

2023

European Social Services Awards

Promoting Person-centred Care





About the European Social Network (ESN)

The European Social Network (ESN) is the independent network for local public social services in Europe. It brings together the organisations that plan, deliver, finance, manage, research, and regulate local public social services, including health, social welfare, employment, education and housing. We support the development of effective social policy and social care practice by exchanging knowledge and expertise.



Acknowledgements

This report has been written by Junior Policy Officer Victor de Vries (until September 2023) and Junior Events Officer Rioghnach Hyland, and edited by Chief Executive Officer Alfonso Lara Montero. With thanks to Rosemary Hindle, Communications Manager (until January 2024), and Ana Gomes, Communications Assistant, for the production and dissemination of the report.

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Foreword



Dear readers,

It is with immense pride and enthusiasm that I introduce this publication, which shines a spotlight on the exceptional accomplishments of the winners and finalists of the European Social Services Awards. These awards serve as a tribute to excellence and innovation in the field of social services, honoring the tireless efforts of organizations and individuals who are dedicated to enhancing the wellbeing of our communities.

In an era marked by dynamic societal changes and challenges, the importance of social services cannot be overstated. They are the cornerstone of a compassionate and equitable society, providing essential support to individuals, families, and communities when they need it most. Whether it is child protection, employment or housing support, long-term care or support for people with disabilities the dedicated individuals within the social services workforce serve as the lifeline that strengthens our inclusive and resilient societies.

The European Social Services Awards have evolved into a beacon of recognition for those who continuously strive to address the pressing needs of our societies. The remarkable nominees and winners featured in this publication are shining examples of unwavering commitment to social progress. Through innovative delivery, new IT tools, groundbreaking research, visionary teams and partnerships, they have left an indelible mark on our shared mission of improving lives.

This publication offers a glimpse into the remarkable initiatives and accomplishments that have earned these organizations and individuals the prestigious European Social Services Awards. It is a testament to their dedication and innovative spirit, as well as a source of inspiration for all those working tirelessly in the social services sector.

As we navigate the complex landscape of our time, characterised by demographic shifts, economic fluctuations, and the enduring challenges posed by a series of international crises, the importance of social services has never been more evident. The stories within these pages remind us of the vital role that social services play in shaping a more inclusive, compassionate, and equitable future.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the winners and finalists of the European Social Services Awards. Your contributions are making a profound difference on the lives of countless individuals and communities across Europe, and your unwavering dedication continues to inspire and drive positive change for years to come.

With warm regards,



Alfonso Lara-Montero
Chief Executive Officer



About the European Social Services Awards

The annual European Social Services Awards (ESSA) acknowledges outstanding achievements in social services, shining a spotlight on successful new approaches and the extraordinary ongoing work of public social services managers, funders, planners, providers, and deliverers of social services.

Now in its fifth edition, the Awards have honoured over 200 finalists from across Europe and the wider international community. The annual Awards Ceremony has brought together more than 500 participants over the past years.

The Awards are an initiative from the European Social Network that gives visibility to the excellent and innovative work done by social services and facilitates those working in the field to exchange and support each other in improving their practice.

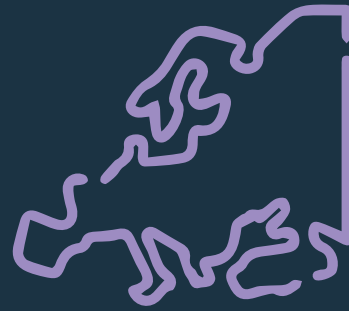
2023 Edition – Promoting Person-centred Care

The theme for the 2023 edition of the European Social Services Awards was '**Promoting Person-centred Care**'. Under this year's theme, the Awards recognised the organisations and people that are rethinking their services to provide care which is centred around the person, **coordinated between services and professionals and enables people to live independent lives and be fully included in their communities**.

Any organisation involved in social services that has a project demonstrating that the project promotes person-centred care, is innovative for their respective context/environment, and has a positive impact could apply. Award winners are determined in a two-step process that combines an expert judging panel's selection with an online social services community vote. The winners were announced at the annual European Social Services Awards Ceremony in Zagreb, Croatia on 16-17 November 2023.



