

International Workshop

“SDGs PRIORITIES & CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL POLICY IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES”

14-15 October 2019

European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
Berggasse 17, 1090 Vienna (Austria)

The Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries face significant challenges regarding their social policy systems. These challenges are related to the ageing workforce, ongoing migration and the transformation of the informal care sector, to name just some areas of concern. Moreover, these countries strive to transform their social policy systems with the general aim of increasing their efficiency, sustainability and accessibility for all in need. There is also a growing recognition that the reform efforts should go hand in hand with implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, a global framework for action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The social pillar is an important part of the Agenda 2030, along with the economic and environmental pillars. Many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) address social issues such as ‘*End of poverty in all its forms everywhere*’ (Goal 1) or to adopt ‘... *social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality*’ (Goal 10/Target 10.4).

To support the reforms of social policy systems and smooth the transitions in adapting national policies towards achieving the SDGs, the EESPN event “*SDGs Priorities & Challenges of Social Policy in the Eastern Partnership Countries*” will be held on 14 and 15 October 2019, in Vienna, Austria (Berggasse 17, 1090). The EESPN (Eastern European Social Policy Network) has been initiated and coordinated by the European Centre of Social Welfare Policy and Research (in short, European Centre), an UN-affiliated institution based in Vienna, that links research, policy and practice in the area of social welfare. Within the EESPN, the European Centre strives to bring together researchers and policy experts throughout the UN-European region (the region of the UN Economic Commission for Europe, UNECE) to better understand and advance social welfare policies in the countries of the EaP and EU (potential) candidate countries. Our main interest is to promote a shared vision and related activities for achieving more efficient and equitable social welfare policies in all countries of the UNECE region.

The event will gather around 25 participants of the EESPN network, especially the **EaP countries’ National Liaison Officials (NLO) of the European Centre**, i.e. nominated personnel of relevant Ministries in the UNECE countries, as well as **representatives of think tanks and/or research organisations**. We expect 2-3 participants (1 NLO and 1-2 researchers, representatives of NGOs and/or think-tanks) per EaP country plus NLOs from all other UNECE countries.

The aim of the event is to **identify and discuss common challenges** and **propose meaningful initiatives** to achieve the SDGs of the social pillar.

Key questions to be discussed at the event comprise the following:

- *What are the common and country specific challenges faced across UNECE countries in the area of social welfare?*
- *What priorities have been set in the area of social policies towards achieving the SDGs of the social pillar in the EaP countries?*
- *What needs to be done by national and international stakeholders to achieve the SDGs of the social pillar by 2030?*
- *What can the European Centre and EaP countries do jointly to address the challenges in the area of social welfare and achieve the SDGs of the social pillar?*

Agenda: Monday, 14 October 2019

12.30-13.00 *Registration*

13.00-13.10 **Welcome & Opening**

Georg Reibmayr, Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection and Dr. Kai Leichsenring, Executive Director of the European Centre

13.10-13.30 **Overview of activities linked to the SD Agenda 2030**

Dr. Anette Scoppetta, Deputy Director of the European Centre

13.30-14.15 **Keynote: Implementing the Social Pillar of the SD Agenda 2030 in the EaP countries**

Ian McFarlane, Deputy Director, UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (EECARO)

Sessions on key topics linked to the SD Agenda 2030

14.15-15.15 **Session 1: Long-term Care**

Inputs from the 5 EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine
Moderator: Dr. Kai Leichsenring, European Centre

15.15-15.45 *Coffee Break*

15.45-16.45 **Session 2: Labour market inclusion of vulnerable groups**

Inputs from the 5 EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine
Moderator: Leonard Geyer, European Centre

16.45-17.45 **Session 3: Social Protection Systems**

Inputs from the 5 EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine
Moderator: Veronica Sandu, European Centre

17.45 End

19.00 Joint Dinner



Agenda: Tuesday, 15 October 2019

Session on key topics linked to the SD Agenda 2030 (continued)

- 9.00-10.00 **Session 4: Active (and healthy) Ageing**
Inputs from the 5 EaP countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine
Moderator: Eszter Zólyomi, European Centre
- 10.00-11.00 **Plenary on meaningful initiatives to achieve the SDGs of the social pillar**
By all
- 11.00-11.30 **Wrap up and the next steps**
By the European Centre
- 11.30 End

For NLO's: Travel to the UN Premises for the General Assembly Meeting of the European Centre

