

## **REPORT YOUTH CARE PLATFORM MEETING 6 JUNE 2017 (VALENCIA)**

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 (14.30 – 17.30)

**Venue:** Ciutat Administrativa Nou d'Octubre  
Castán Tobeñas, 77 in 46018 Valencia

*The meeting took place in the context of the general assembly of the ENSA-network. The Youth Care Platform thanks ENSA en the Valencia authorities for their hospitality and the excellent organisation of the events.*

### **Agenda and documents**

All documents are available at <http://www.youthcare.eu/updates/meetingyouthcareplatform6june2017invalenciaes>

### **Welcome and introduction**

Stefaan Van Mulders, chair of the Youth Care Platform welcomes the participants and explains the agenda.

### **Management of services in a changing socio-economic context: TENDERING OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**(Follow up of the meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> of March in Brussels):**

*Context notice and questions to be addressed:*

*The care sector is according to the European definitions a social economic sector, thus part of the market, general legislation such as state aid, procurement, ... and even the (transnational) trade. According to the European social model there is a substantial amount of public social spending, what makes the sector an attractive market! We're noticing that authorities are willing to establish new relations with social services. The evidence therefor was discussed in the previous meeting (see <http://www.youthcare.eu/updates/meetingyouthcareplatform20thofmarch2017>).*

A conclusion of this debate was that the sector must be aware that **tendering of social service contracts** might become a leading technique for social authorities to set services in the market (as it is already now in many regions). (Multinational) facility management companies will make big efforts to enter this services market (via different business

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models). In this meeting we want to go a little deeper in this phenomenon of tendering social services.

*Introduction to the topic:* [The phenomenon of tendering](#)

*Looking back to previous meeting on this theme in Brussels (20<sup>th</sup> of March, 2017). Overview of the presentations: context, definitions, analyses and conclusions*

Jan Bosmans (Vlaams Welzijnsverbond, BE)

*Key note:* [How local services relate with the local/regional government – impact of tendering services](#)

Segundo Garcia (Don Bosco Services Valencia region - SP)

*Local perspectives, inspiring cases*

All regional representatives presented the vision, policy and practices applied in their region (giving your region's field of competence) on "tendering of social services in a changing socio-economic context". See the [context note](#).

*Ireland (Don Bosco Care):*

Youth care run by 'Tusla' (the national office for youth care); aftercare is run by the regional directors of Tusla. This results in a dispersed image over Ireland.

The Ministry for Housing announced that a special provision would be made for young people leaving the care system. They will make funding available for not for profit housing associations to buy 20 apartments. Tusla intends to extend the scheme in 2018.

In general, the youth care budget is fixed by the authorities and services are not tendered. Services are delivered by state, not-for-profit and private provisions, the local / regional managing authorities are deciding on how they want to organize the 'local market'. So this leads to a really mixed image.

*Västerås / Sweden:*

For a long time, NGOs did not really have a place in the Swedish (youth) care system, as there was the assumption that they would not perform better than public services. But when it comes to cost-efficiently, private companies can be more efficient.

But as a general policy in Sweden, residential care for youth is avoided (only 30 young people in institutions per year); Foster care is preferred. With these small quantities, you can't establish a substantial 'care market'.

Macro-economic shift: Sweden was not so hard hit by the economic crisis. Nevertheless, during the crisis investment in schools and social services was a "safe investment" for investment companies. But once the crisis was ending, the investments were taken back again. Venture capital goes in and out according to investment opportunities in and out the sector. This sector doesn't act as a stable and reliable partner.

In some areas (e.g. elderly and health care at home) 3 private companies are dominant actors. They became so big that it is difficult to turn back. There is now a discussion going on about profit making (who is benefitting from this public investment), though there is no doubt about quality these services offer.

Conclusion: Tendering of services is used, though not in the youth care sector, but it's more and more questioned.

