Co–Creating Future Social Services

European Social
Services Conference **2024**

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

26–28 June 2024

Antwerp, Belgium

Contents

1. ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The 32nd edition of the European Social Services Conference (ESSC) will be organised in Antwerp (Belgium) on 26-28 June 2024.

The ESSC is the annual flagship event of the European Social Network (ESN), the **Network for Public Social Services in Europe**. The ESSC is the largest public social welfare policy and practice forum in Europe, attended by almost 700 delegates in Malmö in 2023.

The ESSC 2024 will be the opportunity for decision-makers in public authorities, third sector organisations, social services professionals, providers of technology solutions, and researchers to share and exchange their knowledge and experiences with peers from across Europe and other regions of the world.

Watch highlights from the 2023 Conference in Malmö.

2. CONFERENCE THEME

CO-CREATING FUTURE SOCIAL SERVICES

Against a backdrop of ageing populations, growing diversity, and complexity of social needs as well as fiscal challenges and social services decentralisation, there has been a move towards more **local and personalised responses to improve people's wellbeing.**

This move is very much related to decentralisation, which has as one of its main rationales that the closer services are planned, commissioned, and provided to the people, the more responsive they are to social circumstances and demands. Moreover, by being more responsive and tailored to local needs, there is an expectation that services are more likely delivered more effectively.

Many of the social challenges facing us today are exacerbated in **urban communities**, a pressure leading to **cities** pioneering innovations that tackle the large-scale and interconnected issues impacting social inclusion.

Innovations are required to go beyond traditional service delivery, with a larger focus on **personalisation** and **co-creation** in **social services** as well as **integrated approaches in service provision.** New approaches are also needed to respond to emerging and diverse personal demands and expectations, demographic changes, and technological progress. Driving forward the personalisation agenda requires cross-sector partnerships to increase the range and availability of community-based support.

However, it is unlikely that this cultural shift can be achieved without **investing in and supportive reforms to the workforce** as well as seizing opportunities for further **innovation and digital developments.**

The 2024 European Social Services Conference will be a launchpad for discussions on how we can co-create community-based social services, with a specific focus on three thematic strands:

Co-Creating Cities Social Inclusion

Starting from the 'think global, act local' concept, the European Social Services Conference in 2024 will look at the ways in which local community responses and the construction of organisational networks can have a positive impact on people's wellbeing and promote sustainable, integrated social welfare at local level. This conference strand is an invitation for **social services in cities** to come together and discuss how aspects related to social inclusion planning (whether public health, skills building, economic considerations, neighbourhood investment, and the changing role of government agencies in local communities) impact the most vulnerable populations with whom social services work daily.

Co-Creating Responses to Manage the Future Workforce

Social services were significantly impacted during Covid-19 but the crisis also highlighted their key role in continuing support and protection of people in difficult circumstances across Europe. Social services account for 5 to 10% of the European economy but we are all familiar with well-documented challenges related to labour intensity, gender, low pay or lack of attractiveness. Yet, there are very good examples across Europe of ways in which social services are addressing these issues through registration, accreditation, skills development, mobility, and innovative approaches in direct cooperation with the workforce. Participants will analyse various **planning and management** strategies to address these challenges.

Co-Creating Digital Solutions for Social Inclusion

At our most recent ESSC, we found out that technology and digital solutions play a key role in promoting individual autonomy and social inclusion. However, many social services professionals highlighted the need for those tools to be fit for purpose. For this to happen, there needs to be a clear dialogue and **social lab** in place between developers, authorities, professionals and users. We identified good practice in this field but there is still plenty more to do including addressing legislation in data-sharing for integrated social services. The conference will address this key strand of technology development in social services by not only identifying practice but also engaging across the table the right people to ensure that **digital social inclusion** is a key priority in further technology developments in social services, thereby encouraging integrated service delivery and co-production between professionals, service users and their families.

3. CONTRIBUTE TO THE ESSC PROGRAMME

Who can apply?

The 2024 ESSC will bring together leaders in social services to inspire ideas on co-creating the future of community-based social services. Contribute to the Conference and make your work and experience part of the discussions.

Proposals are accepted for all population groups with which social services work.

We encourage proposals from:

- Public authorities
- Universities and research centres
- Sector leaders
- Professional associations
- Third sector organisations
- Innovators wishing to work/working with social services

Thematic Areas

If you wish to contribute to the conference programme, you may contribute to any of the three thematic strands.

Co-Creating Cities Social Inclusion

- Community Care models in cities
- Fighting residential exclusion
- Neighbourhood approaches
- Managing childhood and youth transitions in areas like early childcare or child protection
- Support planning for people with disabilities in aspects related to work and social participation
- Support programmes for ageing populations in fighting loneliness, promoting community support
- Managing diversity in the community
- Co-production in local social services planning, delivery and evaluation

Co-Creating Responses to Manage the Future Workforce

- Workforce planning and management strategies
- Training for co-production with people using services and their families
- Registration and accreditation programmes
- Programmes to break down gender stereotypes
- Innovation and digital programmes supporting social care and support, such as digitaltools or forecasting scenarios

Co-Creating Digital Solutions for Social Inclusion

- Prioritise person-centred care and relationship-based practice
- Improve services interaction
- Address digital readiness for practice
- Enhance people's autonomy
- Further data security
- Address ethical concerns and data protection needs

Types of Sessions

A maximum of **2 proposals per organisation** can be submitted for the following types of sessions. If you submit more than one proposal, please send each proposal for a different type of session.

