

High Level Task Force on Social Cohesion in Europe

**TOWARDS AN ACTIVE, FAIR AND
SOCIALY COHESIVE EUROPE**



To What Does Social Cohesion Refer?

- People feeling connected with and integrated into the community and society - shared values
- Solidarity and collective involvement rather than individualism – active membership
- A fair system of rights and responsibilities
- Democratic principles and the rule of law

Why States Should Engage Now

- There are risks that have to be addressed
 - demography, divisive nature of global capitalism, migration/cultural diversity
 - social stability
- The relationship between the economic and the social has become unbalanced
- Democracy is not functioning to best effect

What Does the Report Offer?

- A clear vision for social cohesion (definition, principles, goals, proposals)
- Offers an analysis of what is wrong
- Spells out the actions and actors involved (emphasising multiple actors and responsibilities)
- Develops a template for social cohesion as a policy objective at 2 levels: domain specific, transversal

What are the components of Social Cohesion Policy at National Level

- A broad-ranging employment policy
- An updated social protection system
- An effective policy on health and care
- A forward-looking education and training system
- An effective housing and area-based policy
- Policy for an active and integrated society (better procedures for conflict resolution integration of migrants and minorities, the fight against discrimination)

The Way Forward: Four Priorities for Social Cohesion in Europe

- Reinvesting in Social Rights (stronger promotion of social rights, develop health and education as rights)
- Greater Sharing of Responsibilities (citizens, public authorities, social partners)
- Strengthening Mechanisms of Representation and Social and Civic Dialogue (Participation) (reactivating democratic processes, civil and social dialogue)
- Building Confidence in a Common Future (a new intergenerational contract, work/family reconciliation, migration)

Main Messages

- Social cohesion is more relevant than ever because:
 - - it is concerned with long-term sustainability
 - - it is essential for the restoration of confidence and for survival and growth in the downturn
 - - it encapsulates the social goals of Europe, and has deep roots in Europe
- Political leadership is now vital
- The Council of Europe has a key role and background in social cohesion