ICSW EUROPE
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WELFARE
A World Organisation Promoting Social Development

# ICSW EUROPE NEWSLETTER
## *2/2024*

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"A March of Citizens who protected their environment – Sicily 1980"

*author of the photo: © Max Rubisch*

# A Message from the President

Dear readers of our Newsletter,

the 9th June was an important date for Democracy in Europe: at the European elections 390 millions in 27 countries could vote 720 deputies for the European Parliament.

Often the elections are not guided by European issues but by national and regional facts and campaigns. Sometimes they are used as a preparation for national elections. But what are the main results on a European level – compared to the last elections in 2019?

- There is a political shift to the right – in the three biggest EU countries – Germany, France and Italy the conservative and far-right parties have gained votes;
- The Green parties have lost votes;
- In some countries (p.ex. France, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Romania) the socialists and social-democrats have performed relatively well;
- Hungary and Poland – two countries with problematic developments towards the EU – now voted for Europe and for democracy: in Hungary the party of *Viktor Orban* has lost his absolute majority and in Poland the party of *Donald Tusk* is in the first place;
- At the last European election five years ago, young people voted in majority green or left: now also young people are voting more and more for right parties.

It seems that the COVID-19 crisis, the Russian war against Ukraine, the rising costs for food, housing and energy and especially the climate crisis have lead to a growing insecurity in the population, especially for young people under 30. They are afraid of financial problems, unemployment and social descent. They are also afraid of security problems, the effects of mass migration and the growing effects of the climate crisis.

For some of them, the right-wing populist parties have simple answers to these complex problems. We have seen a growing success of these parties in France (Rassemblement National), Italy (Fratelli d'Italia), Germany (Allianz für Deutschland) and Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs). These developments are dangerous for democracy in Europe.

Of course, the fears of the people have to be taken serious. But simple answers are often dangerous. It is obvious that the far-right parties stand up for authoritarian states and not for democracy, they stand for nationalist politics and not for European and international cooperation. Experience shows that when they are in power they put under pressure human rights, independent justice and independent media.

All these problems of rising costs of living, growing insecurity and the effects of the climate crisis have a large social context. Socially disadvantaged people are hit the most by all these developments. The issue of social welfare and social security becomes more and more important.

The results of the European elections have shown:

- Democracy and Human Rights in Europe can easily come under pressure – we must defend them;
- Issues of social policy are essential not only for the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, but also for Europe;
- The European Green Deal must remain at the centre of European politics and should be enlarged to a "Green and Social Deal";
- We need not less Europe, but more Europe.

In their response to the European Elections, the Social Platform has written: *"This election must serve as an urgent reminder to all policy makers that people feel left behind and that meeting their needs means prioritising social rights."* Please read the whole statement of Social Platform on page 5–6 in this newsletter.

I wish you all a beautiful summer!

***Max Rubisch***
President of ICSW Europe

SOSTE
Yhdessä tehty hyvä elämä kaikille.

## The situation of asylum seekers and refugees in Finland. Seminar 21/5/2024

SOSTE, ICSW Committee of Finland and Finland's Social Policy Association hosted a seminar on 21/5/2024 on the situation of asylum seekers and refugees in Finland. The three-hour crash course painted a somber account on where Finland is heading.

Globally, the UNHCR has estimated in 2022 that there were 114 million refugees. This number is expected to rise to 250 million by 2050 due to impact of the climate change. Currently there are 6.4 million Ukrainians, who have fled their country and an additional 17 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. What is the situation in Finland, and what should be done?

### Finland on the path to a much stricter immigration regime

According to Associate Professor ***Hanna Tuominen***, the European Union, since 1999, has increasingly begun coordinating immigration policies. But the outcomes of member countries regarding asylum have varied a lot. The tendency of an aging Europe is towards conservatism, and there are rising tensions on this issue. The main tendencies are to see immigration from security, containment and externalization perspectives. The main focus of the EU has been to turn the tide of immigration back to the countries of origin.

