

## ICSW EUROPE NEWSLETTER

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#### *“The Han River Miracle” of Korea:*

From rags to riches in one lifetime: In the 1950s South Korea was one of the poorest nations in the World. Now the country has the income per capita of the EU average. The road has been bumpy, and challenges remain, but in the long run there has been a vision of shared growth, growth with equity.

ICSW Global President, Dr. *Sang-Mok Suh*, presenting the Korean case at the Joint World Conference in Seoul 26 October 2022.

## A Message from the President



*"If we do not know for sure how things end up, let us suppose that in the end things will end up fine",* said Finland's late president Mr. Mauno Koivisto.

The above was not a call for wishful, unrealistic thinking. It was a message: pessimism is a self-fulfilling prophesy. He was famous of oracle statements that left much room for interpretation – and options for action by those who had the responsibility to choose the right way forward. We must have a positive vision in order to make wise choices also in critical situations. Hope for the best – but be also prepared for the worst.

Now Europe faces a situation that was not foreseen when I was elected as ICSW Europe President over four years ago. There was wishful thinking that economic cooperation will guarantee peace in Europe. Even the word *Peace* was maybe even considered irrelevant in Europe an vocabulary. Furthermore, our countries were not well prepared to a serious pandemic as it was generally believed that infectious diseases are not a threat in Europe. We should have had a clearer vision on how to ensure that things go reasonably fine when such "Black Swans" suddenly emerge. Thus, all choices might not have been right as the visions were not "crisis proofed".

COVID-19 became COVID 19-22 and Russia's military assault on its neighbor has turned into barbaric terrorism against civilians. This irrational and uncivilized move by Russian leaders has ruined Europe's and the whole World's common, socially and ecologically responsible agenda that was in good shape. However, societies, including the EU, have shown their ability to respond, resist and recover – and not to lose hope and belief in future. We must continue to hold tight to our conviction that we can turn things right by sticking to the democratic European social values and by working together for all people's social wellbeing, that requires – and

creates – peace and democracy across Europe. Despite of the current challenges ICSW will continue to work towards a new socially fair and ecologically sustainable, "eco-social" future.

Recently we got a strong injection against pessimism: the **ICSW and IASSW Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development (SWESD 2022). Redefining Social Policy and Social work Practice in a post-pandemic society. Social welfare programs and social work at the crossroads.**

It took place in Seoul, Korea at the generous invitation of Korea National Council on Social Welfare (KNCWSW) ([Conference website – SWESD 2022](#)). It was a great success and full of forward-looking positive views and realistic visions. It was also a great example of the devotion and organizational skills by the current management of ICSW and IASSW. There were 300 participants from over 40 countries onsite or online. This hybrid format of conferences will no doubt be the new normal for involving more participants than would be possible at on site events.



Photo: Dr *Sang-Mok Suh*, ICSW President, at the Joint World Conference (SWESD 2022) at Seoul, Republic of Korea

Another success has been the publishing of two books that have been edited by ICSW and IASSW teams based on the inputs of the cancelled conference in Rimini process and other events organized by ICSW in 2021. The books were published by two commercial publishers – a sign of the quality and relevance of the work.

Furthermore, the good news at the ICSW General Assembly meeting was that ICSW is breaking financially even after years of difficulties.

The ICSW President Dr *Sang-Mok Suh* was also very successful in mobilizing partners and sponsors to this joint Conference.

We must continue to keep in mind our vision and work toward it: *an inclusive society for all that leaves no one behind*. That is where we need comprehensive social policies and social work – and civil society organizations to push governments beyond short term politically selling goals. Many governments have again on the table austerity measures that cut social, health and education spending. Austerity policies always hit hardest the most vulnerable.

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This is my seventeenth and last editorial. My two mandates as ICSW Europe President are expiring. At the end of ICSW Europe General Assembly in Malaga, 2 December, Mr. **Max Rubisch** who **was elected as the New ICSW Europe President at the recent global ICSW elections** will take charge. He is a very experienced social policy expert from Austria. Before retirement he was Head of Department at Austrian Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and also, inter alia, was actively involved in the work on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). ICSW Europe current Vice President, Mr. **Jean-Michel Hôte** was elected as the **ICSW Europe Treasurer**. Also Ms. **Gabriela Siantova**, **ICSW Europe Secretary and Editor** will continue with ICSW Europe. They are the “institutional memory” of the new ICSW Europe Board as they have worked for many years in the functions of ICSW Europe. Thus continuity is strong, but refreshing the leadership is also vitally important and welcome.