119
APPLICATIONS



32
COUNTRIES



145
ATTENDEES

FROM 20
COUNTRIES



44
SHORTLISTED



35,000
ONLINE VOTES

ESSA 2023 Judges



Adelina Comas-Herera

Assistant Professorial Research Fellow, Care Policy and Evaluation Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science



Andrzej Klimczuk

Assistant Professor, Warsaw School of Economics



Cherrie Short

Associate Dean of Global & Community Initiatives and Professor of Practice, USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work



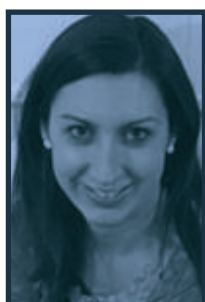
Christian Fillet

Vice General Director, City of Bruges and Chair, ESN



Christian Morabito

International Expert in Inequality and Early Childhood Care and Education



Delphine Chilese-Lemarinier

Head of EU Affairs, Edenred



Elena Weber

General Director, Regional Rittmeyer Institute for the Blind



Enrique Delamonica

Senior Adviser Statistics and Monitoring (Child Poverty and Gender Equality), UNICEF



Florian Sanden

Policy Coordinator, European Network on Independent Living



Jenny Billings

Professor of Applied Health Research, University of Kent



Karolin Killmeier

Analyst in the Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD



Melissa Zumaeta-Aurazo

Senior Social Protection Consultant, World Bank



Viktoria Stein

Assistant Professor Population Health Management, Leiden University Medical Centre



Zorana Uzelac Bošnjak

Assistant Head of Social Policy, City Office for Social Protection and Persons with Disabilities, City of Zagreb



“

The European Social Services Awards shine a spotlight on successful new approaches and the extraordinary work done by public social service managers, funders, planners, providers and inspectors.

”

Jane Dudman

Freelance Journalist, Event Chair & Consultant

Our Partners

The European Social Services Awards are institutionally co-hosted by a city council member of ESN (Brussels 2021 – Malaga 2022 – Zagreb 2023 – Lisbon 2024).

ESN partners with private organisations that may have a presence at the exhibition and practice fair areas, be part of the judging panel, and sponsor and hand out an Award during the ceremony.

For ESN industry partners, the awards are a source of collaboration, inspiration, and contacts. It is a networking opportunity to meet social services professionals with different backgrounds and from different sectors, to learn about the latest social policy and practice trends, to discuss opportunities and challenges and to showcase solutions and products to potential clients.

The European Social Services Awards 2023 were hosted by

City of Zagreb

City Office for Social Protection, Health, War Veterans and People with Disabilities



CITY OF
ZAGREB

Many thanks to our Partners



ESSA 2023 Winners and Finalists



Service Delivery

Social services carry the responsibility to provide care to improve the lives of people in disadvantaged situations. This Award honours innovative social services' programmes, measures or processes that have a person-centred approach to planning, designing, and providing better quality services meeting the needs of people who require care and support.

Winner

Coffee and Community: Tackling Rural Isolation

Rural Coffee Caravan, United Kingdom

The Rural Coffee Caravan's project addresses the isolation and loneliness of older people in rural areas, which often leads them to feel disconnected in their communities.



Shortlisted Projects



- AST Contact Points for People with Qualifications Gained Abroad - Counselling Centre for Migrants in Vienna, Austria

AST Contact Points simplifies the process of recognising foreign qualifications. This has allowed individuals from over 170 countries to fully use their professional diplomas and enter the Austrian labour market, easing skills shortages.



- Geronto Community - Home for Older People Centre, Croatia

Mobile team consisting of a nurse and social worker who offer holistic and individualised support, including emotional, social, and health counselling in older peoples' own homes.



- **Live in Dignity - Pro-ACT Support Association, Romania**
This programme supports adults with intellectual and psycho-social disabilities, who are currently living in large residential facilities, to move to smaller, family-like homes and flats in rural areas.



- **Pathways to Freedom - SOS Children's Villages, Bulgaria**
Psychological and professional development support for young people leaving care in their transition to independent living in Bulgaria.



- **Person-centred Value Framework for Specialist Social Services - Region of Southern Denmark**
Improving the autonomy, self-reliance, and quality of life for individuals in specialist social services facilities through a values-based framework.



