



Evropská unie  
Evropský sociální fond  
Operační program Zaměstnanost



# Promoting Professional Social Services – Quality Standards and Ethical Guidelines for Service Providers

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Herbert Paulischin

[herbert.paulischin@liwest.at](mailto:herbert.paulischin@liwest.at)





## Background

The European Pillar of Social Rights has three main categories:

1. Equal opportunities and access to the labour market
2. Fair working conditions
3. Social protection and inclusion





*"With the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, we have put investing in skills, reducing inequalities, social fairness and inclusive growth on top of the agenda. We now need to keep track of the performance of the Member States on the principles and rights included in the Pillar, to make them a reality on the ground."*

Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, in charge of  
Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility





## **Social Worker ensure that no-one is left behind**

People facing social vulnerability have disproportionate exposure to risk and a decreased ability to use social rights for improving their life.

IFSW Europe launched in 2017 a project, called “Social workers for transformational and sustainable social protection in Europe 2017-2019”, aiming to influence the development of social protection under the European Pillar of Social Rights.





- 1. Jobs are not enough.**
- 2. Investment in social services is the foundation for sustainable economic development.**
- 3. Social Workers involvement is a condition for a sustainable social protection in Europe.**





*“The Commission cannot alone animate the Pillar – it requires a joint effort going well beyond the Commission, the EP and Member States. Indeed, it also requires action from social partners and civil society”.*

Jeroen Jutte, European Commission, head of unit  
employment and social aspects of the European Semester





## Political Framework

Iain Ferguson compares the current situation with the political situation in the 1930s:

Current threats:

- Growing tensions between countries (UK – Russia, US – North Korea)
- Environmental crisis: Mass extinction of species
- Pollution of cities and rivers
- Climate change





## Current threats (2):

- Economic crisis
- Economy 4.0: Robots will replace lower qualified workforce
- Growing part of societies at risk of poverty – „working poor“
- High level of unemployment and non-standard employment contracts
- High level of (hidden) homelessness







## Current threats (3):

- Growth of racism and fascism
- Attack on media (fake news, public funding...)
- Erosion of constitutional democracy and rule of law
- Scapegoating (1): Refugees are abused to justify a reduction in social budgets.
- Scapegoating (2): Muslims are accused of endangering safety in societies.
- Religious and ethnic groups are disadvantaged and socially excluded.
- ...





## **Social Work as a public service (Walter Lorenz)**

1. Social work has a public mandate – privatising it would mean transforming public concerns into personal troubles
2. Social work ensures, that service users receive help as a matter of rights and not as charity
3. Social workers are engaged in making social citizenship a lived reality. The right to belong is not a matter of having the right nationality or religion.





“One group who have traditionally been moved to action by ‘pity to the poor’, we call ‘Charitable’; the other larger or smaller in each generation but always fired by the ‘hatred of injustice’, we designate as the ‘Radicals’”.

Jane Adams, 1910





# Promoting Professional Social Services

Social services, in their various forms, address the multiple, complex transactions between people and their environments.

Through social services, professional social workers in cooperation with other professionals seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs.





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# Quality Standards for Social Services

The standards apply to both types of service providers, public administration and private organizations.





# I - Preconditions for social service delivery

- supportive social policy framework
- legislative framework
- stakeholder dialogue
- sustainable funding
- affordable services
- available services
- accessible services





## II - Minimum requirements on service providers

- professional management
- systematic quality improvement
- feedback (service user involvement)
- confidentiality
- proactive dialogue





## III - Minimum requirements on services provided

- person-centred approach
- needs based services
- comprehensive services







## IV - Minimum requirements on case management

- easy access to information
- clear procedures
- individual assessment of needs and resources
- intervention plan
- monitoring and evaluation





## V - Minimum requirements related to employees

- skilled and competent professionals
- adequate working conditions
- training and professional development
- reasonable case load management
- training of volunteers
- code of ethics





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# Ethical Values and Principles in Social Services

The ability and commitment of the employees of social services to act ethically is an essential aspect of the quality of the service offered.





1. Human dignity and worth of the people
2. Social justice
3. Professional integrity
4. Professional conduct of the services
5. Confidentiality
6. Cultural consciousness





## Conclusion

Social services should be part of a comprehensive and integrated system rather than focusing at provision of fragmented services or programmes.

Social services deal with many problems that are complex and are not susceptible to only one solution. The complexity and uncertainty about problems, as well as solutions required a system that learns and innovates, that finds solutions to problems and finds new ways to improve people's lives.





## Conclusion

No social service can meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century without a stronger commitment to the professionalization of its workforce.

Social workers need to feel valued and motivated to improve their activities and be innovative in their practice. Social service providers need to ensure that social workers have the right skills, knowledge and values to provide high quality services.