Stricter policy measures have gained steam in the Finnish political landscape from the obvious "instrumentalization" of asylum seeking by Belorussia and Russia on the borders of EU countries. The Conservative Finnish government led by Prime Minister ***Petteri Orpo*** of The National Coalition Party is an example of this stricter direction by the European Union. The Government Program aims to fulfill only the minimum requirements set by the European Union regarding asylum seeking thus scaling down the current procedures and assistance, which already have been strict in Finland.

***Eveliina Lyytinen*** from The Migration Institute of Finland spells out what these stricter measures mean. Refugee status will be shortened and dismantled. The criteria to gain citizenship will be made stricter. Resources for integration shall be cut. Having the possibility to change status as an asylum seeker shall be removed (e.g. changing status from asylum seeking by study, research, work placement, or voluntary work). Granting border control officers the right to stop asylum seekers on the border without detention and the due process. These proposals are framed as a security issue, but in reality, this will become the new normal for all immigrants and asylum seekers.

### What are the principles for successful integration?

In her presentation ***Annu Lehtinen***, Finnish Refugee Council, called for international coordination and responsibility in concert with local solutions to the tackle the forced migration issue. The root causes of forced migration are poverty, social instability and lack of social rights, which have an international context in addition to local politics.

***Bahar Mozaffari*** also called for a holistic approach to social integration. This would entail understanding social integration as a multifaceted process, which not only includes the individual and local community, but incorporates a larger framework including the family, local communities, organizations, civil servants and the whole of society. Communication within these networks is crucial. Individuals must be active. These networks must accept an engrained dynamism reacting to arising and changing needs. This will involve also the sharing of information and resources to make integration more efficient and comprehensive. The interplay must recognize that there are individual needs, which must be balanced with collective needs.

Refugees might face obstacles relating to employment or entrepreneurship, education, lack of economic resources or social networks, cultural differences, political, legal restraints and lack of representation. There can be experiences of racism, and social isolation and/or imported cultural restraints such as family pressures which hinder integration. These issues must be recognized and addressed with a holistic approach involving all stakeholders.

According to ***Lotta Mäkipää*** of the Finnish National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), 2/5 of immigrants had experienced discrimination in Finland during the last year. Most immigrants still feel more attached to their homeland then Finland but the majority follow both Finnish and their home countries' news.

The seminar was rounded off by ***Yelizaveta Babina***, from Ukraine and ***Sara Shirazi*** from Iran. *Yelizaveta Babina* lost everything from her past life in Ukraine, but refuses to see herself as a victim, and she is doing her best to learn the Finnish language and fulfill additional requirements on top of her two degrees she had done in Ukraine. Finnish education system does not necessarily recognize degrees from abroad. *Sara Shirazi* came to Finland as a migrant (not as asylum seeker) and told that her main barrier was the opening of a bank account in Finland; it took over a month to set up for an Iranian citizen. Both women work at Startup Refugees NGO and expressed their strong desire to learn Finnish language, to work and to build a life in Finland. This is the sort of momentum and motivation that we in Finland should build upon for successful integration.

Program of the Seminar (in Finnish language):
https://www.soste.fi/tapahtuma/kansainvalisen-sosiaalipolitiikan-iltapaiva-turvapaikkahaun-ja-pakolaisuuden-tilannekuva-suomessa/

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SOSTE Finland; ICSW Europe

## German speaking ICSW Members discuss staff shortage in care and social work in Berlin

On 16th and 17th May the German Association for Public and Private Welfare invited their German-speaking ICSW partners – the Austrian Committee for Social Work (ÖKSA) and the Swiss Conference for Social Assistance (SKOS) – for their traditional trilateral meeting to Berlin. Around 40 experts from Germany, Austria and Switzerland discussed the challenges posed by the staff shortage in the fields of long-term care and social work.


