

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

The Social Services
Network for Europe



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The European Social Network (ESN)

The European Social Network (ESN) is the independent network for local public social services in Europe. It brings together the organisations that plan, deliver, finance, manage, research and regulate local public social services, including health, social welfare, employment, education and housing. We support the development of effective social policy and social care practice through the exchange of knowledge and expertise.

Co-funded by the European Union

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Contents

Letter from the Chair	6	INFORM - International and National Policy-Making	28
Letter from the CEO	8	EU funding for social services	30
2022 in Numbers	10	Promoting New Models of Care and Support	32
2022 Activities.....	12	Section Technical Assistance	33
At a Glance.....	14	Crisis on our doorstep: Social Services Humanitarian Response in Support of Ukrainian People	34
SHARE - Current Policy and Practice	16	NETWORK - with Key Decision-Makers and Peers across Europe	36
Annual Seminar: Partnerships for Social Inclusion	18	30th European Social Services Conference	38
Peer Learning Visits	20	31st European Social Services Conference	40
BUILD - Knowledge to Develop Quality Services	22	2022 European Social Services Awards	42
Social Services Quality Working Group	24	Our Members	46
Social Services Resilience and Transformation Working Group	25	Governance	50
Improving Social Work: The role of the Principal Social Worker	26		

Letter from the Chair

Dear ESN Members, partners and colleagues,

The financial crisis, the Ukraine crisis, energy crisis and the crisis on the labour market: social services in Europe are groaning under the pressure of work. One crisis overlaps with the next while they are still dealing with the after-effects of Covid-19. Social services in Europe have been “all hands-on deck” for months, if not for years, and are constantly overwhelmed with requests for support.

A combination of complex situations, a jumble of legal texts, more applications for aid and the almost impossible assignment to find extra social workers puts great pressure on social services.

Society is evolving and digitising, yet we experience that an increasing number of people are at risk of being left out. The pandemic and lockdowns accelerated digital services. Social workers notice that these are additional barriers for the most vulnerable people, for whom several services have sometimes become inaccessible.

In this context, as ESN Chair, I am delighted that the work at the European Social Network is stronger than ever. Faced with these challenges, ESN has shifted up a gear, offering support, reaching ideas and interpreting the call of the workplace to the European authorities. ESN is growing year after year, both in terms of activities and members, and has since become an indispensable

platform in Europe that can count on the highest appreciation from national and European authorities. We can be proud of that. My thanks therefore go to all employees of ESN and the confidence our members have in our high-quality work. The passion to help and support is in the blood of our team!

Yours sincerely,



Christian Fillet

Chair





Letter from the CEO

Dear members, colleagues, partners and friends,

I am thrilled to present the 2022 annual review of activities of the European Social Network (ESN).

The reason I got involved in social services is very simple – social services programmes helped my family and myself. The combination of programmes, community, family, and grit created a series of opportunities that helped my siblings and me thrive. I am trying to pay it back – and pay it forward.

More than ever, 2022 has taught us key values in life we should embrace, cherish, safeguard, and never take for granted. The social consequences of the Covid-19 crisis, the arrival of millions of refugees from Ukraine due to Russia's aggression, and the cost of living crisis have further tested the resilience of public social services, which once more have jumped into action to support those most in need.

This succession of crises has shown that societies without effective social welfare systems are susceptible to more significant fallout. Therefore, there has been increasing recognition of social services as the cornerstone of our social welfare systems, and the debate about how social protection, new models of care, and social services play a key role in promoting social inclusion and community development across Europe is growing.

ESN is the leading network for social services in Europe. In 2022, we returned to organising all our activities in person. We were excited to welcome almost 600 delegates from 35 countries to our 30th European Social Services Conference in cooperation with Germany's federal government and Hamburg City Council, two years later than planned. For the first time, we organised the [European Social Services Awards Ceremony](#) outside Brussels in cooperation with Málaga City Council, which welcomed 160 delegates from 18 countries. Our annual seminar in cooperation with Gironde County Council, addressing integrated social inclusion programmes combining minimum income and social services, saw the participation of 100 delegates from 20 countries. We launched working groups on the resilience and quality of social services, both of which were held in cooperation with members in Madrid and Prague.

2022 has been a year of tremendous engagement by members as well as growth and development as we engaged in new social service innovation and funding projects and saw our Secretariat and membership grow. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our 13 new members, and to thank the European Commission, institutional and private partners for their continuing support. ESN has seen a remarkable achievement from small beginnings and we are ready to move forward with confidence to help improve social services during 2023.

Our 31st [European Social Services Conference](#) taking place in Malmö on 14-16 June 2023 will cover the role of technology in promoting autonomy and inclusion. Over 90 applications have been received to participate at the technical programme and more than 100 delegates have already registered. Moving forward, I think back to our first project 'Towards a People's Europe' that already in 1999 was focused on personal budgets. Still relevant today, as a 'people first' approach continues to drive our programme of learning, exchange and development.

