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Table of Contents

A Message from the President	2
ICSW Europe General Assembly	3
Flagship Conference	3
SDG Watch Europe	5
Council of Europe	5
Conferences/Expert Meetings	6
Publications	8
Useful Links	9
Colophon	9



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A Message from the President



"If you are not at the table you will be on the menu." ICSW Europe was indeed at the table at the **"Building Social Europe Flagship Conference"** of Social Platform in Helsinki, Finland on 16-18 September. Actually we were also involved in the planning of the menu: building

the connection between social rights with economic goals.

The Conference brought together civil society organizations, academics, EU Institutions and current and forthcoming EU Presidencies. It consisted of several interconnected events and was included in the official Program of Finnish EU Presidency. By the way, Finnish government is committed to advance the social and ecological dimensions of the EU also in the future.

We also held a street action to publicize the European Pillar of Social Rights in Helsinki city centre. Few passers-by knew about it. There has not been much public discussion about it. A Chinese elderly couple stopped to read the 20 posters and asked me: *"Why are you talking about this? We have lived in Finland six years and everything is so good."* Opposing their opinion was neither polite nor wise. Instead I said: *"we must talk about social rights to keep things that way"*.

Indeed, the European Pillar of Social Rights can work as a beacon for development even if it is not legally binding. It provides a political reference point to policies. As legal approach is not suitable its implementation calls for political action. This is precisely what this Conference was all about:

Civil society joined forces with like-minded governments, such as Portugal in 2018 and Finland now and others to come. Together we will be stronger without needing to sell our independence.

The *Lingua Franca* of the EU is economics. This is why Finnish Government adopted willingly the concept of Well-Being Economy coined by SOSTE, the organization hosting ICSW in Finland. It floated very

well on the waves of discussions and will be the perspective of the EU Council Conclusions, the main outcome document of Finnish Presidency. It will be tabled during October.

Many speakers referred to this concept as a cross-cutting term that can build bridges across sectors and Directorates – and between the economy and the social and ecological dimensions of policies.

The recommendations of the Flagship Conference can be read at <https://www.socialplatform.org/news/building-social-europe-flagship-conference-workshop-recommendations/>.

One specific worry came up in many interventions: governments have increasingly outsourced social sector services since the financial crisis. One of the reasons was seen in the EU Public Procurement Directives that have been designed to *"ensure that tenderers within the EU are treated in an equal and non-discriminatory manner, regardless of their nationality"*. It does not guarantee that service users would not be discriminated or not be treated in an unfair way. On the contrary, 'fundamentalist' interpretations of the public procurement directives have resulted in a take-over of the social service market by large international firms/capital investors especially in long-term care of the elderly and increasingly in child protection. Small, community based private service providers, including those run by nonprofit NGOs, have been on the menu: they have been eaten out from the care market. The Big Ones have put profits before the people. As a consequence quality of care has been going down and prices have gone up (see my article *"Putting People at the Center of European Development – Finland promotes a Well-being Economy"* in the May 2019 Newsletter of the ICSW member, the German Association for Public and Private Welfare: https://www.deutscher-verein.de/uploads/-/mitgliederportal/digitale-publikationen/ndv/2019/ndv-5-2019_inhalt.pdf. The full documents in German and/or English versions are available upon request, please contact: *Gabriela Siantova: gsiantova@gmail.com*).

The private sector – including NGOs – are needed in the social sector but the rules of the game need to be corrected. The public sector does not need (and cannot) produce all the services by itself but governments are ultimately responsible for the equal access of all people to realize their social rights.

As this is a central principle of general human rights Conventions this challenge is acute also in non-EU countries. ICSW must keep sitting at the tables to push for the recognition of people’s social, economic and cultural rights in the context of the broader sustainable development agenda.

(Ronald Wiman, ICSW Europe President)



The day before the General Assembly, **June 13th**, was dedicated to the **Strategy/Capacity Building Seminar** the outcomes of which for discussion and

further action were included in the point 3) and 6) of the Agenda of ICSW Europe General Assembly the next day.

ICSW Europe President, *Ronald Wiman*, closed the 2019 ICSW Europe General Assembly, he evaluated it as a very effective and interactive meeting. He thanked *Vadim Moldovan* and his colleagues from Project Casa Mare organisation for hosting the GA meeting and for their generous hospitality.

(Editor of ICSW Europe Newsletter)

ICSW Europe General Assembly

2019 ICSW Europe General Assembly took place at the Free International University of Moldova in the capital city of the Republic of Moldova – Chisinau on **June 14th**.



