



ICSW EUROPE NEWSLETTER **March & April 2011**

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Successful ICSW ENSACT Conference Brussels Sustainable Social Development

The joint ICSW-ENSACT conference took place in Brussels from 10 to 13 April 2011. Over 600 participants – social professionals, social work educators, policy makers and users – from 29 European countries and several countries outside Europe joined in three days of debate on sustainable social development and economic challenges. Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council, spoke at the opening of the conference, emphasizing that financial stabilization and solidarity between Member States were crucial for preserving the European Social Model. In his view, Europe may sometimes be presented as a scapegoat, but it plays an active role in setting objectives, monitoring developments and emphasizing the need for equal opportunities throughout the European Union and beyond.

Key note speakers

The first key note speaker, Jef Peeters, talked about the relationship between environmental challenges and social development. Economy, society and ecosystem interact within a delicate balance. Peeters called for a new view on well-being and the need for a transition into a society based on quality and equality. In his view, ecological justice – access to resources, equal distribution – call for 'dematerialisation' in the developed world, and a shift from political power to personal strength.

Jean-Michel Bonvin claimed that the connection between welfare and social work on the one hand, and economic sustainability on the other hand, is much more complex than suggested. Genuine social and economic sustainability would have to rely on the enhancement of beneficiaries' capabilities by empowering them and respecting their freedom of choice, avoiding all paternalistic practices.

Richard Wilkinson highlighted the impact of unequal societies on relative deprivation, i.e. morbidity and mortality, obesity, teenage birth rates, mental illness, homicide, low social

capital, hostility and racism, but also on poor educational performance, proportion of imprisonment, drug overdose mortality and low social mobility. He stated that many of the problems related to low social status may be amenable to changes in income distribution.

Final findings

The forum session on the last afternoon of the conference reflected the richness of the more than 250 presentations that had taken place in workshops, field visits, seminars and symposium sessions. Three panelists commented on the findings presented along the lines of the four conference themes: Social policy and Social Action; Active Citizenship and Social Rights; Professional Intuition; and Innovation. They were Ms Gilda Farrell, Head of the Social Cohesion Development and Research Division of the Council of Europe, Mr Fintan Farrell, Director of the European Anti-Poverty Network, and Ms Berengere Steppe from the Belgian Federal Ministry of Integration. Panelists raised issues such as the need to think outside of the social box and to question the model of growth as it is currently presented, in which fiscal consolidation comes first. The social impact of the crisis is constantly underreported and under-discussed. Economic governance seems to be taking over the social, especially at the EU level. Instead of talking of the social economy as a separate entity, we need to look at making the economy more social. We are facing a democratic deficit. Social cohesion is the capacity of society, i.e. of its citizens. It is a shared responsibility and obligation to bring everyone into the discussion. The rationality and intelligence of all people, including users and beneficiaries, should be respected. For this reason the Council of Europe designed a Charter on shared social responsibilities, aiming to limit uncertainty over the future and create renewed awareness of public and private responsibilities, by promoting the principle of shared social responsibility in order to channel the knowledge and resources of individual and collective players, strong and weak alike, vis-à-vis jointly agreed objectives in the field of social, environmental and intergenerational justice in a long-term vision.

Next conferences

ICSW holds conferences every year, alternating between regional European and global conferences. The next ICSW related conference will be the World Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Stockholm, Sweden, from 8-12 July 2012. The next European region ENSACT conference will take place from 23 to 26 April 2013, in Istanbul, Turkey.

More information

The Conference book of the ENSACT conference contains abstracts from all conference presentations and can be downloaded from the conference website www.ensact.eu

General Assembly ICSW Europe

The General Assembly of ICSW Europe took place in Brussels on 10 April. More than 20 ICSW members from 11 countries approved the annual report and financial accounts of 2010, and discussed the Work Programme 2011-2014 in which the priorities and activities for the coming years are outlined. The final version of the Work Programme will be presented soon. The board of ICSW Europe remains unchanged, with Eva Holmberg-Herrström from Sweden as President, Cornelia Markowksi from Germany as Treasurer, and board members Elli Aaltonen from Finland and Leta Dromantiene from Lithuania. The General Secretary Bodil Eriksson, also from Sweden, has been active in this function since January 2011.