I look forward to continuing working with staff, members, partners and friends to help achieve our shared vision of social justice, inclusion and sustainable social services.

Vi ses i Malmö!

With best wishes,

Alfonso Lara Montero

Chief Executive Officer

2022 IN NUMBERS

163 members in **34** Countries

26,000 Website Users

ESN spoke at **20** Events

408 Participants at EaSI Co-funded Activities

ESN organised **10** Events

2,587 Publication Downloads

17,000 News Subscribers

European Social Services Awards

47,000 Online Votes

160 delegates from **18** countries at the Awards Ceremony

84 Submitted Projects

European Social Services Conference

25 Speakers **102** Presenters

580 Delegates from **35** countries

45 Sessions

2022 ACTIVITIES



22 March

Webinar: Improving the Practice of Social Work -The role of the Principal Social Worker



31 March

Webinar: Crisis on our doorstep -Social services humanitarian response in support of Ukrainian people



1 April

2021 European Social Services Awards Ceremony
Brussels, Belgium



6-10 June

European Social Services Conference
Hamburg, Germany



4-5 July

Meeting of Working Group on Resilience and Transformation
Madrid, Spain

26-27 September

Annual Seminar: Partnerships for Social Inclusion
Bordeaux, France

24-25 October

Meeting of Reference Group on the European Semester
Brussels, Belgium

25 October

Round Table EU Funds for social services: Promoting new models of care and support, European Parliament
Brussels, Belgium

7-8 November

Meeting of Working Group on Quality of Social Services
Prague, Czechia

17-18 November

2022 European Social Services Awards
Málaga, Spain



AT A GLANCE



Working Groups

- Social Services Resilience and Transformation
- European Semester and EU Funding
- Social Services Quality

Annual Seminar

European Parliament Round Table

European Social Services Conference

European Social Services Awards



Participation in European Projects

- **RuralCare:** aimed at developing an integrated home-based model of care in rural areas.
- **Reticulate:** aimed at piloting a 'one-stop shop' model for people furthest from the labour market.
- **xEITU:** aimed at transforming the current regional minimum income programme through testing a coordinated model of employment and social services.
- **Social Services Helpdesk on EU Funds (SESK):** aimed at supporting local social services in accessing and using EU funds.
- **No-Limit:** aimed at helping service providers in supporting the inclusion of people with poor mental health into the labour market.
- **Learning and Innovation Labs:** aimed at testing an integrated and person-centred health and social care services model.
- **SISWEC:** aimed at supporting training in the field of social work.
- **Like at Home:** aims to transforming the model of long-term care to make it more community, home-based, person-centred.
- **Side by Side:** In Spring 2023 we will start this new project coordinating training for child protection professionals with four public authorities.

Tailored Support to Members

- Peer Learning Visits
- Technical Assistance



SHARE

Current Policy and Practice



Partnerships for Social Inclusion

Bordeaux, France

Addressing life obstacles minimum income beneficiaries may face is key for their social inclusion. Confronted with multiple social problems, minimum income beneficiaries often require more than monetary support to be fully included in society. How minimum income programmes can be integrated with social services was the focus of ESN's Annual Seminar on 26-27 September in Bordeaux, France, organised with the support of ESN members, Gironde County Council, the National Association of Directors of Social and Health Care in County Councils; and the French Ministry for Solidarity.

Our research, outlined in ESN's new report '[Partnerships for Social Inclusion Integrated Minimum Income and Social Services Programmes](#),' found that only 14 European countries currently have integrated social inclusion policies for minimum income beneficiaries. The seminar highlighted some of these programmes in practice. In Vienna, for example, young people receiving minimum income receive employment, training and social support at an integrated one-stop shop involving social, employment and benefits services. In Essen, Germany mental health issues of minimum income beneficiaries are addressed by close collaboration across services. In Odense, Denmark, local authorities have been working on a housing first policy, which has succeeded in significantly reducing the number of homeless people compared with the national Danish average.

The recently adopted European Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income contains proposals to enhance cooperation of income support, employment and social services. This reflects ESN recommendations and our active support in two social innovation projects – xEITU and Reticulate.

As today's ecological, economic and social challenges, especially affect those living in precarious circumstances, it is our duty to develop new solutions. Therefore, Gironde County Council promotes new ideas, such as a Universal Basic Income and the 'Zero long-term unemployment territory', to bring us closer towards a more resilient society, providing a good and decent life for all.

Jean-Luc Gleyze, President, Gironde County Council, France



Housing first is a key element of our integrated approach to social inclusion. With this strategy, Odense managed to reduce homelessness by 50 % since we started implementation in 2009. We are convinced that we will be able to end homelessness this way.

Jakob Gudbrand, Integrated Support for Homeless People, Odense City Council, Denmark



Peer Learning Visits

Since 2014, ESN has been running the Peer Learning Visits Programme, which supports an ESN member to take part in an exchange lasting 1-3 days with another to learn about a service or project they hope to implement in their own organisation.