The shortage of skilled workers in both areas is already challenging today and will become even more acute in the coming years due to demographic developments and increasing needs for professional care. Even today, necessary services cannot be expanded due to the shortage of personnel and skilled workers, and existing services are increasingly threatened with closure due to a lack of qualified workers. The exchange on the progress and experiences from neighboring countries provided new perspectives and answers to the question of qualification of staff, as well as strategies for recruiting and retaining skilled workers.

Representatives of the respective authorities, as well as social services and care providers from the three countries, presented new approaches to master the mentioned issues. Concepts like regional interdisciplinary networks, enhancing and adopting work environments and promoting the work fields differently provided food for thought and enriching exchanges. Recruitment and retention of social and care workers formed the second focus of the meeting and offered innovative and differing approaches between the three partners. The overall conclusion was to highlight the positive and fulfilling purpose of social and care work, not only to change the mindset within the sector but as well the external reception of it. This can have a positive impact on future generations of potential trainees and skilled workers.

The meeting in Berlin also offered the opportunity to bid farewell to a long-standing ICSW colleague. *Michael Löher*, Chairman of the German Association, will be retiring in June and the opportunity was taken to thank him for his dedicated work and support within the ICSW cooperation.

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## Time to double down on Social Europe: Social Platform's response to the EU elections

While the dust settles in Brussels after the recent European elections, it is clear we are witnessing the further growth of extreme far right parties. While Social Platform welcomes the stability that the traditional grand coalition brings, the recent election highlights its fragility. This election must serve as an urgent reminder to all policy makers that people feel left behind and that meeting their needs means prioritising social rights.

As civil society, we are deeply concerned about the growth of extremist groups in recent local, national and EU elections who make political gain at the expense of vulnerable groups. In particular, political groups and individuals who incite hatred against marginalised communities and minorities and fuel racist, homophobic, transphobic, sexist discourses.

Social Platform calls on EU policy makers not to align with extremist right-wing parties, and work as a coalition of pro-European, inclusive and progressive voices. Normalising extremist groups and political ideas, presents a significant threat to our democracy, rule of law and undermines the recognition and vindication of our human rights.

To prevent the continued growth of extremist groups policy makers must acknowledge and address the root causes of their populist success. Extremist parties thrive in times of social crisis, when welfare states are eroded, poverty, inequality and systems of oppression grow, and people feel unheard. The growth of the extreme parties is part of a wider trend, it is not happening in isolation. In the EU today, 1 in 5 are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including more than 20 million children, 1 in 10 households live in energy poverty while housing costs, severe material deprivation and financial distress of households continues to grow. If newly elected MEPs are serious about tackling extremists, then it cannot be business as usual.

As the political groups negotiate their core asks for the next political guidelines and detail what policies they want the next President of the European Commission to pursue in exchange for their support, they must prioritise social rights, equality, equal opportunities and focus on the wellbeing of people and planet.

In addition to the commitment to revise the Action Plan for the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Union of Equality, political groups must show specific commitments to how they'll promote social inclusion and equality over the coming five years and ensure social progress for everyone.

In building a stronger Social Europe there is plenty that can be done, including: developing the social taxonomy and the Do No Significant Social Harm principle; promote social distribution impact assessments; drive forward an action plan on social services; follow through on the Parliament's previous call for a framework directive on minimum income; introduce mandatory social and green criteria in revising the public procurement directive; work and improve access, availability and affordability of essential services and revise and improve the indicators within the Semester's social scoreboard; develop an EU taskforce on housing; promote an EU anti-poverty strategy; monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Long-Term Care Strategy and the European Child Guarantee; build on the EU Social Economy Action Plan by creating enabling environments for Social Economy to thrive; and the effective transposition of the Directive on Violence Against Women & Domestic Violence.

