



ICSW EUROPE NEWSLETTER

Winter 2018

ISSN 2411-9709

Table of Contents

A Message from the President	2
European Pillar of Social Rights	3
Social Platform.....	4
Annual Growth Survey Package 2018 – EAPN Response	6
ICSW Europe Members	7
Council of Europe	8
Moscow Conference 2017 – Outcome	9
Useful Links	11
Colophon	11

A Message from the President

Are there as many social policy systems in Europe as there are countries in the region? Not really. Despite of the great heterogeneity of European countries they have also similar features in their social policies. After 60 years of the Treaty of Rome and twenty-two years of the World's first Social Summit in Copenhagen the European Union summarized some of that common ground of the European Union countries by endorsing the [European Pillar of Social Rights \(EPSR\)](#) at the EU Social Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden, 17 November 2017. While this is a EU document, many, probably most, non-EU countries belong to the like-minded, as the contents are well aligned with globally endorsed recommendations by the United Nations and ILO.

Indeed, the EPSR Document is still a vision, a desired, feasible future. It describes a future that would provide equal opportunities to work, and fair working conditions, plus basic social protection and inclusion. The stakeholders agreed that we “need to put people first” by applying twenty principles grouped under the aforementioned three broad themes. The vision is also intended to help on the road towards more converged social policies in the EU.

Following many years of austerity messages and measures by the EU Commission, the President of the EU Commission, *Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker*, promised in his speech to the European Parliament in October 2014 to lift the EU to the level of “social triple A”. Read more e.g. in the [EU Social Agenda Magazine # 48](#)

The proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) by consensus is a welcomed milestone on the roadmap to better performance in the social dimension of the Union. In this Newsletter you find the link to a very thorough statement about the EPSR by the one of our Members, the [German Association for Public and Private Welfare](#).

Indeed EPSR is still a paper, a recommendation and there are no new concrete tools for the way forward. As this recommendation has adopted the rights-based language it will create high expectations in the minds of people.

Responsibility for social policies relies mainly by the Member States themselves. However, delivering on the principles of the EPSR is a joint and collaborative challenge for the EU Institutions, Member States, social partners and the civil society. If the EU Institutions and Member States fail to deliver accordingly, people's trust in respect to the EU's capacities in the social sector may rapidly erode.

A high level consensus document of this nature is a nevertheless a strong advocacy instrument for civil society organizations, such as the ICSW. It helps in making politically relevant business cases of good practices, experiments and innovations in social policy.

While this was a good start by the EU this step still falls seriously short of the approach of the [European Social Charter](#) by the Council of Europe.

Europe needs a broader, more comprehensive social policy agenda beyond labor market focus. Social Policy is not only about investments in people, or human capital, but it is also investment in the sustainable future of societies. This is the direction ICSW Europe works towards in close collaboration with Social Platform and the other networks and civil society organizations referred to in this newsletter.

Links:

The European Pillar of Social Rights Document
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf

European Parliament brief: "What is Triple A ?"
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2016/577996/EPRS_ATA\(2016\)577996_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2016/577996/EPRS_ATA(2016)577996_EN.pdf)

EU Social Agenda Magazine # 48
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_agenda/books/48/en/

European Charter of Social Rights of the Council of Europe website
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/turin-european-social-charter>

The opinion of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the European Pillar of Social Rights
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/turin-european-social-charter/-/secretary-general-s-opinion-on-the-european-pillar-of-social-rights>

(Ronald Wiman, ICSW Europe President)

European Pillar of Social Rights



Deutscher Verein
für öffentliche
und private Fürsorge e.V.

ICSW Germany's Opinion on the European Pillar of Social Rights

On 26 April 2017, the European Commission adopted the 'European Pillar of Social Rights' as

a Commission Recommendation. At the same time, it proposed to the European Parliament and to the Council that there should be a joint "interinstitutional proclamation" of the text by the Commission, Council and Parliament. The joint proclamation was made on 17 November 2017, at the Social Summit in Sweden. The European Pillar of Social Rights is intended 'to serve as a guide towards efficient employment and social outcomes' and to ensure 'better enactment and implementation of social rights' (see also: 'A message from the President', page 2 of this Newsletter).