- **Silver DOST – Respect for All Ages - The Agency for Sustainable and Operative Social Provision (DOST Agency), Azerbaijan**
This programme helps to address unmet needs amongst older people, including those with limited self-care abilities or facing psychological challenges, to overcome social stigmas that limit their potential.



- **Social Atelier - City of Osijek, Croatia**
A platform fostering dialogue and empowering disadvantaged, under-represented and vulnerable groups, that enables professionals from different disciplines to work more closely together.

ESSA 2023 Winners and Finalists



Workforce Support

Central to the delivery of person-centred care in social services is a well-performing and competent workforce that can understand and address the needs of the people they care for and support. This Award honours social services organisations that have impacted their workforce in a positive manner to support the provision of person-centred care.

Winner

PYCIPEDIA: Knowledge Sharing Platform to Connect Specialist Social Workers

Linköping Municipality R&D Centre, Sweden; IT University of Copenhagen, Denmark

A wiki-type collaborative platform developed to allow social workers across Sweden to connect, create, browse, and share training materials with each other and with parents of children with intellectual disabilities.



Shortlisted Projects



- Developing a Communication and Person-Centred Practice - Northern Health and Social Care Trust, United Kingdom

This project provides training in Talking Mats and Makaton for health support and social care staff working with persons who have difficulty with or cannot communicate verbally.



- Dialogical Approach to Care - Department for Social Rights, Regional Government of Navarra, Spain

This project provides child protection professionals with the training and tools necessary to move to an integrated care model.



- Learning French to Get a Job - ActivitY, France

This project provides asylum seekers in France with language skills, job-oriented training, and support to find employment so they can enter the labour market and become part of their local communities.



- Process Supervision: Professional and Personal Support - Bucharest 6th District General Directorate for Social Care and Child Protection, Romania

This programme provides support to social workers and relatives of people with disabilities who have difficulty letting go of built-up stress and emotions from dealing with demanding situations.



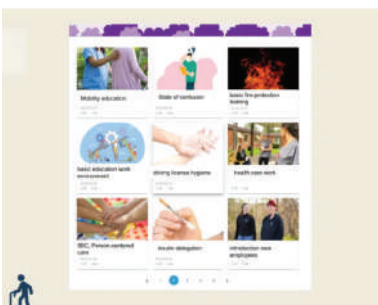
- The Fundamentals of Advocacy in Health and Social Care - Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), Ireland

A free online learning course to support people to advocate for themselves, understand the role of advocates, and how and when to raise awareness of independent advocacy services.



- Training and Employment for Individuals with Physical Disabilities - Na Laga'at Centre, Israel

A project to provide person-centred care for people who are deaf or blind, supporting them to access their employment rights or other care services.



- Health Care Academy - City of Mölndal, Sweden

The Health Care Academy is a digital platform where employees can access information, courses, and training on a wide range of topics, improving the care provided to beneficiaries.

ESSA 2023 Winners and Finalists



Collaborative Practice

A cornerstone of person-centred care is the coordination between relevant organisations, services, and sectors to ensure the needs of people are met. This Award honours cooperative relationships between different levels of government, public agencies, services, third and private sector organisations that have led to the provision of person-centred care.

Winner

The Sharing Factory

Public Centre for Social Welfare, Kortrijk, Belgium

A collaboration between government agencies, third-sector organisations, and volunteers, to offer items such as clothing, household appliances, and bikes for shared or temporary use, alongside support to people in need.



Shortlisted Projects



- **BRUS: A Collaboration to Support Children and Youth at Risk** - The Cities of Aarhus, Randers, Herning, Hedensted, Skanderborg, Ikast-Brande, Norddjurs, Samsø, Syddjurs, Skive, Odder, and the Centre for Digital Youth Care

The City of Aarhus, with 10 other municipalities, and the Centre for Digital Youth Care in Denmark have come together to offer support to children and young people growing up in families with alcohol or drug problems.



- **Community Engagement in Supporting Ukrainian Refugees** - City of Warsaw, Poland

The arrival of Ukrainian refugees posed an immense social challenge for the City of Warsaw. With the engagement of its society and NGOs, the city is enabling the implementation of accessible aid programmes tailored to individual needs.