Three exchanges took place in 2022: the City of Zagreb visited the City of Gothenburg to gather information to support the implementation of programmes linked to a new law on personal assistants to be introduced in 2024. The City of Vilnius visited Esbjerg Municipality in Denmark to study the implementation of quality assurance programmes for children and young people's services in need of care and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. Finally, JDC Myers Brookdale Institute and Israel's Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs visited the Health Information and Quality Authority in Ireland to support its development of national standards for social services quality.

Peer learning visits allow ESN members to strengthen their network and share good practice in choosing the most suitable way to provide social services.

Nadežda Buinickienė, City of Vilnius, Lithuania



This programme of international peer learning visits is an excellent way to gather new knowledge, experience, and best practice to help us in the development and implementation of social services.

Marinka Bakula-Anđelić, Zagreb City Council, Croatia

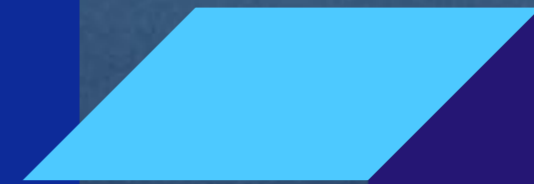
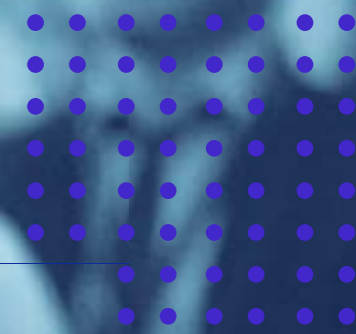
Read our Publications

Visit esn-eu.org/publications



BUILD

Knowledge to Develop
Quality Services





Social Services Quality Working Group

Prague, Czechia

On 8-9 November, ESN members met in Prague for the first meeting of the Working Group on Quality, which gathers evidence on existing quality assurance mechanisms, common principles of quality, and possible ways forward on cross-European quality standards in social care and social services. Participants representing quality assurance agencies, national and local public social services, providers, and applied research institutes, discussed ongoing EU initiatives in this area, made proposals for key quality principles, and



“When procuring home care services, we define in our contracts the key quality outcomes that need to be achieved by the providers.”

Rosa Martín Niubó, Institute of Social Services, Barcelona City Council, Spain



considered how they potentially could be translated into comparable cross-European standards and indicators.

Discussions covered the shift of focus from assessing quality of care to quality of life; from process-oriented inspection to outcome-based quality measurement; from sanction-based quality control to a culture of learning and continuous improvement; from institutional care provision to home, family and community-based services; and from addressing health and social needs separately to an integrated provision and evaluation. The working group will continue its work until 2025, when it will present its recommendations.

Social Services Resilience and Transformation Working Group

Madrid, Spain

On the frontline of a succession of crises -from the 2008 financial crash through Covid-19 to the war in Ukraine, public social services are turning their focus to investing in resilience, so they can recover more quickly from these external shocks, ensure the continuity of the care and support they provide, and rise to current and future challenges in a sustainable manner.

On 4-5 July, ESN held the first meeting of its Working Group on social services transformation and resilience,



“Organisational resilience is the key to social services being able to continue providing high quality care and support as they are confronted with increasingly complex and challenging realities. Supporting innovation in our organisations will create the foundations for the necessary transformations to respond to these challenges.”

Brigitta Zierer, National Association of Social Workers, Austria

“An essential component of social services resilience is promoting an organisational culture based on participation. This was a key pillar in the development of Madrid City Council’s new model of social services, where questionnaires, focus groups and presentations with beneficiaries and professionals together with policymakers ensured that all stakeholders were mobilised and consulted.”

Alejandro López Pérez, Madrid City Council, Spain



which aims to increase the knowledge and capacity of public authorities to plan and manage services in a resilient manner and promote effective crisis management.

The meeting, hosted by ESN member Madrid City Council, brought together social services professionals and leaders from nineteen countries across Europe, to discuss what resilience means in the context of social services and the challenges they face. Focus areas included approaches to the design, management and evaluation of social services, enhancing the prestige of the social sector, how EU funds can be better tailored to and more easily managed by social services, and addressing the social services workforce shortage across the EU, reflected in a number of recommendations outlined in ESN’s [Policy Briefing](#). This will form the basis for future discussions of the group in 2023.

Improving the practice of social work – The role of the Principal Social Worker

The role of the Principal Social Worker (PSW) can be crucial to lead, inspire, and determine priorities for quality assurance and delivery improvement of social work.

On 22 March, as part of a wider set of activities for Social Work Month, ESN organised an online discussion focusing on this role, comparing how it is implemented in different countries and highlighting the benefits of introducing this position where it does not exist already.



The recognition of social work as a profession is crucial to ensuring recognition of the value of social services not only for individuals but the whole of society.