The next General Assembly will take place in parallel with the global ICSW conference in Stockholm in July 2012.

Council of Europe Conference of INGOs

ICSW Europe participated in the Conference of International NGOs of the Council of Europe in January 2011. Around 400 organisations have Participatory status with the Council of Europe. Several far-reaching decisions were taken to reform the Conference of INGOs as the result of a reform started in 2010. The INGO conference budget was reduced with approximately 50%, but a more efficient inner organisation was proposed which can respond quicker and be a better match to the Council of Europe.

The number of meetings of INGOs enjoying participatory status in the Conference of INGOs has been reduced from four to two meetings a year in Strasbourg. The six thematic committees and transversal groups have been reduced to three committees. The working-names for the three new committees are: 1. Human Rights. 2. Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges. 3. Education and Culture. The first two of these new committees are very interesting for ICSW. An INGO session will be held in the early summer to decide on work processes.

For more information: [Thomas Goldberg](#)
ICSW-representative at the INGO conference

ICSW Europe expert meetings Applications for 2012

ICSW Europe hosts expert meetings regularly. These are usually focused on a specific theme related to the general priorities of ICSW Europe and include participants and experts from several European countries. The subject matter discussed in the expert meeting relates to the thematic issues and priorities of ICSW Europe as presented in the Work Programme 2011-2014. The expert meeting has a clear expected result, usually providing outputs in the form of a written report with conclusions and recommendations, a public statement and/or a position paper for ICSW Europe. ICSW Europe can contribute to these expert meetings in several ways:

- Use the ICSW network to identify and/or invite experts
- Communicate the event to members and others and invite participants
- Offer financial support to pay for experts' travel and accommodation

For more information on the conditions, the procedure and the format for applications, please visit the website of ICSW European Region. The **deadline for applications for 2012 is 30 September 2011.**

Applications can be sent to: Bodil Eriksson, Secretary-General ICSW Europe, c/o Department of Social Work, Stockholm University, SE-106 91 Stockholm, Sweden. Ph. +46 8 1632228 Mob: +46 73 9484372; E-mail: [Bodil Eriksson](#)

Changes at Social Platform

The general assembly of the Social Platform in April elected a new management committee for 2011-2013, consisting of:

- Conny Reuter (Solidar), who was re-elected President
- Heather Roy (Eurodiaconia) and Rodolfo Cattani (EDF), who were elected Vice-Presidents
- Michel Mercadié (FEANTSA), who was elected Treasurer
- Catriona Williams (Eurochild), Michaela Moser (EAPN) and Julien Dijol (CECODHAS), who were elected Ordinary Members

The general assembly also accepted three new full members to Social Platform:

- [TGEU](#) – Transgender Europe

- [IUT](#) – International Union of Tenants
 - [PICUM](#) – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
- After holding the position of Acting Director since June 2010, Pierre Baussand takes over the running of the Social Platform secretariat as its Director.

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights First annual report

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights has now been legally binding for over a year – primarily on the EU institutions (European Parliament, Council and the European Commission) when preparing new European laws, but also on national authorities if they are implementing EU law. As part of its efforts to make fundamental rights a reality for citizens in the EU, the European Commission is reporting for the first time on how the Charter is being applied. The Annual Report shows that fundamental rights are relevant across a wide range of policies – from data protection to immigration and asylum – and that public interest in the Charter runs high. However, the report also highlights that the Charter is frequently misunderstood. In 2010, the Commission received more than 4,000 letters from the general public regarding fundamental rights. Approximately three quarters of these concerned cases outside the remit of EU law. In addition, a recent survey by the European Ombudsman found that 72% of Europeans do not feel well informed about the Charter. The report is a first step in addressing these challenges, clarifying where the Charter applies and where it does not. The report should help citizens determine where they need to turn when they believe that their fundamental rights have been violated by an EU institution or a national authority. The Annual Report is therefore part of the Commission's strategy to ensure that fundamental rights are effectively implemented so that people can rely on them in practice.