- CONET: Collaborative Network of Welfare - Reykjanesbaer, Iceland

This project provides information on available public and community services, supporting, for example, job market integration or social inclusion, to improve people's quality of life and well-being.



- Domestic Violence Services - Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Malta

These services help victims of domestic violence at times of crisis, work with perpetrators, and promote a zero-tolerance approach to violence.



- FACT – an Ecosystem of Care for People with Extensive and Changing Needs - Lund Municipality, Sweden

The Flexible Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) programme was introduced to deliver care and integrated support within health and social care services in several Swedish municipalities.



- L-INC Independent Living Agency - IPIS "insieme per il sociale" consortium company, Italy

L-INC transforms rigid disability services into personalised ones focused on upholding the rights and autonomy of people with disabilities for their full social integration.



- Open Space 'Espai Obert' - Support-Girona Foundation, Catalonia, Spain

Community-based service providing essential day-care for people with psycho-social disabilities, helping them access other resources in the community and prevent institutionalisation.

ESSA 2023 Winners and Finalists



Digital Transformation

Digitalisation and technological tools can play a central role in delivering person-centred care and empowering people. This Award recognises technological and digital improvements that enable social services to provide care that is personalised, coordinated and enabling.

Winner

Automating Social Protection for Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine

Ministry of Social Policy, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Medirent, Ukraine

Development of a new platform which centralises appointments and payment processes, supporting almost 2.5 million internally displaced people, enabling the government to monitor their social protection efforts.



Shortlisted Projects



- All in One Sensor - Barcelona Provincial Council, Spain
Person-centred technology that identifies changes in daily routines to provide early indicators for various risk situations.



- AI-based Solution for Targeted Social Assistance - State Social Protection Fund, Azerbaijan
Using Artificial Intelligence to centralise and streamline the assessment of people's eligibility for social support, making the process more objective, efficient, transparent, and cost-effective.



- Centria HealthLab - Centria University of Applied Sciences, Finland

A network that connects social and health care professionals, technology companies, non-profit organisations, and end-users, to co-develop technology that promotes well-being and independent living.



- DARE: Data for Integrated Care in Catalonia - Ministry of Social Rights, Ministry of Health, Catalan Government, Spain

Integrating health care and social services' data to better support the needs of an ageing population, while fostering collaborative practice.



- Digital Streetwork Bavaria - Bavarian Youth Council, Germany

Digital anonymous and confidential counselling service for young people that also establishes connections with local social services, bridging the digital and analogue worlds.



- Kujawsko-Pomorskie Telecare - Regional Centre for Social Policy in Torun, Poland

Telecare and social assistance for older people including wrist bracelets equipped with sensors, which are monitored by paramedics to provide support based on individual needs.



- National ICT Services: Providing Quality Client Data for Evidence-Based Social Services - Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland

Integrated digital social welfare services designed to improve access to, and the quality of clients' social and health data, enabling efficient and accurate care and support.

ESSA 2023 Winners and Finalists



Research and Evaluation

Without a proper understanding of how a social problem arises, it can be difficult to come up with the right solution to address it. Backed with data, research provides this link to social services. This Award honours research that contributed to the development of evidence-based person-centred services.

Winner

Through the Eyes of the Child

The Child and Family Agency (Tusla);
Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

This research studied children's experiences of the child protection system in Ireland. The recommendations from the study have led to the introduction of staff training and informed future policy and research work.



Shortlisted Projects



- Community Resource Assessment Tool for Social Service Provision - Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma, Croatia

Tool to help municipalities assess the potential demand for essential social services, simplifying their delivery and enhancing their quality.



- Dementia Friendly Helsingborg - City of Helsingborg; Lund University, Sweden

The creation of dementia-friendly public spaces that are easy to access and rich in sensory experiences so that people can continue to engage in their communities.



- Empowerment-based Services in Domestic Violence - Home for children and adult victims of domestic violence 'Duga-Zagreb', Croatia

This study evaluated the effectiveness of psycho-social services provided to women victims of domestic violence by gathering insights directly from those affected.



- Evaluation of the Home Care Service in Catalonia - Ivàlua: Catalan Institute for Evaluation of Public Policies, Spain

This evaluation analysed strategic policies and gathered evidence to improve and adapt home care in Catalonia to increasingly diverse and expanding care needs.