*I take this opportunity to wish them success and thank warmly all the ICSW Europe members and other faithful readers of ICSW Europe Newsletter for the fruitful collaboration during the past over four years. It was indeed an honor to serve ICSW Europe through these years. Thank you all for your cooperation and devotion to ICSW. I trust that the new Board and you all will guarantee ICSW Europe a successful and impactful future.*

Between 30 November and 2 December ICSW Europe will have its traditional **Capacity Building Seminar (CBS)** prior to the **General Assembly 2022**. The events

will take place in Malaga, Spain, at the generous invitation of the University of Malaga. The theme is **“The challenges of inclusion in Future Europe”**. The Capacity Building Seminar aims at strengthening our vision of an inclusive society for all and on practical ways to promote inclusion and full participation. The purpose is also to provide inputs to ICSW's contribution to the forthcoming UN World Social Summit 2025.

Still are needed candidates for ICSW Europe Vice President and two other ICSW Europe Board members by **13 November 2022** and electronic voting will end on **27 November 2022**. The nomination forms have been sent to ICSW Europe members.

#### Call for inputs to the CBS:

In the preliminary program of the Capacity Building Seminar there was a slot for presentations of good practices on inclusion. The slot will be expanded as needed. You are welcome to prepare and share your experiences, views, and comments on inclusion: of the elderly, people with disabilities, poor people, minorities, refugees etc.

Keeping everyone included on the same boat makes them stakeholders of society. It makes societies stronger and more cooperative. This is needed while striving to make ethically right, socially fair, ecologically sustainable, and economically feasible futures a reality.

I will continue working with ICSW as I was elected to the ICSW global Management Committee and to the function of Vice President of ICSW.

#### Welcome to Malaga, 30 November – 2 December, onsite or online!

Registered participants will be provided the link. Register by **25 November 2022**.

Ronald Wiman, ICSW Europe President  
(in charge until 2 December 2022)

**The new publications** utilizing the materials of ICSW and IASW conferences and events:

**Digital Transformation and Social Well-Being: Promoting an Inclusive Society.** Edited by *Antonio López Peláez, Sang-Mok Suh* and *Sergei Zelenev* and published by Routledge Publishers 2022.

**Remaking Social Work for the New Global Era.** Edited by *Ngoh Tiong Tan, P.K. Shajahan* and published by Springer 2022.

The ICSW and IASW Joint World Conference website:  
[SWESD 2022 | swesd2022](https://www.swesd2022.org/)

## ICSW Europe Members

### International Congress on Social Policies 2022: The Challenge of Social Inclusion in Future Europe

Hosted by University of Malaga and organised jointly with, ICSW and UNED

**30 November, 1 December, 2 December 2022**

#### Scientific objective of the Congress

The aim of the Congress is to map innovative analyses and societal policy solutions to emerging social development issues, and to lay ground to a conclusions paper to help guide ICSW and its partners towards a strong impact on the envisaged UN Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025.

The Congress will take place at the **Faculty of Social and Labor Studies of the University of Malaga** located at: **Avenida Francisco Trujillo S/ N. Malaga, Spain (Campus Expansion).**

#### Program of the Congress

##### Day one – 30 November: Opening sessions

##### 9:30 am Inauguration

*Jose Angel Narvaez Bueno.* Magnificent Rector University of Malaga

*Ana Rosa del Águila Obra.* Dean Faculty of Social and Labor Studies

*Ana Maria Campanini.* President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)

*Max Rubisch.* President of International Council of Social Welfare Europe

*Sang-Mok Suh.* President of International Council of Social Welfare President

##### 10:00 am–11:30 am Round table:

##### “International Social Work Organizations and Global Trends”

*Ana Maria Campanini.* President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)