The report gives the first comprehensive overview of how fundamental rights are being implemented in the EU following the Lisbon Treaty, which made the Charter legally binding. The report highlights how the rights enshrined in the Charter must always be taken into careful consideration by the EU institutions, while Member States are bound by the Charter only in cases where they implement EU policies and law. The report is structured into six chapters reflecting the six titles of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights: Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizens' Rights and Justice. It shows that the Charter is relevant across a range of policies for which the EU is responsible.

The Commission's Annual Report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/intro/news_intro_en.htm

UN Commission for Social Development Poverty eradication

The 49th Session of the Commission for Social Development in New York from 9-18 February had the priority theme Poverty Eradication. ICSW was represented at this event, where UN Member States, civil society and other stakeholders examined the progress and challenges related to poverty eradication. Although a permanent objective of development since 1995, progress in this field has been uneven among countries and regions.

Social Protection Floor Initiative

ICSW made a statement on poverty eradication and promoted the Social Protection Floor Initiative, which combines a basic set of essential social rights and transfers to provide a minimum income and livelihood security for all with access to essential goods and services. At the same time the Initiative calls for the supply of an essential level of goods and social services such as health, water and sanitation, education, food, housing, life and asset-saving information that are accessible for all.

The Social Protection Floor Initiative was also endorsed by Jane Stewart, Director of the ILO Office for the United Nations. She stated that the Social Protection Floor 'emphasizes the need to implement comprehensive, coherent and coordinated social protection and employment policies to guarantee services and social transfers across the life cycle, paying particular attention to the vulnerable groups'.

EU contribution

On behalf of the European Union the Hungarian Minister of State for Social Inclusion, Zoltán Balog, stated that poverty reduction is a worldwide challenge, but emphasized that 'poverty is also an issue within the EU, even though it is an overall relatively wealth region that has developed strong welfare systems'. He referred to the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010, the poverty reduction target within the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion to illustrate EU efforts to combat poverty.

Mr Balog also claimed that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals remains the EU's and its Member States first priority. The EU, as the largest donor, has a specific responsibility. He welcomed the UN social protection floor as promoted by ILO and WHO, and referred to the 2nd edition of the European Report on Development that was presented during the UN Commission for Social Development and which highlights the EU contribution to social protection in developing countries.

EU and vulnerable groups

Another statement on behalf of the European Union was made by Mr Imre Nyitrai, Hungarian Deputy State Secretary, related to the situation of specific vulnerable social groups: persons with disabilities, youth, older persons and families. On 22 January 2011, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities formally entered into force in the European Union. The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 sets up a list of actions identified at EU level to supplement national ones, and it determines the mechanisms needed to implement the UN Convention at EU level. The rights of people with disabilities are also promoted in the EU development programmes.

Mr Nyitrai also noted that the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing will coincide with the 30th anniversary of the UN's first World Assembly on Ageing held in Vienna and the 10th anniversary of the second World Assembly in Madrid and hailed this as an opportunity to promote synergy and to enhance the visibility both of the UN's and the EU's action on ageing. He expected that the Ministerial Conference of UNECE at European level in 2012 would represent an important step for the development and the revitalization of strategic actions of the EU and the UN in Europe.

ICSW's statement on poverty eradication can be found [here](#).

History of social work canon

One of the messages conveyed during the ENSACT conference on Sustainable social development is that innovation is not always only connected to the future. We should also be learning from our past, both from successes and from failures. The international version of the History of Social Work Canon allows users to look back and learn from a timeline/website on the history of social work. This initiative was launched in 2010 following the success of the Dutch-language equivalents for the Netherlands and Flanders. The website is free for users, and always will be. The costs associated with developing the website and writing/editing the contents are carried by a number of public shareholders. They have an interest in making this information available to the global community of social work.