Type of session	Aim	Format
Interactive Session: **Case Study** or **Training Workshop**	**Case study** • Present the learnings from a practice, service model, project, or new idea (already implemented with some form of evaluation) that the audience can learn from and stimulate discussion • Must include an interactive component, such as group discussions **Training Workshop** • Interactive meeting or educational session designed to create a specialised result, for example a guidance or learning that participants can use afterwards • Must include some form of training and/or group work	• Total time of session: 60 mins • Two presenters on stage • Maximum time for presentation is 20 minutes • Remaining time should involve an interactive component with delegates • Up to 6 Interactive Sessions will be running in parallel in different streams on 26 and 27 June • 80-150 delegates per session

Type of session	Aim	Format
Thematic Panel Discussions	• Discussion on a specific theme or topic with peers from across Europe • Your proposal is matched with 2 or 3 other similar proposals to form a moderated panel on a theme	• Total time of session: 90 minutes • 1 presenter on stage per organisation • Max. 15 minutes presentation per organisation with PowerPoint followed by moderated discussion • Up to 4 sessions running in parallel with max. 4 panellists per session on 27 and 28 June • 100-200 delegates per panel discussion
Project Forum	• Short dynamic presentations that outline the main points of project • After this session, presenters will have the opportunity to discuss their project with colleagues during the break	• Total time of session: 30 - 60 minutes • 1 presenter on stage per organisation • 5-minute 'elevator pitch' style • 5 slides maximum • 5-6 projects from different organisations per session • 1 or 2 sessions on 27 and 28 June • All conference delegates can attend

Type of session	Aim	Format
Practice Fair	• Present your project (e.g. tool, research or practice) at your stand in a specially designated exhibition space and directly engage with all participants. • The practice fair does not involve a formal presentation. It takes place at the exhibition area in the form of a conversation between delegates.	• Total time of session: 60 minutes • At least one presenter per stand • High-table provided and space for your own roll-up, brochures, reports, posters, a laptop to showcase information, merchandise, or other relevant material. • All conference delegates can attend

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

Selection Criteria

Case Study, Thematic Panel Discussion, Project Forum, Practice Fair	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Relevant to the theme of the ESSC	X	
Innovative	X	
Been initially evaluated and shows initial results Or Will be evaluated	X	
Interactive & engaging (e.g. group discussions) *case study proposals	X	
Co-presented with person with lived experience *case study proposals		X
Involves cross-sector and/or cross-border approach		X
Transferable and could be implemented elsewhere		X

Workshop format: Only applicable for those applying for workshops	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Relevant to the theme of the ESSC	X	
Relevant and deliverable to an international audience	X	
Clear and achievable educative or training goal(s)	X	
Run by an experienced trainer or facilitator	X	
Interactive & engaging (e.g. training, group work)	X	
Employs visual tools (e.g. whiteboards, flipcharts, 2D and 3D objects) and uses multi-media	X	
Co-presented with person with lived experience		X

Languages

There is the possibility for interpretation to and from French, German, Italian and Spanish if you wish to present in these languages.

Deadlines

17 November 2023: for proposals submitted in French, German, Italian, Spanish

24 November 2023: for proposals submitted in English

Confirmation of acceptance or rejections will be sent by **16 February 2024.**

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL HERE

Proposals can be made in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

5. CONFERENCE FEES

Thematic Panel Discussion, Project Forum, Practice Fair

Selected organisations to contribute to the ESSC programme must register one presenter and at least one additional delegate, each paying the full delegate fee for the conference.

Interactive Sessions: Workshop and Case Study

Selected organisations to contribute to the ESSC programme must register at least two presenters paying the full delegate fee for the conference.

Members of the European Social Network	Non-members of the European Social Network
Standard members **EUR 680** Members from EU-14/neighbouring countries **EUR 565** Members from Belgium **EUR 610**	Private companies **EUR 1,100** Public organisations **EUR 790** NGOs/voluntary sector **EUR 625** Organisations from EU-14/neighbouring countries **EUR 595** Public and Third Sector Organisations from Belgium **EUR 625**

Fees will not be subject to VAT.

EU-14 countries

Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

EU neighbouring countries

Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine.

Included in the fee	Not included in the fee
All plenary and parallel sessions 2 lunches on day 1 and day 2 All coffee breaks Formal reception Networking Dinner	Hotel accommodation Travel to venue

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL HERE

Please ensure the availability of funds from your organisation for delegate fees, travel, and hotel before submitting your proposal.

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Conference

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