for short-term residents, and only think about earning money to finance their stay in Switzerland. However, they forget to think long-term and secure their future. Unfortunately, they are also often ignorant of their rights and responsibilities.”



Both employers and employees are getting themselves in trouble as a result of illicit employment.

By working illegally, cleaners lose out on the opportunity to pay into their pension plan, explains Schatzmann. “This means that they will receive much less OASI pension when they reach old age, although they had the right to ask for a legal registration.” Additionally, illegal employees also lack accident insurance. If a cleaner

is not legally registered, they are not insured against occupational accidents and are also not entitled to any unemployment benefits.

The state also loses money

Schatzmann also sees major issues with illegal employment from the state's point of view. Due to the lack of payments into the OASI compensation fund, the state loses social contributions and taxes, especially if an employee is liable to withholding tax.

“In such a case, each family that employs the cleaner must theoretically pay taxes.” Schatzmann explains. She is unwavering in her belief: “If you can afford a cleaner, you can afford to register them. That's why we offer our customers the opportunity to pass on all their paperwork to us for a good price.”

As early as this July, Schatzmann is launching a product to combat illicit work among cleaners – the "Fast & Easy" package. The 36-year-old explains:

“We're offering this all-round package for people, including families, singles or the elderly, who are unable to manage their housekeeping by themselves and want to legally employ a cleaner.”

The additional service is aimed explicitly at the legal employment of cleaners, with two versions being offered.

The “Fast & Easy” package includes the obligatory and correct registration of an employee with OASI, as well as the preparation of monthly payslips and annual wage statements and wage declarations. If required, the registration and processing of withholding tax is also included.

“In a nutshell: We take care of all the bureaucracy involved in employing someone, ensuring the safety of the employees and legality of the employment.

Making legal registration more attractive

The “Fast & Easy” package is being offered for a fair price:

“One version only costs an employer 400 Swiss francs annually, which comes to only 33.33 Swiss francs per month.”



Manuela Schatzmann, owner of Perfect Way GmbH in Brugg.

At first glance, that might seem like a lot of money, but it's deceptive. On average, it corresponds to only one hour's pay per month. As Schatzmann explains: "Average hourly wages for a cleaner are between 30 and 35 Swiss francs. The "Fast & Easy" package, on the other hand, only costs 33.33 Swiss francs per month.

It's a small price to pay for the welfare of the employees," Schatzmann argues. "In recent years, there has also been an increase in OASI revisions. That means that the authorities are conducting more and more inspections. Through legal registration, both parties protect themselves from fines and additional payments in arrears."

With this additional package, Schatzmann wants to remedy the grievances experienced by cleaners and help to eliminate illegal employment.