The first draft version of this website can be found at www.historyofsocialwork.org There are currently 20 icons available, but the full version will contain 50 icons. Suggestions on what to add to the current icons or which icons to add are welcome.

The Flemish ministry of welfare and the Dutch ministry of welfare provided the initial budget to kick-start this website. The current version is the result of this support. Organisations interested in providing support for the further development of this initiative are welcomed to contact the [initiators](#).

Publications

Rethinking Poverty

UN Report on the World Social situation 2010

The 2010 issue of the Report on the World Social Situation focuses on the challenge of achieving poverty reduction. The Millennium Development Goals seek to halve, by 2015, the levels of extreme poverty that existed in 1990. The Report begins with an overview of global, regional and selected country poverty trends over the period 1981-2005. Current poverty measurements are problematic and controversial: the Report urges going beyond the dollar-a-day poverty line to embrace an approach that seeks to combat inequality and social exclusion through the universal provision of essential social services.

The Report recommends reconsideration of the policy approaches that have dominated the discourse on growth and poverty thus far. It considers the contributions of both the growth and inequality-centered approaches to poverty reduction, including macroeconomic policies, microeconomic policies of economic liberalization, and labour-market and other social policies. The Report urges promoting structural transformation to bring about sustained growth of real output, employment and incomes – in other words, inclusive development that benefits poor people. It advocates the integration of economic and social policies to enable the achievement of people-centered development outcomes. The Report seeks to advance the global dialogue on and international effort for poverty reduction to help achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs ST/ESA/324

ISBN 978-92-1-130278-3

Policy Brief "Poverty and Social Exclusion of Migrants in the European Union"

Orsolya Lelkes and Eszter Zólyomi

The Policy Brief analyses the occurrence of risk-of-poverty and social exclusion among the migrant population, and the trends in poverty rates between 2004 and 2007 based on the EU-SILC survey. The results include various tests of reliability, including the estimation of confidence intervals for the poverty estimates, and the use of alternative definitions of migrants.

Migrants from outside the European Union are occasionally exposed to a multiple times higher risk of poverty than the "indigenous" population. EU and non-EU migrants constitute two rather distinct groups in most countries in terms of their exposure to poverty.

The European Centre also explores the measure of social exclusion as defined in the EU2020 Strategy, including an analysis of the overlap between the measures of poverty, deprivation and low work intensity. Migrants are more likely to be socially excluded than the local population. Altogether, however, cumulative disadvantage (being at risk of poverty, suffering from severe material deprivation and living in households with very low work intensity) affects only about 1-2% of the migrant population, a number of 62 thousand EU migrants, but 518 thousand non-EU migrants.

More information can be found on the [website](#) of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

Is the European project moving backwards?

The Social Impact of the Crisis and of the Recovery Policies in 2010

The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) published a report on the ongoing negative social impact of the crisis, specifically on the vulnerable groups in society. The findings are based on reports of the national EAPN members. Despite the fact that the general consensus in Europe seems to be that the crisis is over, the report warns that "it is not just the social consequences of the crisis itself which continue to cause concern, but the consequences of the negative policy choices made by Member States in their recovery packages, and the decisions over austerity measures" which will ensure that the worst is yet to come.

The social impact is getting worse, as Governments' austerity measures make the poor pay and undermine a sustainable recovery. The social impact of the crisis is being systematically under-assessed and ignored, both at national and at EU level. NGOs are gravely weakened and their fundamental contribution to society is at stake, both in providing services and in their advocacy role in favour of the vulnerable groups that they serve. Although the crisis was not caused by public sector spending, the consequences are felt there more than in other sectors. However, some countries – the Nordic countries and Poland – made different choices, investing in public sector social protection and other public goods, and sustained commitment to reduce inequality gaps and improve access to services, reinforced their capacity of resistance to the crisis and the potential for a quick recovery.

EAPN emphasizes that alternative policy options are open to other Member States to support a fairer sustainable recovery, aimed at defending social priorities, reducing deficits and choosing anti-cyclical measures rather than the reduction in deficits at any price. The EU is called upon to restore the core values of the European Project, and to use the EU 2020 Strategy to drive an ambitious social and sustainable vision.

