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A scenery on the 31st January 2019



The same scenery on the 21st January 2020



Weather or climate:

The nearby cross-country ski track in Espoo, Southern Finland turned into a 'Nordic walking' -trail in 2020.

This is still to large extent an example of *weather* variability. In 2021 there was snow again. But here in the North of Europe *climate* change has shown as the clear long-term *trend* of shorter winters and increasing average temperatures. We see less winters of the kind as in the left-side photo and more of those pictured in the right-side photo.

(photos © R.Wiman)

A Message from the President

The Limits to Growth (1972): “If the present trends in world population, industrialization, pollution, food production, and resource depletion continue unchanged, the limits to growth on this planet will be reached sometime within the next 100 years,” that is: the second half of the 21st century. And that is: during the lifetime of today's children and youth¹.

This Report was commissioned by the *Club of Rome*. It is an independent international think tank of scientists, business people, civil servants, and former heads of state, community leaders, etc. The study was based on a computer simulation model “*World3*”. It is good to remember that those days a computer occupied a full big room, its punch card reader was of the size of a piano – and the computing power of our today's cellphone is some 100,000 times larger than the computer of the early 1970s. Nevertheless, the report was a turning point in computer assisted ecological systems thinking connecting population, consumption, environment, technology.

The message was not intended to be an end-of-the-world prediction. Rather, *The Limits to growth* was a wake-up call: *The business as usual* is a no-go road.

The computer model, data and results were criticized for many good and for many not so relevant reasons. Without going into details, many studies have concluded that the model was clever. And calculations did not go that badly off the mark – because for the next 20-30 years that followed was a ‘free fall’, the business as usual indeed continued².

Since then, we have learned to understand more about the constraints of material growth given the current technology and the limits of our planetary ecosystem. One of the key variables that has been further specified is ‘pollution’ caused by carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Just a week ago, the existence and understanding of the complex mechanism of **climate change** was given the highest endorsement: the *2021 Nobel Prize in Physics* was awarded to *Giorgio Parisi, Syukuro Manabe* and *Klaus Hasselmann* who have laid the

foundation of our knowledge about complexities of the Earth's climate and global warming and how humanity influences it³.

The key research by *Klaus Hasselmann* was going on already those days of the Limits to Growth-discourse. However, serious action to limit human harmful impact on environment and climate had to wait until 1990s. Systematic action has been taken especially since 2010.

Some **examples of recent climate action** are given below:

- Establishment of the [IPCC \(Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change, 1988\)](#) and its [Reports since 1990](#). The next report in February 2022 will deal also with human vulnerability, poverty, livelihoods and the SDGs.
- Technology is advancing more rapidly anyone could have expected 10 or even 5 years ago. Take Denmark: wind power provides close to half of its electricity, progressing from 22% in 2010 to 48% in 2020⁴.
- Business is in the forefront (not necessarily governments): carbon trade and new cleantech business opportunities have become strong incentives and drivers to cleaner production technology.
- Environmental protection and climate crisis are on the top of global political agendas.
- Climate agreements: *The Paris Agreement (2015)* to trying to limit the global warming to 1.5 degrees, and follow up action such as the 26th [Conference of the Parties in November \(COP26\)](#), in Glasgow, Scotland. There governments are expected to agree to speed up reduction of CO₂ emissions.
- Climate action is high on the EU Agenda ([Delivering the European Green Deal | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)).
- Young people – the future generation – is on the move.

There is a reason to be optimistic: the worst scenario has already been avoided said *Prof. Petteri Taalas*, the Secretary-General of the *World Meteorological Organization (WMO)*. But the reduction in emissions must still be speeded up in order not to go much over 1.5 degrees. Every tenth of a degree is meaningful.