As the EU lays the foundations for large-scale investments in defence and energy infrastructure, we cannot ignore urgently needed social investments, which are estimated by the EU to be about EUR 192 billion a year.[1] This can be achieved through a just transformation fund post 2026, to follow-up on the Recovery & Resilience Facility, with specific benchmarks to meet social and green investments and continuing to work on progressive taxation systems at national level.

In progressing climate policies, a just transition will be essential to ensure vulnerable groups are not negatively affected nor left behind, which can be facilitated through a Green & Social Deal, centring on the social dimension of climate polices, and ensuring low-income households are not disproportionately burdened in the green transition. Additionally, it must strengthen the social dimension of the circular economy through supporting reuse and repair operators in the social economy and establishing reuse targets for inclusive circular jobs.

MEPs will work on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). A significant focus must remain on social conditionality and the social use of the funds to underpin Europe's social progress and ensure no one is left behind as Europe navigates towards 2030.

In the area of civil liberties, justice and home affairs the Union of Equality should be prioritised with a commitment to both evaluate and extend the existing strategies and frameworks, this should also include evaluating the implementation of the pact on migration and asylum, resuming negotiations for the Long Term Residents directive and fighting the criminalisation of CSOs working with migrants. The union of equality must do better to mainstream social inclusion, through breaking silos: discrimination and social exclusion are two sides of the same coin and should be tackled simultaneously.

In short, there are numerous concrete policies the European Institutions should pursue and prioritise in the months ahead, all within EU competencies. Social Platform, and our members, remain a key supporter and ally in promoting the uptake of these policies.

Social Platform calls on progressive and pro-European voices to work together to ensure that over the next 5 years the correct policies are put in place to guarantee social progress and tackle the root causes of poverty, social exclusion and inequality.

Contact: *Laura de Bonfils*, Secretary General, Social Platform
**Laura.debonfils@socialplatform.org**

*(source: Social Platform: Time to Double Down on Social Europe: Social Platform's Response to the EU Elections. [online]. [cit. 2024-6-25]. Available at: <https://www.socialplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Social-Platform_Election_Response.pdf>)*

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1 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0098

## AGE Platform

**Read Special Briefing**

### Historic development: UN States recommend a UN convention to better protect rights in old age

**Special Briefing**

The 14th session of the United Nations (UN) Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG), held from May 20-24, 2024, marked an important milestone in the promotion and protection of human rights in older age, after years of discussion and active advocacy by civil society.

Established by the United Nations General Assembly, the mandate of the OEWG is to: assess the international human rights framework for older persons, identify gaps and propose measures to fill those gaps, including the feasibility of new instruments.

This year, for the first time since its creation in 2010, the OEWG adopted by consensus a **set of recommendations** that encourage UN Member States to consider – among other options – an international legally binding instrument, namely a convention, to promote, protect and ensure the recognition and realization of all human rights of older persons.

This unprecedented decision also gives the mandate to the Chair of the OEWG to present these recommendations for the consideration of the General Assembly with a view to promoting further concrete discussions on next steps on the protection and promotion of the human rights of older persons.

*(source: AGE Platform Europe: Historic development: UN States recommend a UN convention to better protect rights in old age. [online]. [cit. 2024-6-20]. Available at: <https://www.age-platform.eu/historic-development-un-states-recommend-a-un-convention-to-better-protect-rights-in-old-age/>)*

## EAPN

### End Poverty: A Political choice for the future of Europe

[Elections for the European Parliament took place on 6-9 June 2024.]
The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) underscore[d] the critical importance of addressing poverty and social exclusion within the European Union. With 95 million citizens facing daily struggles to survive, it is evident that urgent action is needed to create a fairer and more equitable society for all.


The rise of in-work poverty, the inadequacy of social protection systems, and the shifting landscape of the labor market have contributed to the alarming levels of poverty across the EU. Moreover, discriminatory practices and systemic inequalities persist, undermining the principles of equality and solidarity upon which the EU was founded.