The full EAPN report can be found [here](#)

New website

<http://www.eurohealthnet.eu>

EuroHealthNet launched its new Website at <http://www.eurohealthnet.eu>. This Website showcases health promotion work carried out by the membership and network of EuroHealthNet, with the aim of improving the health of European citizens by striving for greater health equity between and within countries. Since 1996 EuroHealthNet's mission has been to help improve health for all and tackle social and health inequities. The health of EU citizens is determined by the conditions in which they are born, grow, live, work and age. These circumstances, which are shaped by policy choices, are mostly responsible for health inequalities – the unfair and avoidable differences in health status between and within countries. Health inequalities persist across the EU, within and between Member States, and there is evidence that they are widening.

Conferences

30 June - 2 July 2011

Linz, Austria

Old? So what? Independent living for seniors with disabilities

European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD); Caritas Linz

E-Mail: charlotte.boetticher@easpd.eu

Website: <http://www.easpd-linz.com/english/>

In the framework of the research done for the European Platform Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, launched in December 2010, the European Commission has identified persons with disabilities and elderly people as being at high risk of falling into poverty and social exclusion. This means that elderly people with disabilities are facing double disadvantages and risks in society. Elderly persons with disabilities are also more likely to live in residential institutions and often don't have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and with whom they would like to live even though article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities clearly underlines the right for all persons with disabilities to "Living independently and being integrated into society".

04 - 06 July 2011 Warsaw, Poland

European Social Services Conference 2011 - Building an Active and Caring Society: Innovation, Participation, Community
European Social Network (ESN)

E-Mail: conference@esn-eu.org

Website: <http://www.esn-conference.org/>

The annual European Social Services Conference in Warsaw 2011 will emphasise the important role of social services in building an active and caring society for all. These are some of the issues for discussion:

- Volunteering both informal and formal
- Coordination of care; including health and social services
- Integrated solutions; across sectors and professions
- Doing more with less; more efficient and more effective
- Reducing poverty – the role of local services
- Evidence based social work practice
- Environmentally sustainable services
- Closing institutions and developing community care
- Empowering service users and their carers
- Inclusion for minorities including the Roma

05 - 08 July 2011 Toulouse, France

23rd ENHR Conference

European Network for Housing Research (ENHR)

Website: <http://www.enhr2011.com/>

The theme of this year's conference in Toulouse, France, is 'Mixité': an urban and housing issue? Mixing people, housing and activities as the urban challenge of the future. Some interesting workshops during this conference are:

- Poverty Neighbourhoods
- Welfare Policy, Homelessness and Social Exclusion
- Housing & Living Conditions of Ageing Populations.

06 - 09 July 2011 Madrid, Spain

Naming and Framing: The Making of Sexual (In)Equality

International Association for the Study of Sexuality, Culture and Society (IASSCS)

E-Mail: 2011conference@iasscs.org

Website: <http://www.iasscs.org/2011conference/>

The 2011 Conference theme focuses on the multiple ways that equality and inequality are articulated through sexuality. The meeting will explore diverse situations and issues of (in)equality with regard to sexuality in the global arena, bringing together researchers,

advocates, policymakers and practitioners to critically share their strategies and challenges that inform and inspire new forms of action and thinking about sexuality.

06 - 08 July 2011

Lisbon, Portugal

International conference on community development, empowerment and leadership

Sociedade Portuguesa de Psicologia Comunitária

E-Mail: info@cdconference.com

Website: <http://www.cdconference.com/>

The chosen theme for 2011 IACD Conference is transformative leadership and empowering communities. The core goal of community development is to work in genuine partnership, in building socially and economically inclusive, diverse, environmentally sustainable, gender responsive and just societies. Empowering and transformative approaches boost a more active participation of community leaderships in decision making processes, and enable the transformative capacity of citizens to act as agents of change.

