

PESSIS 2 Promoting employers'

social services in social dialogue

"Sectoral social dialogue – a key element of the European Social Model and a tool of modern industrial policy and good governance"

Why to promote social dialogue in the social services sector at European level.

The social services sector is a rapidly growing sector in both social and economic terms, in particular due also to demographic changes. The employment growth of this sector, during a period of rising unemployment, has important implications for its place within the European Union (EU) economy. However, today the demand for social services exceeds supply of resources available in terms of workforce and financial support to the sector for many interconnected reasons linked to working conditions, the poor public image of the sector and the lack of public funding.

The social services sector faces a common set of problems, which are challenging traditional forms of delivery. The EU is playing an

increasingly role in terms of policy action, promoting cooperation among Member States and facilitating the exchange of good practices. Employers of the social service sector have a contribution to make, but they are not involved in the debate concerning their sector at EU level. Moreover, social services are not represented by a committee and thus not part of the European Social Dialogue.

The lack of social dialogue structures at European level in this sector is a missed opportunity, as the delivery of services will depend on the future of the workforce. Solutions to problems of recruitment and retention will have to involve improved working conditions, more training and support for professionalisation, as well as focus on quality and better access to public funding. All these issues could be addressed through European Social Dialogue (ESD). Despite the fact that social dialogue for the social services sector is developed to varying degrees throughout Europe, there is a strong sense that this process is transforming into something more and more concrete. ■

Recommendations for the European Union (EU) level

There is no structured input from social service employers on key European policies, such as the EU 2020 Strategy and the The Social Investment Package..

Recommendation: The European institutions should create dialogue structures with social service employers, to enable them to contribute to the policy making process.

The social services sector is not represented by a specific committee in the framework of the European Social Dialogue.

Recommendation: The European Commission should support the development of social dialogue instruments for the social services sector at EU level.

Due to a lack of sustainable funding schemes and a coherent policy framework, the social services sector is characterised by poor working conditions, shortage and retention of staff, lack of training opportunities and carrier perspectives and lack of gender balance in many European countries.

Recommendation: This wide range of common problems facing all national social services sectors should be addressed through the development of social dialogue at European level.

The not-for-profit sector is expanding fast and becoming a significant employer in all European countries.

Recommendation: New opportunities to promote reflection within the sector in order to identify employer responsibilities and ways of meeting them should be facilitated across Europe.

The European social services sector is diverse and often with a lack of representation.

Recommendation: Employers and employees must recognise the role of actors at EU level to support social dialogue in the social services sector. More work to support the development of representativity for employers, through workshops and seminars, is needed at EU level.

Recommendations for the European Union (EU) level

Existing social dialogue in the social services sector needs to be better understood and more widely recognised.

Recommendation: Use the Presidencies in 2014 (Italy) and 2015 (Latvia and Luxembourg) to promote the PESSIS 2 project conclusions and recommendations.

Further data is needed to better understand how social dialogue is organised in the 17 PESSIS study countries.

Recommendation: The EC should invest in follow-up research to identify models of good practice and to understand the full economic and social contribution of the sector. ■

Recommendations for the National level

Social partners in the social services sector need to develop a shared language for negotiations between employers and employees.

Recommendation: Support the creation of new social dialogue pilot projects to bring social partners together to create an effective social dialogue between employees and employers in the social services sector.

To reach innovation in social service delivery, additional research is required, drawing on new technologies as well as preserving sensitive and tailored local delivery.

Recommendation: National governments and other stakeholders should commission research to explore how social services delivery could be restructured, using new technologies and new forms of organisation at local, regional and national levels. ■

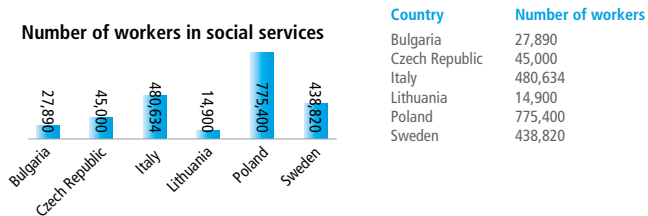
Key Findings

6 additional
EU countries

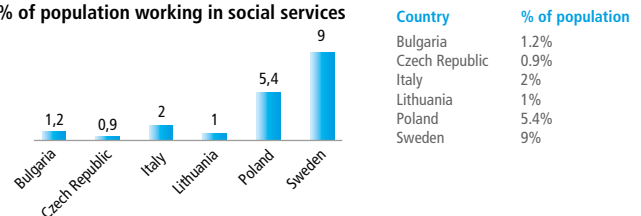
- The social services sector is a rapidly growing sector contributing to social and economic value;
- Social services are labour intensive activities and there is a growing demand for workers, with problems of recruitment and retention;
- The majority of workers are women and low paid, often working part-time

- Much of the labour force is aged 40+;
- The social services sector is fragmented with a majority of small sized enterprises in for-profit and not-for-profit sectors;
- There is an expansion of competition and entry of the for-profit sector;
- There is a decline in public provision in many countries.