The German Association for Public and Private Welfare (Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V. / ICSW Germany) supports the European Commission's aim of achieving upward social convergence in the sense of improved economic and social cohesion in the EU, via the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR). The German Association calls on the Member States to strive for social policy convergence of European social systems on a high level of standards and to involve regional and local actors, social insurance providers as well as actors in civil society, for example, non-statutory social welfare organisations (Freie Wohlfahrtspflege), in the process. The decisive aspect for the German Association is not that the European Pillar of Social Rights exists as a text, but that it supports improvement in the realities of life for citizens through suitable implementation initiatives at EU level and in the Member States, thereby promoting improved economic and social cohesion in the EU. In this spirit, the German Association will monitor the implementation measures at EU level that are vital for the effectiveness of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Find the full text of the opinion on ICSW Germany's English website:

<https://www.deutscher-verein.de/en/uploads/dateien-stab-internationales/dv-12-17-opinion-epsr.pdf>
<https://www.deutscher-verein.de/en/publications-and-opinions-2171.html>

(ICSW Germany)

Social Platform



Recommendations ahead of the European Council of 14th and 15th December 2017

On the 17th of November SP gathered in Gothenburg to discuss the social dimension of the future of the European Union. With the interinstitutional proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the EU delivered a strong and united message to put people first.

In the letter addressed to the European Council of 12th December 2017, SP urges the European Council to take concrete steps to:

1. Tackle inequality to safeguard our democracy;
2. Deliver a strong social agenda that goes beyond employment and ensure adequate and sustainable funding of welfare systems;
3. Involve organised civil society in developing, implementing and monitoring policy.

Read the full letter here:

http://www.socialplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/20171208_SP-Recommendations_Follow-up-Social-Summit.pdf

Members' Consultation:

"Setting our advocacy priorities for 2018"

On 7th December, the General Assembly adopted Social Platform's 2018 Work Programme. To ensure SP builds on the successes and opportunities created in 2017 around the European Pillar of Social Rights, SP's advocacy work will be focusing around the following priorities: *Legislation, Social and Economic Governance and EU budget Post-2020.*

On this basis, SP has released a consultation document presenting **15 proposals**. A questionnaire has been sent to SP's members and its results will be presented to the Management Committee on 31st January 2018.

The proposals included in the questionnaire were as follows:

Legislative:

Proposal 1: Priority to be given to the upcoming Social Fairness Package – Lead: Secretariat;

Proposal 2: Priority to be given to Work-Life-Balance – Lead: SP members with support from Secretariat;

Proposal 3: Contributing to taxation legislation, in the framework of strategic partnerships;

Proposal 4: Social Platform does not work on any other pieces of legislation in 2018;

Social and Economic Governance:

Proposal 5: Social Platform explores possibilities to set-up of a high level dialogue;

Proposal 6: Social Platform advocates for regular and structured strategic dialogue at expert level;

Proposal 7: Social Platform advocates for the development of Commission Guidelines on stakeholders' involvement at national level;

Proposal 8: Social Platform advocates for the modification of the Social Scoreboard and coordinates members' input during negotiations;

Proposal 9: Social Platform advocates for an inclusive benchmarking process that triggers policy reforms;

Proposal 10: Social Platform advocates for budgetary flexibility for social investment and for a change of current budgetary rules;

EU Budget post-2020:

Proposal 11: Social Platform advocates for a 'Human Capital Fund'/'ESF+' that brings together various social funding streams, while keeping the earmarking of budgets for specific target groups and social inclusion (beyond employment);

Proposal 12: Secure adequate funding for the implementation of the Social Pillar in different budgetary headings and instruments (mainstreaming approach);

Proposal 13: Campaigning for an increase in the budget of "Europe for Citizens";

Proposal 14: Members' led campaigning for the future of the EasI Fund, with the support of the Secretariat;

Proposal 15: Social Platform does not advocate for any other new or existing funds that are currently not covered by the above proposals.

Social Platform Extraordinary General Assembly

On 7th of December 2017 Social Platform has invited its members to take part in **Social Platform's Extraordinary General Assembly**. Extraordinary General Assembly was leaded by President **Jana Hainsworth**. The Assembly programme covered the issues of membership, adoption of SP Work Programm 2018 as well as adoption of 2018 SP Budget.