Climate change consequences are being an acute reality also in Europe: increasingly odd weather conditions are affecting us all: floods, droughts, heat waves. There are also secondary consequences emerging: energy prices, migrations, etc. Climate change prevention, mitigation of consequences, and implementation of coping mechanisms and eventual compensations are necessary but do also have a price tag. But doing nothing will be much more costly. It is also clear that climate change and adaption action costs and benefits impact various groups in different ways. Thus, it is not enough to do right things – we also must do those things right, in a fair way. Fairness is needed between population groups, between regions, between industries and occupations, and on the world scale. Indeed, sounds to be a typical field for action for national, regional and global equalizing social policies. It remains to be seen how economic and social policies are redesigned to respond fairly to challenges created by climate change and adaptive climate action. An unfortunate test case will be the foreseen energy crisis of this winter in Europe.

The basic message of the Limits to Growth remains valid: Unlimited growth on a limited planet is impossible. By the way: This year EU's '*Overshoot Day*', the day on which the EU exhausted its budget of natural resources was May 10th⁵.

We in **the rich world** has **particular responsibilities** for the global good and must have a key role in ecologizing our ways of life and in assisting the poorer countries to participate in and contribute to the joint effort:

- ⇒ We, the rich, need to reduce our *population growth* further because our ecological footprint per head is many times bigger than that of people from poorer countries. We also need to help families in poorer countries to reduce their family size.
- ⇒ We need to reduce our *ecological footprint* by changing consumption habits and our production patterns *applying better technology*. We must help the poorer countries to invest in low-carbon technology.
- ⇒ We need to *integrate ecological consideration* fully into our economic and social policies – and in our investments in lower income countries. Ecological boundaries, nature capital and the services of the ecosystem need to be included in cost and benefit calculations. *Ecological economics* – approach is a helpful tool in this.

⇒ We must *get the biggest total polluters on board*, that is USA, China, India, etc.

The Club of Rome has been active over all these years in promoting and updating its mission. A few weeks ago the **Club of Rome called the EU to take a lead** in designing policies that replace GDP growth with wider goals: *put the wellbeing of people and the planet at the center*.

The Think Tank says that EU does not need to make again a new '*Plan B*', it is enough to realize the *EU Green Deal* towards more equitable low carbon and circular economies. Also ensure fair incomes and work and shift taxation from labor to the consumption of the natural capital. Very important: end the perverse subsidies to fossil fuel and agriculture⁶.

It is necessary to get the buy-in by all Europe's countries and people. Catastrophic, no-hope scenarios will not motivate people. While everyone can do something individuals will not solve the big challenges. Thus, we in civil society organizations need to make demands to business and politics. We fail if some people and some countries feel being left behind. Extreme views lead to polarization and will not elicit cooperation – but cooperation, that is what is needed.

Sustainable development is defined as *development that satisfies the needs of the current generation without compromising the opportunities for future generations to fulfill their needs*. A reference to *future generations* sounds a remote concern. It is often forgotten that the most relevant '**future generations**' **are already here: today's children and youth**. They will shoulder the biggest burden of the consequences of climate change despite they have been least responsible for its emergence. Children and youth are the key stakeholders of the future Spaceship Earth. For them *there is no planet B*.

Ask the youth what kind of a world they want.

sources:

¹Dennis Meadows: *Limiting Growth to Save the World*, 2010; available at: <<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/dennis-meadows-limiting-growth-to-save-the-world>>

²Jorgen Randers: "*2052 – A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years*", 2012; available at: <<https://www.clubofrome.org/publication/2052/>>

³*The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The Nobel Prize in Physics; available at: <<https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2021/10/popular-physicsprize2021.pdf>>*

⁴*Share of wind power coverage in Denmark from 2009 to 2020. Statista; available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/991055/share-of-wind-energy-coverage-in-denmark/>>*

⁵*Eco Watch: If Everyone Lived Like Europeans, We'd Be Out of Earth's Resources Today; available at: <<https://www.ecowatch.com/eu-overshoot-day-2636803420.html>>*