*Antonio López Peláez.* ICSW Executive Director and UNED Professor

*Sang-Mok Suh.* President of International Council of Social Welfare

##### 11:30 am–12:00 noon Break

##### 12:30 pm–1:30 pm Lecture:

##### “Digital Social Work”

*Chaime Marcuello Servós and Patricia Almaguer* (Universidad de Zaragoza)

#### Day two – 1 December: ICSW Capacity Building Seminar (CBS)

##### 9:30 am–10:30 am Lecture:

##### “Why is social inclusion an important topic now and in the future” – Background for the next Social Summit 2025

*Ronald Wiman* (Current President, International Council of Social Welfare Europe)

##### 10:30 am–11:30 am Lecture:

##### “Inclusive well-being economy”

*Vertti Kiukas,* Secretary General, Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health – SOSTE) (online)

##### 11:30 am–12:00 noon Break

##### 12:00 noon–1:00 pm Lecture:

##### “Disability Inclusion”

*Max Rubisch,* Austria, forthcoming ICSW Europe President





**1:00 pm–2:00 pm Lecture:**  
**“An unwelcomed inclusion: Globalization, cultural leveling and rural autochthony”**  
*Vadim Moldovan*, Director, Project Casa Mare, Moldova, ICSW Europe Board Member

**2:00 pm–3:00 pm Break**

**3:00 pm–4:00 pm**  
**“Inclusion cases and good practices”** (by ICSW members, tbc)  
Moderator: *Antonio López Peláez* (ICSW Executive Director)

**4:00 pm–5:00 pm**  
**Discussion on ICSW Europe priority themes for the Social Summit 2025**  
*Ronald Wiman* (coordinator)

### Day three – 2 December: ICSW CBS continues and General Assembly

**10:00 am–11:00 am Lecture:**  
**“Digital inclusion”**  
*Sergei Zelenev*, ICSW Special Representative to the UN  
*Antonio López Peláez* (ICSW and UNED), *Gloria Kirwan* (Royal College of Surgeons / Trinity College) and *Sergei Zelenev* (ICSW)

**11:00 am–12:00 noon Lecture:**  
**“Challenges of the International Ecosystem of Social Work and Social Services Organizations”**  
*Joaquín Castillo de Mesa* (Universidad de Málaga)

**12:00 noon Break**

**12:00 noon–1:30 pm Lecture:**  
**“Social inclusion and social services in Europe: challenges for the next decade”**  
*Alfonso Lara Montero*, Chief Director European Social Network (ESN)

**1:30 pm–2:30 pm Break**

— — —  
**2:30 pm–5:00 pm**  
**ICSW Europe General Assembly 2022**  
(for ICSW Member Organisation representatives, only)

## Partnership

**The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)**



**Joint statement on the European Commission's Proposal for a Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income schemes in the EU**

On September 28, the European Commission released its long-awaited proposal for a **Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion**. The Proposal is part of the initiatives announced in the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) Action Plan and seeks to contribute to the EU-level headline target to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by at least 15 million people by 2030.

Concretely, it provides recommendations to Member States (MS) to modernise their Minimum Income Schemes (MIS) by asking them to improve the adequacy of their income support, tackle lack of coverage and non-take-up, improve access to inclusive labour markets, ensure access to enabling and essential services, promote individualised support, and increase the effectiveness of governance of social safety nets, as well as monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

**EAPN, [Caritas Europa](#) and [Eurodiaconia](#)** (the signing organisations), are leading networks in the fight against poverty and social exclusion across Europe and have been jointly advocating for adequate MIS for many years. As signing organisations, we welcome the Proposal, for it includes positive aspects and advancements. However, we also notice some major missing points and shortcomings that should be urgently addressed by MS before approval by the Council.

We urge the Council of the EU and its Member States to be ambitious and act swiftly to prevent more people being dragged into poverty as a result of the successive crises. We call on them to address the Proposal's shortcomings – as outlines in the full Statement – and approve a robust Council Recommendation.

While useful, simple soft-law and policy guidance mechanisms are not enough to guarantee adequate, accessible and enabling MIS that ensure a life of dignity for all. **As we have been stating for years, we reiterate our urgent call for a binding EU Framework Directive on Adequate Minimum Income to assure effective contribution towards the implementation of Principle 14 of the EPSR.** Thus, we hope this council recommendation will be a step in this direction.