Director of Social Platform, **Kelig Puyet**, talked over the achieved results and presented new Work Programme. She shared the information of march for European Social Rights Pillar, which resulted in its high level recognition – European Social Rights Pillar was proclaimed by the President of the European Commission **Jean-Claude Juncker** on 17th November, 2017 at Social Summit in Gothenburg, where discussions were focusing on promoting fair jobs and growth in Europe.

It was valuable that before the SP General Assembly it was held a meeting with **Maria Joao Rodrigues**, a member of European Parliament. **M. J. Rodrigues** introduced the participants of the meeting the progress to acquaint European Commission and other European institutions with European Pillar of Social Rights.

Advocacy and policy advisor **Gilberto Pelosi** stressed that in 2014-2015 SP worked mainly influencing the scope of European Pillar of Social Rights. In 2017 there were activities to make sure that the Social Pillar has been adopted. In 2018 the main activities for Social Pillar has to be implementation.

In order to have more effective cooperation with SP, there was proposed a principle of cooperation with SP:

- Secretariat of SP lead activities;
- Members lead activities;
- Partners lead activities.

As SP priorities, there were highlighted European Commission and social governance sphere as well as Structural dialogue with social actors. After discussions on Work programme and budget issues, the members submitted their observations, proposals and confirmed these documents.

(Angele Cepenaite, ICSW Europe Board Member)

Annual Growth Survey Package 2018 – EAPN Response



**European Anti Poverty Network
Ireland**

EAPN's Analysis of the 2018 Annual Growth Survey & Draft Joint Employment Letter

EAPN presents its full analysis of the 2018 Annual Growth Survey and Draft Joint Employment Report.

This follows a letter to President Juncker (<https://eapn.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3f7a32005781bb4c683c8e68e&id=f75cd27ba4&e=2baab4c54d>),

presenting EAPN's proposals for the AGS 2018, which were based on our members' review of the Semester and the NRPs 2017 (<https://eapn.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3f7a32005781bb4c683c8e68e&id=20eedd4c7b&e=2baab4c54d>).

Following the launch of the AGS 2018 in November, EAPN published an immediate Press Release: Participation is key to making Social Rights a 'compass' for the EU

(<https://eapn.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3f7a32005781bb4c683c8e68e&id=b494b7af99&e=2baab4c54d>).

On 22nd November, the European Commission adopted its 'Autumn Package', including the Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2018 and the Draft Joint Employment Report (JER), and a proposal to amend the Employment Guidelines to bring it in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The main message from the AGS 2018 is that the EU is showing positive signs of recovery, and that structural reforms have yielded tangible results, enabling an opportunity to improve growth and jobs, and promoting economic and social convergence.

The Pillar of Social Rights is said to be fully integrated, focussed on skills, equal opportunities in the labour market, fair working conditions, increasing labour productivity to support wage growth and adequate and sustainable social protection. It is meant to be a 'compass' for the Semester.

However, as the 3 priorities remain almost unchanged from previous years – 1) boosting investment, 2) pursuing structural reforms and 3) ensuring responsible fiscal policies – with no mention of Europe 2020 targets including poverty reduction, concerns are raised about how far economic policies will be adapted to 'put social rights first', or whether the EU will continue to prioritize growth, relying on 'trickle-down' to promote social rights and inclusion, despite strong evidence of the failure of this approach.

We call for 5 priorities for action:

1. Ensure macroeconomic policies are coherent with social rights;
2. Set out a roadmap with EU funding to implement the Social Pillar and reduce poverty;
3. Give equal weight to adequate minimum income and social protection as a right, ensuring adequate financing;

4. Promote quality jobs, as part of integrated Active Inclusion approaches;
5. Make Civil Society equal partners in the Semester.

Read the Analysis

(<https://eapn.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3f7a32005781bb4c683c8e68e&id=1ab9e1e0a9&e=2baab4c54d>)

(European Anti Poverty Network, EAPN Ireland)



**Pancyprian Volunteerism
Coordinative Council**

Code of Good Management, Conduct and Ethics for NGOs

The Pancyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC) has published the “Code of Good Management, Conduct and Ethics for NGOs”. The Code urges NGOs to comply with good practices on transparency, impartiality, integrity, credibility, accountability, equal treatment, respect for human rights, dignity and objectivity. Every volunteer, either a member of the board of directors or the organization, and each member of the staff must apply these basic principles which should guide and inspire them. The PVCC has distributed the “Code of Good Management, Conduct and Ethics for NGOs” among NGOs urging them to adhere faithfully to this Code and apply its principles and practices so as to contribute to the effort of becoming a dynamic tool of good governance, good conduct and ethics.

