

Editorial

The big event for the Council of Europe this year was the Summit of Heads of State and Government, which was held in Warsaw in May 2005. Bringing together the top representatives of no fewer than 46 States, this was, by any standards, a significant landmark for the Organisation.

The Summit confirmed the leading role of the Council of Europe in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These basic objectives are the inspiration for all its work, including its work in the field of social cohesion. The Summit expressed its conviction that social cohesion (as well as education and culture) is an "essential enabling factor" for the effective implementation of the Council of Europe's core values. In other words: it is not possible to pursue human rights, democracy and the rule of law without giving heed to the state of our societies.

This is what led the Heads of State and Government to state that the Council of Europe should not only maintain but "step up" its work in the social policy field. In particular, the Summit decided to set up a high-level taskforce to review the Council of Europe's strategy to promote social cohesion in the twenty-first century in the light of the Organisation's achievements.

The role of the Taskforce will be to take a long hard look at current challenges to the European tradition of social protection and social policy and consider how member States can reform their social policies without going back on their fundamental

principles. In a world of fierce global competition, in a Europe which is entering uncharted demographic territory with persistent low fertility and an ageing population, in a society where people's values have become more oriented towards individual consumerism, what is the future of the European model of social cohesion, defined by the Council of Europe as "the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members"?

The Committee of Ministers have now adopted the terms of reference of the Taskforce and will appoint its members before the end of this year. The Taskforce will start work early next year. It is expected to consult widely and then come up with a report before the end of 2007 which will, we trust, make a distinctive Council of Europe contribution to current debates about the future of the European social model.

The Summit also recognised the importance of population movements within Europe and from other continents to Europe and the fact that management of this migration is a major challenge to 21st-century Europe. They considered that the Council of Europe should pursue its activities in this sector, in cooperation with the European Union, to contribute to a more balanced management of migration Europe-wide. The key role of the European Committee on Migration (CDMG) lies in promoting the transfer and development of policy experience between the member States and in strengthening the co-operation between policy-makers from countries of origin, transit and destination in order to develop a framework for orderly management.

This is carried out primarily through the Political Platform on Migration which brings together representatives of the 46 member States of the Council of Europe and selected African and Asian countries of origin. The CDMG will therefore continue working on its two main lines of action, namely promoting an orderly management of migration flows, respectful of the human rights and human dignity of all migrants and devising innovative policies to better integrate migrants and minorities into European societies.

Regarding the Roma activities, the Summit confirmed the member States' commitment to combat all kinds of exclusion and insecurity of the Roma communities in Europe and to promote their full and effective equality. The first plenary Assembly of the European Roma and Travellers Forum will take place in the Council of Europe headquarters from 13 to 15 December 2005, with the logistical and financial support of the Council of Europe. Roma issues will remain high on the agenda of the Directorate General of Social Cohesion with the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Group of Specialists on Roma and Travellers in spring 2006 and with the submission to the Committee of Ministers of a draft recommendation on policies towards Roma and Travellers in Europe which sets out a coherent and comprehensive strategy to improve the situation of Roma communities in all the member States.

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Newsletter: The Warsaw Summit has set up a high-level taskforce on social cohesion in the 21st century. What do you see as the main threats to social cohesion in the years to come? Some people think the welfare state has had its day. Do you agree?

Globalisation is with us whether we will it or not because technology and technological development will continue to drive it. Inevitably a more open economy, necessary to generate the growth to provide, *inter alia*, the spending on social protection, needs greater flexibility of individuals, companies and communities. But that same flexibility itself can threaten the social equity and stability which parts of Europe have taken more or less for granted, unless decisions are taken at both the national, political level and throughout society that social cohesion can and must be maintained. Some of this frankly is about political choice. The United States, home of the tradition of the individual, of individual freedom and individual responsibility has traditionally turned its back on many forms of collective action but at the cost of 36 million living below the poverty line and 44 million without health insurance. Not the kind of model most of us want in Europe for our communities. Partly the threat to social cohesion in Europe is a political-cultural one, a loss of confidence that we really can marry flexibility with social cohesion. Partly it is a technical one, the failure to make the investments in people and technological systems to secure our future.

Newsletter: Stability cannot be reached without a long-term perspective for citizens and the feeling that they are useful to society. How could we improve the skills and knowledge of young people so

as to support their professional and personal engagement in society?

The knowledge-based economy must be at the heart of Europe's future, we all agree with that because virtually no part of this continent can or should seek to compete with the low wage, and importantly, the low social wage economies emerging in Asia and progressively in other parts of the developing world. Many parts of Europe under-invest in research and development and education and skills training. Investment in research and development is fundamental if Europe is to be at the centre of the knowledge-based economy. But this cannot be a simple mantra where repetition guarantees the result. In the United Kingdom, the Labour government came to power claiming that our priorities were "Education, education, education". In today's world this can no longer be the education of a narrow elite but an active choice to drive both the funding and the culture of education into every home in every country. No individual national model is guaranteed to work everywhere but I am justifiably proud of the real improvements I have seen in the education of young people in my Parliamentary constituency in Manchester, one of the most deprived in Britain, which historically underachieved because of neglect of those at the wrong end of the social and economic ladder. All our talents must be harnessed. And education and training must be for life.

Newsletter: Do you think that employment for all is a possibility for European countries? What is the price of better distribution of jobs opportunities? Are lower salaries the key to a better sharing of existing employment?

Even with the most efficient education system, individuals will aspire to and reach different levels of attainment and skill. Not everyone can work at the forefront, say, of biomedical research or developing the latest information technology. But nor does society want this. Under most imaginable scenarios we will still require people working in our health services, our caring professions, our hospitality industries, our retail section. What society needs is, at every level, the best possible training and education to help the workforce perform the tasks they are

asked to take on. And individuals need the same if individuals during their working life face a flexible economy with jobs changing, skills disappearing and new ones emerging, the old days of narrow specialist skill are gone and we must educate and train to a level that allows for adaptability and for regular change of employment.

Newsletter: Do you think that globalisation imposes a new division of responsibilities among stakeholders including enterprises, governments and civil society? How can such new responsibilities be clarified

There are new challenges at every level of society in this. To take the example of the welfare system, we must recognise that with a flexible economy and even with highly adaptable individuals, there should be no overriding disincentive to prevent people moving from job to job as the employment base changes or as individuals seek to improve themselves. This needs a recognition that welfare support should accept temporary stoppages of work patterns as inevitable and provide continuity of not only family income but also to guarantee no loss of access to health, education and pensions entitlement that can now be affected by stoppage, even temporary stoppage of work. That needs a combination of individuals, enterprise and society accepting that it is in everyone's interest to protect individuals, families and communities as a flexible economy encourages change but protects against its worst impact. And it needs a radically different attitude in some European countries, certainly including my own, to the culture with respect to training. Training is a tripartite commitment between the individual, the employer and society's education and training systems. Individuals have their own responsibility but too many employers regard training as something that happens to their employees before or despite their current employment. But society must also accept a role to manage and maintain acceptable standards as well as to bring into training those that have not reached basic skills levels and, in the case of a collapse of a major employer, to prevent whole communities from the devastation of structural unemployment.

Newsletter: Reconciling growth, social protection and equity has become a real challenge in a globalised Europe. How can countries ensure that the benefits of growth will be redistributed and that there is more individual responsibility for the welfare state?

Inevitably the challenge of managing the balance between economic flexibility and social cohesion requires real effort and belief in all our societies. It requires a culture which rejects the individualistic view of the world, where the well-off educate their children to be the next generation of the well-off, where the haves in society purchase individual protection against life's problems of health or unemployment or whatever. Individuals always can and always have made some private provision. But there can be no long-term cohesion in our societies if the strong do not protect the weak, if the working generation denies care to the old, the young and the vulnerable. If society chooses sometimes to reward those in sometimes temporary powerful economic positions in extraordinary ways, it also chooses to condemn those in the weakest positions to fight only by eroding their living standards, and their quality of life, and then we will be engaged in a real race to the bottom.