Number of workers in social services



% of population working in social services



Key Findings

Social Dialogue in the Social Services Sector

- The social services sector is often covered by a range of employers' organisations and more than one trade union;
- Some form of dialogue between employers and employees exist in all countries;
- Five countries have well-developed social dialogue systems, but there are differences in the role played by the state;
- Six countries have some form of dialogue ranging from well developed collective bargaining based on legislation, to less well defined agreements covering fewer issues;
- There is evidence that some existing arrangements are threatened by a lack of recognition of social services partners;
- Budgets cuts are leading to new alliances.

European Social Dialogue in the Social Services Sector

- European Social Dialogue provides an opportunity for employers and employees to discuss and come to agreement on issues that have cross-border implications and that require action at European level.
- Participation in ESD would provide the sector with an increased influence over EU policy making as the European Commission is obliged to consult social partners in all proposals related to Employment and Social policy.

- Creation of a sectoral committee for the social services sector will:
 - strengthen social dialogue at national level;
 - help sharing models of good practice and solutions to problems facing social services;
 - facilitate the share of information about how to safeguard the social value of social services.

Collective Bargaining in the Social Services Sector

- Basic collective agreements just cover wages, an Basic collective agreements just cover wages, and more comprehensive agreements cover a wider range of issues such as pay, working hours/conditions, contracts, consultations, absences and trade union rights;
- Coverage by collective bargaining agreements is highest with public social services workers and lowest for private sector workers;
- Recent changes in the social services sector have led to changes and mergers between collective agreements;
- There is an important role of the state with some tri-partite arrangements; others are influenced by the state as funder of social services;
- In some countries with strong social dialogue arrangements, the collective bargaining agreements are built on these relationships. ■

The PESSIS 2 Project

PESSIS 2 project is the follow up of the previous project PESSIS and represents the second step of a longer term process aiming at establishing a representative platform for employers in the social services sector at European level. The project is supported by a broad partnership of European and national organisations representing social and health services providers, in close cooperation with the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU). The first PESSIS project provided a detailed understanding of how social dialogue is organised and structured (or not) in the social services sector in eleven EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, The Netherlands, Scotland, Slovenia and Spain). It focused on identifying barriers to increased cooperation among employers in the sector as well as highlighting examples of good practice.

The aim of PESSIS 2 was to extend the research area to 6 additional countries in Central, Eastern, Southern Europe and Scandinavia,

and to build capacity on the employers' side of the social and health sector in five selected countries and to test their will in joining European Social Dialogue. National and European partners investigated the best ways in which to build social dialogue structures at European level by identifying practices and experiences which might help the sector to structure itself as employers' representative.

The project, running from November 2013 to December 2014, was led by EASPD and supported by a broad partnership of 8 European and 5 national organisations representing social and health services providers, in close cooperation with the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU).

It is a European project funded by the European Commission's Programme on Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue.

The PESSIS 2 Final Conference

23 September 2014
Liaison Agency Flanders-Europe,
Avenue de Cortenbergh, 71, Brussels

The Conference brings together representatives from national employers and trade unions, as well as stakeholders and representatives of EU institutions to present the work that has been done over the past year and lay down the first building blocks for the creation of a European platform representative of employers in the social services sector.

9:30-10:00 Welcome Coffee and Registration

10:00 - 10:30 Welcome and Objectives of PESSIS 2 from an Employer perspective

Conny Reuter - (Secretary General of Solidar)

Objectives of PESSIS2 from a Trade Union perspective
Carola Fischbach-Pyttel (Advisor, EPSU)

10:30 – 11:30 Presentation of Country Reports on social dialogue in the social services sector in six countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden) by each national researcher

11:30 – 11:45 Coffee Break

11:45 – 12:15 The current state of play of social dialogue in the social services sector in 17 EU countries. Jane Lethbridge (Director of PSIRU)

12:15 -12:45 Roadmap towards European Social Dialogue for the social services sector. Thomas Signal (EASPD)

12:45-13:45 Lunch break

13:45–14:30 What is the Added Value of European Social Dialogue for Employers? Discussion on the experiences of current social partners in European Social Dialogue. Panelists from the HOSPEEM, CEEP and EPSU.

14:30 – 15:00 What can be achieved for our sector in European Social Dialogue? Perspective from representatives of national Trade Unions

15:00 – 15:15 Coffee break

15:15 - 16:15 What can be achieved for our sector in European Social Dialogue? Perspectives from representatives of national Employer Organisations in the Social Services sector.

16:15 -16:45 How can the European Institutions strengthen working conditions in the social services sector? A perspective from the European institutions.

16:45- 17:00 What are the next steps for our sector in European Social Dialogue? Conclusions and remarks by Luk Zelderloo (Secretary General of EASPD)

Partners in PESSIS 2

For more information, please visit: www.socialserviceeurope.eu/peissis



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European Partners



And Social Services Europe



National Organisations