Read the [Full Joint Statement here](#).

*(source: The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN): Joint statement on the European Commission's Proposal for a Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income schemes in the EU. [online]. [cit. 2022-11-05]. Available at: <<https://www.eapn.eu/eu-joint-statement-minimum-income/>>)*



**The EU Care Strategy is historic, but will Member States live up to the ambition?**

With its EU Care Strategy, launched on [7 September 2022], the European Commission sets out a comprehensive set of policies, establishing for the first time its vision on long-term care. Yet, many of these policies still lack concrete measures.

AGE had called for the Strategy to be based on the **rights to independence and autonomy of all persons**, performing a shift from policies based on welfare paternalism, overreliance on informal and residential care. The EU Care Strategy shows that the call has been partially heard, as the proposed list of quality criteria build on respect, person-centredness, continuity of care and focus on outcomes in terms of quality of life. It rightly calls out the lack of choice for many persons in need for care between residential, community-based and home care, the tremendous impact of current care policies on women of all ages and the case for investment and improved working conditions in long-term care. It also unequivocally

establishes long-term care services as services of general interest, which have a special status under EU market rules. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of prevention and the role of care to re-establish independence of a person rather than leading her into further care dependency.

### **Need for national indicators and EU targets on long-term care**

In the most important areas however, **the Care Strategy stops short of providing clear targets and indicators for long-term care**, unlike its ambition in the field of early childcare and education. In most areas, the Commission kicks the ball into the court of Member States, who have to agree on indicators, targets, quality criteria or request specific funding for transforming and developing their long-term care systems. However, it very helpfully lists the numerous EU funds that are available for triggering a transition of long-term care sectors, including the recent work of the World Health Organisation under the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing.

The recognition that the **current reliance of the EU's care systems on informal care**, provided mainly by family members, often women over 50, is unsustainable demographically, socially and economically is a strong sign for millions of informal carers. The Commission encourages Member States to support informal carers with income, training and respite care services. Still, the Commission refrained from updating the framework of the Work-Life Balance Directive, providing 4 days of potentially unpaid leave from work for informal carers, by setting out a requirement to develop social protection, including pension credits.

The proposed Council Recommendation requires that Member States nominate **national long-term care coordinators** and come up with action plans on long-term care within one year of adoption. This governance and monitoring framework is very welcome and a cornerstone to filling the ambition of the Strategy with life. It is now up to Member States, first and foremost the Czech Council Presidency, to swiftly adopt this Recommendation and trigger the transformation of national care systems towards more fairness, human rights and dignity.

More information:

AGE submission to the Call for Evidence by the European Commission:

[‘EU Care Strategy is a chance to trigger a rights-based change in long-term care systems’](#)

AGE position paper on long-term care:

[‘Care must empower us throughout our lives’](#)

[European Commission documents on the EU Care Strategy](#)

(source: AGE Platform Europe. [online]. [cit. 2022-10-28]. Available at: <<https://www.age-platform.eu/>>)

## Council of Europe



### Activity Report

An Activity Report since the last exchange of Mr *Gerhard Ermischer*, President of the Conference of INGOs, with the Committee of Ministers in June 2022 was sent to all Members of the Conference of INGOs (Strasbourg, 25 October 2022).

An Activity Report contains the sections:

- Work of the Conference of INGOs and its Committees;
- Work with other bodies of the Council of Europe;
- Country visits;
- Products;
- Work with partners outside the Council of Europe;
- [Conference of INGOs'] position on a potential new Summit.

The whole [Report can be read here](#).

(source: Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe: An Activity Report. [online]. [cit. 2022-10-28]. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/activity-report-of-the-president-of-ingos-since-june-2022/1680a8b91d>)

## European Commission



### Minimum income: more effective support needed to fight poverty and promote employment

Brussels, 28 September 2022

Today, the Commission calls on Member States to modernise their minimum income schemes as part of the ongoing pledge to reduce poverty and social exclusion in Europe. The [proposed Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion](#) sets out how Member States can modernise their minimum income schemes to make them more effective, lifting people out of poverty, while promoting the labour market integration of those who can work.

