

Carity: Proactive Social Tariff in Social Restaurants and Access to Food Support

<u>Organisation(s):</u>	City of Ghent, District 09, and Codeer	
<u>Country:</u>	Ghent, Belgium	
<u>Contact:</u>	policy@esn-eu.org	
<u>Theme:</u> Choose at least one option	☐ Ageing & Care ☐ Asylum & Migration ☐ Young People ☐ Support for Children & Families ☐ Community Care ☐ Integrated Care & Support ☐ Co-Production ☐ Disability ☐ Housing & Homelessness ☐ Artificial Intelligence ☒ Digitalisation ☐ Quality Care	☐ Labour Market Inclusion ☒ Social Inclusion ☒ Technology ☐ Workforce and Leadership ☐ Social Benefits ☐ EU Funding ☐ Social Services' Resilience ☐ Mental Health ☐ Person-Centred Care ☐ Research & Use of Evidence ☐ Management & Planning ☐ Other, please specify:
<u>Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights:</u> <i>Which principles does your practice cover? Check the 20 principles here.</i>	☐ 1. Education, training, life-long learning ☐ 2. Gender equality ☒ 3. Equal opportunities ☐ 4. Active support to employment ☐ 5. Secure and adaptable employment ☐ 6. Fair Wages ☐ 7. Transparent employment conditions ☐ 8. Social dialogue ☐ 9. Work-life balance ☐ 10. Healthy, safe work environment	☐ 11. Childcare and child support ☐ 12. Social protection ☐ 13. Unemployment benefits ☒ 14. Minimum income ☐ 15. Old age income and pensions ☐ 16. Health care ☐ 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities ☐ 18. Long-term care ☐ 19. Housing and assistance to homeless ☒ 20. Access to essential services
<u>Current status of the practice:</u>	☐ Concept and Design Phase ☐ Testing or pilot phase ☐ Temporary practice that has terminated ☐ Temporary practice that is ongoing and has a termination date ☒ Established and ongoing practice ☒ Scaling Up and Transformation Phase ☐ Other (please specify):	
<u>Summary:</u> <i>Please summarise the practice in maximum 3 sentences. This will be the</i>	Carity is a digital system that enables secure data exchange between referrers and food initiatives, ensuring that people automatically receive the correct discounted rate at social restaurants. By checking relevant databases in real time, Carity applies the appropriate discount based on a person's status while respecting privacy and GDPR rules. The system combines digital efficiency with human-centred support to improve access to dignified food assistance in Ghent.	

disclaimer of your project on our website. Example here.	
<u>Context/ Social issues addressed</u> <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve with your practice.</i>	People in vulnerable situations can face administrative, practical and social barriers when accessing food support and affordable healthy meals. Referrers, volunteers and social restaurant staff also need reliable information to confirm eligibility and apply the right tariff, which can create delays, duplicate data entry and a less welcoming experience. Carity addresses these issues by enabling secure, real-time data sharing between social services and food initiatives, making referrals faster, more accurate and more dignified.
<u>Objectives:</u> <i>Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.</i>	1. Remove barriers to food assistance and social restaurants for people in vulnerable situations. 2. Automate secure data exchange so that the correct social tariff is applied in real time. 3. Save time for referrers, volunteers, cashiers and policy officers while improving access to usable data for service planning.
<u>Activities:</u> <i>Please describe the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 400 words).</i>	Carity was developed with District 09 and Codeer as a hybrid model combining digital automation with human intervention where needed. The system connects e-IDs, authentic data sources and real-time data processing so that, when a person is referred for food support, selected information from their social record can be shared securely with food initiatives. At social restaurants, the cashier can scan the e-ID and the system indicates the correct rate based on the person's status. The tool also supports exemptions for groups who may not appear in standard databases, such as people without legal residence papers, so they can still access food support and affordable healthy meals. In addition, Carity provides food initiatives and local policymakers with data on the number and profile of people using services and how often they use them, helping to improve operations and policy decisions while respecting privacy and GDPR requirements.
<u>Outcomes:</u> <i>Please explain what the results were/are so far and how you evaluated this (i.e. statistics, a study, or feedback)</i>	In the first 11 months of 2025, more than 16,000 people were referred to food support and material assistance in Ghent through Carity. Since January 2025, 5,000 Ghent residents have received the correct discount in social restaurants through the system. Feedback from partners, including regulators and inspection bodies, shows that referrers, volunteers, cashiers and policy officers experience significant time savings because they no longer need to request or record data separately, and tariffs are assigned automatically by scanning the e-ID.
<u>Funding Source:</u>	EU Funds: ESF+ ☐ INTERREG ☐ ERDF ☐ ERASMUS ☐ RRF ☐ other ☐ ☐ National Government Funds ☐ Regional Government Funds ☒ Local Government Funds ☐ Private Sponsorship / Public-Private Partnership ☐ Financial contribution of People using Services ☐ Other, please define:

<u>Links to supporting documents:</u> <i>e.g. project website or report of the practice, articles</i>	AI 4.800 Gentenaars kregen automatisch korting in sociale restaurants Stad Gent
<u>Comments and tips</u> <i>i.e. for people willing to implement your Practice in their service</i>	1. Involve all stakeholders from the start so that the digital tool meets the wishes of all partners. 2. During development, make it clear what can and cannot be expected (e.g., in Ghent, it did not become an agenda management tool). 3. Moreover, appoint an employee who follows up on the development process and can train users during the rollout and act as a helpdesk. 4. Finally, ensure the DPO is on board so that you can immediately develop and implement everything in a GDPR-compliant manner.