



Comité économique et social européen
European Economic and Social Committee



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Bulgarian Presidency of the Council
of the European Union



Eurofound

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Access to and quality of public services in the EU:

A debate on improving quality of life

A joint event organised by Eurofound and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), in cooperation with the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

PROGRAMME

- Date:** Thursday, 8 March 2018, 9.30–16.30
- Venue:** European Economic and Social Committee, Van Maerlant Building,
1000 Brussels, Belgium
- Room:** VMA3
- Language:** English only
- Webstreaming:** <http://eurofound.link/EQLSevent>

Access to and quality of public services in the EU: A debate on improving quality of life

Eurofound's approach to establishing the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) as the European monitoring tool for assessing quality of life has been based on a broad understanding that quality of life goes beyond individual living conditions and is related to societal context. This recognises that quality public services are an essential feature of the European social model.

The results from the EQLS (2016) show recovery and progress across many dimensions of quality of life in the EU compared to the years of crisis. Nevertheless, there are persistent inequalities, for example, in perceptions of social exclusion, with people with lower income reporting less improvement in the quality of their public services. The perceived quality of public services continues to vary markedly across Member States, raising questions as to how much upward convergence the EU has actually achieved.

The importance of quality public services is growing and is increasingly reflected in policy priorities. Good quality services are a key part of European initiatives to improve the integration of the long-term unemployed, address challenges related to ageing societies, and promote work–life balance. The fundamental role that services play in the lives of individuals and societies has been most recently recognised by the European Institutions and Member States when proclaiming the European Pillar of Social Rights on 17 November 2017 in Gothenburg. As governments and citizens turn to the task of making the principles of the Pillar a reality, Eurofound aims to inform through evidence-based research and monitoring, specifically, from the EQLS.

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09.00–09.30	Registration and coffee
	Welcome and opening
09.30–09.50	Milena Angelova , Vice-President, Employers Group, EESC Permanent Study Group on 'Services of General Interest' (Bulgaria) Lazar Lazarov , Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Bulgaria Erika Mezger , Deputy Director, Eurofound
	Exploring the European Quality of Life Survey: Highlights <i>Moderator: Daphne Nathalie Ahrendt, Research Manager, Eurofound</i> Presentation by Tadas Leončikas , Senior Research Manager, Eurofound
09.50 – 11.00	Commentators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inge Bernaerts, Head of Cabinet to Commissioner Thyssen, European Commission• Bea Cantillon, Director, Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy, University of Antwerp, Belgium• Rait Kuuse, Vice Chair of the Social Protection Committee (SPC), Deputy Secretary General at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Estonia
	Keynote speech: The social dimension and the future of Europe
11.00 – 11.20	Maria João Rodrigues , MEP, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the S&D Group and President of FEPS
11.20-11.40	Coffee break
11.40-13.00	Panel: Priority actions at EU level to improve access to quality services <i>Moderator: Roubina Gropas, Social Affairs Team Leader, European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irena Moozova, Director, Equality, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission• Jana Hainsworth, President, Social Platform• Jeroen Jutte, Head of Unit, Employment and social aspects of the European Semester, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission
13.00-14.00	Lunch
14.00-15.00	The role of key organisations in Member States – Enhancing quality of services <i>Moderator: Rob Anderson, Head of Social Policies Unit, Eurofound</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Penny Clarke, Deputy General Secretary and Head of EU Policy, Trade and Human Resources, European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)• Rebekah Smith, Deputy Director, Social Affairs, BusinessEurope

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- **Valeria Ronzitti**, General Secretary, European Centre of Employers and Enterprise, (CEEP)
 - **Heather Roy**, Secretary General, Eurodiaconia
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Panel: The contribution of research and monitoring – Beyond the Social Scoreboard

*Moderator: **Shana Cohen**, Director, TASC – Think-tank for action on social change, Ireland*

15.00-16.00

- **Jolanta Reingarde**, Senior Researcher, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)
- **Rudi Van Dam**, Chair Indicator Subgroup of the Social Protection Committee and Coordinator Social Indicators, Belgian Federal Public Service Social Security
- **Emilio Di Meglio**, Team Leader, Income and Living Conditions and Quality of Life, Eurostat
- **Eszter Zólyomi**, Researcher, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
- **Matteo D’Emilione**, Researcher, INAPP – Istituto Nazionale per l’Analisi delle Politiche Pubbliche, Italy

Closing

16.00-16.15

Juan Menéndez-Valdés, Director, Eurofound

16.30

Networking reception