07 - 09 July 2011

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The struggle to belong. Dealing with diversity in 21st century urban settings

Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research – Urban Studies

University of Amsterdam – The Netherlands

Website: <http://www.rc21.org/conferences/amsterdam2011/>

Some of the topics:

- Neighbourhoods and individuals: advanced methodologies
- Social consequences of gentrification
- Local responses to transnationalism
- Governance and diversity in cities
- Invisible migrants in the cities of the South
- Negotiating social mix in global cities

Deadline abstracts: May 15th 2011

26 - 28 July 2011

Washington, United States

16th International Conference: Rethinking and Revitalizing Intergenerational Connections

Generations United

Website: <http://www.gu.org/RESOURCES/Conference.aspx>

The Generations United conference will be different from a typical conference. It will offer multiple opportunities for you to rethink your work, your community, your connections and society through learning about intergenerational programs, practices, policies and research from around the world.

04 - 07 August 2011

Oslo, Norway

Power and Participation - Nordic Sociological Association Conference

Nordic Sociological Association

E-Mail: nordic2011@sosiologi.uio.no

Website: www.nordicsociology2011.org

For decades studies of power have been central in Nordic sociology. Almost a decade after the Danish and Norwegian Power Studies were closed in 2003, it is time to bring up the theme once more, asking not only about power in society at large, but also in organizations, ethnic and gender relations, communities, and in cultural constellations. Special sets of

questions are raised when regarding power as part of structural complexities. In addition to viewing power as a set of top-down constraints, bottom-up perspectives concerning changes in autonomy and control among ordinary citizens become essential when adding questions of participation.

11 - 13 August 2011 Reykjavík, Iceland

The 2011 Joint Nordic Conference on Welfare and professionalism in Turbulent Times

a.o. The Nordic Association of Social Workers

E-Mail: conference@yourhost.is

Website: http://www.yourhost.is/welfare_2011/home.html

The focus will be on the welfare state in the Nordic countries and Europe, participation, empowering, poverty, social exclusion, user involvement, civil society, personal assistance, new knowledge and skills of practitioners and social equality.

Papers are welcome in the above mentioned areas and in areas of wider relevance, with a particular interest in papers involving collaborations between practitioners, academics, and researchers.

25 - 27 August 2011 Reykjavik, Iceland

6th ECPR General Conference

European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)

E-Mail: ecpr@essex.ac.uk

Website: http://www.ecprnet.eu/conferences/general_conference/Reykjavik/sections.asp

The academic programme takes the standard conference format of sections, which have within them between 4 and 10 panels. These sections are organized around a common theme and major research questions. Sections are not workshops. Rather, they provide the opportunity to present recent research to a larger audience and to expose it to the criticism, suggestions, and support of peers. The purpose of the conference is to further scientific discussion and research across all national scientific communities and across all areas of political science. In addition to sections and panels, there are round tables, symposia, a plenary lecture and an interesting social programme.

28 August - 02 September 2011

St. Gallen, Switzerland

7th World Ageing & Generations Congress

World Demographic & Ageing Forum

E-Mail: info@wdaforum.org

Website: <http://www.wdaforum.org/en/congress-2011.html>

As in the past years the congress will be a platform where academia, business, policy makers and practitioners from different fields come together to share their experience and expertise to cope with the challenges of demographic change.

31 August - 03 September 2011

Basel, Switzerland

Volunteer work between freedom and professionalisation

European University for Voluntary Service (EFU)

E-Mail: ceps@unibas.ch

Website:

<http://www.universityforvoluntaryservice.ch/universityforvoluntaryservice.ch/Home.html>

In order to mark the European Year of Volunteers, the European University for Voluntary Service (EFU) on the topic of "Volunteer work between freedom and professionalization" is taking place in Basel. The European University for Voluntary Service 2011 continues the tradition of previous universities of voluntary service. The objective of these conferences is, on the one hand, to map the current state of research on voluntary work in Europe and, on the other hand, to contribute to knowledge transfer and exchange between theory and practice.

Colophon

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