A complete document (only in Greek language) is available at:

http://www.volunteerism-cc.org.cy/App_Directory/CMSEditor/Documents/EKD_OSEIS/Kodikas%20Xristis%20Dioikisis-final.pdf

(Alexandra Kyriacou, PVCC)



Mission Armenia's Update of Activities and Beneficiaries for 2017

Mission Armenia is an Armenia-based NGO with over twenty-year successful track record in:

- community-based support;
- poverty reduction and economic empowerment;
- aging;
- provision of humanitarian assistance to refugee and displaced persons;
- advocacy and human rights protection;
- social partnership

“Mission Armenia is a long-standing partner for UNHCR Armenia. UNHCR and Mission Armenia share long and successful past in supporting thousands of displaced persons who seek protection in Armenia. Mission Armenia is flexible enough to integrate a strategy and action plan to address the most urgent needs of displaced Syrian persons seeking protection in Armenia. The commitment and dedication among the staff is just outstanding”.

Refugee Assistance Program-UNHCR Armenia

MA supports local and refugee vulnerable people of different age and gender groups, including: the elderly, people with disabilities, economically

vulnerable adults, and young people and children.

Over these years, up to 18,000 beneficiaries have received integrated social, health, care, legal services, nutrition support; benefited from vocational and economic empowerment initiatives; have been provided with a variety of humanitarian emergency assistance, including rental subsidy support, temporary shelter support through social housing, distribution of food packages and non-food basic commodities, etc.



“This Mission Armenia program provides a rare example in Armenia of integrated delivery of social, health and nutrition services outside of an inpatient, institutional setting. The Mission Armenia model potentially has valuable lessons to offer to government and to other NGOs offering social and health services in the development of a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of the vulnerable population.”

Social Transition Program USAID/Armenia

More information about MA NGO at:

<http://www.mission.am/NEW/?iL=1>

(source: Mission Armenia NGO)

Council of Europe

The Winter Session of the Conference of INGOs

The winter session of the Conference of INGOs will take place from **22 to 26 January 2018**.

During the political debate on the situation of NGOs in the Member States, the representative of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights will present the report on the Challenges facing civil society working on human rights in the EU. The speakers will discuss **the freedom of association and NGO participation in public policies** in [Estonia](#) and [Serbia](#). This debate will take place with the participation of the Ambassadors of the concerned countries and representatives of national NGOs. The Expert Council on NGO Law will present its two opinions: on freedom of association in [Turkey](#) and on the draft amendment to the Law on Associations and Foundations in [Romania](#).

Protection of Human Rights Defenders will be discussed at the Side Event Human Rights Defenders in the Council of Europe area: current challenges and new responses which will take on **Monday 22 January**.

(source: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/home>)

Moscow Conference 2017 – Outcome

ICSW Europe International conference “Human Well-Being, Social Cohesion and Sustainable Development: the Quest for the Responses to Contemporary Challenges” which was organised by ICSW Europe member – Moscow Institute for Additional Professional Education of Workers for Social Services, Russian Federation and Moscow Department of Labour and Social Protection of Population together with Moscow City Government took place in Moscow (Russian Federation) on 18th and 19th of May, 2017.

The proceedings and all the documents will be soon available at ICSW website <http://www.icsw.org/index.php/regions/europe>

The document “**Outcome of the Conference**” is presented below:

Under the modern conditions, population of many regions of the World faces challenges in ensuring dignity and equality which are common to all, as well as in the organization of social protection answering the purposes of sustainable development.