⁶*The Club of Rome: The Club of Rome calls on EU to adopt wellbeing economics instead of growth at all costs - Club of Rome; available at: <<https://www.clubofrome.org/impact-hubs/reframing-economics/wellbeing/>>*

Ronald Wiman, ICSW Europe President

ICSW Europe Members



ICSW Sweden seminar series 2021-2022: The Swedish welfare society today – the roles of the media, the civil society and the welfare institutions

Sweden is commonly viewed as a universal welfare state where the state has a central responsibility to achieve a high level of equality by making education, care and nursing, healthcare and social initiatives of various kinds available to its citizens. In recent years, however, voices have been raised about changes where these universal claims have come into question. In several welfare sectors, there are increased demands for efficiency, a higher degree of bureaucratisation and a market-driven welfare where services and initiatives are procured in competition between tax-financed and private actors. An example of when increased demands on efficiency affect the individual is when a person applies for sickness compensation. The individual's life situation and well-being are here affected by prevailing guidelines and directives.

The civil society, which in Sweden is often described as a complement to the welfare state, is considered to have become more important in supporting people who face various forms of challenges in their lives. It should be pointed out, however, that the civil society, historically had and still has a central role in Swedish welfare society.

The media, recurrently labeled as the third state power, has an important agenda-setting role in today's society, as media descriptions affect how we perceive events and phenomena in society. This in turn can affect how different issues in society are handled and what efforts are directed towards a specific problem. At the same time, the media landscape is complex today with many various actors with different agendas and perspectives, which means challenges for how news reporting can be valued and understood by the public.

During the autumn of 2021 and the spring of 2022, ICSW Sweden will arrange three seminars that address *The organization and importance of welfare institutions today – the example of the Social Insurance Agency, The historical and contemporary role of civil society in Swedish society* and *The media's task in today's society – entertain, inform or something in between?*

The seminars will be held in Swedish. The content and discussions at the seminars will be summarized in a report written in English.

More information: www.icsw.se

(Axel Ågren, President ICSW Sweden)

ICSW Germany: Position paper on the new European Union social targets



The 'German Association for Public and Private Welfare' (ICSW Germany) has set out its position on the European Union headline targets on social policy – to be achieved by 2030 – in a new publication. These EU headline targets had been proposed by the European Commission in its 'European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan' of March 2021 and were endorsed by the European Council at the Porto Social Summit in May. The German Association welcomes the fact that the European Union has once again set headline targets in the areas of poverty and social exclusion, skills and employment. Member states need to implement ambitious national targets and social policy initiatives in order to achieve the reinforcement of social Europe by 2030. In order to achieve upward social convergence at a high level, the German Association supports the further implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights at EU level and in the member states, as proposed by the European Commission in its Action Plan. National, regional and local interests, as well as those of civil society, should at the same time be widely incorporated into the process of shaping policy.

Opinion of the Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V. (German Association for Public and Private Welfare) regarding the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan and the "Porto Declaration":

<https://www.deutscher-verein.de/en/publications-and-opinions-2171.html>

(source: Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V.; available at: <<https://www.deutscher-verein.de/en/publications-and-opinions-2171.html>>)

Dialectic Social Work and the Community Wellness Model: The blueprint for social work practice in the 21st Century

Vadim Moldovan, PhD, MSW

Free International University of Moldova, Program Director
York College of the City University of New York, Professor

The social work profession is forever in the throes of identity crisis. Since its inception in the beginning of the 20th Century, it is trying to reconcile the contrasting demands of micro- and macro-level practice into the "dual purpose" of social work – to promote individual wellbeing and social justice. However, the tension of the profession's dilemma remains as strong as the conflict between the visions of *Mary Richmond* and *Jane Addams*, between casework and community organizing, between individualized assistance and social change, between charity and empowerment. While the theoretical orientation of micro-level casework includes the overlapping framework of sociology and psychology, the macro-level social justice-oriented practice rests on the foundation of conflict and critical theories.

