



THE SECTOR

According to the European Union definition, the **PHS sector includes** the following economic activities:

- Services provided to households and inside homes (on site) for all age groups and life situations
- Long-term care (assistance to the elderly and services for people with disabilities) and child care
- Cleaning, catering, maintenance, gardening, lighting repairs, etc.
- Support through information and communication technologies (ICTs) to the technical assistance systems, assisted services for assisted daily life.



THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To identify and exchange **Good Practices** regarding the policies and actions in the sector of Personal and Household Services carried out by local, regional or national Governments of the countries involved in the project as a way to define **Policies and Actions Proposals** to encourage the efficiency of these services and to contribute through the creation of new jobs to the objectives of European 2020 Strategy.



THE PARTNERS

- L ALDA - THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY**
www.alda-europe.eu
- L CONFEDERACIÓN EMPRESARIAL DE SOCIEDADES LABORALES DE ESPAÑA. CONFESAL.**
Applicant-Coordinator of the project www.confesal.com
- L DIESIS (European Research and Development Service for the Social Economy)**
www.diesis.coop
- L REVES - EUROPEAN NETWORK OF REGIONS AND CITIES FOR THE SOCIAL ECONOMY**
www.revesnetwork.eu
- L FONDAZIONE SCUOLA NAZIONALE SERVIZI**
www.scuolanazionali.eservizi.it





THE ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

Definition of criteria to identify good practices of policies and actions developed in the Personal and Household Services Sector in terms of efficiency

- Identification of relevant stakeholders of the country partners
- Collection of European good practices in PHS sector and elaboration of a **Guide of good practices in PHS sector**
- Elaboration a report with the proposal of Policies and Actions and a methodology of implementation:

PHS Research and Proposals Guide

- Transference of results.

THE PROPOSALS FOR POLICIES AND ACTIONS IN PHS

The analysis of the good practices made possible to identify a series of key elements to define the proposals for actions and policies to improve the efficiency of the PHS Sector, which may be implemented in the European Union by public and private actors involved in the personal care services. To facilitate the adoption of this Proposals, the project has defined an Implementation Methodology to follow.

The results of the research and analysis have been gathered in the publication PHS Research and Proposals Guide.





POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1

To implement policies and actions at local level, closer to the citizens.

The local management of the resources makes it possible to establish public procurement models for the services to be provided. This can take into account the capacities and characteristics of the local industry and facilitate the professionalization of existing small and medium companies in the territory with training and consultancy plans, thus facilitating the creation of jobs in the territory.





2

To include social clauses and service quality standards, as well as the gender perspective, in the public procurement processes rather than considering solely or mainly the cost of the services in those processes.



It is essential to consider the inclusion of social clauses. The kind of activity carried out makes it possible to incorporate this type of perspective without negatively affect the provision of the services incorporating as well training and qualification initiatives which would improve the social and employment prospects of these people.

Similarly, it is important to include quality standards, thus ensuring that the service provided meets the needs of the population and that it is not negatively affected by a possible reduction in the economic cost. In addition, the inclusion of these quality standards generally acts as a

limitation on the reduction of the economic cost, because the fulfilment of those standards makes it difficult to present very low bids.

A third aspect to be considered is the gender perspective. The majority of the people who work in the sector are women, often lowly qualified, with low salaries and unstable employment contracts. For this reason, it is important that those procurement processes favour the professionalization of these people and the improvement of their professional and employment situation, also taking into account aspects such as the balance between their personal, professional and family lives.



3 Public agencies should develop policies and action plans that are not in the form of financial assistance to the family or the person requiring the service.

The aim of financial aid measures, that can also have the form of tax relief, should be to allow the beneficiaries the possibility to hire professionals. The main contribution to professionalization, job creation, qualification of the workers and attention to the gender perspective, all of them

key elements in this sector, is to relate the aid to a professional service, and that aid can be of different types: tax benefits through deductions, subsidies on care by means of service vouchers, or direct financial aid.





4

To recognise the role of business organisations in structuring and professionalising the sector, providing support measures to those organisations so they can carry out consultancy and training activities.

Many of the professional services provided by the sector take place in the sphere of the social economy, promoted by groups of workers who set up small productive units with the aim of providing the service more efficiently, thus enabling them to develop synergies in their business management.

Experience reveals that a decisive factor of success in the business development of the sector is the role of the business organisations, both in the social economy and specific sectoral ones, from two perspectives:

- On the one hand, through their information, training and company-creation, the business organisations facilitate the development of new collective self-employment business projects;
- On the other hand, the business organisations play a decisive role in providing training and technical assistance to the personnel of these new companies, not only at the moment of their creation.





5

It has been seen that many of the business projects in the sector arise at local level, under collective self-employment formulas, thus allowing the regularisation of informal employment. In this context the main risks of these projects is their management shortcomings and limited professionalization.

Successful projects are consolidated through improvements in management, business growth and the development of economies of scale to enable these businesses to compete against the other players in the sector. At present, many of the public resources are managed through public invitations to tender to cover the care demands. Support to the creation of consortia is fundamental in order to give these small companies the possibility of accessing new

Favour the creation of consortia both at national and transnational level and support the processes of business cooperation and company growth.

markets and so be able to embark on more solid growth processes.