Maria McInnes, TUSLA Child and Family Agency, Ireland



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Listen to our Podcast
esn-eu.org/podcasts

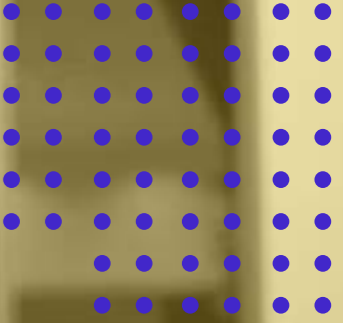


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INFORM

International and National
Policy-Making





EU funding for social services

Since 2014, ESN has tried to bridge the gap between European funding-related policy and decision-making and the planning, management and financing of public social services through its Reference Group on the European Semester.

One of the questions for this year's Reference Group, emerging from the cross-country analysis based on a questionnaire completed by public authorities' social services representatives in 19 EU countries, was how to better balance social and economic policies, particularly in the context of the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans, and increased pressures on social services because of the cost-of-living crisis and the war in Ukraine. At their meeting in Brussels 24-25 October, members also discussed challenges and good practice regarding the implementation of selected principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) related to children's services, long-term care and support for homeless people.

ESN's analysis of the 2022 European Semester: '[Putting People First: Investing in Social Services, Promoting Social Inclusion](#)' includes an overview of the issues impacting social services in local communities across Europe. The report supports the European Commission in putting together future recommendations for national governments in the field of social services. Key proposals include:

- Ensuring that children in child protection are included in future EU care Recommendations;
- Ways to improve the long-term sustainability of social services and social care;
- Putting in place strategies supporting the social services workforce recruitment and retention;
- Providing a set of integrated supports to reduce homelessness;
- A Care Guarantee for all that ensures everyone who has the need to can access care and support.



Promoting New Models of Care and Support

European Parliament, Brussels

Public social services authorities and service providers require sufficient funding to provide the quality services on which so many vulnerable people depend. Our round table discussion in the European Parliament on 25 October, hosted by MEP Pedro Marques, was an opportunity for ESN members to discuss the impact of EU funding on integrated social services and the development of new models of care, as well as the challenges and opportunities related to the relevant use of EU funds on the ground.

Spain's Secretary of State for Social Rights, Ignacio Álvarez Peralta, outlined new models of community-based care made possible by the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility. Social Services Directors from Slovenia and Italy shared local examples of social innovation projects, increasing the accessibility of long-term care and supporting sectors left ill-protected after the pandemic.



We need European targets for long-term care, while also identifying an essential role for the European Parliament in monitoring the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility from a social perspective.

MEP Frances Fitzgerald,
Ireland

Emphasising the significance of the recently published European Care Strategy, MEP Frances Fitzgerald highlighted the growing need for community-based care.

New and existing EU funding initiatives are being used to tackle the problems revealed by recent crises, such as Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine but participants highlighted that there is a need for long-term investment programmes.



There is no quick solution. We need long-term investment programmes to tackle the digital gap, staff shortages and burnout, and ensuring people's rights are protected.

Trees De Bruycker,
Ghent City Council, Belgium

ESN is a partner in one new initiative: 'The Helpdesk for Social Services and EU Funds' which aims to facilitate partnerships between managing authorities and social services, supporting them with comprehensive guidance on access to European funding at national and local levels.

Technical Assistance

ESN supports its members and external organisations providing advice on areas like new models of care and support, quality of care, social innovation and social services reform. These are some highlights for the year.

In 2022, ESN's CEO Alfonso Lara Montero lectured at various Universities and spoke at conferences on innovation, technology, digitalisation, ecosystems of care and integrated social inclusion.

We organised two international study visits in the area of quality improvement for a delegation of social services professionals.

We launched a benchmarking study in the area of person-centred, community and home-based care.



Crisis on our doorstep: Social Services Humanitarian Response in Support of Ukrainian People

On 31 March, ESN organised an online conversation with our members in Ukraine's neighbouring countries to learn about their immediate responses and challenges in light of the arrival of millions of Ukrainian refugees.

Social services support to Ukrainian people fleeing the war -mostly women with children- is not just about the initial response but also about overarching responses that address longer term social inclusion needs.

This essential conversation highlighted social services' current programmes put in place, the continuing support which has been required so far, and assessed how national and European authorities could help the work of social services in the long-term.



The European Commission has activated the Temporary Protection Directive, so that Ukrainians are entitled to work and social support and has activated funds available in the European Social Fund+, the European Regional Development Fund and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived.

Ruth Paserman, Director,
Funds Programming and Implementation,
European Commission

Finding long-term accommodation for people coming from Ukraine will be a long-term challenge. I know the best option for them is to live independently without fear that they will have to leave.

Katarzyna Modrakowska,
Regional Government of Silesia, Poland



We need a medium to long term approach through investment in family social workers, psychologists and social services professionals, who can help refugees deal with the trauma of war migration and build trust to integrate into their new communities.

Alfonso Lara Montero, Chief Executive Officer,
European Social Network
(writing in the EUobserver)



NETWORK

with Key Decision-Makers and
Peers across Europe

30th European Social Services Conference

Hamburg, Germany



The Conference represents for Deloitte the best platform to learn about latest social service policies and practice trends from different countries.