Newsletter: What are the roles and the tasks that should be taken on by international organisations such as the Council of Europe in order to contribute to the reconciliation of growth and social cohesion in a globalised world?

International institutions like the Council of Europe have a real role to play in all this by ensuring we debate properly these matters and don't simply drift into a divisive future. The Council of Europe can lead this debate and harness the capacity of other partners, employers' organisations, the European trade union movement, the International Labour Organisation. Together we can forge a European culture which offers a future to all our citizens and provides a model which can be used worldwide.

The Directorate General of Social Cohesion hopes that the 2005 Forum, "Reconciling labour flexibility and social cohesion", gave participants a chance to explore the many facets of one of the most controversial and widely discussed topics in the member states today: what are the effects of labour flexibility on social cohesion? In other words: how do labour market reforms, both legislative and organisational, match the need to continue pursuing the aim of fairer access to rights, recognition of everyone's dignity and of everyone's desire for autonomy, personal development and citizen participation?

Ministers, representatives of employers, trade unions and the unemployed, parliamentarians and researchers have been putting forward their views on this complex issue. Three workshops also provided an opportunity to discuss current institutional changes (particularly in labour law); effects on families and the management of private life; and apportionment of the costs and benefits of the changes.

This discussion highlighted the political perspective and the expectations of governments, firms, trade unions and citizens concerning the future role of labour in our societies. Is labour always associated with social and economic rights? Or is it just a commodity – something bought where it costs least?

Unemployment in Europe is another crucial issue. The champions of labour market flexibility regard it as a change which

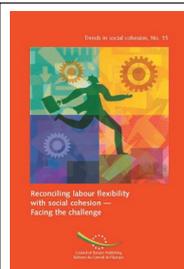
globalisation demands, and hope that it will also reduce unemployment, while states see it as a way of cutting down on unemployment benefits. Opponents fear that the cost of the changes will fall unfairly on workers, and that employment will become increasingly precarious. The Forum offered an opportunity to explore the arguments on both sides.

For the Forum the Social Cohesion Development Division has prepared a grid which indicates the ways in which new laws on labour flexibility square with social cohesion. Its presentation during the Forum has sparked further interest in this project.

The conclusions of the preliminary work and of the Forum itself have been published for wide distribution in the series "Trends in Social Cohesion" Volume 15 and highlights the effects of labour market institutional and organisational reforms on social cohesion. Volumes No. 16 and 17 will be published in 2006 and they will provide a basis for the discussions of the Group of high-level experts which the Committee of Ministers is setting up to analyse the future of social cohesion in Europe.

More information can be found on the forum website: <http://www.coe.int/socialcohesion/forum2005/fr>

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Reconciling labour flexibility with social cohesion - Facing the challenge

Trends in social cohesion No. 15, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005, ISBN: 92-871-5813-4

This volume on labour flexibility questions the effects on social cohesion of labour market administrative and organisational reforms. The Council of Europe is seeking conciliation between the inevitable changes wrought by globalisation, i.e. reorganisation of the parameters of competition, and social cohesion.

This conciliation should take into account the essential political value of

democratic security. This security is to be found firstly in employment; the high social and societal cost of precariousness attests to this. However, security should not imply rigidity and rather translate it into societal recognition of a "right to transition" which calls for co-responsibility of all stakeholders.

Conciliation is more than a political duty: it is the cost of the stability required for social sustainability. It should therefore raise awareness of the need to find new ways of sharing fairly the costs and benefits generated by the transitions.

To order this publication, please contact the Council of Europe Publishing: <http://book.coe.int>

Seminar “Involving citizens in combating poverty and social exclusion”

1-2 December 2005, Trento (Italy)

The seminar on “Involving citizens in combating poverty and social exclusion” which took place on 1-2 December 2005 in Trento (Italy) was organised by the Directorate General of Social Cohesion (DG III) in co-operation with the Autonomous Province of Trento, the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs, the FEBEA/SEFEA and the European network of ethical and solidarity-based initiatives. It discussed a vital question: how, by making responsible choices, can individuals help to combat poverty and exclusion? The seminar is one of the initiatives launched to enhance the work of the “European dialogue platform on citizen initiatives to combat poverty and social exclusion”.

At the **3rd Council of Europe Summit** (16-17 May 2005, Warsaw), the Heads of State and Government declared that combating poverty and social exclusion was an integral part of achieving social cohesion. The Trento seminar’s approach ties in with the various projects launched by DG III to explore, with civil society, ways of making action against poverty and social exclusion more effective.

Public policies are not enough to achieve the aim of inclusion and well-being for everyone. It is becoming increasingly necessary to involve ordinary people

by means which connect with individual responsibility: ethical and solidarity-based financing and responsible consumption are two of them. This is why the themes for the seminar were selected in consultation with representatives of Europe’s various citizen involvement networks, who met representatives of the Council of Europe’s European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS), Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, and Committee of Ministers (GR-SOC) in Strasbourg, to decide how they could best contribute to political dialogue on action against poverty.

The following questions were selected for the seminar:

- How can the economy be made an instrument of solidarity and well-being for everyone?
- What is the added value of dialogue between public authorities and citizen initiatives for action against exclusion and poverty?
- Which of the concepts, approaches, products and services offered by organisations working on solidarity-based finance and responsible consumption are relevant to combating poverty and exclusion?
- Which legal and institutional measures promote citizen solidarity and social responsibility?
- How can the poorest of the poor be given access to credit?

• What responses are available, or needed, to tackle new forms of poverty, such as family overindebtedness?

• Would a fund for innovation and experiment help citizen approaches to ethical and solidarity-based responsibility to develop?

The Trento seminar’s conclusions and discussions should serve as a template for action in a priority area for the Council of Europe’s member States, particularly since eliminating poverty and exclusion is an aim shared by all the governments and by civil society.

The seminar opened with a public debate, in which the people of Trento were invited to take part. As well as highlighting the work of the various partners active in this field, the aim was to receive public feedback on the usefulness of ethical and solidarity-based approaches in combating poverty.

More information is available on our website: www.coe.int/platform

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The review *Alternatives économiques* (France) co-edited with the Council of Europe an overview of 80 good practice examples of citizen and solidarity initiatives in 15 European countries. This was then translated into Italian by the review *Altreconomia*.

«**Les initiatives citoyennes en Europe**», *Alternatives économiques*, Hors-série pratique n° 19, mai 2005.

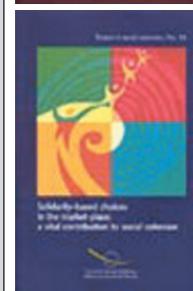


«**Cittadiniattivi Europei Solidali**», *Altreconomia*, AA.VV., novembre 2005.



Two Council of Europe publications on the theme:

Ethical, solidarity-based citizen involvement in the economy: a prerequisite for social cohesion (Trends in social cohesion No. 12), Council of Europe Publishing, 2005, ISBN 92-871-5558-5



Solidarity-based choices in the marketplace: a vital contribution to social cohesion (Trends in social cohesion No. 14), Council of Europe Publishing, 2005, ISBN 92-871-5761-8

To order these publications, please contact the Council of Europe Publishing: <http://book.coe.int>

Positive and non-violent parenting

The Council of Europe's **Third Summit** (May 2005, Warsaw) adopted an Action Plan which calls for "Building a Europe for and with Children". The definition of children is 0-18 years in accordance with the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** – ratified by all member States of the Council of Europe.

The Action Plan highlights two tasks: to promote children's rights and to eradicate all forms of violence.

The guidelines and report on parenting currently being elaborated address both these issues. First, the guidelines aim at promoting positive parenting, in accordance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Furthermore they address the need to bring up children in a non-violent way and provide parents with alternatives to corporal punishment. Children's perspectives on these issues will also be included, based upon their messages at the consultation with children that took place on 6-7 October 2005 in Strasbourg.