Minimum income is cash payments that help households who need it to bridge the gap to a certain income level to pay the bills and live a life in dignity. They are particularly important in times of economic downturns, helping to cushion drops in household income for people most in need, thereby contributing to sustainable and inclusive growth. They are generally complemented with in-kind benefits giving access to services and targeted incentives to access the labour market. In this way, minimum income schemes are not a passive tool but act as a springboard to improve inclusion and employment prospects. Well-designed minimum income schemes strike a balance between alleviating poverty, incentivising work and maintaining sustainable budgetary costs.

Minimum income and social safety nets must incorporate sufficient incentives and support for beneficiaries who can work to reintegrate in the labour market. Their design should therefore also help to fully realise the potential of the green and digital transitions by supporting labour market transitions and active participation of disadvantaged people.

The social and economic advantages of adequate and targeted social safety nets became even more important during the lockdowns linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Adequate minimum income is highly relevant in the current context of rising energy prices and inflation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine as income measures can be targeted to specifically benefit vulnerable groups.

The proposal will help achieve the EU's 2030 social targets to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or exclusion by at least 15 million people as set in the [European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#). It will also help Member States reach the goal that at least 78% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment.

Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People, *Valdis Dombrovskis*, said: *"Social protection systems help to reduce social inequalities and differences. They ensure a dignified life for those who cannot work – and for those who can, encourage them back to a job. At a time when many people are struggling to make ends meet, it will be important this autumn for Member States to modernise their social safety nets with an active inclusion approach to help those most in need. This is how we can fight poverty and social exclusion, and help more people into work during this challenging period."*

Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, *Nicolas Schmit*, said: *"Today, more than one in five people in the EU are at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Minimum income schemes exist in all Member States, but analysis shows that they are not always adequate, reach all those in need, or motivate people to return to the labour market. Against a backdrop of soaring living costs and uncertainty, we must ensure our safety nets are up to the task. We should pay particular attention to getting young people back into work also through income support, so they do not get trapped in a vicious cycle of exclusion."*

Well-designed social safety nets to help people in need While minimum income exists in all Member States, their adequacy, reach, and effectiveness in supporting people vary significantly.

Today's [proposal for a Council Recommendation](#) offers clear guidance to Member States on how to

ensure that their minimum income schemes are effective in fighting poverty and promoting active inclusion in society and labour markets.

Member States are recommended to:

- ⇒ **Improve the adequacy of income support:**
  - Set the level of level of income support through a **transparent and robust methodology**.
  - While safeguarding incentives to work, ensure income support **gradually reflects a range of adequacy criteria**. Member States should achieve the adequate level of income support by the end of 2030 at the latest, while safeguarding the sustainability of public finances.
  - **Annually review and adjust where necessary** the level of income support.
- ⇒ **Improve the coverage and take-up of minimum income:**
  - Eligibility criteria should be **transparent and non-discriminatory**. For instance, to promote gender equality and economic independence, especially for women and young adults, Member States should facilitate the receipt of income support per person, instead of per household, without necessarily increasing the overall level of benefits per household. In addition, further measures are needed to ensure the take-up of minimum income by single-parent households, predominantly headed by women.
  - Application procedures should be **accessible, simplified** and accompanied by **user-friendly information**.
  - The decision on a minimum income application should be issued **within 30 days from its submission**, with the possibility of reviewing this decision.
  - Minimum income schemes should be **responsive to socio-economic crises**, for instance by introducing additional flexibility regarding eligibility.
- ⇒ **Improve access to inclusive labour markets:**
  - Activation measures should provide **sufficient incentives to (re)enter the labour market**, with particular attention to helping young adults.
  - Minimum income schemes should help people to **find a job and keep it**, for instance through **inclusive education and training** as well as (post)placement and mentoring support.



- It should be possible to **combine income support with earnings** from work for shorter periods, for instance during probation or traineeships.
- ⇒ **Improve access to enabling and essential services:**
- Beneficiaries should have **effective access to quality enabling services**, such as (health)care, training and education. Social inclusion services like counselling and coaching should be available to those in need.
- In addition, beneficiaries should have **continuous effective access to essential services**, such as energy.
- ⇒ **Promote individualised support:**
- Member States should carry-out an individual, **multi-dimensional needs assessment** to identify barriers that beneficiaries face for social inclusion and/or employment and the support needed to tackle them.
- On this basis, **no later than three months** from accessing minimum income, beneficiaries should **receive an inclusion plan** defining joint objectives, a timeline and a tailored support package to reach this.
- ⇒ **Increase the effectiveness of governance of social safety nets at EU, national, regional and local level, as well as monitoring and reporting mechanisms.**

EU funding is available to support Member States in improving their minimum income schemes and social infrastructure through reforms and investments.