In June 2024, citizens across the Union [had] the opportunity to shape the agenda for the next term of the European Parliament. It [was] imperative that this election deliver[ed] representatives committed to building a stronger, fairer, and more resilient European Union.

Therefore, the European Anti-Poverty Network present[ed] the following key demands for the next mandate of the European institutions:

1. Adopt a comprehensive European Anti-Poverty Strategy
2. Ensure an inclusive and intersectional Twin-Transition
3. Guarantee the right to adequate housing
4. Ensure the right to healthy and affordable food
5. Improve access to healthcare and essential services

## 1 Adopt a comprehensive European Anti-Poverty Strategy

The European Union faces a significant challenge in combating poverty and social exclusion, with 95 million citizens struggling to meet their basic needs every day. It is essential to recognize that poverty stems from intersecting social, political, and systemic factors. Therefore, a comprehensive European Anti-Poverty Strategy is necessary to address the multifaceted nature of poverty, which extends beyond economic factors to encompass social, political, and systemic issues. We need a Europe and policies that prioritise social policy initiatives and champion the eradication of poverty to create a more inclusive society where everyone's rights are recognised and upheld. Investing in a decent minimum income means investing in the economy.

## 2 Ensure an inclusive and intersectional Twin-Transition

The transition to a green and digital economy presents both opportunities and challenges for the European Union. However, current policy approaches often overlook social considerations, leading to the marginalisation of vulnerable populations. As a result, we see record levels of employment alongside persistent in-work poverty and rising inequalities across Europe. Shockingly, 1 in 5 Europeans are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, with significant proportions facing energy poverty and financial distress. Therefore, to ensure an inclusive transition that leaves no one behind, it is essential to integrate social policies into climate and digital initiatives that goes beyond mere job creation and skills development. It requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the structural and systemic roots of social exclusion. This includes, for instance, implementing fiscal and economic measures such as green and social investments plans, wealth taxation and redistribution, shifting subsidies away from fossil industries, introducing a financial transaction tax and taxing windfall profits. Prioritizing these measures can create a transition that not only promotes economic growth but also fosters social equity and environmental sustainability, leaving no one behind in the process.

## 3 Guarantee the right to adequate housing

Access to adequate and affordable housing is a fundamental human right that is essential for individuals' well-being and social inclusion. However, housing insecurity and homelessness persist across the EU, disproportionately impacting vulnerable and marginalized communities. In recent years, we have seen a troubling rise in housing costs in our cities, driven by the accumulation of real estate revenues. This trend has hit groups such as women, low-income individuals, religious and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, migrants, and refugees the hardest. Discrimination in housing access forces many from these communities into inadequate living conditions, including informal settlements, substandard housing, or precarious arrangements due to financial constraints. These challenges are compounded by a lack of essential services like water, sanitation, and electricity, further deepening their vulnerability. To tackle this issue head-on, the EU must establish a dedicated “European fund for investment in affordable, decent, and suitable housing.” This fund should prioritize the creation and maintenance of low -cost housing tailored to the diverse needs of different populations. EAPN calls on the EU and member states to align housing policies with the objectives of the Green Deal and the European Pillar of Social Rights, to effectively combat housing inequality and foster greater social inclusion.

## 4 Ensure the right to healthy and affordable food

Food poverty presents an urgent challenge in Europe, exacerbated by rising food and energy costs. This has triggered a cost-of-living crisis, disproportionately affecting the most economically vulnerable groups. Many families find it increasingly difficult to afford nutritious meals, resulting in adverse effects on their health and overall well-being. For example, parents are grappling with providing adequate nourishment for their children, students are forced to prioritize between heating their homes and securing enough food, and the elderly are confronted with the difficult choice between essential medications and nutritious meals. Existing support systems like pensions, welfare schemes, and wages have failed to keep pace with the steep rise in food prices, exacerbating the physical and mental health challenges faced by EU citizens. These multifaceted negative consequences underscore the critical need to address the economic decisions at the heart of European food production and health services. To combat food poverty effectively, it is imperative to address its root causes and bolster community food resilience. This involves the establishment of accessible, sustainable, and health-focused food systems that prioritize both public health and long-term food security. Moreover, the EU must confront the resistance from influential vested interests to safeguard public health, invest in social welfare policies and sustainable food production and security. Europe needs to promote affordable and nutritious food for all to confront the inherent inequalities within the current food system and ensure universal access to essential nutrition and adequate health support for everyone.