The guidelines will situate parenting in contemporary Europe and they will be developed in the light of the challenges identified to provide greater support for

parenting. The spirit of the report will focus on the resources or capital that are needed for parenting.

The report and guidelines will be both generic in the sense that they will be directed at all parents and specific in the sense that they consider children in particular situations and will be directed at specific groups of parents. Among the latter the following groups have been identified: low-income parents; lone parents; families with illness/disability and families in which there is drug dependency. The overall aim of the guidelines is to promote an upbringing which guarantees children's rights to a positive and non-violent childhood at home.

The Section Children, Families and Elderly people within Council of Europe Directorate General for Social Cohesion (DG III) will convey the messages from the participants to the Committee of Experts on Children and Family (CS-EF) and the active participation of these children and parents is being considered for the 28th Conference of European Family Ministers, Lisbon 2006.

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The Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Family Affairs

The 28th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Family Affairs will take place on 16-17 May 2006 in Lisbon (Portugal) on the following theme: "CHANGES IN PARENTING: Children Today, Parents Tomorrow". It will focus on family policies – taking into consideration the demographic changes in Europe and different patterns of family life. Starting with an identification of the changing elements in parenting and an assessment of the present situation of new family structures in our member states, the Conference will consider which family policies are needed in response to changes and new challenges and

which are the most useful to enable states and public authorities to help families (for example through family policies and supporting programmes) and supporting parenting in the best interests of the child.

The protection of children's rights and how these – including those of children with disabilities, from ethnic and minority groups and migrant children – are being taken into consideration in the member states will be addressed throughout the Conference. Intergenerational aspects and policies which might help in this field will also be considered. The Ministerial Conference will also take stock of follow-up to the 27th session at Portorož, Slovenia (21-22 June 2001) on the theme of "Reconciling work and family life".

Say no to poverty!

Since 1992, the United Nations have declared the 17th of October "International Day for the Eradication of Poverty". Each year this symbolic date is an opportunity for the Council of Europe and the NGOs working with the Organisation, in particular the Extreme Poverty and Social Cohesion Grouping and the International Movement ATD Fourth World, to gather on the forecourt of the Palais de l'Europe round the commemorative stone which was inaugurated over ten years ago. This year the Council of Europe choir performed at the ceremony, which was followed by a small reception.

Ms de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, said that, since its foundation in 1949, the Organisation had constantly shown and confirmed its unflinching commitment to making Greater Europe a vast continent in which respect for human rights goes hand in hand with the fight against poverty and social exclusion. This commitment was particularly clear at the **3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government in Warsaw in May 2005**.

The Council of Europe has several legal instruments to help combat exclusion and poverty: the **European Convention on Human Rights**, which establishes fundamental rights and freedoms, and the **European Social Charter**, which establishes social rights, in particular the right to protection against poverty and the right to housing. The **Social Cohesion Strategy**, which the Committee of Ministers approved on 31 March 2004, defines social cohesion as "the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarization".

- **Message from Ms Boer-Buquicchio**

- **Internet Site on the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty**

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2005 WORLD SUMMIT: RESULTS AND FOLLOW-UP

14-16 SEPTEMBER 2005, NEW YORK, USA



The World Summit was followed by numerous expressions of disappointment and disapproval. International NGOs in particular voiced their fears and their apprehension about far too great a drop in income as a result of states' lack of strong commitment.

Since the end of September 2005, the General Assembly and its President, Jan Eliasson, of Sweden, have been responsible for bringing to a conclusion the discussions on the key decisions taken at the Summit. The arrangements for and means of fulfilling the eight Millennium Development Goals set five years ago need to be re-examined, so that the goals can be attained by 2015.

The United Nations Organisation (UN) has just celebrated its 60th anniversary. UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, speaking on United Nations Day (24 October 2005), said: "we must recognize that the world today is very different from that of our founders. The United Nations must reflect this new age, and respond to its challenges".

The leaders who attended the World Summit of 14-16 September 2005 in New York adopted a final document which Mr Annan described as less ambitious than the initial draft. It nevertheless offers the advantage of including a long first chapter on development (61 paragraphs), endorsing the setting up of a Peacebuilding Commission and a Human Rights Council by the end of 2005, and calling for the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on terrorism by September 2006.

The main items sadly missing from the decisions taken were non-proliferation and disarmament, although Mr Annan did emphasise his concern "about weapons of mass destruction and the possibility that they may even get into the wrong hands". Reducing world poverty, the first Millennium Development Goal, was ultimately very much pushed into the background during the Summit, with other subjects such as terrorism overshadowing this debate, albeit without a decisive outcome being achieved.

"We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights. Unless all these causes are advanced, none will succeed."

Kofi A Annan, UN Secretary-General, introduction to the 2005 report on the Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2005

Also acknowledged has been the need for reform of UN management, so that the Organisation can deal more effectively with the effects of poverty and war and promote sustainable development. The reforms called for are now being negotiated. As the negotiations are proving difficult, Mr Annan is yet again calling on states to show a readiness to compromise.

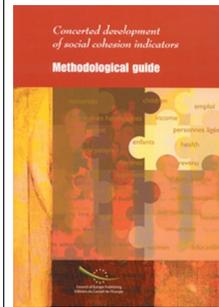
Links to website pages:

- [2005 World Summit general website](#)
- [2005 World Summit Follow-up page](#)



Concerted development of social cohesion indicators - Methodological guide (Book + CD-Rom)

Council of Europe Publishing, 2005
ISBN 92-871-5742-1, 235 pages, 25 Euro



The recently published Methodological guide on the concerted development of social cohesion indicators was developed by the Council of Europe's Social Cohesion Development Division of the Directorate General of Social Cohesion.

This guide brings our concept of social cohesion as it is defined in the Council of Europe's **Social Cohesion Strategy** to life and proposes a method and tools for making co-responsibility of the actors work, at the local, regional, national and European levels, in order to ensure the welfare of all. It provides actors in the same geographical territory with the means to pool their ideas, choose their objectives and translate them into indicators in order to clarify and quantify them, monitor the progress made and assess their impact.

Based on a global approach to social cohesion that looks not only at welfare in its various dimensions as an outcome, but also at how people interact to achieve this welfare and the values, feelings and bonds they share, the guide proposes a variable-geometry framework for analysing social cohesion in different areas of life (employment, income, health, education, housing, nutrition, culture, information) and vulnerable groups (migrants, minorities, children, elderly people, people with disabilities, women).

The cd-rom accompanying the publication offers some 2000 statistical indicators and links them with the Council of Europe's adopted conventions, recommendations and resolutions.

By presenting this guide to relevant partners, the Social Cohesion Development Division hopes to raise interest in the implementation of the Social Cohesion Strategy and to offer the necessary analytical and methodological framework to measure this implementation.

For further information on this guide and its use, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Gilda Farrell (gilda.farrell@coe.int) or Mr Samuel Thirion (samuel.thirion@coe.int).

To order this publication, please contact the Council of Europe Publishing: <http://book.coe.int>

Migration and co-development

The European Committee of Migration (CDMG) is currently working with countries of origin of migrants with a view to assisting them in identifying their particular interests in the management of migration and with a view to improving the quality of their dialogue and co-operation with countries of destination. It is planned that the results of this work will be examined by CDMG at its 51st meeting in the first half of 2006. One of the areas of interest is that of how migration can contribute to the development of countries of origin; and one particular aspect of this linkage is the role of migrants themselves (whether they be first generation migrants or people of migrant origin) in contributing to the development of their country of origin – a process that carries the name of co-development.

The notion of co-development is well understood by some countries but less well understood by others. France is a leader in this field, with an Ambassador for Co-Development. Co-development is closely linked to the question of migrants' remittances and their contribution to local development in the country of origin. There is currently considerable interest at international level on this question. The OECD, for example, organised an important conference in Marrakech on 23-25 February 2005 on migration, remittances and the economic development of sending countries.