Rebecca Kapes Osmon, Deloitte

Almost 600 social services leaders from 35 countries came together in Hamburg on 8-10 June to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the European Social Services Conference. With the theme **Rethinking Recovery**, it focused on how social services can use the innovations developed as part of the response to Covid-19 to continue their transformation further and ensure they are both resilient and better prepared for future crises.

How these innovations become structural is a strategic choice to make in terms of organisational changes, workforce recruitment and development, or building

individual and collective resilience -the three pillars of our discussions on recovery throughout the conference. Across 3 plenary discussions; 24 workshops; 6 round table and panel discussions; a Project Forum and an Innovation Zone, panellists and presenters recognised the multiple challenges social services have been facing and discussed some of the solutions.

Examples of these organisational innovations were presented throughout the conference and included inter-sectoral networks to support vulnerable children, the development of cross-sectoral assessment and indicators measurements, a consent service utility, predictive analytics for the reduction of vulnerabilities, data driven approaches to identify at risk families, or investments in home care amongst others.

Ensuring social services are resilient and crisis-proof requires a paradigm shift in our models of care and social services. It also requires that we adapt our ways of working by developing workforce skills to think and value new collaborative approaches, professional roles and networks, and increase the attractiveness of the sector. Finally, the sector must learn and adapt to respond best to people's social needs, hence people who use services need to be meaningfully involved throughout the process.

The Conference provided much food for thought as public social services across Europe continue to evolve to meet the growing needs of those who require their help.



We cannot afford anymore to invest in programmes, without knowing if they effectively bring the desired support for people in need.

Petra Lotzkat, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Health, Social, Family Affairs and integration, Hamburg, Germany



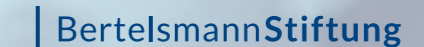
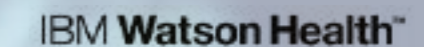
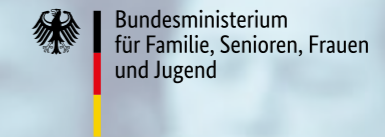
In the past 2 years we have had three crises – the pandemic, the war and energy poverty. Social services are at the frontline to respond to these crises.

Jan Vrbický, Social Services Director, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Czechia

Hosted by:



In partnership with:



31st European Social Services Conference

Malmö, Sweden 14-16 June 2023

Advancing Social Services

The role of technology in promoting autonomy and inclusion

The largest annual public social welfare policy and practice forum in Europe

Accelerating the digital and technological transformation of social services by public authorities and agencies involved in their development and delivery is key to reach people in their homes and communities.

At the 31st European Social Services Conference (ESSC), held within the framework of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, we will discuss how technological advancements can help to improve the delivery of social services by making access and sharing of information simpler, improving coordination between services, encouraging early intervention, supporting decision making, and promoting people's autonomy and choice.

The conference will highlight research and practice on innovation in social services through technology; IT developments for social inclusion, accessibility, or autonomy; organisational and workforce improvements, or data management for decision-making.

Last year 600 professionals joined us in Hamburg.

Participate at the European Social Services Conference.

SHARE

Contribute to the expertise of social services professionals on the frontline.

LEARN

Join stimulating discussions on new research, ideas and practices.

FIND OUT ABOUT LATEST TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Hear ideas from our partners on how to transform public services in our Exhibition Area.

GET INSPIRED

Listen to inspiring speakers from European and national policymaking, academia, industry, third sector, the media, and people with care and social services experience.

BUILD KNOWLEDGE

Discuss with peers how we can use technology and digitalisation to support the delivery of more effective and inclusive social services for local communities.

Book your place at www.essc-eu.org/register

Visit essc-eu.org to find out more



Hosted by:



Confirmed partners until now:



Join our Community of Partners

ESN continues to partner with the European Commission to deliver our annual policy programme.

Drawing on our expertise as the leading network for social services providers in Europe, ESN is looking to develop mutually beneficial long-term cooperation with industry partners that work with us to continue to pursue excellence and innovation in social services to better support vulnerable communities and those in need.

Participate in our Innovation Zone

- Are you changing social services through the provision of IT and digital products and solutions for social services?
- Have you created digital or IT tools for needs assessment, care planning, safeguarding or supporting professionals' mobility?
- Are you working with public authorities to design and implement new tools, services and platforms through the use of IT?

If you answered 'Yes' to any of these questions, we want to hear from you. Get in touch with ESN's CEO alfonso.montero@esn-eu.org for more information.

2022 European Social Services Awards

Málaga, Spain

Innovation for Social Change

The European Social Services Awards (ESSA) recognise innovation and excellence in social services, shining a spotlight on successful new approaches and current practice.

In 2022 we chose to celebrate visibility to social services at the forefront of social innovation developing new, creative and inspiring solutions to a structural challenge, a deep-rooted problem or an emerging need.