Similarly, some companies that manage to grow and strengthen their structures remain entangled to operate within their home countries, because, in order to take part in public invitations to tender in other countries, they need to get together with other partners from other countries, and they do not have the capacity for that. Therefore, an essential element is to foster the growth of the companies in the sector and develop initiatives which facilitate business cooperation at both National and transnational level.

6

To favour innovation and its transferability.



A factor of success common to many of the identified good practices has been the ability to develop innovative products and services that represent a considerable added value for their users and give competitive advantages to the companies that have developed them.

There are many technological developments (movement sensors, camera control, GPS, alerts, etc.), closely related to information and communication technologies, which represent a key element in the professional development of the sector. Those advances are very often related to the quality of the service provided.

We recommend that the public agencies incorporate measures that foster the technological development of the sector and, especially, which facilitate the transfer of results between innovative companies and the rest of the sector, favouring the collaboration with companies operating in the fields of engineering, applications and new information and communication technologies, which can develop technical solutions to improve the quality of services provided to the people in their homes.



To promote the definition and implementation of quality standards in the provision of personal care services.



It is an aspect which would make it possible to improve the image of the sector, reinforcing the competitive capacity of the companies that fulfil them and fostering the professionalization of the sector.

It is important that those standards be applied to both the companies which provide their services within the framework of a public contract and those which attend directly to the existing demand in the market.

For this purpose, it is necessary, on the one hand, to define certain quality standards in all the member states, on the other hand, the definition of those standards must take place at state level, ensuring their coherence and application throughout the territory of each country. If that is not possible, then we must advance in that direction, introducing those standards at local level, i.e. the level at which the services are provided. Finally, the fulfilment of those standards must be included in the public procurement processes, at whatever level (national, regional, local).



8

To facilitate the development, knowledge and transference of new models of company management.

In general terms the sector shows considerable failings in business management and the professionalization of the management models. It would be extremely interesting to be able to disseminate and transfer new, already-proven management systems, as well as defining the possibility of managing companies under franchise systems, thus facilitating the creation of new local companies and new jobs. The organisation of exchanges among companies, seminars and symposiums, etc., is key elements to facilitate this process of business improvement.





9

To foster the participation of workers in the company and the creation of social economy companies as a factor in job creation.

The analysis has shown that a considerable part of the structure of demand for services is generated at local level, both as a result of the programmes implemented by public agencies and by processes of aggregation of demands at private level. These demands are being responded to by groups of workers who carry out their activities formally and informally and who decide to take a professional leap through the creation of business projects of collective self-employment.

In this regard, the role of the social economy organisations is a key element, both to boost the processes of the creation of companies under one of the legal formulas of the social economy and to accompany, advise and support new and existing initiatives of this kind, helping to facilitate the creation and start-up processes and those of growth and consolidation.



10 To implement professional qualification and training initiatives in the sector.

The qualification and training of people is a key factor in the competitive capacity of companies. For this reason, we propose the development of training programmes which, on the one hand, help to improve the management abilities of the managerial teams of the companies in the sector, and, on the other hand, develop training programmes to equip the workers in the personal and household services sector with comprehensive skills and qualifications, professionalising their work, but also complementing their training in order to be able to expand their sphere of action to complementary work, thus improving their employability.






11 To promote specific action plans that favour the reincorporation of women into the labour market and their empowerment

It is evident that women experience considerable negative factors that prevent their real incorporation into the labour market in the sector. They find jobs that requires few qualifications, with low salaries and precarious employment conditions.


It is considered vital that public agencies develop dissemination, information and training campaigns aimed specifically at women, to emphasise the value of their work, their labour rights in the sector, the need to professionalise their work and make it more visible, and to make women aware that this is a field of work that allow regulated access to the labour market, improving the self-esteem of disadvantaged groups and dignifying and professionalising work in the sector.



[12]



To favour social dialogue and the role of the trade unions in the sector.



The sector suffers from the existence of an informal, unstructured economy, within the family and with low levels of professionalisation, starting from labour activities without recognition or rights. Promoting labour rights and rising awareness among the workers would help to regularise informal employment and improve the efficiency of the sector.

To protect and promote labour rights it is necessary to have the support of the unions and the support of the public administration.





THE ANALYSIS OF GOOD PRACTICES



BESPAT Partnership has identified 20 good practices in the PHS sector in nine European countries (Spain, Italy, Belgium, France, UK, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and The Netherlands).

Good practices have been defined as experiences that:

- solve a problem or responds to a social demand;
- use innovative methods or mechanisms;
- see participation and empowerment of the different players;
- achieve demonstrable results superior to those of other experiences;
- last over time;
- capable of being replicated by other organizations.

The good practices identified correspond to relatively different, diverse models, in terms of both forms of action and spheres of intervention and are carried out by public entities at a national, regional or local level, or by other players and sector stakeholders: suppliers, business associations, non-governmental organizations, etc. A Good Practices Guide contains the results of the research.



BESPAT GOOD PRACTICES ARE:

				<p>One Family-One Plan Scheme (Heusden Municipality)</p> 	
					
					
					



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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-28, EFTA_EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.





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Policies, Analysis
and Transference
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