Migration and co-development is also the subject of a pilot series of workshops on North-South dialogue on migration organised between the Migration Division of DGIII and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe in Lisbon. The series of workshops has been launched in response to the call to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe at the last conference of European Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs in 2002 to establish a regular dialogue between countries of origin, transit and destination.

The series of workshops was launched as a modest initiative to help bring together people interested in migration from both North and South, to help them establish contacts, share information and exchange ideas and if possible to develop working relationships. And as part of this process, particular importance is attached to bringing together not simply counterparts – for

example government officials from the North with government officials from the South; but rather to encourage a transnational criss-cross of contacts between actors in civil society (NGOs and migrants associations) and government officials, parliamentarians and local authorities. That is to bring together people who they might not otherwise work together.

Four workshops have been organised in this series on migration and co-development: (i) Migrants: actors and partners in development here and there (1st Workshop, April 2004); (ii) The role of local authorities (2nd Workshop, December 2004); (iii) Migrants: economic players in their countries of origin (3rd Workshop, March 2005); (iv) Financing co-development (4th Workshop, October 2005). A 5th workshop will close the series in spring 2006.

Already, the workshops have had an impact. They constitute a well of ideas and inspiration for the Council of Europe. The European Committee on Migration set up a working group this year to prepare guidelines on how governments can support migrants associations and organisations in their projects on co-development. The European Committee also organises debates with representatives of countries of origin in a Political Platform on Migration; and the theme 4th Session in April 2005 was on co-development between North and South and how countries of origin maintain links with their migrants. The debate provided an opportunity to present the work of the workshops and widen awareness among government experts about the importance of north-south dialogue on migration and on the contribution that co-development can make.

Moreover, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has adopted two important texts on co-development; a **resolution (No 1462)** addressed to the governments of the member States, and the other; a **recommendation (No 1718)** addressed to the Committee of Ministers (**see article in adjacent colon "Parliamentary Assembly: Co-development policy to regulate migratory flows"**).

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Parliamentary Assembly: Co-development policy to regulate migratory flows

At its 2005 October part-session, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted **Resolution 1462 (2005)** and **Recommendation 1718 (2005)** with regard to co-development policies. The Rapporteur, Mr Salles (France, ADLE) argued that the interaction between migration and development – i.e. ensuring that migration contributed to sustainable development and that, in turn, development contributed to the management of migration – could be most successfully achieved through co-development policies.

Co-development policy has emerged as a way of involving migrants as active actors of development who strengthen cooperation between home and host societies. Migrants generally contribute to development through investment and remittances, and also through their skills, entrepreneurial activities, and support for democratisation and human rights promotion.

The Assembly observes that transfers of migrants' savings can be an important contribution for the national economy, for families, villages and regions in the country of origin. While these transfers have traditionally helped to create an unofficial social security system bridging gaps in national welfare systems, governments of home countries should by no means rely on remittances to relieve them of welfare burdens and they should take full responsibility for the provision of welfare.

The Assembly considers that in order to help break away from the vicious cycle of poverty, the transfer of acquired skills and migrants' savings should play an important part in improving education, employment and entrepreneurial skills in their country of origin.

Partnerships between host and home countries – particularly at the level of local authorities – should stimulate the use of remittances as additional funds for investment and local development.

Social security: Compatibility of the Ukrainian legislation with European and International standards

The assistance offered by the Council of Europe to Ukraine in relation to social security reforms has entered a very crucial phase.

With the support at the highest political level of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine, the Social Policy Department of the Council of Europe started this year to elaborate, in co-operation with the International Labour Office, a programme of bilateral cooperation with Ukraine on social security for the coming years. The main aim is to define a national social security framework compatible with the European standards and to elaborate a road map to implement these reforms.

The first step was the organisation of a seminar in Kiev on 22-23 June 2005 to have a general overview of the compatibility of the Ukrainian social security legislation with European and International standards; in particular the European Code of Social Security (ECSS). A member of the European Committee of Social Rights of the European Social Charter also participated at this meeting.

The meeting examined social security as a fundamental right and presented European standards on social security. The nine contingencies appearing in the ECSS were introduced by Ukrainian experts and analysed. This analysis indicates that the degree of maturity of the different contingencies is different and that the following branches are more likely to comply with the requirements of the European Code of Social Security: sickness and maternity benefits, employment injury benefit and unemployment benefit. Participation during the meeting was very active and of a high level.

This meeting outlined the preparation of a programme of activities leading to the ratification of the ECSS. The main steps towards ratification would be:

- Translation into Ukrainian of the ECSS and the form for the annual report on the ECSS;
- Preparation of compatibility studies of the Ukrainian social security legislation with the standards of the ECSS. This will include a legal analysis and an economic and financial analysis

(methodology of calculation and viability of the social security system);

- Preparation of a zero report on the basis of the compatibility studies;
- Signature of the ECSS ;
- National Conferences to present the zero report to define the parts of the Code that can be accepted and the necessary modifications to national legislation;
- Training of high level authorities on social security;
- Ratification of the ECSS.

The need for coordination of the legal obligations assumed by the government under the different European and international standards was also underlined during this meeting since Ukraine will soon ratify the Revised European Social Charter, excluding article 12.

The translation of the ECSS and the compatibility studies have been carried out end 2005.

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Employment in South East Europe: 4th meeting of the Permanent High-Level Committee of experts

On 22-24 September 2005, the 4th meeting of the Permanent High-Level Committee (PHLC) of employment experts from South East Europe took place in Budapest.

The High-Level Committee meets regularly to discuss and review employment policies in South East Europe and to share good practices. The work of the committee was launched by a high-level conference in Bucharest in 2003. The countries which participate in this process seek to further improve their national employment policies, in order to pursue economic growth, social cohesion and regional stability with high and productive employment.

At the meeting in Budapest, the participants examined the Country Reports of Employment Policies (CREP) of Moldova and Serbia. Based on the national employment reports submitted by the two countries, as well as the findings from missions carried out

Migrants can play a key role in this co-operation process since they often have better understanding of local conditions and investment opportunities than do foreign creditors and investors.

In terms of project aid, an obvious element for the success of investment projects is the existence of democratic and transparent structures in the country of origin and sound financial and banking systems. It is therefore important to first develop projects supporting the local banking systems and to lower transfer costs.

In its Resolution I462 (2005) the Assembly invites the governments to integrate migration management into development policies; to promote migrants as agents of development; to sign bilateral and regional agreements for orderly migration management; to help countries of origin to improve their infrastructures and to create better conditions for international investments; to promote co-operation with diaspora communities and encourage migrants' participation in drawing up co-development policies and projects; to promote the return of students and migrants meeting the needs of the countries of origin and to provide necessary re-employment training and grants. The Assembly also invites the relevant international agencies to conduct studies on the micro and macro-economic impact of remittances and on the relationship between migration and remittances.

At the level of the Council of Europe, the Assembly recommends: setting up policy guidelines for migration and co-development; encouraging the North-South Centre to make migration and co-development one of its principal programme areas; considering how the Council of Europe Development Bank could be involved in the financing of co-development projects; and continuing to address the issue of co-development and migration in the Organisation's programmes of activities.

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by the joint team of the International Labour Organisation and the Council of Europe, the PHLC discussed both the reports as well as the recommendations given by the ILO and the Council of Europe.

The PHLC also examined the national employment reports submitted by Montenegro (reviewed by Bulgaria and Albania) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (reviewed by Romania). Croatia reviewed the Belgian National Action Plan. Furthermore, Albania and Croatia reported on the implementation of the recommendations made in the Country Reports of Employment Policies, which were presented at the 2nd session of the PHLC.

The meeting was also an opportunity to present a gender equality project (Promoting equal opportunities for women and men in the Country Employment Reviews of Stability Pact countries) and a comparative analysis of existing coordination mechanisms for employment strategies in some EU and South East European countries, with particular reference to the involvement of other stakeholders, such as social partners, local authorities and NGOs.

