

Brussels, 17th of January 2019

Social Services Europe's statement on the 16th of January parliamentary vote on the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)

Social Service providers welcome the adoption of the ESF+ by the European Parliament but concerns remain about support to the most deprived and delays in negotiations.

Social Services Europe, the largest network of not-for-profit social and healthcare providers at EU level representing over 100,000 organisations, would like to highlight the following points following the European Parliament plenary vote on the current parliamentary proposal for the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) in the framework of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 – 2027:

- Social Services Europe welcomes the result of the vote and emphasizes the key role of the ESF+ in the EU. In a context of increasing social needs, many people in vulnerable situations and a severe decrease in social investment at national level during the last decade, this **programme is vital in contributing to funding both innovation and continuity in quality social service provision and thus directly and immediately improving the quality of life of all people in Europe.**

“Social services are a key component of the European social model, ensuring social rights are met” stated Social Services Europe President Laura Jones. *“Social services play an important role as stabilisers in times of social and economic difficulties”* she added.

- Social Services Europe especially welcomes the parliamentary proposal to increase the earmarking for social inclusion to 27%, as well as to make the earmarking for addressing material deprivation complementary to the social inclusion earmarking. However, **a minimum allocation of 4% for addressing material deprivation - instead of the 3% proposed - would have allowed to sustain the level of resources available under the current Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD) (EUR 4 billion between 2014 and 2020), as well as providing a strong basis for future negotiations with the Council of the EU.**
- **A delay or disruption in the process to approve the ESF+, or a decrease in the budget of the ESF+ would seriously endanger the continuity and quality of the provision of social services in Europe.**
- Following these points and in view of the proximity of the European elections and the configuration of a new European Parliament, **we urge the Member States to work towards reaching a final agreement on the ESF+ and the MFF before May 2019.**

“To ensure social services can fulfil their essential roles, funding from the ESF+ must not be jeopardised by delays in the process to approve the programme”. Ms Jones concluded.

About Social Services Europe

Social Services Europe is the largest network of not-for-profit social and healthcare providers at EU level, representing over 100,000 organisations through its 8 members: Caritas Europa, Eurodiaconia, Red Cross EU Office, European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR), European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), SOLIDAR and the European Council for Non-Profit Organisations (CEDAG). Our members provide services to people with disabilities, homeless people, migrants, children, the elderly, and other people in vulnerable situations. Social Services Europe aims to strengthen the profile and position of social services and promote the role of not-for-profit service providers in Europe.

For more information please visit www.socialserviceseurope.eu