*Flanders (BE)*

System with both public and private institutions (regulated and recognized by the government, with clear quality standards) and they receive 100 % funding (based on regulation what costs are refunded, so no competition based on prices). New initiatives often are put in the market via tendering, but at a fixed price and only non profit making companies can apply.

*Antwerp (BE):*

As the biggest city in Flanders, the city of Antwerp has an own budget to organize specific services a local level (mainly for homelessness and drug addicts. Now for the first time service contracts were awarded to a for profit company (after tendering) but after a court decision, the contract was taken back. For the local authority, the (new majority after elections) tendering was a clear political strategy to break down the structural cooperation of the municipality with the local NGOs.

*Carinthia (AT):*

Only tendering in ambulant services, but there is a discussion nationwide how far tendering should go.

*Vienna (AT):*

Social democratic model, very state organized. 60% are NGO's (Caritas, catholic churches,

this is historically grown) and 40% public services. Services are not tendered (only few NGOs, they are very specialized and also more flexible, they can respond quicker and easier to the need of new places than the public institutions. Prices are negotiated. Conclusion: no tendering applied.

The Netherlands:

A public debate on how social services can/should be put into the market is going on. Does tendering guarantee that the best services at the best price are available? What about their local anchoring?

*Conclusion:*

Once again the relevance of the topic was proven. No conclusions by now how we should continue this debate, but it will be taken back for sure in the work plan that is prepared (see also next topic).

### **Management issues: leadership of the platform and workplan 2018 - 2020**

#### **How to go on with the Youth Care Platform after 2017?**

In 2014 the Flemish Agency for Youth Welfare initiated the Youth Care Platform (first meeting at the occasion of the ENSA general assembly in Garda, IT). It chaired the Platform for a first period of 3 years. A first work plan was developed and approved (see document section on [www.youthcare.eu](http://www.youthcare.eu)). The Austrian Carinthia region, represented by ms Christine Gaschler-Andreasch, is willing to chair the platform from of 1/1/2018. The platform member agree on this proposal and welcome Christine to chair the Platform from of January 2018. In July Christine and Stefaan will have a meeting to prepare this.

Also Christine wants to base the Platform on an agreed **action plan**. In the [document hereby](#) topics that were mentioned already during the meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> of March are listed up. This list was discussed, commented and completed in small groups.

Results of this discussion:

*At policy level:*

- EU-level: how to guarantee youth care at European level
- How to make the shift from residential care to foster care at policy level
- Prevention strategies

*Policy-level and management: policies aspects*

- How to deal with children and youngsters in residential and foster care?
- Ethical issues (ethical / philosophical / religious frame work of service provision)
- Stigma of youth care Children's rights
- Participation of youngsters (including involvement in policy making and management)  
Empowerment of youngsters, especially as to after care.  
Prepare youngsters for partner- and family relationships
- The different services and 'systems' (youth, adult, social and emotional services) should meet in working on these topics

*Management of services*

- 'Wrap around approach': one family, one plan
- How to improve cooperation between youth care, mental health care and education (holistic approach)
- Integration of after care services
- Social entrepreneurship in youth care

*Target groups*

- Victims of sexual exploitation
- Girls with heavy behavior
- Alternative 'second chance schools'
- Education and Jobs
- Unemployed youth – NEETS: how to tackle
- Mental health for youngsters and families with complex behavior
- Unaccompanied minors and the secondary movement of unaccompanied minors (where do they go to after the country where they arrive)

*Management of the platform*

- Exchange, study visits
- How to expand the network/platform

- Informing about the Platform to the European Commission and social authorities in EU-regions
- Exchange also with other relevant networks (Coface, Eurochild, Feantsa, ...)

Conclusion:

A proposal of a work plan will be proposed later this year by the new chair, Christine Gaschler-Andreasch, based on the grid of themes collected above. All Youth Care Platform-members will be invited to comment the proposal.

**Planning next meeting in 2018?**

Will be proposed later this year.

**17:30 End of the Youth Care Platform meeting**

**COMMENTS**

*Please send all comments to  
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