The PHLC also made comments on the drafts of the "Sofia Conclusions" and the "Activity Report 2003-2005", in preparation of the second regional Ministerial Conference on Employment, which is scheduled to take place on 21 October in Sofia.

The forthcoming 5th session of the PHLC was tentatively scheduled for spring 2006. The "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" kindly offered to host this meeting.

The meeting was attended by the delegates from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Belgium. The representatives from the ETUC, the IOE, the European Commission, the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) and the ETF also attended the meeting.

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South Eastern Europe Ministerial Conference on Employment

21 October 2005, Sofia, Bulgaria

A regional ministerial conference on employment took place in Sofia on 21 October 2005. Ten Ministers responsible for employment from countries in South Eastern Europe signed the "Sofia conclusions". They agreed to strengthen their cooperation on employment, and in particular to exchange good practices and cooperate in the design and implementation of employment policies.

The conference was organised by the Bulgarian Government, under the auspices of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, and in cooperation with the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Belgian Government. It was organised as a follow-up to the Bucharest Conference in 2003, which launched the "Bucharest process" of cooperation at the level of experts and facilitated a number of bilateral exchanges among the countries in the region.

During the Sofia Conference, the Ministers stressed the importance of such cooperation for stability, social cohesion and economic growth in the region. To date, in-depth reviews of employment policies of Albania, Croatia, Moldova

and Serbia have been carried out, on the basis of the reports prepared by the Council of Europe and the ILO.

Bulgaria and Romania have taken a leading role in advising the other participants, based on their experience of preparation for EU accession. For example, as part of peer reviews, Bulgaria has reviewed the employment policies of Montenegro, while Romania has reviewed those of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Taking this further, it was agreed that the employment policies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" would be submitted for in-depth review as well. The Ministers also committed themselves to implementing the recommendations, contained in the previous reviews, and to strengthen further bilateral exchanges. The recommendations stress the importance of the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the labour market and strengthening dialogue between the government, employers, and labour unions. They also suggest improvements to labour market policies and to the work of national employment agencies.

Representatives of the World Bank and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation present at the Ministerial Conference stressed their strong interest in promoting employment in the region and pledged funding.

Pan-European Forum on Human Rights in the Information Society : Responsible behaviour by key actors

Strasbourg, 12 -13 September 2005

Introduction and background

As a follow-up to the 2004 Council of Europe/European Commission Forum and as part of the implementation of the Council of Europe intergovernmental work of the Group of Specialists on Human Rights in the Information Society (MC-S-IS), the Forum on "Human Rights in the Information Society : Responsible Behaviour by Key Actors" held in Strasbourg on 12-13 September 2005 was organised to discuss the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholder groups in protecting and promoting human rights in the Information Society.

The Forum focused specifically on online environments and issues relating to the right to freedom of expression balanced against the right to privacy, the protection of human dignity and the well-being of persons, with particular reference to the protection of children and young people and the prevention of criminal activities.

The need for balance between competing rights and freedoms is ever more necessary within a rapidly evolving technological and economic context at both member State and European and international level. The interactive nature of content and services, especially with regard to their development, marketing and their role in protecting and promoting human rights, requires detailed analysis of both the challenges and opportunities which they pose.

Discussions and conclusions

The key issues arising from the Forum concern in particular harmful content

Palliative care: Serbia hosts a landmark European Conference

20-21 October 2005, Belgrade (Serbia)

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia in conjunction with DGIII-Health Division co-organised a European Conference on Palliative Care, which was held in Belgrade on 20-21 October 2005. The conference brought together around 300 participants, including 70 governmental experts from among the Council of Europe's 46 member States, alongside health care professionals and representatives of civil society. The two-day event was centred around the Committee of Ministers' **Recommendation Rec(2003)24** on the organisation of palliative care which calls on palliative care to become an integral part of the health care system and an inalienable element of a citizen's right to health care.

Palliative care is the active, total care of all patients: men, women and children, with advanced, progressive diseases such as cancer, AIDS and Alzheimer's disease, the aim is to control pain, relieve suffering and achieve and maintain the best possible quality of life for each individual patient and their family, for the duration of their natural life, with no intention to hasten or to postpone death. Palliative care thus encompasses psychological, social and spiritual support.

The Conference programme reflected these different aspects of the organisation and provision of care. With the guiding principles of Cure, Care, Communication, Companionship and Compassion at the core, specialists brought forward topics covering ethical perspectives, educational training for carers, enhancing the image of care and sharing a common vision of care provision. Workshops allowed participants to discuss in-depth how to promote a comprehensive policy framework for providing quality care to patients right through to the end of their lives, ensuring that each person's human dignity is respected. Participants also looked at the future of palliative

care. Government representatives presented the current palliative care situation in their respective countries. Epidemiological data and information on the organisation of palliative care units, the treatment of pain and the legislation in force was also available covering the whole of Europe. There were examples of, and discussions on, best practices in, *inter alia*, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia and Montenegro and the United Kingdom. In particular, a draft Serbian Action Plan on Palliative Care was presented and thoroughly discussed. A pilot implementation of the Recommendation in one or more member states was proposed.

The Conference website, including the Final Statement, can be found at <http://www.pallcare.belgrade2005.org.yu>. The full text of the recommendation on the organisation of palliative care and its explanatory memorandum can be found at: http://www.coe.int/T/E/Social_Cohesion/Health/Recommendations/. Thanks to efforts jointly undertaken with the European Association of Palliative Care, the Recommendation has been translated into 20 languages and now reaches over 600 million Europeans. They are available at <http://www.pallcare.belgrade2005.org.yu/downloads.php>.

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Towards a European Disability Action Plan

On 20 October 2005 the Council of Europe Committee on the Rehabilitation and Integration of People with disabilities (CD-P-RR) approved the final draft of the "Council of Europe Action Plan to

and the 'risk of harm' deriving from activities and behaviour that children and young people may encounter or engage with online or in related offline environments; as well as media literacy and the role of the state as the ultimate guarantor of human rights in the Information Society.

On this basis, the overall conclusions may be summarised as follows:

- greater human rights protection and promotion in the Information Society based on a multi-stakeholder and multi-layered approach;
- better understanding of how children and young people interpret and respond to perceived risk of harm concerning online and related offline activities within the context of their everyday lives and the utilisation of new and emerging social networking and communications technologies, as well as traditional media channels;
- developing human rights "proofing" of all key actions, decisions and technologies affecting the Information Society;
- better media literacy provision in order to minimise the risk of harm online (closely linked with member States responsibilities to protect and promote human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights) coupled with better use of civil society and the media to develop clear systems of evaluation of the efficiency of educational initiatives;
- make the most of public service broadcasters' trust relationship with users to develop commitments towards shared responsibilities in the production and distribution of user-generated content such as blogs.

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promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015”.

The Disability Action Plan focuses on human rights, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, full citizenship and the improvement of the quality of life of people with disabilities.

A goal of paramount importance is to provide a shift away from the medical model that stresses the deficit-approach by looking at impairments and disabilities, to a social and a human rights model, ensuring a coherent and integrated approach aimed at full citizenship and participation, looking at the capacities and potential of persons with disabilities.

The Disability Action Plan has a broad, multi-disciplinary scope and encompasses all key areas of the life of people with disabilities; e.g. empowerment and participation in all aspects of society such as housing, education, employment, culture, accessibility, mobility, social and legal protection, and awareness raising. The Plan also acknowledges the fact that some people with disabilities need special attention in order to be included into society, for example women and girls, children and young people, older people with disabilities, people with disabilities who need a high level of support and people with disabilities from minorities.

