

Annual Report 2020

Social Services Europe

Key activities from January to July 2020

- A SSE seminar took place in the European Parliament on 21 January entitled “Do Social Services Matter for the EU?”. The seminar was hosted Pierfrancesco Majorino – member of the European Parliament for S&D. About 30 people attended the event. At the seminar the SSE research paper on the current and potential employment situation of third-country nationals in social services was presented.
- A meeting with Commissioner Nicolas Schmit took place in May. We organised a preparatory meeting with Monica Chaba (DG EMPL) where the priority topics for the meeting with the Commissioner were agreed. Focus of the meeting was the EU Pillar of Social Rights.
- SSE participated in a high-level meeting on the impact of Covid on social services with 5 Commissioners including Commissioner Schmit which took place in May. SSE also contributed to the Social Services Summit and the webinar on the need to channel ESF/REACT_EU resources to social services, with EASPD as the driving force, which both took place in June.
- In terms of policy work the SSE statement on the ESFplus was finalised and sent out, and we made good progress on an SSE position on the Action Plan of the Pillar of Social Rights.
- Five board meetings took place (most online because of the Covid pandemic) in January, March, April and June. The general assembly met in July.

Key activities from July 2020 to January 2021

- Building on the 3rd and 25th of June events, a number of follow-up activities took place:
 - A letter was prepared by EASPD and sent to the European Commission, calling for a Helpdesk facilitating access to EU funding for social services. Most members signed the letter.
 - Maria met with Alfonso Montero (ESN) to see how we can continue to join forces as social service providers in the policy response to the impact of the COVID crisis on social services.
 - SSE built on the momentum of the positive cooperation with the trade unions and policy makers in the continued coordination actions. Meetings of relevance for SSE members took place on the 15th of September and 5th of November (REACT EU and the Helpdesk) and the 16th of September and 15th of December (European Informal Task Force on Social Services during COVID-19).

- A follow-up summit to the 25th of June webinar was planned (final date agreed was 16th of March 2021, preparations lead by Caritas Europa and Eurodiaconia).
- Maria spoke on behalf of SSE at the [Empowering Services session](#) of the European Week of Regions and Cities on the 8th of October.
- A Social Platform webinar on Social Services took place on the 17th of September, allowing for exploring the priorities from the perspective of social service providers and equality networks as to the role of Social Platform in relation to social services. SSE was invited to support in the preparations. Most SSE members attended the event.
- An exploratory meeting took place concerning the [Call for proposals](#) “Competence centres for social innovation”. Several members expressed an interest to partner in a bid for this call through their members and SSE facilitated the contacts between their respective interested national members.
- Under the leadership of Freek, SSE [contributed to the consultation on the European Pillar on Social Rights](#).
- A first proposal for a commitment statement, to be signed by all SSE members, in relation to the appropriate conduct within the sphere of joint actions was discussed. Members were invited to share their codes of conducts to see if those can be used as a basis to develop an SSE “code”. This work will be continued in 2021.
- The Work Plan 2021 was prepared, with the continued policy actions following the impact of COVID-19 on social services at the center.
- One meeting of the General Working Group took place, and four Executive Board meetings (2nd September, 7th October, 17th November, 17th December).
- At the final meeting, it was agreed that Luk Zelderloo, EASPD, takes over the chairmanship of SSE for the first semester 2021.