Dialectic social work emerged in the beginning of the new millennium as a guide for understanding of and practice in the complex modern world which is fraught with the peril of exploitation, deception, and degradation. The notion of "person-in-environment" is the guiding principle in the social work practice practically since inception of the profession. Dialectic social work provides a more dynamic perspective on the interaction between humans and their ecologies by stressing the prevalence of conflict in these interactions.

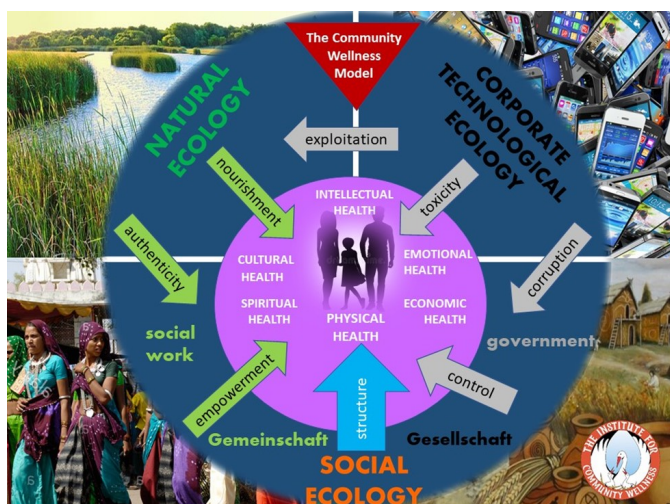
The adversarial nature of the human-nature relationship is the basic premise behind the mankind's age-old progress toward urbanization. Not only humans overcome the elements to build a safer civilization, they also learned how to bend nature to their will through the miracle of technological progress.

The antagonistic attitude toward nature corresponds to the dialectics of social life. Children grow against the traumata of family- and peer-relations. Upon reaching adulthood, people begin their life-long struggle for professional success, social acceptance, material wellbeing, etc.

And the old age in the modern world has predominately become a contest with disease.

The social work perception of human life taking place in the gladiatorial arena is neither Manichean nor Hobbesian but a mere acknowledgement of the fact that our profession deals with human troubles that are born of a vast variety of interpersonal, systemic, and existential conflict on all levels of social work practice, and it behooves a practitioner to become an expert on conflict, learn how thrive in the dialectic environment, and empower others to deal with conflicts in their lives.

Dialectic social work positions the practitioner as an expert on conflict in his/her ability to recognize, understand, manage, and even provoke contestation on behalf of the people. Not through avoiding or denying the ever-present conflict by through transcending it, one acquires strength, self-efficacy, and the ability to experience joy. Unfortunately, the modern world is saturated with a large assortment of escapes from conflict through entertainment, drugs, and digital simulation. The predicament of the modern human is complex as it is opaque and barely accessibly to understanding. Perhaps the subsequent generations will look back with clarity of the hindsight. In the meantime, in this obscure and tumultuous time, the social work profession, with the dialectic approach and Community Wellness Model in its arsenal, has the opportunity to trailblaze its way to the vanguard of human empowerment.



The Community Wellness Model (CWM) is a graphic tool that explains the impact of three ecologies – natural, social, and technological – on human health in dialectic interactions between ecologies and between ecologies and human health. The CWM

integrates ideas, concepts, and theories concerning human wellbeing into a dynamic cognitive map that is essential for academic progress, intellectual integrity, and professional advancement in social work. The CWM offers an epistemological structure that centers on taxonomies of human health and ecologies.

