

European Social Services Conference **2025**

Transforming Social Services

Where Care Meets Tech



#ESSC2025



EUROPEAN SOCIAL SERVICES CONFERENCE 2025

The European Social Services Conference (ESSC) is the annual flagship event of the European Social Network (ESN) and is the largest forum for public social policy and practice in Europe. The 33rd edition of the European Social Services Conference welcomed almost **700 delegates from 38 countries**.

The 2025 Conference was hosted by the **City of Aarhus** and the **Regional Government of Central Denmark**, and was supported by the **Danish Ministry for Senior Citizens** and the **Danish Ministry for Social Affairs and Housing** within the framework of the **Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union**.

The Conference provides:

- Insights into the social services sector needs, policy developments and practice trends at local, regional, national, and European level;
- Networking opportunities with social service leaders from different organisations and decision makers from national, regional, and local administrations;
- Opportunities to build connections with coordinators of social innovation projects;
- The chance to discover products and solutions to improve public social service quality and delivery.

European **Social** Network



ABOUT THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL NETWORK (ESN)

The **European Social Network (ESN)** represents the voice of public social services as employers, managers, funders, planners, deliverers, and inspectors of social services in Europe.

ESN inspires social services leaders to improve the lives of people in the community through the development and exchange of knowledge to improve policy and practice in public social services, including all support and community-based services fighting poverty, promoting social inclusion and autonomy, child protection, protection of people with disabilities, care and support for older people, homeless people, as well as people and families in disadvantaged socio-economic situations.

ESSC 2025: AN UNFORGETTABLE EDITION

670

Delegates

38

Countries

212

Organisations

24

Keynote
Speakers

113

Presenters

25

Exhibitors

34

Sessions

77,333

Website Visitors

45,024

LinkedIn Impressions



ABOUT THE ESSC 2025 PROGRAMME

The 2025 Conference theme, **Where Care Meets Tech**, focused discussions on the two key drivers of the social services transformation: **relational welfare approaches** and **welfare technology**.

The 4-day conference programme consisted of:

5 Plenary Sessions

26 Breakout Sessions in the format of thematic panel discussions, interactive workshops and case study sessions

10 Innovation Zone presentations on specific companies' products and solutions

2 Project Forums with 8 elevator pitch presentations

1 Walking Practice Fair which included **18** social innovation projects

9 Study Visits to social projects in the City of Aarhus

The Conference technical programme was shaped through a Call for Contributions process, where organisations were invited to submit a proposal to be included in the programme. **69 applications** from **23 countries** were received, resulting in a diverse range of local, regional and national perspectives being represented across the programme.

The conference plenary sessions were interpreted into five languages: English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. All sessions in the technical programme were interpreted into English, giving presenters the freedom to present in their native language, and delegates from across Europe the opportunity to attend and engage with the topic, encouraging a greater diversity in geographical representation at the Conference.

The main policy takeaways from this year's Conference can be found on the [European Social Network website](#).

WHO JOINED US AT ESSC 2025?

Have a look through the type of delegates and organisations who joined us at the 2025 edition of the **European Social Services Conference**.



ESSC 2025 brought together a truly diverse range of participants, with delegates from **5 different continents** in attendance. While most participants came from across Europe, the Conference also welcomed attendees from **Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates**.

Over the past three years, attendance at the ESSC has steadily increased — from **610** delegates in 2022 to **670** in 2025.

The Conference typically hosts **high-level delegates** from national and local authorities of the host country, as well as representatives from **European Union institutions** and **international organisations**.

In 2025, **more than half of the participants** held decision-making roles within their organisations — including **global leaders of international companies, CEOs, and heads or managers of departments** responsible for public social services at national, regional, and local levels.

Two-thirds of all delegates represented **public authorities**, with the largest proportion (**31%**) coming from municipalities.

TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS



Most of the organisations **(64%)** represented were public administrations, with the highest proportion of these organisations being local public administrations **(31%)**.





ESSC 2025 PARTNERS AND EXHIBITORS

ESN has developed mutually beneficial long-term cooperation with different kinds of organisations to pursue excellence and innovation in social services.

Conference Partners organise thematic discussions and interactive sessions, showcase products and solutions in the exhibition area.

To know more about the ESN Partnership Programme, please contact our **Development Coordinator, Francesco Capuani**, by email at francesco.capuani@esn-eu.org to discuss how your organisation can become involved with the 2026 European Social Services Conference.





Foundation for Social
Welfare Services
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SOCIAL
CARE
STANDARDS
AUTHORITY



POSITIVE
PARENTING
NATIONAL STRATEGIC POLICY 2016 - 2025

LOOKING AHEAD TO ESSC 2026

Crossing Borders, Bridging Boundaries Global Perspectives on Social Services

The 34th edition of the European Social Services Conference will bring together directors, senior professionals, and policymakers to examine and compare how key social services such as child protection and family support, long-term care for people with disabilities and older adults, and social inclusion strategies are structured, financed, and delivered across Europe.

The event will take place in **Valletta, Malta**, from **17-20 May 2026**.

With a strong focus on policy and operational practice, this event offers a unique opportunity to:

- Gain strategic insights into the organisation and delivery of social services in the host and other European countries;
- Benchmark national systems against each other as well as international approaches;
- Engage in dialogue that supports the development and alignment of effective, sustainable social services across Europe;
- Contribute to evidence-informed policy processes at both national and international levels.

Designed for decision-makers shaping the future of social services, this Conference will be a forum for critical reflection, peer exchange, and advancing practice and policy coherence across borders.

European Social Services Conference



European Social Network
Avenue des Arts 3-4-5
1210 Brussels, Belgium

www.essc-eu.org
conference@esn-eu.org



@ESNSocial



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