### **Better impact assessments for fair policies**

Today, the Commission also presents a [Communication on better assessing the distributional impact of Member States' reforms](#). It offers guidance on how to better target policies in a transparent way, making sure that they contribute to addressing existing inequalities and taking into account the impact on different geographical areas and population groups, like women, children and low-income households. The Communication covers guidance on the policy areas, tools, indicators, timing, data and dissemination of the assessment. The guidance presented today is also relevant for Member States when designing their minimum income schemes.

### **Next steps**

The Commission [proposal for a Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion](#) will be discussed by Member States with a view to adoption by the Council. Once adopted, Member States should report to the Commission every three years on their progress on implementation. The Commission will also monitor progress in implementing this Recommendation in the context of the European Semester. The proposed instrument – a Council Recommendation – gives Member States enough leeway to determine how to best achieve the objectives of this initiative, taking into account their specific circumstances.

### **Background**

Over [one in five persons](#) – or 94.5 million people in total – were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU in 2021. Social safety nets play a key role in supporting these people and helping them to (re) enter the labour market if they can. However, more effective social protection systems are needed, with around 20% of jobless people at risk of poverty not being eligible to receive any income support and estimates of around 30% to 50% of the eligible population not taking up minimum income support.

The [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) includes principle 14 on the right to adequate minimum income. To promote social inclusion and employment and ensure that no one is left behind, the Commission has presented many additional initiatives, which complement today's proposal. This includes the proposal for a [Directive on adequate minimum wages](#) to ensure that work pays for a decent living; the [European Child Guarantee](#) to give children free and effective access to key services; and the [European Care Strategy](#) to improve the situation especially of women and people in the care sector.

The Commission [Recommendation for Effective Active Support to Employment \(EASE\)](#) offers guidance on active labour market policies, including upskilling and reskilling. The [Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality](#), sets out specific guidance to implement policies for a fair transition, with particular attention to vulnerable households.

Finally, the [Commission proposal for a Regulation on an emergency intervention to address high energy prices](#) seeks to address the dramatic energy price increases by reducing consumption and sharing the exceptional profits of energy producers with those who need help the most.

#### For More Information

[Proposal for a Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion](#)

[Communication on better assessing the distributional impact of Member States' reforms](#)

[Questions and answers: Adequate minimum income](#)

[Factsheet: Adequate minimum income](#)

(source: European Commission. [online]. [cit. 2022-10-29]. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?lang=en&catId=89&furtherNews=yes&newsId=10417#navItem-1>>)

The Forum provide[d] a platform to share evidence and expertise related to gender equality issues with a collective of high-level political decision-makers, practitioners and members of civil society. The event feature[d] various panel discussions, practical workshops, and experience sharing sessions. In addition, the results of EIGE's annual Gender Equality Index [were] released during the Forum, with a specific focus on the impact of COVID-19 on informal care, work-life balance, care services and working conditions of women and men.

*Angelė Čepėnaitė* (Lithuanian National Committee of ICSW Europe) attended the event online.

The first-ever **Gender Equality Forum – 3 Steps forward towards a stronger, more inclusive economy** provided a possibility for many participants to take active part in its' work online. Director of European Institute on Gender Equality (EIGE) *Carleen Scheele* in the opening stressed remarks that gender equality is important part of solution in crises periods. EIGE became knowledge centre in EU over the last 12 years since the gender equality index – the measure of GE progress in EU was launched. She indicated gender equality as a tool for the resolution which is only as effective as individual enjoyed commitment. She invited the gathered Forum participants and activists from different countries – individuals, equality bodies, trade unions, researches and youth representatives to identify the three steps forward to gender equal Europe by noting that there is no need to take the same steps as the steps could be different in order to learn more from each other and take them.