The Plan aims to provide a comprehensive framework that is flexible as well as adaptable in order to meet country-specific conditions. It is intended to serve as a roadmap for policy-makers, to enable them to design, adjust and implement appropriate plans, programmes and innovative strategies. At the same time member states have the primary responsibility for implementing disability policies at national level where they decide on appropriate review and follow-up arrangements. At European level, the follow-up this Action Plan should focus strengthening co-operation amongst Council of Europe member and observer states in the field of disability

and should allow for effective exchange of information, experience and best practice in a structured way among member states. Upon request, the Council of Europe will assist member states with implementing the Action Plan.

The Plan has been drafted upon recommendation of the Second European Conference of Ministers on Disability held in Malaga, Spain in May 2003, which formed a major political event of the European Year of People with Disabilities 2003. The Plan will now be submitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for final adoption, preferably resulting in a Recommendation to all Council of Europe member states.

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Counterfeit medicines in Europe: protecting the patient and deterring counterfeiters

A multisectorial action programme of the Council of Europe

Counterfeit medicines are on the rise in western industrialised countries. They undermine public trust in medical therapies and health care systems and present a significant threat to patient safety: they kill patients either through lack of therapeutic effect or through an inherent toxicity.

A study¹ carried out by the Council of Europe indicates a 10% market share of counterfeit medicines in Europe.

A counterfeit medicine is deliberately and fraudulently mislabelled with respect to source and/or identity, and includes medicines with correct ingredients, wrong ingredients, incorrect quantities of active ingredients, and/or products with fake packaging (WHO, 1992).

Transversal project on “good governance in the information society”

The three-year Project on “Good governance in the information society” was set up at the beginning of 2005 as a follow up to the Integrated project “Making democratic institutions work” (IPI), building upon the achievements of a range of Council of Europe sectors and those of IPI.

The Project seeks to put into practice the Council of Europe’s commitment to safeguarding human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the face of the social, economical and cultural transformations brought about by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The Project concentrates, in particular, on the links between ICT issues and democracy, recognising that technologies are not in themselves carriers of democratic values or relationships, but can enable and facilitate democratic practice.

The main achievements of the Project in 2005 can be summarised as follows:

1. An Ad-Hoc Committee of Experts prepared a draft declaration by the Committee of Ministers on human rights and the rule of law in the information society (adopted by the Ministers’ Deputies on 13 May 2005). The declaration is the first international attempt to draw up a framework on the issue and is groundbreaking by articulating the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights with the challenges and opportunities of the information age. It also looks at how major stakeholders - such as businesses, governments and civil society - can co-operate both nationally and internationally on the issue. The declaration provided the background to the first “Pan-European Forum: Human Rights in the Information Society: Responsible Behaviour by Key Actors” (Strasbourg, 12-13 September 2005), organised by the DG II-Directorate of Human Rights in partnership with this project.

Organised crime is often involved. The Council of Europe Committee of experts on pharmaceutical questions (P-SP-PH) under the Partial Agreement Public Health Committee (CD-P-SP), has already called for multisectorial and concerted action in its Resolution AP(2001)2 on the role of the pharmacist on health care security². Alarmed by counterfeit medicines in the legal distribution chain, in 2003 the Committee of experts entrusted the ad hoc Group on counterfeit medicines with a specific action plan including a survey, information exchange, risk management procedures and rapid alert systems as well as training programmes. The ad hoc group composition and project approach are multisectorial, bringing together officials from Council of Europe member states, European institutions, associations of pharmaceutical industry and trade and international organisations (e.g. WHO, European Commission, European Patent Office).

Co-operation was established with the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, the European Directorate on the Quality of Medicines and DG I Legal Affairs. The Committee of Ministers encouraged the P-SP-PH to proceed with its activities in the framework of its work programme³.

The P-SP-PH organised the seminar "Counteract the Counterfeiters! Limiting the Risks of Counterfeit Medicines to Public Health in Europe by Adequate Measures and Mechanisms, 21 – 23 September 2005, to discuss the follow-up to preliminary work results with an expert audience. There were 200 participants from 40 member states of the Council of Europe, European and international institutions and organisations, key industry and trade stakeholders, health professionals. The participants produced recommendations on specific legal and practical measures and their practical implementation, namely as regards legal environment, international co-operation, control of public health challenges of counterfeit medicines in Europe, training programmes, enforcement – networking and risk management, best practices for industry and distributors. The Council of Europe was recognised a centre of

excellence in the quality control of medicines, a flexible multisector platform, an organisation with a comprehensive European membership, capable of bringing forward a consensus of a suitable level to protect European health care systems, ensuring the rule of law from the human rights and public health angle. These recommendations will be referred to the appropriate Council of Europe bodies at their forthcoming meetings to decide on follow-up.

Counterfeiting of medicines is a criminal act with a dramatic impact on health of most vulnerable persons, patients. No loopholes for medicines' counterfeiters!

1 'Harmonised provisions, legislation / administrative structures and procedures applicable to counterfeit medicines; stakeholders views and experiences'. Study report; March 2005. In press.

2 ResAP(2001)2, paragraph 8: "... counterfeit pharmaceuticals pose real threats. In order to combat these dangers, the authorities, manufacturers, wholesalers, pharmacists and intergovernmental organisations must co-operate..."

3 CM/AS(2005)Rec1673 final 11 April 2005

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2. The above-mentioned Declaration will constitute part of the Council of Europe's contribution to the Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) on 16-18 November 2005. Moreover, the Council of Europe will organise two parallel events at Tunis, one entitled "From here to e-democracy: promoting e-participation and dealing with harmful content" (17 November), and a second one on "The Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime: a global treaty?" (15 November).

3. As a follow up to the Committee of Ministers' recommendations on e-voting and on e-governance, both recommendations and their explanatory memorandums have been published as ISBN-publications, and there have been several opportunities for presenting and promoting the recommendations and to collect information on emerging good practice.

4. An Inter-Secretariat task force on the Information Society was set up to oversee, stimulate and promote the Council of Europe's work in the field of ICT, and has held two meetings.

Priorities for 2006 include a progress review of developments in the field of e-voting in Europe and beyond, and the setting up of an interdisciplinary advisory group on e-democracy in order to find out which governments are thinking of working on e-democracy and to learn about any experiences already made with initial projects. The work of the project overall is also to be seen in the wider context of the decision by Council of Europe's Warsaw Summit to establish a Forum on the Future of Democracy in Europe, which is likely to address issues of e-democracy at some point in this newly established process.

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EUROPEAN ROMA AND TRAVELLERS FORUM: FIRST PLENARY MEETING 13-15 DECEMBER 2005, STRASBOURG



The Council of Europe has met a historical moment between 13 and 15 December 2005 on the occasion of the first plenary assembly of the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) in Strasbourg. This marked the achievement of the initiative launched by Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, who proposed the establishment of such a consultative body

in 2001, and especially of a dream of about 8 to 12 million Roma and Travellers throughout Europe who from now on will be able to express themselves with one voice before governments and European institutions.

More than 34 national delegations (out of 38 member states having such a population) were represented at the first plenary assembly of the Forum as a result of the selection of national delegates that took place over the last months. Seven international Roma organisations - who inter alia defend the interests of women and young people, were represented. Delegates have elected at unanimity their president, Mr. Rudko Kawczynski (RNC, Germany), and their vice-presidents, Mrs Miranda Vuolasranta (Finland) et Mr. Stanislaw Stankiewicz (IRU, Poland).

Delegates also adopted their statutes, their annual budget and started debating about the priorities for action.



Rudko Kawczynski (RNC, Germany)
Elected Chairperson of the ERTF

For further information, please visit the ERTF website: www.ertf.org

CIVIL SOCIETY - LATEST

Second International Anti-gypsyism Conference

8-9 October 2005, Hamburg
(Germany)

Anti-gypsyism is not just another form of racism. It is an ideology which views gypsies as inferior human beings and thus not subject to the legal and moral consideration due to so-called normal persons. This is the conclusion of a two-days conference organised by the [European Centre for Antiziganism Research](#) on 8-9 October 2005 at the University of Hamburg (Germany).