Basic premises of the Community Wellness Model:
Community wellness is impacted by conflicts in three ecologies

- 1) Natural Ecology: Nourishment vs. Toxicity
- 2) Social Ecology: Gemeinschaft vs. Gesellschaft
- 3) Technological Ecology: Authenticity vs. Simulation

Social work values operationalized as the dialectic dimensions of the Community Wellness Model:

Social work values vs. prevalent contemporary social trends	
Cohesion (holism, mutuality, empathy)	Fragmentation (factionalism, identity politics)
Diversity (plurality of opinions and cultural expression)	Homogeneity (conformism, standardization)
Traditional culture (heritage preservation and practice, wisdom, continuity, human connections, traditional healing, authenticity)	Materialism (scientism, the medical model, globalization)
Social Justice (egalitarianism, fairness of rights and opportunities)	Exploitation (stratification, corporatization, oppression)
Integrity (truth, wholeness, reality)	Propaganda (marketing, advertising, commodification, consumerism, virtualization)
Human Dignity (freedom, critical thinking, dissent)	Dehumanization (social control, technocracy, transhumanism, simulation)

The CWM is a result of a decade-long dialogue with social work academicians, students, and professionals in the United States and Europe. The CWM went through numerous revisions and is currently being extensively utilized in social work pedagogies across the world to serve as an instrument for analysis of social problems at the intersectionality of global forces, community interests, and individual impacts.

The CWM is not only an effective pedagogical tool, but also an essential social work practice methodology that helps the client to locate himself/herself in the confusing world of social dialectics in order to attain a higher level of self-understanding.

The model was proven to be highly useful in CBT-oriented treatment. As a cognitive map, the CWM is invaluable as it inculcates the teacher, therapist, student and client alike with a systemic perspective on social and health troubles.

Opening of the joint European Master's program in Social Work with Children and Youth (ESWOCHY)



September 13, 2021: Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania, Vilnius) hosted the opening of the first and currently the unique joint European Master's program in Social Work with Children and Youth (ESWOCHY), coordinated by a Lithuanian higher education institution.

<https://eswochy.eu/>



<https://www.mruni.eu/en/news/european-joint-masters-social-work-with-children-and-youth-opening-celebration-held-sept-13th/>



At the end of 2020, it was confirmed that the Executive Agency (EACEA) had provided funding for an Erasmus Mundus joint masters project. The Erasmus Mundus program funds high-level joint masters programs implemented by an international consortium of research and study institutions from different countries (2020 call EMJMD – ESWOCHY – 619857).

With the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, the Consortium of Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania) (coordinator), Riga Stradins University (Latvia), the Catholic University in Ruzomberok (Slovakia) and the ISCTE University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal) presents **European Joint Master in Social Work with Children and Youth**.

Why is this programme important?

Implementation of ESWOCHY:

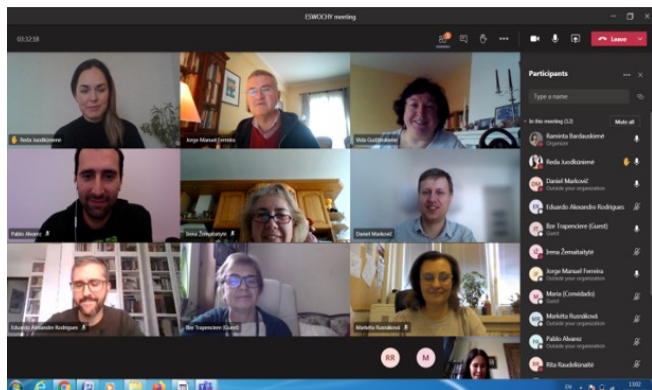
- will promote exchanges of knowledge and experience among teachers, researchers and students;
- will increase joint research possibilities for young and experienced researchers;
- will increase international cooperation and promote cooperation in quality assurance in education;
- will increase the international recognition of higher education institutions and attractiveness to new students;
- will response global labour market needs;
- will increase employability of graduates in leading position in the EU and non-EU countries;
- will move from brain drain to brain gain where people having lived and learnt abroad return for the benefit of their home country.