Innovation instils a sense of creativity, a sense of confidence, but actually above all it ensures that all the interventions we use as professionals to support the people who really need our support are suited to the ever-changing society in which we live.

Georgia Chimbani,
Suffolk County Council, UK



Social services are ideally placed to implement tangible approaches to tackling rising inequality in our societies, proving that this impact is not niche.

Lucia Dal Negro, CEO of De-LAB



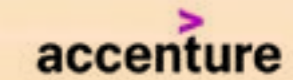
Over 80 projects were whittled down to 35 finalists, which were put to a public vote in October. The winning projects were announced at the Awards Ceremony on 17-18 November in Málaga, Spain. The following day shortlisted organisations shared the highlights of their projects during a networking event, where they discussed challenges at two round-tables on social services workforce and innovation in cities' social services.

Hosted by:



Ayuntamiento de Málaga

In partnership with:



Winners

Excellence Award: Cities Innovation for Social Change

Gaming Club:, Gothenburg City Council, Sweden

An innovative project to support young people with disabilities using computer games to reintegrate them into the community



Service Delivery

The Access Hub: Simon Community, Scotland, United Kingdom

A new multiagency hub developed in Glasgow bringing together a wide range of services supporting people experiencing homelessness.



Workforce Support

Educational Innovation Programme: Department of Education, Regional Government of Catalonia, Spain

This project transforms internships for future professionals through mentors who are trained in reflective practice and constructive support.



Technology Tool

Effective Preventative Care Supported by Artificial Intelligence, City of Helsingborg, Sweden

An innovative AI model that proactively identifies users at high risk of extensive future needs and individuals with the highest potential for rehabilitation, enabling targeted interventions, making more efficient use of the resources available.



Collaborative Practice

Multidisciplinary Group for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Association of Centres for Social Work, Slovenia

A multi-agency approach to the prevention, response and reporting of cases of domestic violence in Slovenia, connecting frontline responders from social, legal, educational, medical and other public agencies to jointly train them to support victims of violence and raise awareness in the community.



Research Project

DocRoom: Bringing Health Services Closer to Homeless People, Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, Hungary

Evidence-based research project measuring the effects of digital health tools in the medical care of homeless people.



Submissions for the 2023 European Social Services Awards open in Spring 2023

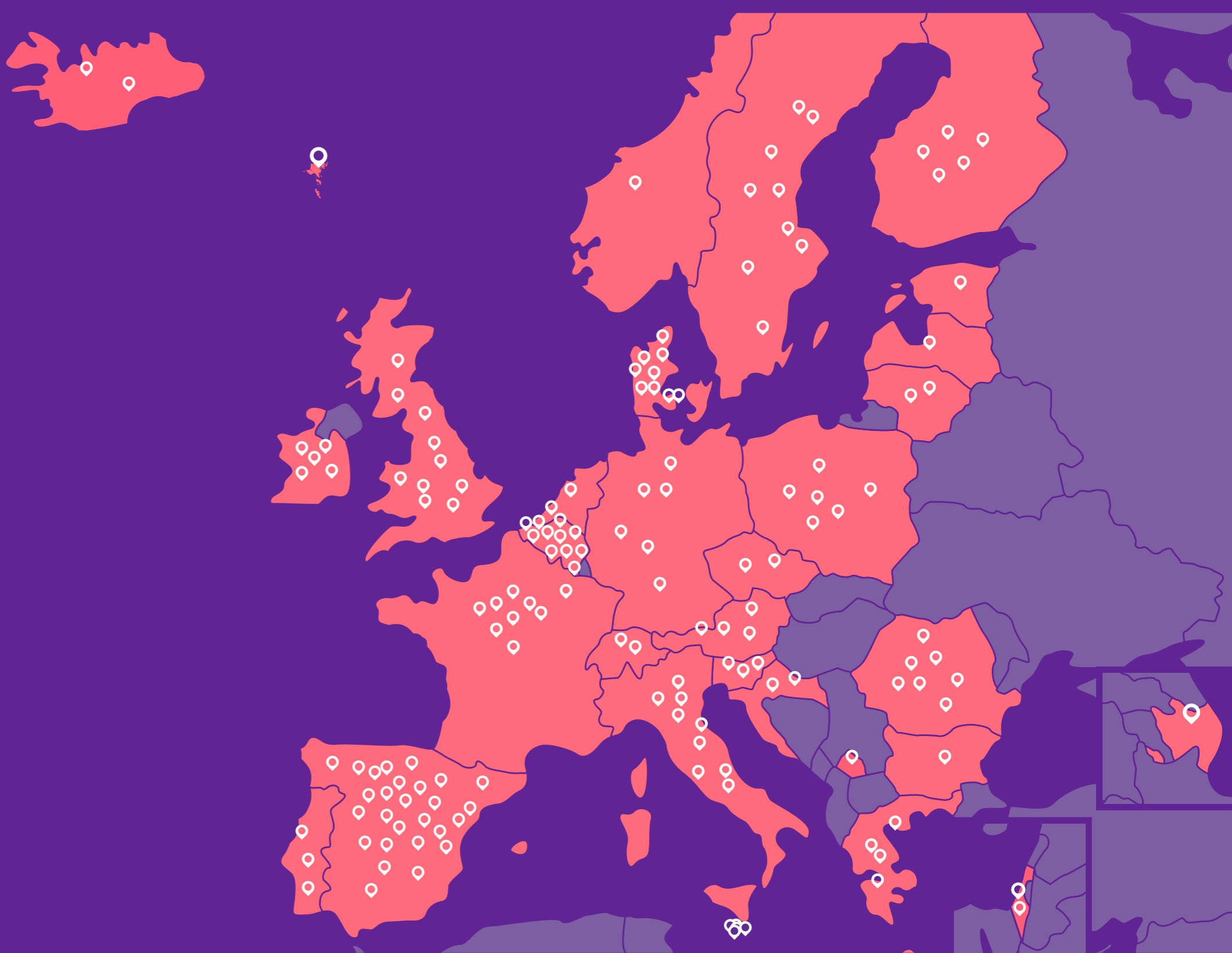
- Showcase the amazing work of your social services teams;
- Highlight your team's innovative projects;
- Learn from and share your experiences with other social services professionals across Europe.