The Centre, known as EZAF (*Europäisches Zentrum für Antiziganismus Forschung*) has established a partnership with the University of Hamburg to carry out research on the nature of anti-gypsyism. It is endeavouring to find other universities, in Germany and abroad, to undertake research on this issue.

Participants included university professors, teachers, researchers and human rights activists from Germany and other European countries. The lecturers demonstrated the de-humanising nature of anti-gypsyism, deeply embedded in the mentalities of all European populations. Anti-gypsyism is widespread, constant and often institutionalised. It is an increasing phenomenon which is banalised by society and ignored by the authorities. In many countries gypsy children are placed in special schools for the mentally retarded and their settlements are situated far away from the sight of 'normal people'. They are a breed apart to be shut out of society.

The conference in Hamburg revealed the need to delve deeper into the roots of antigypsyism as a special form of racism if this phenomenon is to be eradicated. One of the conclusions of the Conference was to publish, at regular intervals, a 'black book' listing all the racist acts against gypsies during that period. While many are actively racists, many others are passive

and uninterested. This category of people needs to be made aware of racist acts, and the dangers of ignoring them.

A third international conference will be held in Hamburg next year with the Holocaust and Genocide as the main focus. It was agreed that one should not keep looking back but the past had to be kept in mind if we want a better future.

For further information on the conference, please visit the EZAF website on following address: <http://www.ezaf.org/de/iazk>

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Young people and social inclusion

As part of the youth research partnership with the European Commission, the Directorate of Youth and Sport of Council of Europe DG IV held a seminar on youth policies, entitled "Social inclusion and young people: a research seminar to inform policy and practice" from 31 October to 2 November 2005 at the European Youth Centre in Budapest.

Various subjects were addressed, for example school to work transition and making good use of informal forms of education which allow young people to acquire certain skills and open up a number of opportunities. The issue of discrimination was also widely discussed, particularly through themes such as the educational integration of Roma, the place of young people with disabilities and mixed ethnicity in schools and the results that have been achieved.

To understand the importance of youth policy research, it is necessary to realise how complex the subject is. Young people do not form a specific population class as such in either sociological terms - since they do not strictly speaking share a specific lifestyle or have a joint action strategy that is independent of factors such as social class, income or geographic origin - or political terms, since apart from specific youth policies, major transverse policies which also concern them directly, such as education, employment and housing for older young persons, are aimed either at a population of children or at a population of adults.

One of the key aspects of the youth issue is the acquisition of independence. Independence is not acquired automatically between childhood and adulthood but is part of a process of learning and experimentation. Between the moment when they leave the family home, whenever that finally takes place, settling down in a more or less stable job and founding their

own family, young people go through different stages to reach the "status" of (independent) adult and these and the obstacles they encounter determine their integration into society. Young people who encounter a series of obstacles during the transition from school to employment or between the family home and their own home may experience difficulties in being integrated into society and may even face the prospect of a period of social exclusion.

It is therefore essential that inclusion policies help these young people to pass through these different transitional stages successfully. By way of introduction to the seminar, Professor Howard Williamson used the metaphor of a box to describe the situation of socially excluded young people. Before appropriate inclusion policies could be drawn up, it was necessary to consider the following six questions:

- How big is the box (what is the extent of the problem)?
- For what reasons does anyone find themselves in this box (what are the processes that lead to exclusion)?
- What are the causes of these exclusion processes?
- Is this of any long-term significance? Can young people get out of the box without any assistance?
- How can we prevent young people from entering the box?
- What bridges do we need to build to help young people get out of the box?

The findings on issues concerning the inclusion of young people presented at the seminar stressed the importance of vocational education and giving it a clearer status so as to offer young

people opportunities for vocational integration, as well as the importance of non-formal learning and its contribution to the acquisition of skills, in particular in terms of citizenship and participation. The seminar also highlighted the importance of existing links, and the links that should be forged, between practitioners, researchers and policy-makers, and of constructing opportunities for young people.

These themes have been dealt with in a publication prepared by the Council of Europe Social Cohesion Development Division, which will come out in 2006. The purpose of this "Guide to framing Youth Integration Policies in Lower-income Urban Areas" is to examine concepts relating to youth policies, such as the concepts of youth and neighbourhood, and the role played by traditional means of integration such as education, work and the family. Another important aim of this publication is to break down the stereotypes which influence public debate on this subject and to propose new alternatives for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Inclusion policies for young people, particularly in working class and lower-income urban areas, are of the utmost importance for social cohesion. The recent events in France have spotlighted the need to integrate these young people, and their feelings of exclusion. Providing opportunities for personal development, autonomy, participation and fair treatment is one of the keys to the success of these social cohesion development policies.

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CARDS Programme
(Social Institutions
Support Programme in
South East Europe)

Progress and prospects

In the framework of the Joint CARDS Programme between the European Commission and the Council of Europe to support social institutions in South East Europe (SISP), a Regional Steering Committee and a Network of Local Programme Officers were created in 2005.

SISP has fulfilled its main objectives for its first year of operation by implementing a number of activities, among which the most prominent were the 1st Regional Summer School on Social Security, organised from 22 August to 2 September 2005 in Ohrid ("The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia") and the 1st Speaking Days on Social and Health Insurance between Serbia and Montenegro and "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", organised on 7-8 November 2005 in Belgrade.

The Summer School provided an in-depth social security training to 35 participants from the whole region in a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and multinational way. This approach was comprehensive because it looked at social policy and social security as a whole, multidisciplinary because it looked at the issue from various angles (legal, sociological, administrative, economic, etc.), and finally multinational in the sense that it included knowledge and best practices from a whole range of countries, both within the region and from the rest of Europe. International standards received attention as far as they provided a framework for putting the comparative information into a future perspective.

During the Speaking Days a number of representatives from the pension funds and health insurance met to accelerate the resolution of pending cases in social security matters for claimants who may have acquired rights

in the two countries. Out of 84 people interested in the free legal advice, 64 people presented their cases to the two delegations. Most of the cases were solved during the meeting; a smaller number, which needed further analysis, will be followed up by the experts and solved in the coming three months.

Moreover, national reports on the present and future state of social security in the beneficiary countries were prepared on the basis of a uniform description template and the information collection phase, including the necessary updating, was concluded. The national reports constitute a real introduction of all aspects of social security within each of the concerned states. Besides offering a brief overview of the national social security systems of the SISP countries, the reports also facilitate the broad comparison of these systems by describing them according to a uniform structure. A 1st interim report was recently approved by the European Commission. The above-mentioned documents are now ready for publication on the SISP Website, presently under construction and shortly accessible at: http://www.coe.int/T/E/social_cohesion

A range of activities are planned for the next three months:

- a meeting with the State Secretaries from the region to prepare the Ministerial Declaration on Social Security (Belgrade, 24 January 2006);
- the 2nd Speaking Days on Social and Health Insurance between "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Serbia and Montenegro (Skopje, 20 February 2006);
- a ministerial conference on Social Security in the Western Balkans Region (Zagreb, 24 March 2006).

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INGOs forum on the integration of migrants

11-13 November 2005, Messina (Italy)

On 11 and 13 November 2005, the INGOs of the Council of Europe, the North-South Centre in Lisbon and the Messina International Study and Research Centre (Intercenter) held a forum in Messina, Italy on: **Integration of migrants in Europe: what role for NGOs ?**

The aims were to reflect on the barriers to and good practice in integration, to promote the Council of Europe's legal instruments and to put forward recommendations for action.

The forum began with a minute's silence for the men, women and children who had emigrated in search of a better life and who had died en route or as a result of ill-treatment in the "host country".

The forum was organised around plenary sessions and three workshops on the following themes:

- Culture, religion, education: successfully drawing cultures together;
- Socio-economic questions: ways to improve immigrants' living conditions;
- Human rights: ensuring that they are respected in the migration context.

In the course of the debates, participants discussed the significance of concepts such as integration, assimilation, sectarianism and multiculturalism for their work. They emphasised the particularly important role played by women in the integration of migrants, and noted that women were often the primary victims of human rights abuses.