Thirteen participants representing ICSW Europe member organizations (from Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Moldova, Norway, Russian Federation

and Sweden) took part in the annual meeting; Lithuania and Switzerland were represented by proxies. Issues and documents discussed were as follows: Approval of the Minutes of the General Assembly held in Vienna (Austria) on 23rd November, 2018, ICSW Europe Activity Report 2018, The Report from the Treasurer, The Report of the Auditors, Updates on their Activities by ICSW Europe National Committees, Summary of Strategy Discussions of the Capacity Building Seminar (13th June, 2018), Reminder: Work Program 2016-2020, Updating of the Budget for 2019 and Budget for 2020, Discussion and Decision Regarding the Management of the Treasurer Function of ICSW Europe, Updated Information about the Official Registration of ICSW Europe in Utrecht (Netherlands), Any Other Matters Arising.



Second Social Platform’s Flagship Conference “Building Social Europe”

This year, Social Platform organised its second Flagship conference. **2019 “Building Social Europe”** conference took place in **Helsinki, Finland** on **16-18 September**.

This year’s Conference was organised in cooperation with the [Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland](#) [and ICSW member – SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health (<https://www.soste.fi/soste-in-english/>)].

The Conference took place back to back with the [Finnish EU High Level Presidency's Conference on the Economy of Wellbeing](#). This topic was a priority of the Finnish Presidency with the aim of adopting Council Conclusions [and Council Conclusions are being prepared on this perspective to guide future EU policies]. A delegation from Social Platform attended the Presidency Conference and High level speakers of the Finnish Conference participated in Social Platform Flagship event.



The Flagship Conference 2019 was listed as an [official side event of Finland's Presidency of the Council of the Europe Union 2019](#).

Social Platform partnered with ICSW Finnish member [SOSTE – Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health](#) who provided enormous support in organising the Flagship Conference. The conference was also supported by the City of Helsinki.

The second Flagship Conference took place during a very crucial time: European leaders were preparing the next EU legislature following the European elections results, negotiating, nominating and electing the future European Commission and filling in EU top jobs. All this was taking place against the backdrop of growing popular mobilisation for greater social justice and democracy, stopping and reversing an environmental crisis and securing the future for the next generations. [...]



The Flagship Conference was an opportunity for Social Platform's members and actors from a wider European social movement to debate with national and EU level decision-makers on how the European Union could prevent further decay in social justice, democracy and trust in the EU.

In particular it was looked at:

- 1) Participatory democracy: How can civil society become the missing link between people and decision-makers?
- 2) Social justice: How to make the economy work for people?



Following a series of panels, thematic workshops, study visits and a high-level round table with national government representatives including the current and forthcoming EU Presidencies, the 150 participants of the Flagship Conference put forward the following recommendations on an economy of wellbeing approach that leaves no one behind:

The Economy of wellbeing encompasses a longterm approach, that...

- 1) Looks at the impact of decisions and policies on people's lives.
- 2) Is based on a participatory governance structure.
- 3) Ensures socioeconomic and environmental justice for all.

(source: Social Platform; available at: <https://www.socialplatform.org/news/recommendationsof-the-2nd-social-platform-flagship-conference-in-helsinki/>; photos by Ronald Wiman, ICSW Europe President)

SDG Watch Europe



'Falling through the Cracks: Exposing Inequalities in Europe and beyond'

Despite the European Union's commitment to leave no one behind, millions of people in Europe are falling victim to widening inequalities, a major EU-wide report concludes: **'Falling through the Cracks: Exposing Inequalities in Europe and beyond'**.

In September 2015, the international community adopted the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda's transformative promise is to 'leave no one behind' with Goal 10, "To reduce inequalities within and between countries" at its core. The European Union and its Member States were a driving force in the process leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its goals.

SDG 10 is being reviewed in 2019 in the UN-led process that monitors progress towards achieving the goals. As things stand now, Member States of the EU are not on track to achieve the goal to reduce inequalities by 2030.

Civil society has taken the opportunity to provide an analysis of the different dimensions of inequality that exist – and persist – across the European Union. We are using this moment to present concrete policy recommendations to the EU, its new political leadership and its Member States. Our purpose is to provide information and proposals to address inequalities effectively – a first and necessary step towards ensuring a just transition towards human well-being within the planet's ecological limits, and to leave no one behind.

This report has been produced as part of the pan-European project Make Europe Sustainable for All in

close collaboration with SDG Watch Europe, the European civil society coalition advocating for the complete implementation of the SDGs in and by the European Union and its Member States.

The new EU wide report (124 pages) involving 58 CSOs from 15 countries provides a national picture of the various forms of inequalities and an overview of inequalities at EU level.