The program has received 100 applicants from around the world, however, 12 excellent students were selected for EMJMD as well as 3 best self-funded students from:

- ⇒ Bangladesh
- ⇒ Brazil
- ⇒ Cameroon
- ⇒ Ghana
- ⇒ Indonesia
- ⇒ Italy
- ⇒ Kyrgyzstan
- ⇒ Mauritius

- ⇒ Nigeria
- ⇒ Pakistan
- ⇒ Philippines
- ⇒ USA

The program will be implemented by an international team of professors from universities in four EU countries (Lithuania, Slovakia, Latvia, Portugal) led by program and project manager *Raminta Bardauskienė* (MRU, Lithuania).



(Information prepared by: Alina Petrauskienė, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania)

The EU Alliance for Investing in Children urges EU Member States to:

- Ensure that the Child Guarantee national action plans target **all children** in need and that no child is left behind.
- Ensure that the Child Guarantee action plans take a **comprehensive approach to addressing child poverty** and social exclusion by promoting measures to **support parents**.
- Ensure that **EU funds and national budgets** are mobilised to adequately support the Child Guarantee action plans.
- Set **ambitious targets and sub-targets** to tackle child poverty.
- Set a **national framework for data collection** and a set of indicators that will take the most vulnerable into account. The monitoring of the Child Guarantee should feed into the **European Semester** process.
- Ensure meaningful **consultations with multi-spectral stakeholders, children, and parents** for the designation of the targeted groups of children and the design of the action plans.

Read the full statement [here](#).

Endnote

The EU Alliance for Investing in Children has been advocating for a multidimensional, rights-based approach to tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being since 2014. This statement was endorsed by the following partner organisations of the EU Alliance for Investing in Children – read [here](#).

(source: COFACE: *EU Alliance for Investing in Children statement the drafting of the Child Guarantee national action plans, 2021*; available at: <<https://www.coface-eu.org/education/eu-alliance-for-investing-in-children-statement-on-the-drafting-of-the-child-guarantee-national-action-plans/>>)

EU Alliance for Investing in Children statement on the drafting of the Child Guarantee national action plans

On 14 June 2021, EU Member States **unanimously adopted the Council Recommendation establishing the European Child Guarantee**. By calling on EU Member States to guarantee access to basic rights and services for children in need, this ambitious and innovative framework represents a landmark step forward in protecting the rights of children growing up in poverty and social exclusion in the EU.

COFACE



UNECE

AGE Platform Europe



4th Periodic review and appraisal cycle of MIPAA/RIS

As our members and readers may probably remind, the **“Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing”** (MIPAA) has been adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in Spain in April 2002.

The MIPAA follows the 1st International Plan of Action on Ageing which was proclaimed in Vienna in 1982.

Meanwhile, the UN **“Principles for older people”** were adopted in 1991; they address **five key areas**: independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, dignity.

It offers a new agenda for handling the issue of ageing in the 21st century. It is a political declaration agreed upon by 159 UN member States which *“aimed to mark a turning point on how the World addresses the key challenge of building a society for all ages”* and can be used as a resource in order to build a comprehensive agenda at different levels from governments to civil society organizations (CSOs). Even though on a voluntary basis, MIPAA has foreseen an innovative participatory review to reach an international consensus.

To support the implementation of the Plan, European States have adopted in 2002 in Berlin a **“Regional Implementation Strategy”** (RIS) which provides a list of relevant ageing policy development in the so called post 2nd World War **“UNECE”** (UN-European Commission for Europe) Region. The UNECE has been set up by the ECOSOC. It includes 56 member states in a wider scope than the one of the Council of Europe. Its *“major aim is to promote a pan-European economic integration”*.

Every five years, countries undertake an analysis of the current state of implementation and the actions required to make further progress.

The last three yearly review cycles took place in 2011-2013 (2nd) and 2015-2018 (3rd).

During the first year, the process is launched, the second year is dedicated to national reports, the third year to Regional reports (integrating all the national reports of the Region) and in the last one the UN Commission for Social Development draws Global conclusions.