The 2023 European Social Services Awards Ceremony in 2023 will take place in the city of Zagreb, Croatia.

Visit [t essa-eu.org](https://essa-eu.org) to find out how you can get involved.

OUR MEMBERS

ESN brings together 163 organisations in 34 countries, representing more than 1 million senior social services professionals across Europe and beyond. Our membership includes national associations of directors of social services; national, regional, and local departments of social welfare and social services in ministries, regions, counties, cities, and municipalities; universities, national schools, or applied research institutes working on social services improvement; and regulators and inspection agencies.



Become a member

Join our growing community

Access good practice and updates about European social policies

What we offer

- Online library of good practices
- Monthly newsletter and members' updates
- Online members' community
- Meetings with EU policy makers
- Contribute to EU policy consultations

Membership benefits

- Participation costs at ESN events for one delegate
- Discounted participation fees for a second delegate
- Discounted participation fees for the ESSC annual conference
- Discounted fees to attend the ESSA ceremony
- Discounted fees for ESN trainings
- For CORE+ members participation of extra delegates at events

Membership Types

Core

Public authorities and associations of social services directors in Europe

Core+

Core benefits with additional funded places at events

Council

Core members who help guide ESN policy direction, eligible to become Board members

Associate

Other service providers, professional associations, inspection and development bodies and applied research organisations

Global

International public authorities, associations of professionals and social services directors, quality inspection and applied research organisations who share our mission and values.

For more information on how to join, contact ESN at membership@esn-eu.org



Governance

Management

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees are legally responsible for ESN's governance. They are responsible for overseeing the management, financing and work of the Network and its members' interest.

The Board nominates the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Honorary Treasurer and the Legal and Policy Secretary. They may also allocate other responsibilities as needed.

The Trustees meet regularly during the year. Trustees do not receive payment for their work on behalf of ESN.

Current Trustees are:



Christian Fillet, Chair, Deputy Director, City of Bruges, Belgium



Rannveig Einarsdóttir, Honorary Treasurer, Director of Family and Children's services, Hafnarfjörður, Iceland



Graham Owen, Director of Social Services, Trosa, Sweden



Georgia Chimbani, Director of Adult and Community Services, Suffolk County Council, United Kingdom



Alfred Gixti, CEO, Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Malta



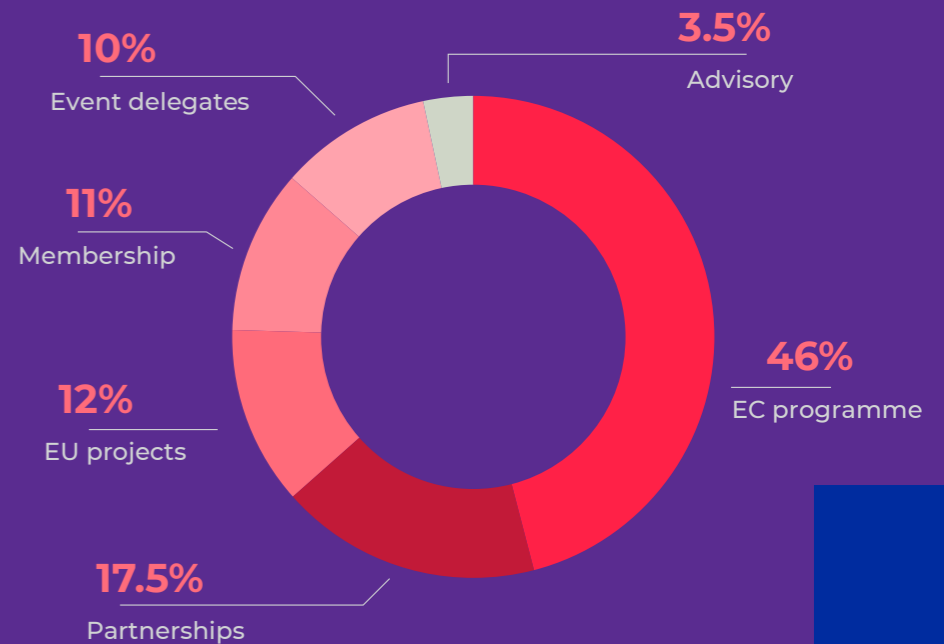
Jukka Lindberg, Director of Health & Social Care, Hame Region, Finland