## 5 Improve access to healthcare and essential services

Access to healthcare and essential services is not just a matter of convenience; it's a fundamental aspect of social inclusion and well-being. The principle 20 of the European Pillar of Social Rights underscores this by emphasizing everyone's right to access essential services of good quality. These encompass a wide range of services, from healthcare to energy, digital, and transport, fulfilling basic human needs and fostering social inclusion, especially for disadvantaged groups.

However, affordability and accessibility barriers often hinder individuals, particularly those at risk of poverty or social exclusion, from accessing these vital services. This affordability challenge disproportionately affects the most vulnerable, who may rely on income support or be forced to forego essential services due to financial constraints. As we approach the EU elections, it's crucial for the EU to implement measures ensuring universal access to quality healthcare and essential services, irrespective of socio-economic status or geographical location. Prioritizing access to these services is paramount in enabling all individuals to thrive and fully participate in society.

*(source: EAPN Europe: End Poverty: A Political choice for the future of Europe. [online]. [cit. 2024-6-21]. Available at: <https://www.eapn.eu/eu-election-2024/>)*

# Council of Europe

### Secretary General 2024 report on democracy, human rights, and rule of law in Europe – 30 April 2024

Link to the news

"Our rights do not apply only at one moment in time, or to a specific situation. Instead, they are built to apply over the decades, and in whatever circumstances we find ourselves", stated Secretary General *Marija Pejčinović Burić* in the introduction to the 2024 report on democracy, human rights, and rule of law in Europe, entitled "Our rights, our future", published [on 30 April 2024].

"Our rights are not an end point or a destination, but rather a moral compass for our journey through life. The Reykjavik Declaration was an important milestone at a moment of profound concern for our continent, but we have found our direction. Now, the journey must continue", emphasised *Marija Pejčinović Burić*.

The annual report focuses on the Organisation's follow-up to the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Iceland in May 2023. In the "Reykjavik Declaration" European leaders expressed their commitment to addressing democratic backsliding in many parts of the continent.

The Summit's main priority was to signal unwavering support for Ukraine and to ensure accountability for the Russian Federation's ongoing war of aggression.

The report highlights the progress made in creating and setting up the Register of Damage, which now comprises 43 states plus the European Union, with staff and offices in the Hague and Kyiv.

Another priority was the need for member states to fully execute final judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. Progress has also been made in this area.

Finally, future challenges were also addressed at Reykjavik, with a strong focus on the draft Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, and enhanced work on the environment and human rights and tackling migrant smuggling.

"As we celebrate 75 years of the Council of Europe, we should be confident in ourselves and our capacity to address these challenges, harnessing the opportunities provided by multilateralism. We have faced terrible circumstances before, and we have overcome them. We can do that again", wrote the Secretary General.

*(source: NGO-unit: Conference of INGOs/civil society: selected Council of Europe news – Conférence des OING/ société civile: actualités sélectionnées du Conseil de l'Europe. [E-mail]. [cit. 2024-5-17])*

## New Georgian legislation on transparency of Foreign Influence does not conform to European and international standards, says Expert Council on NGO law – 16 May 2024

Link to news

The Expert Council on NGO law, a body of the Conference of International non-governmental organisations of the Council of Europe, released today an opinion on Georgia's law on transparency of foreign Influence which was adopted on 14 May at the conclusion of its third reading.