It is a three year cross-sectorial project run by 25 partners from across Europe; it aims to promote implementation of the 17 Global SDGs in the EU."

The report is available at:

<https://www.sdgwatcheurope.org/sdg10/>

(source: SDG Watch Europe, available at: <https://www.sdgwatcheurope.org/sdg10/>)

Council of Europe



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Updating of the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process

Ten years ago, the Conference of INGOs adopted the [Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in Decision-Making](#) and the Strategy for its Implementation and its Promotion.

The Code has become a reference document of the Council of Europe, being supported by the Committee of Ministers which has adopted a specific Declaration on this subject.

The updated version of the Code will be proposed for adoption by the Conference of INGOs and for adoption by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities during their respective sessions in October 2019.

[...] It marks the beginning of a vivid co-operation to **create a practical tool-kit** in a common effort as a living tool **for NGOs as well as local and regional governments to improve participative processes.**


(source: Council of Europe, Conference of INGOs; available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/-/updating-of-the-code-of-good-practice-for-civil-participation-in-the-decision-making-process>; the text is abridged)

The Expert meeting will be held in German. Nevertheless, experts from other countries are very welcomed. A summary of the results will be produced in English and given to ICSW Europe for distribution.

For more information please contact:
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Conferences/Expert Meetings

SKOS CSIAS COSAS
Schweizerische Konferenz für Sozialhilfe
Conférence suisse des institutions d'action sociale
Conférence svizzera delle istituzioni dell'azione sociale
Conférence svizzera da l'agid social

 Deutscher Verein
für öffentliche
und private Fürsorge e.V.

ÖKSA


Promoting Human Relationships : Bridging the Future
Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development

ICSW Expert Meeting

Situation pflegender und betreuender Angehöriger in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz

Situation of long term caring relatives in Germany, Austria and Switzerland



When: **November 14th-15th 2019**

Where: Bezirkshauptmannschaft Eisenstadt
Ing. Julius Raab-Straße 1
7000 Eisenstadt, Austria

Within the circle of selected experts from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, challenges for the care and support of family members are discussed. This will continue the tradition of three-country expert meetings under the umbrella of **ICSW Europe**.

Relation care is a special type of care based on factors such as reciprocity, emotionality and existing social relationships among the participants. However, it is not only an intra-family, but because of its dominant position within the "supply landscape" also a social issue. Progress and experience from neighbouring countries should help to question their own offerings and strategies and to consider new approaches.

Key dates for SWSD 2020:

Call for abstract: June 2019

Scientific programme: September 2019

Registration online: October 2019

Hotel booking: October 2019

Deadline for abstracts submission: December 2019

Acceptance for abstracts: February 2020

Early registration deadline: March 2020

Late registration deadline: April 2020

Final programme: May 2020

SWESD conference: June 28th – July 1st, 2020

For scientific programme see:

<http://www.swesd2020.org/Web/39/Scientific->

Child Poverty in Sweden and Europe Expert Seminar

Dear ICSW friends,
greetings from ICSW in Sweden with a recommendation to reserve and report interest in participating in an interesting expert seminar on child poverty in a comparative perspective along with one of Sweden's foremost experts in this area, Professor *Tapio Salonen*.

The time for this seminar in collaboration with Malmö University will be on **December 6-7, 2019** in **Malmö, Sweden** together with representative networks from the ICSW Board of Sweden.

We want to enable an expert meeting within the organization **International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)** with delegates from Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Norway, Finland and Sweden on the topic of **Child Poverty in Sweden and Europe**.

We have applied for financial resources for travel and accommodation for up to two participants per ICSW country, to which we are directing the invitation.

Confirm your interest in participating during these days, as well as those who intend to attend, and we will confirm as soon as we have received our application for external financing.

We will return soon with more detailed information regarding the detail of the program, possibilities for accommodation, etc. to all interested.

Welcome to Sweden, Greetings,

Leif Öberg
Chairman
ICSW Sweden
leif.oberg@fralsningsarmen.se

European Expert Seminar

The purpose of the meeting is to provide a platform for discussion and exchange of scientific and practical knowledge about child poverty. At the meeting, we also intend to discuss how policies on child poverty and how each country handles the issue in the social policy area. The host of the meeting is Malmö University through the Prorektor and Professor *Tapio Salonen* annually conducts a survey of Child Poverty in Sweden on behalf of the Save the Children.

Relevance to social work and social policy

Child poverty is an ever-present issue for the Swedish welfare society and has historically and presently been a central issue for social work and social policy. But changes in living conditions, demographics, public conversation and social policy make the issue a priority and perceived differently in different time periods. Examples include recent years' marked increase in homelessness in Sweden and evictions of families with children. The increase in migration of child families and unaccompanied children to Europe and Sweden are also changes that potentially require issues of child poverty to be elucidated from different perspectives.