MIPAA focuses on **three main areas**:

- older people and development: it addresses work and ageing labor force, access to knowledge, education and training, intergenerational solidarity;
- advancing health and well-being into old age: universal and equal access to health care services, mental health needs, older persons with disabilities needs;
- ensuring, enabling and supportive environments: housing, living environments up to neglect, abuse and violence.

The **4th review (2020-2023)** is ongoing: the national reports are presently collected at Regional levels of the UN for Regional conclusions to be available in mid-2022.

For more information see the [AGE platform Europe website](#), specifically the sections dedicated to [Human Rights Handbook](#) and [Toolkit on dignity and wellbeing of older people in need of care](#).

At **UN level** national reports are progressively available at [here](#).

(Jean Michel Hôte, ICSW Europe Vice President)

*UNECE is one of the five Regional Commissions of the UN. The others are **ECA** (Africa), **ESCAP** (Asia and the Pacific), **ECLAC** (Latin America and the Caribbean), **ESCWA** (Western Asia)

The **International Conference on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development & the European Green Deal: How we localise the global decade of action to deliver on the SDGs** took place in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 8th of October 2021.

SDG Watch Europe, presented in Panel 2: **Why the European Green Deal needs ecofeminism**, a report that maps the gender gaps and opportunities in the EU's flagship European Green Deal.



This report maps the gender gaps and opportunities in the EU's flagship European Green Deal. It explores how, though gender issues affect environmental policies and vice-versa, they are not integrated into the European Green Deal. This publication also provides

recommendations on how to move from gender-blind to gender-transformative environmental policies. These include intersectional and gender equal environmental objectives, moving towards a feminist economy of well-being and care and ensuring the use of gender mainstreaming methodologies in environmental policies.

The full document can be downloaded [here](https://eeb.org/library/why-the-european-green-deal-needs-ecofeminism/).

(source: SDG Watch Europe; available at: <<https://eeb.org/library/why-the-european-green-deal-needs-ecofeminism/>>)

Discussion of the three-year strategy document (2021 – 2024)

On the 31st of August, the Conference of INGOS of the Council of Europe hold a meeting for discussing the draft of the **three-year strategy document (2021 – 2024)** to be adopted by the next GA of the Conference on the 5th of October.

As a reminder, the Conference, abbreviated CINGO, is the representative body of all the international NGOss enjoying “participatory status” towards the Council of Europe. ICSW is one of them.

The CINGO is a part of the so called “Quadrilogue”, the other three bodies being the Committee of Ministers (CoM), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council (PACE) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Congress).

The document is clearly aligned with both the Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe (November 2020) and the Conference members' prioritization of actions for this period which has been designed considering the results of a survey among members which were presented during the meeting.

The **strategic priorities of the Council of Europe** are mainly the following:

- implementing the European Convention on Human Rights (ensuring its sustainability and strengthening the implementation of the European Court of Human Rights' judgments);
- ensuring freedom of expression both online and offline;
- fighting growing social inequalities and poverty;
- fighting discrimination and ensuring the protection of vulnerable groups.

The **CINGO's Strategic priorities** proposed by the Standing Committee are the following:

- 1) Ensuring freedom of expression, assembly and association: with a focus on freedom of association
- 2) Strengthening the effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights' system: with a focus on the implementation of the Court's judgements
- 3) Fighting inequalities and pursuing the European Social Charter: with a focus on the promotion of the collective complaints procedure
- 4) Equality, anti-discrimination and protection of vulnerable groups: with a focus on the implementation of the "Istanbul Convention" (Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, adopted in 2011)
- 5) Acting against environmental degradation and climate change: with a focus on promoting environmental sustainability and action in climate justice
- 6) Membership engagement within the "Quadriologue": with a focus on better enabling CINGO as the CoE "civil society pillar".

Of course, all those priorities are matter of principles, but INGOS need them first as common strategic guidelines before putting them in practice.

