The Eastern European Social Policy Network is an initiative of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research that brings together researchers and policy makers throughout the UN-European Region to better understand and to advance social welfare policies in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and the EU (potential) candidate countries.

EESPN Public Forum
“Divided Society – Cohesive Europe?”

Europe faces manifold societal challenges, out of which the unequal distribution of wealth between and within European territories is of upmost importance. The growing divide between the rich and the poor, the healthy and unhealthy, economic and social segregation by skill-levels and ethnic origin and persistent discrimination based on gender and age, to just name some social discrepancies, jeopardise Europe’s welfare, social cohesion and economic development. Well-designed social policies that help those most in need are required more than ever before across Europe, be it European member states or the (potential) candidate countries and the countries of the Eastern partnership.

Various political strategy papers and action plans have been drafted and partly implemented in most countries. These, however, frequently miss the research base, are repeatedly not aligned with one another and often fall short of their final goal of helping those most in need. Representatives of the (potential) candidate countries and the countries of the Eastern partnership therefore stressed the need to establish strong linkages to research during the Launch event of the Eastern European Social Policy Network (19 September 2016, Vienna). To this end, participants of all countries present at the event requested to promote evidence-based policies and to strengthen cooperation between sectors, systems and policies, not only within countries but even more relevant across countries.

Well-designed social policies that help those most in need contribute to reduce social inequalities and to achieve more distributive justice. In times of stressed social systems, effective social policy making that reduces economic and social discrepancies, however, is not an easy task. How can social policies best contribute to more distributive justice? Which strategies are the most promising in the various European regions? And: How can governments and research from the EU member states and (potential) candidate countries contribute to a social and cohesive Europe? The EESPN Public Forum seeks to provide an assessment of current social policy practices based on these guiding questions.

Time and Venue
12 July 2017, 14.30-17.30, BMASK (Saal II / 1st floor), Stubenring 1, 1010 Vienna

Programme
14.00-14.30 Registration and Welcome Coffee
14.30-15.00 Opening & Introduction
by the Edeltraud Glettler, BMASK and by Anette Scoppetta, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
15.00-15.10 Unequal distribution of wealth between and within Europe by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
15.10-15.30 Brief research insights from the East
by Summer School participants
15.30-17.00 Towards evidence-based social policies
Key note by Andrew Cartwright, CEU – Central European University, Budapest
Key note by Sena Maric, European Policy Centre, Belgrade
Discussants: Jozef Vasak, Representation of the European Commission in Austria; Kvetoslava Repkova, Institute for Labour and Family Research, Slovak Republic; and Ricardo Rodrigues, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
17.00 Conclusion
17.30 Farewell