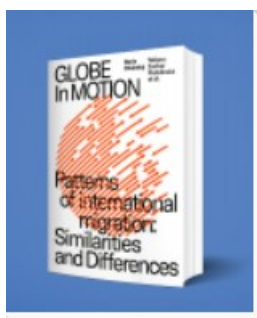
Expected result

Arranging a meeting with experts on the issue from several European countries will help to exchange knowledge about the similarities and differences in countries in terms of efforts, responsibilities and solutions. Exchanges of knowledge that can benefit each country's future work on issues related to child poverty. At the expert meeting, perspectives from the welfare states' social work, civil society, research and social policy context will be highlighted in order to provide as diverse a picture of child poverty as possible.

The expert meeting will lead to a "position paper" being written by ICSW Sweden with the aim of being disseminated to the social policy field at national level in Sweden and within Europe, by publishing on ICSW's websites in different countries, ICSW Europe's newsletter and ICSW's global newsletter.

The Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences has recently published a new book on international migration entitled **“Globe in Motion. Patterns of International Migration: Similarities and Differences”**. The book comprises 10 contributions on variegated topical and momentous **migration issues**, prepared – among others – by such prominent global migration researchers and practitioners as *Howard Duncan, Rinus Penninx, Antoine Savary, Alexandra Williams-Woods* etc. In terms of its author team, formal character and scientific content, the book is pioneering in the country.

Just a few weeks ago, the editors and the mentioned book received an Award of the Slovak Academy of Sciences – the SAS Prize in International Science, more simply for the best work in the field of social sciences, as the first ever in this area of migration. Let me therefore recommend it to your attention. Any feedback or comment as well as its review will be highly appreciated.



The book *“Globe in Motion. Patterns of International Migration: Similarities and Differences”* can be downloaded at

<http://www.uet.sav.sk/?q=en/globe-motion-patterns-international-migration-similarities-and-differences>

Slovenská katolícka charita (Caritas Slovakia) has recently issued a book on migration and development in Slovakia. The publication has been developed as part of the MIND project (Migration. Interconnectedness. Development), a 3-year international project of 11 countries financed by the European Commission (DG DEVCO) under the DEAR scheme (Development Education and Awareness Raising). More information on the project can be found at

<https://www.caritas.eu/mind/>
<https://www.caritas.eu/whatishome/>
<https://www.charita.sk/projekt-mind/>

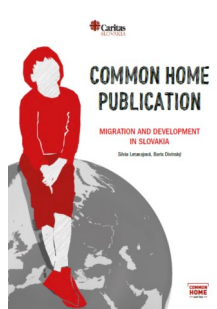
The publication has been produced in two language mutations, differing just slightly, but having different ISBNs. Both – the Slovak and English versions – in the .pdf form can, respectively, be downloaded at

English version:

[https://www.charita.sk/cojedomov/Common%20Home%20\(EN\).pdf](https://www.charita.sk/cojedomov/Common%20Home%20(EN).pdf)

Slovak version:

[https://www.charita.sk/cojedomov/N%C3%A1%C5%A1%20spolo%C4%8Dn%C3%BD%20domov%20\(SK\).pdf](https://www.charita.sk/cojedomov/N%C3%A1%C5%A1%20spolo%C4%8Dn%C3%BD%20domov%20(SK).pdf)



For printed copies, those who have not received them yet, please send emails to: marinova@charita.sk or janak@charita.sk

(source: RNDr. Boris Divinský, independent expert in international migration, expert of United Nations Alliance for Civilizations (UNAOC) altiplano@centrum.sk)

Useful Links

Social Platform – 2nd Flagship Conference, Helsinki 2019:
[Flagship Conference](#)

Building Social Europe – Flagship Conference workshop recommendations:
<https://www.socialplatform.org/news/building-social-europe-flagship-conference-workshop-recommendations/>

The Finnish EU High Level Presidency's conference:
[Finnish EU High Level Presidency's Conference on the Economy of Wellbeing](#)

The Report 'Falling through the Cracks: Exposing Inequalities in Europe and beyond':
<https://www.sdgwatcheurope.org/sdg10/>

Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development, Rimini, Italy, 2020 – Scientific Program:
<http://www.swesd2020.org/Web/39/Scientific-Program/>

Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in Decision-Making Process, Council of Europe:
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/civil-participation>

Caritas Europa:
<https://www.caritas.eu/mind/>

ICSW Sweden:
<http://www.icsw.se/icsw-sweden-in-english/>

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.

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Njål Petter Svensson (Norway)

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