

# Social Services Europe

Brussels, 27 October 2014

**Ref: Ms Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner-elect for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; Mr Jyrki Katainen, Commissioner-elect for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness.**

Dear Mr Juncker, President-elect of the European Commission,

On behalf of [Social Services Europe](#) (SSE), I am writing to congratulate you for the strong support the European Parliament gave you and the collegiate of Commissioners on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

SSE brings together nine Europe-wide networks of not-for-profit providers of social and health care services, representing over 100,000 organisations throughout Europe who provide services for those most excluded from the labour market, our education systems and indeed our communities.

We fully welcome your willingness for “Europe to be dedicated to being triple-A on social issues, as much as it is being triple A in the financial and economic sense”. The Social Services Sector plays an important role in both these objectives. Indeed, the sector has already shown in the past that it is an extremely dynamic sector in terms of employment expansion. [Between 2000 and 2009, 4.2 million new jobs were created in the health and social services sector in the EU](#); over a quarter of all jobs created in Europe during that period. As a result of demographic and societal trends, the demand for social services in Europe is growing exponentially, meaning that the sector will need to employ more and better qualified staff over the upcoming years and decades.

In addition to reducing unemployment, securing the supply for the demand for social services is also key to counteracting the increasing social exclusion and poverty in Europe. Indeed, the social services sector is perhaps the best argument for demonstrating the change in paradigm defended and promoted by the European Commission’s Social Investment Package. [Social investment in the social sector leads to positive and lasting economic outcomes as changes to the situation of service users can bring previously excluded people back into being active members in society; through employment, training or education.](#)

However, [many barriers](#) continue to stop the sector from fulfilling its job creation potential; including problems such as a lack of public finance, often difficult working conditions and training opportunities, as well as the low attractiveness of the sector.

As your first priority is to encourage job creation in Europe, especially in the context of achieving the Europe 2020 objectives, how will you use the Jobs, Growth and Investment Package (and the other tools) you have at your disposal to help unlock the job creation potential in the social services sector? Streamlining EU Member States’ actions through a dedicated Communication would contribute significantly to fulfilling the job creation potential in the social services sector and achieving the 2020 targets.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions on this topic.

Yours respectfully,

Luk Zelderloo

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Secretary General of EASPD  
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