

Quality Social Services: a Key to Implement the European Pillar of Social Rights

20-21 November, Brussels

Transforma Bxl, Avenue Jules Bordet 13

1140 Brussels

Draft Programme

The topic of quality of services in the social sector has been a priority for EPR and its members for many years, and in 2003 EPR launched [EQUASS](#), which enhances the social sector by engaging social service providers in continuous improvement, learning and development, in order to guarantee service users quality of services throughout Europe. Its quality framework provides a comprehensive approach to quality management, features a rights-based approach and is a recognised tool for implementing the European Voluntary Quality Framework for Social Services.

The European Pillar of Social Rights was “proclaimed” by all EU member states, the European Parliament and Commission in November 2017 and is considered a significant initiative in the social field at EU level; according to the European Commission, contributing to “Building a more inclusive and fairer European Union”. It contains “[principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems in 21st century Europe](#)”, and actions should be taken to implement it at national and EU level.

Social Services Europe, in which EPR is an active member, developed the position paper ‘[The Role of Social Services in the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights](#)’ in 2018. The paper highlights the importance of these services in achieving the principles in the pillar, and in addition stresses “The effectiveness of the principles described in the Pillar is conditional to the provision of quality services”.

Quality is also explicitly mentioned in some of the Pillar principles, such as:

1. Education, training and life-long learning: “Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education”
8. Long-term care: “Everyone has the right to affordable long-term care services of good quality”;
11. Childcare and support to children: “Children have the right to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality
19. Housing and assistance for the homeless: a. “Access to social housing or housing assistance of good quality shall be provided for those in need”.

One goal of this event is to promote mutual learning on providing quality services, including a focus on services relating to principles in the Pillar; facilitating exchanges on success factors and how to address challenges. Workshops will also give opportunities for participants to learn about methods to improve the quality of services and participants will be encouraged to network to create lasting connections. Another goal of the conference is to discuss and make recommendations as to how actions at EU level could support quality social services in implementing the principles.

Draft Agenda

Day 1	
09.30	Welcome, introductions, ice-breaker
09.45	Short presentations: challenges and developments in quality services and ensuring social rights across sectors/countries
10.30 10.50	Group discussions identifying common and most important issues Feedback
11.00	<i>Coffee</i>
11.30	EQUASS: a tool for supporting quality services across Europe / Q&A (Guus van Beek)
12.00	EU activities addressing quality in social services and impact on service providers: presentation from the European Commission; Monika Chaba
12.20	Panel: Response - what role for the EU in promoting quality of services for social rights? Heather Roy, Secretary General Eurodiaconia and President of Social Services Europe; Alfonso Montero, CEO European Social Network; Gunta Anca, Board member of the European Disability Forum.
13.10	<i>Networking lunch</i>
14.10	Expert-led training workshops (including coffee break)
1.	Discuss EQUASS as a tool to implement principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and exchange about methods in every day work
2.	Discover a model that measures impact of services on rights, social inclusion, quality of life and discuss different practices
3.	Learn to use resources to support a human rights-based approach for quality service provision and share experiences of implementing such an approach
17.40	Feedback from the workshops and closing words
18.00	<i>Closing</i>
	<i>Networking reception</i>
Day 2	
09.30	Opening words, energizer
09.40	Mutual learning groups – exchange of good practices (first session)
10.40	<i>Coffee</i>
11.10	Mutual learning groups – exchange of good practices (second session)
12.10	Brief feedback from sessions
12.30	Drawing conclusions and next steps Closing words
13.00	End