HARREMANETAN OINARRITUTAKO ARRETA
ATENCIÓN CENTRADA EN LAS RELACIONES

- GIZAREA: A Relationship Centred Care Model - Department of Social Policies, Provincial Council of Álava, Basque Country, Spain

This project evaluated a care model for people with dementia bringing together professionals, residents, and families to appreciate the importance of their relationships with others.



- InCARE: Community-based Long-Term Care Services - Matia Institute, Spain

This research project looked into the impact of integrated long-term care policies and services for family caregivers of people with dementia. The evaluation helped come up with a roadmap to person-centred long-term care.



- Sharing the Voices of those who are Institutionalised to Change Practice and Policy - The University of Birmingham; Changing our Lives, United Kingdom

This research used person-centred principles to study the care of people with autism and other learning disabilities, which aims to influence practice through specific guidance for health and social care leaders.

ESSA 2023 Winners and Finalists



Excellence in Cities

Many of the social, environmental, and economic challenges facing us today are exacerbated in cities, which are under pressure to respond to the diverse set of needs that arise as a result. With this headline award, ESN seeks to highlight the city that has been outstanding in Promoting Person-centred Care ensuring all their inhabitants' rights, choices and independence are valued and respected.

Winner

Social Atelier

City of Osijek, Croatia

Platform fostering dialogue and empowering disadvantaged, under-represented and vulnerable groups, enabling professionals from different disciplines to work more closely together.

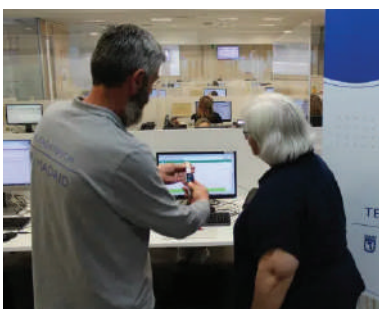


Shortlisted Projects



- Integrated Multidisciplinary Support for Older People - Bucharest 6th District General Directorate for Social Care and Child Protection, Romania

A project that strives to enhance the independence of older adults, ensuring they have a seamless continuum of home care services, and if needed, access high quality residential care.



- Person-Centred Telecare Service - Madrid City Council, Spain

This project introduced technological devices in people's homes so that they can access preventive services directly from their homes, planning emergencies and promoting personalised care.



- **Sharing Improves Lives - City Council of Churriana de la Vega, Spain**

This project tackles social isolation of people with disabilities and older people by offering various cultural, social, educational, and healthcare resources that promote social integration.



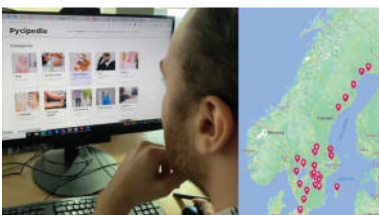
- **Social Care Transformation - Aberdeen City Council, United Kingdom**

Digital case management system which streamlined processes and enabled social services teams to establish a unified approach to those seeking support.



- **BRUS: A Collaboration to Support Children and Youth at Risk - The BRUS Partnership, City of Aarhus, Denmark**

The City of Aarhus, with 10 other municipalities, and the Centre for Digital Youth Care in Denmark have come together to offer support to children and young people growing up in families with alcohol or drug problems.



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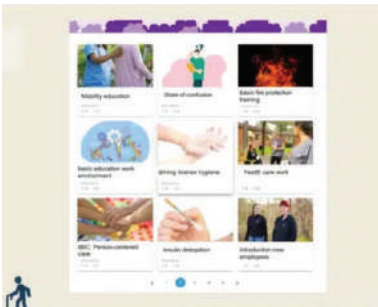
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- **Health Care Academy - City of Mölndals, Sweden**

The Health Care Academy is a digital platform where employees can access information, courses, and training on a wide range of topics, improving the care provided to beneficiaries.

2024 European Social Services Awards

- **APRIL**
Call for applications
- **JULY**
Deadline for applications
- **NOVEMBER**
Award Ceremony

For more information visit essa-eu.org or contact essa@esn-eu.org

We look forward to welcoming you to Lisbon in 2024





European Social Network

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