



## Council of Europe

- Pan-European International Intergovernmental Organisation in Strasbourg, founded in 1949
- 47 Member States
- Promotes democracy and protect human rights and the rule of law in Europe

### Committee of Ministers:

- Council's decision-making body (decides Council of Europe policy and approves budget and programme of activities)
- Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Member States (or their permanent diplomatic representatives in Strasbourg)
- Structure



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



Social Cohesion : Council of  
Europe's Key Role and  
Background

## Historical Background

### SUMMITS OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S MEMBER STATES

Recognition of the importance of social cohesion for democratic stability

- ✓ 1st Summit, Vienna 1993
  - > “With the aim of contributing to the cohesion of our societies, we stress the importance of commitments accepted within the framework of the Council of Europe Social Charter and European Code of Social Security in order to provide member countries with an adequate system of social protection”
- ✓ 2nd Summit, Strasbourg 1997
  - > Social cohesion as “one of the foremost needs of the wider Europe and [...] an essential complement to the promotion of human rights and dignity”
  - > Instructed the Committee of Ministers to draw up a **STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL COHESION**
- ✓ 3rd Summit, Warsaw 2005
  - > “We are resolved to strengthen the cohesion of our societies in its social, educational, health and cultural dimensions”



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



Europe's Key Role and  
Background  
Titre de l'exposé  
si nécessaire

## THE STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL COHESION

### A **RIGHTS - BASED** STRATEGY

- ✓ European Social Charter (1961) and Revised Charter (1996)
- ✓ European Code of Social Security (1964, rev 1990)
- ✓ European Convention on Social Security (1972)

Fundamental link between human rights and social cohesion



## The European Social Charter

### The European Social Charter (1961)

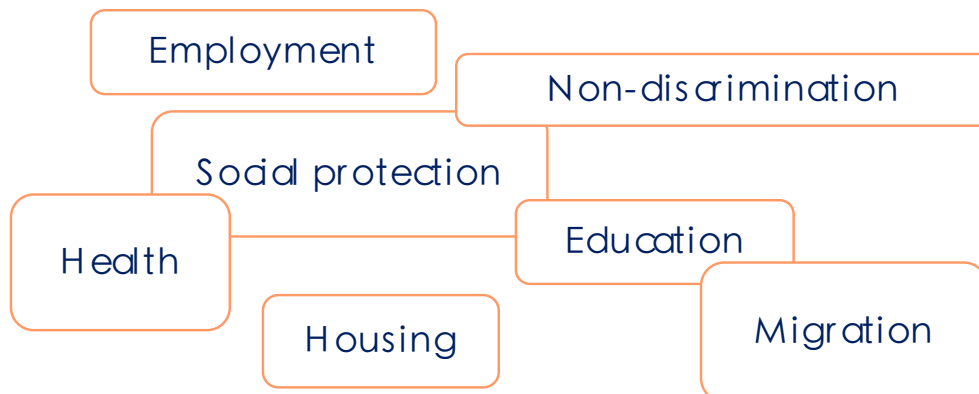
- ✓ Council of Europe treaty
- ✓ complements the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), by broadening the scope of protected fundamental rights to include [social and economic rights](#)
- ✓ guarantees positive rights and freedoms which concern all individuals in their daily existence

### European Social Charter (revised) (1996)

- ✓ improves, expands and deepens in the protection of collective rights provided by the European Social Charter
- ✓ 31 articles
- ✓ gradually replaces the 1961 Charter and its Additional Protocol of 1998 (ratification of the Revised Social Charter by all states parties to the first Charter)



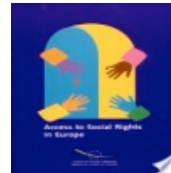
**A Council of Europe treaty setting out human rights and establishing a monitoring mechanism guaranteeing their respect by the States Parties**





## Relevant Reports

### Report “Access to Social Rights” (2002)



- need to improve access to social rights
- analyses obstacles impeding access to different social rights
- examples of how obstacles are being overcome
- integrated measures implemented in member States
- principles on which measures should be based
- cross-sectoral policy guidelines aimed at facilitating access to social rights



## REPORT OF HIGH-LEVEL TASK FORCE ON SOCIAL COHESION

### “TOWARDS AN ACTIVE, FAIR AND SOCIALLY COHESIVE EUROPE”

- 2006-2007
- Review the Council of Europe' Strategy to promote social cohesion in the 21st century, in light of the Organisation's achievements in the field
- in-depth report and recommendations on promoting social cohesion in Europe
- innovative and practical ways in which social cohesion can be promoted within the changed European and world environment of the 21st century
- preventive strategies, as well as remedies and solutions

#### ↪ FOUR MAIN SECTIONS

- SOCIAL COHESION AS IDEA AND POLICY FOCUS
- SOCIAL POLICIES AND SOCIAL COHESION
- SOCIALLY COHESIVE EUROPE: MAIN CHALLENGES
- A PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR A TRANSVERSAL APPROACH TO SOCIAL COHESION



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



Europe's Key Role and  
Background  
Titre de l' exposé  
de ligne si nécessaire

## THE DEFINITION

- ✓ **Strategy for Social Cohesion (2000)**
  - does not define social cohesion as such but seeks to identify some of the factors in social cohesion
  - statement of intent setting out a precise agenda for the Council in the social field for the years
- ✓ **A New Strategy for Social Cohesion - Revised Strategy for Social Cohesion (2004)**
  - as understood by the Council of Europe, social cohesion is the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation
  - A cohesive society is a mutually supportive community of free individuals pursuing these common goals by democratic means



