

Call for Tenders

Research “Recruitment and retention in Social Services: Unlocking the sector’s job creation potential”

[Social Services Europe](#) brings together 8 European networks representing not-for-profit social and healthcare providing organisations. Social Services Europe seeks to ensure that the specificity of not-for-profit social and healthcare service providers be recognised and that economic, social and legal conditions exist for quality social and healthcare services.

1. Tender specification

Social Services Europe is looking for a Researcher to carry out a study at European level on existing and effective interventions made at national level in the field of recruitment and retention of staff in the Social Care sector.

2. Background and main elements of research

Social Services are one of the **biggest job creators** in Europe today with [over 1.7 million new jobs](#) created since 2008 and play a key role in empowering all people to play an active role in society. The sector already employs over **10 million people** and is **fast growing** to respond to demographic changes (ageing population) and evolving family patterns (ensuring work-life balance).

However, there are growing concerns regarding the recruitment and retention of sufficient staff, in particular to respond to the growing demand for services. There are also significant concerns that the downward pressure of public expenditure towards social service providers is having a negative impact on the quality of the jobs created and the attractiveness of the sector. In short, many social service providers have numerous open vacancies which remain unfilled; despite the high levels of unemployment in many European countries. A shortage of staff in social services will ultimately hinder access to quality care and support for those in need of such services (children, persons with disabilities, elderly, other disadvantaged groups); and consequently their social inclusion.

This assessment is highlighted by reports from the European Commission ([2014](#); [2015](#)). The European Commission's response has focused primarily on this issue within the healthcare sector, with very little attention given to the social care sector; despite clear differences regarding salaries, working conditions, job profiles, funding of the sector. This highlights the key problem that workforce in the sector of social care remains often largely invisible in much research on this issue.

The "[Promoting Employers in Social Services In Social dialogue](#)" (PESSIS I, PESSIS II, PESSIS III) project has developed numerous reports regarding statistics around staff employed and key challenges for service providers at national level, as do the reports from the [For Quality! Project](#) on personal and household services. The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) has also published [studies](#) on

- "Employment and Working Conditions in the Disability Sector" (2013)
- "Care in the 21st Century – expanding the social care workforce for people with disabilities" (2016)
- "Initial research on in-work poverty in the social service provision" (2016)

Whereas the sector's job creation potential is very clear, there is less awareness at European level regarding the actual interventions and activities done at national level to attract and retain sufficient workers into the sector.

Additional research regarding this issue would help to feed into Social Services Europe's -and its member organisations'- input into European policies and instruments such as European Semester, the European Pillar of Social Rights, European Civil and Social Dialogue, etc.

It is expected that the study focuses on the following areas:

- Mapping of existing policy interventions aimed at recruitment and retention of well-qualified social care & support staff at European and national level; including an assessment of these interventions within the different context of each national welfare and service systems.
- A systematic literature review on the effectiveness of policy interventions and existing practices, the factors leading to such effectiveness, and their impact in terms of the quality of service provision.
- An analysis of the needs of the social care workforce and determining factors influencing the decision to join, stay or leave social care jobs.
- National and European policy recommendations for effective recruitment/retention policies that could ensure decent work conditions for social care/support staff in Europe
- Executive summary and conclusions of the research



It is expected that the researcher does desktop research and interviews with key stakeholders at national level in 5/6 EU Member States.

3. Timeframe

Deadline for application: 12th March 2017

Response to application: 21st March 2017

First Draft report: 1 July 2017

Final Report: end-August 2017

4. Expertise required

The researcher(s) will be expected to demonstrate that they have:

- Knowledge of social services sector in Europe, in particular in the field of human resource management and recruitment
- Knowledge of academic debates with regards to human resources development, recruitment and retention in the social service sectors.
- Experience of writing accessible reports for Civil Society Organisations and the European institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, etc) .
- Experience in drafting academic studies in English.
- Knowledge of multiple European languages is an asset (to conduct collect data at national level).

5. Selection and award criteria

The researcher(s) will be to submit the following documents:

- CV
- A motivation letter describing your expertise and explaining why you are the right candidate(-s) for the assignment (not more than 1 page).

- A research proposal explaining how you plan to conduct the research, including a review of what has already been done, an outline, a proposed methodology, a work plan (including a timeframe), resources needed, budget, etc. (not more than 2-3 pages).
- Proposals concerning how you propose to find out information in the countries representing the different welfare models of care in the EU (i.e. subcontracting researchers in selected countries).

The contract will be awarded to the candidate(s) whose offer represents the best value for money, taking into account the quality of submitted document and individual expertise. The contract will only be awarded to a tenderer who clearly proves that they have knowledge, experience and expertise which match at least 70% of the selection criteria.

6. Content of the bids

The tenderer will ensure that their bid clearly identifies how they meet the selection criteria. It would also be useful to see examples of previous work demonstrating their ability to write and present in English to a primarily CSO audience, as well as to representatives of public authorities (in particular the European institutions).

7. Payments and standard contract

Payment will be made on receipt and approval of the intermediary and final reports, 40% and 60% respectively.

The Contract will be drawn up between Social Services Europe and the contractor.

8. Price

The estimated price for the study will be max. EUR 10,500, all taxes and overheads included.

9. Contact Details

Please send bids to Mr Thomas Bignal, Policy Officer, European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD): thomas.bignal@easpd.eu, **by 12th March 2017 at the latest.**

