

Social Public Services: Forthcoming Publications

Social public services are services directly provided to citizens to meet their needs in relation to employment, health, housing, education, social security and care. These are services that contribute to the development of productive but also more inclusive and cohesive societies. They are particularly important for people who are marginalized or in some way excluded from society. Social public services are generally regulated and funded by public authorities at national, regional or local levels, but they may also be provided by the public or private sector, voluntary or other third sector organisations.

These services have been subject to widespread reform and modernisation over the last decade, with policy attention to costs, to more co-ordinated provision and responsiveness to user needs. At both national and EU levels the importance of these services has been recognised: for creating employment, combating social exclusion and contributing to social protection.

Two new publications from the Foundation review and examine key changes in social public services in the European Union. They begin to analyse some of the implications of these changes for the promotion of both improved employment conditions and social cohesion.

Trends and developments in social public services presents a series of papers commissioned by the Foundation to look at the change processes under way, and to draw out key issues for policy and research. The papers review the role and contribution of social public services across Member States. They document both changing patterns of employment and work organisation in these services, and the changing needs and preferences of services users. Quality is addressed from the perspectives of employers, services users, managers and policy makers.

These themes are developed further in a report of new research from the Foundation: ***Social public services in the European Union: quality of service and quality of working life***. This represents a synthesis of reports from field research in ten countries with supplementary research in the five remaining Member States. The report looks at service improvements which aim to meet the needs of client groups who typically have multiple needs: adults with mental illness or learning disabilities; dependent older people; and long-term unemployed young people. It examines the impacts of quality improvement initiatives on both service to clients and on working conditions. Strategies for the future development of social public services in the European Union are presented.

Please contact Teresa Renehan at the Foundation for further details on these forthcoming publications.

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