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## New Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion (2010)

**Definition** “The ability of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members; it is based on four pillars: 1/ Reinvesting in social rights and a cohesive society; 2/ Building a Europe of responsibilities that are both shared and social; 3/ Strengthening representation and democratic decision making and expanding social dialogue and civic engagement; 4/ Building a secure future for all”

» **“Social cohesion is not only a matter of combating social exclusion and poverty. It is about creating solidarity in society such that exclusion will be minimised”**



Human rights and social rights at the  
centre of the concerns

Bottom-up and top-down approaches

- ✓ Taking the evolution of society into account in the social cohesion strategy: notion of shared responsibility (state, business, citizens)



## New Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion (2010)

### Four Pillars

- 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)

### ACTION PLAN



## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Clarifying and maintaining the essential role of the State and other public bodies
- B. Integrating the social dimension into economic life
- C. Developing a new ethic of social responsibility
- D. Supporting families and encouraging family solidarity
- E. Encouraging participation in civil society



## Measuring Social Cohesion

### - Methodological Guide (2005)

- creation of social cohesion indicators put into practice on a voluntary basis in order to provide both the Council of Europe and its member states with practical means of measuring the progress
- implementation at local level
- innovative implementation to test the approach and ascertain its feasibility, and to specify and clarify the methods of consultation and construction of joint indicators of social cohesion
- consultation between the different operators - public authorities, NGO, citizens and persons and families victim of exclusion and poverty – leading to a joint vision of well-being criteria which are usually overlooked in conventional approaches
- concept of Territory Responsible for Social Cohesion

### Elements of citizen well-being

- ❖ Equity and non-discrimination
- ❖ Autonomy and personal development
- ❖ Dignity and recognition
- ❖ Participation and commitment



## COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIAL COHESION

### First Conference

- ❑ “INVESTING IN SOCIAL COHESION - INVESTING IN STABILITY AND THE WELL-BEING OF SOCIETY” (Moscow, 2009)

### Second Conference

- ❑ “BUILDING A SECURE FUTURE FOR ALL” (Istanbul, 2012)

### Third Conference

- ❑ “IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR SOCIAL COHESION IN MEMBER STATES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE” (Baku, 2014)



## Committee for Social Cohesion, Human Dignity and Equality (CDDECS)

- 2014-2015
- Mandate to coordinate the intergovernmental work of the Council of Europe on:
  - promoting solidarity and protection of human dignity, equality and equal opportunities for all
  - preventing and combatting violence and discrimination on any ground
  - improving everyone’s full enjoyment of and access to human rights, including social and economic rights
  - reducing the vulnerabilities of sustainable democratic societies
- Possible revision of the Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion





Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

*Ad hoc* Committee

### Purpose

- ⇒ Reinforce the intergovernmental component of the Secretary General's strategy to enhance the Council of Europe's work in the area of social cohesion
- ⇒ promotion of the European Social Charter and its collective complaints procedure in order to ensure equal and effective access to social rights
- ⇒ ensuring that a social cohesion perspective is mainstreamed in the activities of all relevant committees and bodies of the Organisation, through the sharing of good practices and by examining new trends and challenges



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

### Mandate

- ⇒ ***Mainstreaming social cohesion throughout the Council of Europe***
- ⇒ ***Foster the exchange of good practices and innovative approaches***
- ⇒ ***Examine new trends and challenges in specific areas such as those outlined in the mandate***



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

### Focus

- ⇒ Social cohesion related to the enjoyment, with particular emphasis on access, of social rights and economic rights, as well as social protection, with particular attention to the rights, whose effectiveness is central to social cohesion, and which are guaranteed by the European Social Charter, and other relevant instruments
- ⇒ Balance between continuity of activities and innovation
- ⇒ A targeted and concrete approach



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

### ⇒ **Composition**

- ⇒ all Council of Europe member states, bodies and institutions and all international organisations and other stakeholders concerned
- ⇒ Gender Equality Rapporteur

### ⇒ **Outcome**

- ⇒ Report by the Secretary General on progress and results in Platform's field of competence

### ⇒ **International Cooperation**

- ⇒ All relevant international institutions are invited to attend the meetings of the Platform

### ⇒ **Civil Society**



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

- **1st meeting, Strasbourg, 27-28 June 2016**
  - **Meeting of the Group of Rapporteurs**  
**Strasbourg, 12-13 June 2017**
    - preparation of the PECS 2nd plenary meeting on 19 and 20 September 2017
    - exchange with representatives of bodies and committees of the Council of Europe
- **2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, Strasbourg, 19-20 September 2017**



## How does the Platform work?

### 3 Working Groups (WG)

#### WG1

- ↳ ensure the mainstreaming of social cohesion throughout the Council of Europe

#### WG2

- ↳ foster the exchange of good practices and innovative approaches in the field of social cohesion

#### WG3

- ↳ examine new trends and challenges to social cohesion in specific areas

## • Outcomes

- strengthened internal cooperation
- questionnaire on good practices and innovative approaches
- report based on questions to member States
- prospect study



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)



Council of Europe  
Conseil de l'Europe



## European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

- Newsletter
- Webpage