The integration of migrants being a process of mutual adjustment by migrants and the host society, it is essential that integration policies facilitate adjustment on both sides and foster mutual understanding of cultures and values. The cultural heritage

Czech Republic A new Labour Code

Law No 65/1965 of the Collection of Laws – Labour Code, as amended, came into force on 1 January 1966 and has been part of the Czech Republic's legislation for 39 years. It has been amended about fifty times, which has made it confusing for users. So the idea is to make labour law easier to understand.

The government's draft new Labour Code, which complies with the international agreements binding the Czech Republic, does not reduce employees' existing level of protection, but allows them to negotiate other rights on a contract basis (eg content of the employment contract, adjustment of working hours, higher wages, additional paid leave, more extensive paid leave for employees unable to work). The bill is based on the principle that "what is not prohibited is allowed".

As a new member of the European Union, the Czech Republic complies with EU legislation and with its own obligations under international conventions. The draft new Labour Code develops the parties' freedom of contract. While observing the principle of equal treatment, it is possible to negotiate better conditions under collective agreements (which assume greater importance), but also under employment contracts, agreements on work done outside the employment contract and sometimes other agreements concluded between the employer and the employee.

The draft new Labour Code thus becomes easier to understand – for both employees and employers – because it incorporates provisions hitherto contained in separate laws. It determines pay in the private and public sectors and compensation for work-related travel expenses. Besides the provisions on pay, it contains provisions on other rights which were

hitherto set out in decrees (eg paid leave for an employee receiving further training, compensation of all kinds for employees unable to work).

The government's draft Labour Code has been discussed on first reading by the Czech Chamber of Deputies and will soon be discussed by the Parliamentary Committee on Social Policy and Public Health. We assume there will be a whole series of amendments which will be carefully considered and assessed during subsequent debates in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

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The European Social Charter was ratified by the **Czech Republic** on 3 November 1999, then came into force and was published in the Collection of Laws and International agreements (No 14/2000) together with the Appendix to the European Social Charter (No 15/2000). In adopting these documents, the Czech Republic has undertaken to supply information on the application of the European Social Charter and its Appendix in periodic reports.

See European Social Charter Website: http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Esc/

of migrants needs to be recognised. They must not be discriminated against because of their cultural differences and the challenges they pose for societies. Young migrants must be able to be proud of their roots. School and the workplace are ideal settings for integration.

Participants were able to learn about the difficulties and, at the same time, the importance of successfully integrating all migrants, men, women and children, not only for the migrants but also for the construction of European societies. They noted that the Council of Europe's values and legal instruments (*inter alia* the **European Convention on Human Rights** and Protocol 12 on non-discrimination, and the revised **European Social Charter** and the collective complaints procedure) provided key tools for supporting the integration of migrants and pledged to do more to publicise these instruments and to ensure that they were applied.

After the Forum, NGOs drew up the Messina Declaration which calls on various members of society, including the NGOs themselves, governments, the media and the Council of Europe, to implement various targeted activities in order to better contribute to the integration of migrants. This declaration, together with a more detailed report on the forum, is available on the INGO Council of Europe website: <http://www.coe.int/T/E/NGO/Public/>.

Among these recommendations is one that calls on countries to ratify the Council of Europe's legal instruments, and where NGOs are urged to show greater determination and commitment to practical measures to facilitate the integration of migrants.

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ADOPTED TEXTS

Recommendations:

- Rec(2005)11 of the Committee of Ministers on the role and training of professionals responsible for organ donation (transplant “donor coordinators”) (Adopted on 15 June 2005)
- Rec(2005)5 of the Committee of Ministers on the rights of children living in residential institutions (Adopted on 16 March 2005)

Resolutions:

- ResAP(2005)4 of the Committee of Ministers on sun protection products to optimise consumer protection (adopted on 1 December 2005)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Publications

- **Solidarity-based choices in the market-place: a vital contribution to social cohesion** (Trends in social cohesion No. 14), Council of Europe Publishing (2005), ISBN 92-871-5761-8
- **Reconciling labour flexibility with social cohesion - Facing the challenge** (Trends in social cohesion No. 15) Council of Europe Publishing (2005), ISBN 92-871-5813-4
- **Concerted development of social cohesion indicators - Methodological guide (Book + CD Rom)**, Council of Europe Publishing (2005), ISBN 92-871-5742-1
- **Guide to the preparation, use and quality assurance of blood components**, 11th Edition, Council of Europe Publishing (2005), ISBN 92-871-5667-0
- **Eliminating corporal punishment: a human rights imperative for Europe's children**, Council of Europe Publishing (2005), ISBN 92-871-5882-7
- **Transplant Newsletter**, September 2005, Vol. 10 No. 1 (English only)
- Co-publishing: « **Cittadini Attivi Europei Solidali - Amministrazioni pubbliche, economie sociali e partecipazione da Parigi a Sesto San Giovanni** », Altreconomia and Council of Europe Publishing, n°66 November 2005.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FROM JANUARY TO MARCH 2006

Conferences:

- 24 March 2006: Ministerial Conference on Social security coordination in the Western Balkan Region – Zagreb (Croatia)
- 16-17 May 2006: XXVIIIth Session of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Family Affairs – Lisbon (Portugal)

Seminars and other meetings:

- Last week of January: visit of the Chair of the Group of Specialists on Roma, Gypsies and Travellers (MG-S-ROM) and the Coordinator to Kosovo
- 20 February: 2nd Speaking Days on Social and Health Insurance between “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and Serbia and Montenegro - Skopje (“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)
- 1st week of March: Seminar on the Code of Social Security and pension reforms in the Russian Federation - Vologda (Russian Federation)
- 23-24 February: training course on organisational aspects of organ transplantation (Joint Council of Europe/European Commission Programme) - Moldova
- 27 February-1 March: seminar on mental health (Joint Council of Europe/European Commission Programme) - Moldova

Committee meetings:

- 10-11 January: 2nd preparatory meeting of the Committee of Liaison Officers of the European Ministers responsible for Family Affairs (MMF-HF)
- 12-13 January: 61st meeting of the Bureau of the European Committee on Migration (CDMG-BU)
- 16-17 January: 2nd Working meeting of the Consultants for the Guidelines on Parenting
- 24 January: meeting with the State Secretaries from South East Europe to prepare the Ministerial Declaration on Social Security - Belgrade (Serbia and Montenegro)
- 30-31 January: 17th meeting of the Bureau of the European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS-BU)
- 30-31 January: 3rd meeting of Committee of Experts on Associations and Co-development (MG-R-AC)
- February (date to be confirmed): ad hoc meeting of the MG-S-ROM on the draft recommendation on policies towards Roma and Travellers in Europe – Madrid (Spain)
- 14-15 February: 3rd meeting of the Working Party on parental skills, especially for preventing and combating violence affecting children (CS-EF Violence)
- 23-24 February 2006: 3rd meeting of the Working Party on Parenting of Children at Risk of Social Exclusion
- 7-8 March: 4th meeting of the Committee of Experts on Children and Families (CS-EF)
- 14-17 March: meeting of the Committee of Experts on Quality Assurance in Blood Transfusion Services (SP-GS) - Brussels (Belgium)
- 20-21 March 2006: 3rd meeting of the Committee of Experts on the impact of genetics on the organisation of health care services and training of health professionals (SP-GEN)
- 23 -24 March: 3rd meeting of the Committee of Experts on the inclusion of gender differences in health policy (SP-SHF)
- 28-29 March: 16th meeting of the European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS)
- March: 2 days meeting on the North-South Dialogue on Migration and Co-Development – Nice (or Lisbon)
- March: meeting of Bureau of the European Health Committee (CDSP-BU)

“**Social Cohesion Developments**” - electronic newsletter published by the Council of Europe Directorate General of Social Cohesion – Publication: three issues a year
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