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## The first newsletter in the project LINK

Welcome to the first newsletter in the LINK project. In this first newsletter, we will tell you about the content and objectives of the LINK project. Going forward, you will receive exciting updates on an ongoing basis about what is happening in the project.

### How it all started

The rationale and need for the Learning and Innovation Network (LINK) project was based on background research and pilot initiatives by the R&D Centre Linköping and other project partners. They identified the urgent need for a new more integrated and client centred approach to the delivery of health and social care services. This approach should be capable of fostering collaboration and overcoming professional and managerial barriers to change. It also needed to provide flexible access to the skills required by front line professionals, staff and stakeholders to achieve this.

### Integrated Care and Support

A major pre-EU study 'Integrated Care and Support' (Sept 2021), led by one of the partners, the European Social Network (ESN), examined services to older people with complex needs, to vulnerable families and to adults with mental health problems. They

identified 'key drivers' of integration of these services such as:

- To 'Wrap services around the person' through care packages tailored to individual needs.
- A greater coordination between services to reduce fragmentation,
- To reduce duplication and maximise cost efficiency.

The report argued that to achieve greater integration, service providers would also need to:

- promote multi-disciplinary working across professional boundaries
- empower front line staff to respond directly to client needs
- adapt top down management structures to enable this and
- build in the views of the service users in the co-creation of solutions to their needs.

Critically, the report recommended that "Professionals should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to implement integrated services".

### The outputs so far

The project has now been in operation for 16 months out of its 36 months duration. Initially in the project, we carried out a baseline study based on individual national studies prepared



by each of the partners. The results based upon the baseline study are a source of knowledge in developing the main products and tools in the project.

The objectives of the project are:

- The model we build to support learning and innovation labs will be piloted this spring.
- As a support, there is the learning platform that will be filled with knowledge about how learning and innovation teams can work together with the target group in the lab.
- The digital platform also supports an exchange between different learning and innovation labs in Europe through various forums, discussion threads and other material that one chooses to spread to other actors in social work.

In the project team you find the following partners:

- [Zemgale planning region](#) in Latvia
- [The University of Belgrad](#) in Serbia
- [Norwegian university of science and technology \(NTNU\)](#) in Norway
- [University of Ljubljana](#) in Slovenia
- [Fundacion Avedis Donabedian](#) in Spain
- [R & D Centre](#) in Sweden
- [European Social network \(ESN\)](#)
- *and in collaboration with:*
- [IT University of Copenhagen \(ITU\)](#) in Denmark

If you have any thoughts or question please feel free to contact the project manager Johanna Palmstierna, by writing an email to [FoU Funktionsbrevlåda](#).