The Council

The Council consists of 24 national and regional organisations that bring together directors of social services and associations with expertise on the sector. They are 'voting' members who, among other functions, elect the Board of Trustees. The Council is responsible for ESN's overall strategic direction and the approval of the annual accounts. The Council meets at least twice each year.

Finance

ESN's financing comes from a variety of sources. In 2021, ESN signed a framework partnership agreement with the European Commission (EC) for 2022-2025 under the EaSI programme for employment and social innovation and applies annually for a grant to implement the activities co-funded by the European Commission. In addition, ESN organises the European Social Services Conference and the European Social Services Awards as separate self-funded activities for which ESN works with institutional and private partners. ESN is currently involved in 10 European and national projects and provides regular technical support to external organisations and our members through different advisory roles. Finally, ESN's growing Network of members contribute to its sustainability.



The Secretariat

The Secretariat, led by ESN's Chief Executive Officer, provides strategic, policy, communications, financial and administrative support to the Network. It also manages the Network's relationships with partners, including the European Commission, national governments, and private partners.

Meet the Secretariat



ALFONSO LARA-MONTERO
Chief Executive Officer



ALVARO SANCHEZ
Finance and HR Manager



CATALINA MARIAN
Executive and Business Support Officer



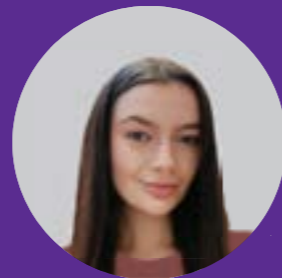
ELONA BOKSHI
Policy Manager



MARTIN LICHTÉ
Policy Officer



VICTOR DE VRIES
Junior Policy Officer



HANNAH MCDONNELL
Policy and Communications Assistant



ROSEMARY HINDLE
Communications Manager



TAMIA COTACACHI ELIAS
Junior Communications Officer



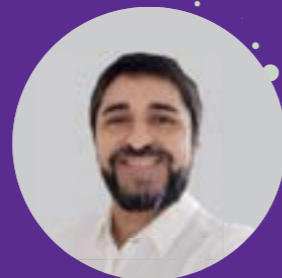
CHRISTINA VARNTOUMIAN
Communications Assistant



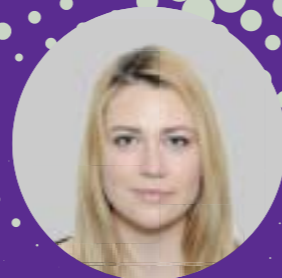
TANJA SHEIKHI
Membership and Operations Officer



TIM BROHEE
Junior Membership and Operations Officer



JOSÉ IGLESIAS
Project Manager



ZRINKA ŠAJN
Project Lead Officer, Social Services Helpdesk



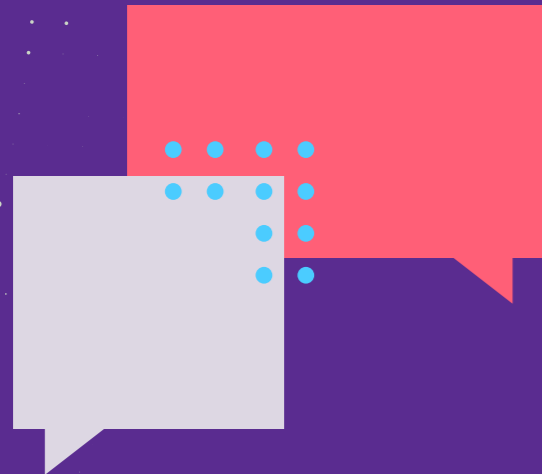
ELENI KEFALLINOÙ
Project Support Officer, Social Services Helpdesk



FRANCESCO CAPUANI
Development Coordinator



RIOGHNACH HYLAND
Junior Events Officer



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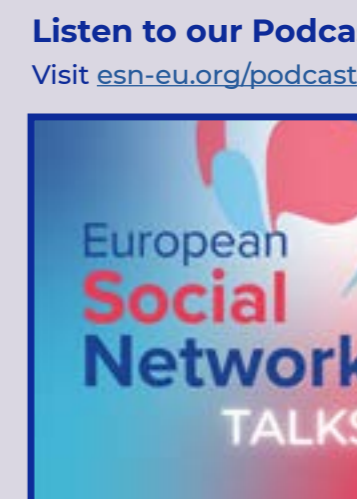


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