

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 utmost 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 / 1<sup>st</sup> floor), Stubenring 1, 1010 Vienna

*Programme*

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