Solution of the problems of demographic development, provision of decent work in the interests of economic growth and achieving sustainable well-being, arrangement of social protection according to international norms and regulations and national standards are designed to ensure addressing the problems defined in the resolution adopted in September 25th, 2015, by the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development “Transforming our world: the 2030 The Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

Social issues in the European countries are very similar, but the solutions are different depending on their national social protection models. ILO Recommendations 202 On National Floors of Social Protection of June 14th, 2012, contains the guiding principles that must be taken into account when working out basic social guarantees on a nationwide scale. National protection floors are becoming not only an important tool for preventing and reducing the incidence of poverty, inequality, social isolation and social vulnerability, but also a way of ensuring human dignity, reaching equal opportunities of social well-being.

Developing nationwide models of social protection of population in the context of sustainable development is becoming a priority of the agenda of international cooperation. The international conference “**Human well-being, social cohesion and sustainable development: the quest for the responses to contemporary challenges**” became a platform for sharing experience, comparing approaches to tackling the challenges of society on regional, national and international levels.

The results of the conference allow to compare best practices in solving social protection tasks and evaluate the importance of their wide dissemination with due regard to national peculiarities.

The conference participants express their commitment to the activities aimed to respond the goals of sustainable development, such as:

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages;
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;

- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;
 - Reduce inequality within and among countries;
 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels;
 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.
- aging society;
 - strengthening of families and intergenerational solidarity;
 - migration policy;
 - social support for vulnerable groups of population.

Realizing that all efforts on achievement of the goals of sustainable development will be is the cornerstone by the coordinated strategy in sustainable development which are carried out on the basis of the principle of national responsibility supported by complex national funding mechanisms, conference participants recognize the importance of the international cooperation, value of joint consultations and researches, accumulation of intellectual and institutional capacity for finding of ways of the joint solution of the general tasks. The role of the organizations of civil society in the solution of these problems is indisputable.

The conference participants consider appropriate to develop cooperation in the following directions:

Combining the efforts of governments, civil society, the private sector, research and educational personnel in the development, examination and testing of technologies for sustainable development, including:

- Development of joint international mechanisms of informational, organizational support for ensuring gender equality, promotion of widespread and equal participation of women and men, as well as persons with disabilities, in the activities in labor market.
- Assistance as to formation of international partnership and strengthening the potential opportunities in the sphere of monitoring and managing the implementation of sustainable development issues and development of social protection.
- Ensuring access to open, comprehensive and transparent information on social protection issues for all interested parties, creation of mechanisms as to provision of reliable information on the implementation of social policies of various states.
- Studying and distributing as to nationwide experience in the sphere of solving the problem of “transforming workplaces for the purposes of poverty eradication”.
- Promoting the use of science, technology and innovations in order to support of sustainable development and to implement social protection programs.
- Implementation of international and cross-country programs for training of social protection system staff, collaborative development of curricula and programs for familiarization with the best social practices.

The issue of Social Protection Floors is a key element of consistent, comprehensive and human rights-oriented social development policy focused on the protection the people against risks and vulnerabilities, as well as ensuring their well-being throughout the life span.

The participants of the conference express confidence that the International Conference has made a certain contribution in comparing approaches to solving the tasks of sustainable development facing the society and strengthening social welfare at the regional, national and international levels and has made some progress in finding answers to the challenges of our time. The conference participants emphasize the importance of a comprehensive vision of the development process, consistency in implementing decisions, recognizing the value and dignity of each and every one, and the importance of finding the most effective and people-centered solutions, in the interests of both present and future generations.

Useful Links

Pancyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC):

www.volunteerism-cc.org.cy

Mission Armenia NGO:

<http://www.mission.am/NEW/?iL=1>

EAPN's Analysis of the 2018 Annual Growth Survey:

<https://eapn.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3f7a32005781bb4c683c8e68e&id=1ab9e1e0a9&e=2baab4c54d>

Social Platform's Recommendations ahead of the European Council – the full letter:

http://www.socialplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/20171208_SP-Recommendations_Follow-up-Social-Summit.pdf

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:

ICSW Europe

Gabriela Siantova, Secretary and Editor

E-mail: gsiantova@gmail.com

ICSW European Region:

President: Ronald Wiman (Finland)

Treasurer: Jean-Michel Hote (France)

Members of Executive Committee:

Angele Cepenaite (Lithuania),

Annelise Murakami (Denmark),

Britta Spilker (Germany)

Global Office:

International Council on Social Welfare

Website:

<http://www.icsw.org>

E-mail: icsw@icsw.org