

RESEARCH ON THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Executive Summary



The world is facing challenges in all the three domains of sustainable development - economic, social, and environmental- that have a direct impact on the societies and their potential to share natural resources in a sustainable way. Like for every sector, **social services** contribute to and are affected by climate change. In this sense, a systematic review and stakeholders interviews coming from 5 European countries (Spain, UK, Belgium, Finland, and Romania) was carried out to analyse the social services' opportunities, needs, and barriers to become **greener taking most of the opportunities offered by the EU Green Deal and other EU policies and funding programmes.**

But... what are the impacts of climate change in social services?

- ★ Climate change is a worldwide citizens threat and even more for persons with disabilities (European Disability Forum, 2019). Thus, people with disabilities and children may be more vulnerable to extreme weather episodes (cold waves, heat waves, floods, hurricanes, disease propagation) that impact on their health (mental health, depression, etc.) and their daily life (transportation, energy consumption, education, etc.). Moreover, climate change can impede the evacuation or migration of people with disabilities, as well as their access to health and LTC services and community support.
- ★ The risks associated to climate change are often high in areas with poverty and low access to essential services (i.e., flood and drought zones); consequently, the climate change will not impact equally all. That is, children and families who are already among the socially vulnerable groups are likely to face some of the most immediate dangers (Unicef, 2015).
- ★ Economic crisis led by climate change may imply worse working conditions for people with disabilities (more discrimination, intensify exclusion, poor working conditions or reduced working opportunities) (IFO, 2019)
- ★ Climate change will increase the number of households facing “Energy poverty” because the high costs of energy (BEIS, 2020; Escandón et al., 2019) and the conditions of the social housing (Brandão & Lanzinha, 2020; Pierangioli & Cellai, 2016).
- ★ Food uncertainty and malnutrition could increase due to harvest losses produced by droughts, floods, heatwaves and cold waves, as well as the propagation of pests (FAO, 2008).

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and... what are the impacts of social services in climate change?

- ★ Related to the infrastructures used to provide the social services (education, LTC, etc.) that entail resource consumption, procurement methods and waste management, but also their construction or maintaining with sustainable materials and planning. Sometimes the installation of renewable energy infrastructures is not possible because structural limitations.
- ★ The energy consumption requirements of people with disabilities may be higher (electrical devices, charging of electric wheelchairs and vehicles, extra laundry costs, etc.).
- ★ Since public social housing and many LTC facilities are often located in suburban and exurban land, the transport requirements of those living in these areas is high.
- ★ Social services generate different waste streams that must be managed separately, such as plastics of diapers, batteries for devices, but also hazardous waste such as medicines, sharps, etc.

How can service providers promote green transformation of social services?

How could policy makers facilitate the green transformation of social services?



Check our infographics on Recommendations for policy makers and service providers.

The **current New Deal call** includes different topics, many of them may imply opportunities in the domains of Social Services. For example, the New Circular Economy Plan, together with the Farm-to-Fork strategy, also include opportunities to green LTC, through funding of projects and the development of regulations and recommendations to reduce food waste and to make catering services more sustainable and resilient to climate change, within the Green Deal call. As an example, topic LC-GD-6-1-2020 includes a subtopic regarding food value chains; furthermore, Horizon Europe Programme will also cover this topic in the following years through Cluster 6. A deep analysis of the topics is included in the complete version of this report. Moreover, other funding opportunities had been also included in the analysis and summarised in the following table:

Programme	What opportunities does it offer to social services providers to be greener?	Who can apply?
European Regional Development Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Local supply chain promotion ★ Green Care initiatives ★ Accessible and integrated transport ★ Simplification of procedures: integration and digitalisation ★ New educational pathways and methodologies 	Public bodies, some private sector organisations (especially small businesses), universities, associations, NGOs and voluntary organisations. Foreign firms with a base in the region covered by the relevant operational programme can also apply, provided they meet European public procurement rules.
European Social Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ New educational pathways and methodologies ★ Capacity building of the social services staff 	Public bodies, some private sector organisations (especially small businesses), universities, associations, NGOs and voluntary organisations. Foreign firms with a base in the region covered by the relevant operational programme can also apply, provided they meet European public procurement rules.
Cohesion Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Rehabilitation in green infrastructures ★ Clean energy consumption ★ Implementation of green and renewable technologies ★ Energy efficiency in buildings ★ Sustainable transport 	Public bodies, some private sector organisations (especially small businesses), universities, associations, NGOs and voluntary organisations. Foreign firms with a base in the region covered by the relevant operational programme can also apply, provided they meet European public procurement rules.
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development	<p>Six priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Knowledge transfer and innovation in Economy sector ★ Sustainable management in rural environments ★ Resource efficiency ★ Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems ★ Diversification, creation and development of SMEs and job creation ★ Inclusion and poverty reduction in rural environments 	All potential recipients in agriculture, forestry and in the rural areas.

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Horizon Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Circular economy ★ Energy self-production and consumption ★ Local supply chain promotion ★ Green Care initiatives ★ Accessible and integrated transport ★ Simplification of procedures: integration and digitalisation ★ New educational pathways and methodologies 	European private and public entities (see specific criteria to involve partners outside Europe)
Erasmus +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Provision of skills and qualifications ★ Innovative methodologies ★ Recognition and validation of competences ★ Inclusion opportunities and employability 	Depending on action type: Higher Education Institutions; Adult Education Institutions; VET Institutions; Primary and secondary schools; NGOs; Enterprises; Public bodies
Just Transition Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Circular economy ★ Energy self-production and consumption ★ New jobs opportunities because the climate change ★ Rehabilitation in green infrastructures ★ Clean energy consumption 	<p>EU countries need to identify the territories and sectors eligible for funding under the JTF through a dialogue with the European Commission.</p> <p>Eligible regions included in this report: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/annex_d_crs_2020_en.pdf</p>
Recovery and Resilience Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ New jobs opportunities because the climate change ★ Implementation of green and renewable technologies ★ Energy efficiency in buildings ★ Sustainable transport ★ Digitalisation of public services 	Member States should prepare recovery and resilience plans that set out a coherent package of reforms and public investment projects. To benefit from the support of the Facility, these reforms and investments should be implemented by 2026.
LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Creation of blue and green infrastructures ★ Creation of jobs in green sectors ★ Information and communication, awareness raising. 	<p>European private and public entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ public bodies ★ private commercial organizations ★ private non-commercial organisations (NGOs etc.)
Interreg Europe	<p>Four policy topics, related to regional development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research, technological development and innovation 2. Competitiveness of SMEs 3. Low-carbon economy 4. Environment and resource efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Public authorities (local, regional, and national) ★ Managing authorities/ intermediate bodies in charge of the Investment for Growth and Jobs programmes or European Territorial Cooperation ★ Agencies, research institutes, thematic and non-profit organisations from Europe, Norway, Switzerland and UK.