(Jean Michel Hôte, ICSW Europe Vice President)

Conference of INGOs – CONF/AG (2021) Meeting of the General Assembly

From 5th to 6th October, the Conference of INGOs held its General Assembly in the form of a hybrid meeting. The session was opened and chaired by *Gerhard Ermischer*, President of the Conference of INGOs.

The first day was devoted to a political debate by representatives of the Member States on the implementation of the Helsinki Decisions and the situation of civil society. The three-year strategic plan of the Conference of INGOs was presented and commented.

At the end of the day, INGO-Service held an extraordinary General Assembly during which the revision of the statutes was accepted by most of the members.

The day of 6th October began with a speech by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ms *Marija Pejčinović Burić*. See the [2021 annual report](#) by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe: State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law: A democratic renewal for Europe.

Various reports were presented during this second day: Committee on the Rights of Migrants, Committee for Interreligious and Interfaith Dialogue, Action for Social Rights, Environment and Climate Change, Health Crisis, Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence, Civil Society and Children's Rights. See: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/committees>.

Agenda:

6th October 2021, Roma (Italy): The University of Roma Tre (Department of Law, Roma Tre International Centre for Research "Diritto e Globalizzazione") together with the University of Nottingham Human Rights Law Centre, and with the support of the Department of the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe, are organising a one-day conference to mark the 60th anniversary of the European Social Charter.

17th-18th October 2021, Strasbourg (France): The Conference of INGOs is organising two events on 18th October 2021, to mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17th October) and the European Anti-Trafficking Day (18th October). All information on the site of the Conference.

A ceremony with senior officials of the Council of Europe will be held outside the Palais de l'Europe from 12:30 – 13:15. Testimonies of persons who have been a victim of trafficking or whose rights to decent work have been denied will be presented.

The ceremony will be followed by a webinar that will explore the issue of decent work – articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 26 of the revised European Social Charter related to: the formality of work; usefulness of work and impact on the environment, respect for the rights and dignity of all persons.

Next meeting of INGO: **from 4th to 6th April 2022.**

[Access to the minutes and documents of the conference of INGO Autumn – 5th and 6th October 2021 available here.](#)

(Gérard Schaefer, ICSW Europe Representative at the Council of Europe)

Conferences/Expert Meetings



Online conference "**Addressing food insecurity in Africa: strategies for ensuring child-sensitive social protection**"

was organised by ICSW in cooperation with IASSW, UNICEF, IFAD, KNCSW and UNED on **9th September, 2021.**

Food and nutrition security is one of the key issues among the development priorities of many African countries. The existing food insecurity in Africa is a huge and complex challenge that is closely linked to the risk of malnutrition, health care, education, political stability, poverty as well as overall national development priorities and directions. Gaining a better understanding of the multidimensional nature of the challenge of food insecurity especially its complex impact on children can facilitate concerted actions and better targeting of interventions by national governments, international bodies and civil society organizations.

Read about the conference [here](#).

(source: ICSW; available at: <<https://www.icsw.org/index.php/news/153-sept-9-2021-online-conference-addressing-food-insecurity-in-africa-strategies-for-ensuring-child-sensitive-social-protection>>)

Useful Links

Opinion of the Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V.:

https://www.deutscher-verein.de/en/uploads/dateien-stab-internationales/dv-11-21_opinion-epsr-action-plan-porto-declaration.pdf

AGE Platform Europe:

<https://www.age-platform.eu/>

AGE Platform Europe Human Rights Handbook:

<http://publications.age-platform.eu/>

AGE Platform Europe – Toolkit on dignity and wellbeing of older people in need of care:

<http://publications.age-platform.eu/opcare-toolkit/>

UNECE reports:

<https://unece.org/mipaa20-country-reports>

The conference of INGO Autumn – 5th and 6th October 2021 – documents and the minutes:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q6g1lcinK5Xt1r0fONAY_VAnc3-xAogp?usp=sharing

Colophon

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

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