

Launch of European Network "Social Services Europe"

(Brussels, 12 December 2011) Today a new European network, Social Services Europe, was launched to strengthen the profile and position of social services, and to promote the role of not-for-profit social service providers throughout Europe.

It brings together seven Europe-wide networks of not-for-profit providers of social and health care services, SOLIDAR, Eurodiaconia, the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR), Workability Europe, European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) and the European Platform for National Non-Profit Umbrella Organizations and for National Associations of General Interest (CEDAG).

Social Services Europe will also work on social dialogue, a key component of the European social model underlining that "in spite of the growing importance of social and health services, which may account for more than 10 % of total employment in some Member States, their coverage by the traditional social partners is still quite poor. Yet, social dialogue is likely to have far-reaching consequences on a series of issues such as working conditions, skills management and quality of services. It may also help addressing bottlenecks such as staff shortage.

Several attempts have already been made to have our sectors involved in projects aiming at improving this situation. New perspectives are emerging again and should be encouraged. Next to social dialogue, Social Services Europe will focus on various other staff and HR issues such as qualifications and competencies of staff, working conditions and professional development" (cf. Social Services Europe - Thematic Priorities, "2. Staff and HR Issues").

Please read the Press Release

- [SSE Launch Press Release](#)

and the overview on thematic priorities.

- [SSE Thematic Priorities](#)

issued by Social Services Europe.

In EPSU's view "the establishment of Social Services Europe is an interesting initiative. The organisations covered employ many ten thousands of women and men in health and social services. Many of these workers are organised in EPSU affiliated unions. The recent [Conference on Care organised by the Social Platform](#) on 9 December 2011 in Brussels to which EPSU contributed in a panel dealing with working conditions and the promotion of quality jobs in care importantly recognised the link between quality of service provision and quality of working conditions. This a remarkable step", says Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, EPSU General Secretary.

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