

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Brussels, 28 June 2017**

# **EASPD launches new website to help social sector get better loans**

**Today, the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) launches a website to help social service providers get better loans through the EU Investment Plan and the European Investment Bank. The new website -[www.socialinvestment.eu](http://www.socialinvestment.eu)- provides a simple, yet detailed overview of the Plan itself, the different options available, tips and success stories. It also provides useful information for investors and public authorities willing to invest in the social services sector.**

In cooperation with European institutions and local partners, EASPD is actively promoting the EU Investment Plan as a way in which the social care and support sector in Europe can get access to better loans to build, innovate and expand their services.

The EU Investment Plan -otherwise known as the Juncker Plan- is an important initiative at European level to help private, public and not-for-profit enterprises get access to loans. Its main operational tool is the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), implemented through the European Investment Bank, which has already helped 100,000 Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and infrastructure projects get access to decent loans.

**Mr Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General of EASPD**, underlines that *“Many social service providers have important investment needs, which too often remain unmet. EFSI can become a real game-changer for social service providers to get decent loans. If used appropriately, the end-result will mean better quality care and support for persons with disabilities and others”*.

The objective of the new website -[www.socialinvestment.eu](http://www.socialinvestment.eu)- is to help the social sector, investors and public authorities to better understand how the EU Investment Plan can help secure the loans they need or want to provide. It includes an overview of the different programmes and options included in the EU Investment Plan, as well as information on the European Investment Advisory Hub set-up by the EIB to support and guide new project development.

Success cases of EIB loans include for instance a Framework Loan to the city of Örebro in Sweden which has helped them build quality childcare facilities, or a loan to [the Irish authorities to build 14](#)

[community-based primary care centres](#). EFSI is also helping social enterprises [get access to smaller loans in Spain](#) and France.

**Mr Thomas Bignal, Investment Policy Advisor at EASPD**, argues that *“EFSI could be the difference between building new community-based facilities or training staff in the correct way and a project being stopped due to difficulties in accessing decent financial support or loans. Using EFSI may require a learning curve for some but hopefully the website will make EFSI a lot easier to understand”*

In addition to the website, EASPD is also organising national events to help present the EU Investment Plan to the social sector and their funders in Austria on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, Finland on 1<sup>st</sup> September, Belgium on 14<sup>th</sup> September and Spain on 22<sup>th</sup> September. A European Conference will be organised on the 27<sup>th</sup> November in Brussels to help bring this discussion to European decision-makers and to promote policy-recommendations developed at the national events. If interested, please contact: [socialinvestment@easpd.eu](mailto:socialinvestment@easpd.eu)

### Related documents

- Website: The EU Investment Plan for the Social Sector – [www.socialinvestment.eu](http://www.socialinvestment.eu)
- EASPD Study on [“Unlocking EFSI for Social Services”](#) (2015)
- EASPD Press Release in PDF

### Note to editors

The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities is a non-profit European umbrella organization, established in 1996, and currently representing over 15,000 social and health services for persons with disabilities. EASPD advocates for effective and high-quality disability-related services in the field of education, employment and individualised support, in line with the UN CRPD principles, which could bring benefits not only to persons with disabilities, but to society as a whole.

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