In the 25 pages document, which examines one by one the various legal provisions and their implications especially for organisations of the civil society, the experts consider inter alia that:

- the purported retrospective inclusion of income received before the legislation would enter into force is clearly arbitrary in that those entities affected could not escape the obligation to register even if thereafter the income received from foreign sources became less significant;

- there are many provisions that impose requirements to disclose personal data that have no conceivable link with the supposed objectives of the law regarding transparency of funding from foreign powers;

- the provisions aim at establishing a monitoring mechanism which would be very extensive in its scope, affecting all civil society organisations, and be unnecessarily intrusive in its range and frequency;

- the intended provisions for the imposition of penalties are manifestly excessive for a regulatory measure.

The opinion further states that this legislation would necessarily lead to the stigmatisation of the entities concerned by making the assertion that they are pursuing the interest of a foreign power simply because of the source of some of their income. It concludes that "There is, therefore, no justification for this law that would be consistent with European and international standards."

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*The Expert Council on NGO Law was created in January 2008 by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe with the aim of creating an enabling environment for NGOs through examining national NGO legislation and its implementation and providing advice on how to bring national law and practice into line with Council of Europe standards and European good practice. It carries out thematic and country studies on specific aspects of NGO legislation and its implementation that seem to pose problems of conformity with international standards, notably the European Convention on Human Rights and the Recommendation (2007)14 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the legal status of NGOs in Europe. Its work covers the 46 member countries of the Council of Europe and Belarus.*

*(source: Secretariat of the Conference of INGOs: Conference of INGOs/civil society: selected Council of Europe news. [E-mail]. [cit. 2024-5-17]).*

# Publications

**New Study by Expert Council on Civil society support to refugees and other migrants**

The Expert Council on NGO Law of the Conference of INGOs has [recently] released a new thematic study: "Civil society support to refugees and other migrants in Europe: the need to end the backlash on civil society space".

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More information about the work of the Expert Council and previous studies can be found on the dedicated web page: Expert Council on NGO Law (coe.int)

*(source: Conference of INGOs: New Study by Expert Council on Civil society support to refugees and other migrants. [E-mail]. [cit. 2024-6-22])*

## Conferences/Expert Meetings

**Innovations in Social Work and Social Development: Uniting Communities across the Globe for Sustainable Change**

Greetings from Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous) and the International Consortium for Social Development!

We are thrilled to announce the 24th ICSD Biennial Conference, themed "**Innovations in Social Work and Social Development: Uniting Communities across the Globe for Sustainable Change**," on **January 8–10, 2025**.

We are pleased to invite you to join us in celebrating the 50th year of ICSD and the 25th DYUTI annual conference (hosted by the Rajagiri School of Social Work), which will merge with the 24th ICSD Biennial Conference. The conference will bring together institutions, leaders, and professionals in social work and social development to collaborate, exchange ideas, and collectively address existing challenges and opportunities in global development.

We kindly request your presence and encourage you to share this invitation with all relevant departments and encourage student participation and paper presentations.

More information on the **conference website**

Contact E-mails:

**icsd2025@rajagiri.edu**
**internationaloffice@rajagiri.edu**

## Useful Links

AGE Platform Europe: Historic development: UN States recommend a UN convention to better protect rights in old age:
https://www.age-platform.eu/historic-development-un-states-recommend-a-un-convention-to-better-protect-rights-in-old-age/

The Expert Council on NGO Law – Council of Europe – published studies:
https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/expert-council

## Colophon

ICSW Europe registered office is located at the municipality of Utrecht (the Netherlands).

The name of the Association is: International Council on Social Welfare Europe, abbreviated to: ICSW Europe.
The Newsletter of ICSW European Region is published quarterly. Material may be freely reproduced or cited provided the source is acknowledged. Contributions on social welfare from all sectors of the international community are welcome.

Contributions and comments can be sent to:

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