A Commissionaire for equality *Helena Dalli*, named this important by her steps: 1) pay transparency; 2) safety, prevention of violence against women; 3) gender balance, and equal representation. She informed that in legislation it took ten years to reflect the financially independent and politically active life of women by preparing a law that soon will appear.

Results of GE index 2022 for EU presented by *Irene Rioboo* and *Davide Barbieri* (EIGE) showed a slow improvement 68.6 (0.6 from the past). It also differed by 5.5 in comparison with data from 2010. The reason – pandemic in March of 2020. The life of people in 2020 changed dramatically for a long period. But not all the countries move by the same speed, for instance, Sweden, Denmark and the

## European Institute for Gender Equality



### EIGE Gender Equality Forum 2022



On 24 and 25 October 2022, the European Institute for Gender Equality organised the first-ever EIGE Gender Equality Forum (#EGEF2022).

Netherlands showed the highest development of GE index 2022, but Sweden and Denmark did not improve, and stood on the same level. The greatest increases were shown by Lithuania, Belgium, Croatia and the Netherlands. Romania decreased the most. The experts of EIGE stressed that there is a way to improve the situation – to activate the actions, otherwise the achievement of progress will take sixty years.

During two days of Forum there were a lot of important discussions – on women's and men's long-term care in their household, intense informal care demands; crises and gender-based violence, gendered impacts, challenges and opportunities. *Lina Salanauskaite* (EIGE) made the conclusion that dynamic, ambitious and transformative public policies is needed to promote informal care: child care, long-term care and housework. *Robert Franken* discussing the paths toward gender equality noticed that not a woman has to change, but the changes have to be done in the world of work – the inclusive system has to be created in order to finish with a monoculture, men-dominated system. In his opinion, society needs to acknowledge the complexity of problems and combine forces to combat inequality.

Summarizing the results of Forum *Lenita Freidenvall* head of the division for Gender Equality, Ministry of Employment, Swedish presidency of Council of EU, stressed that there is a need in data, in research, in order to find a different solution, more specialized, sophisticated data, to tackle implementation gaps, as data are about real life – girls and boys, women and men. There is a need of competence and commitment.

By opinion of the representative of European Youth Forume *Panagiotis Chatzimichail* GE is priority issue. It is not about the policy, but about the action and diversity of experiences. The responsibility of each and all of the persons is to share opinions, to engage, to co-create.



Director of European Institute on Gender Equality (EIGE) *Carleen Scheele* by summarizing the results of Forum informed the Forum participants that the Statement on Gender Forum 2022 will be prepared and published around 10<sup>th</sup> of December, on International day of human rights. She marked that EIGE will continue its' work on the survey results for 2024; key findings on GE will be shared to the European Commission and all EU member states. EIGE committed to organise GE Forum every second year. For more about the event read [here](#).

author: Angelė Čepėnaitė  
(Lithuanian National Committee of ICSW Europe)

(source – text – first two paragraphs and introductory illustration photo: 2022 European Institute for Gender Equality: EIGE Gender Equality Forum 2022. [online]. [cit. 2022-10-28]. Available at: <<https://eige.europa.eu/events/eige-gender-equality-forum-2022>>)

## Conferences/Expert Meetings

### The System of Social Security and the Effect of Crises Three-Country-Seminar in Basel, 24–25 November 2022

EU-SILC has reported in 2020 that 22% of the European population were in risk of poverty or social exclusion. Almost one in ten workers experienced in-work-poverty.

In the last two years, this situation has not improved. We have been facing huge additional challenges: the climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian war against Ukraine, new groups of refugees and rising costs of living have contributed to deteriorate the situation for vulnerable groups and those at risk of exclusion.

The states in Central Europe have long-standing systems of social security – but the actual challenges put also these systems under pressure.

Germany, Switzerland and Austria have a tradition in Three-Country-Seminars on common problems in social policy. Bearing in mind the actual situation, the next seminar will take place in **Basel, Switzerland** on **24 and 25 November 2022** on the theme "**The system of social security and the effect of crises**". We will discuss what effects the actual crises have on vulnerable groups, what the political reactions are and what strategies would be necessary.

"Leaving no one behind" is the key message of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations. With our seminar we want to contribute to the global aim of an inclusive society.

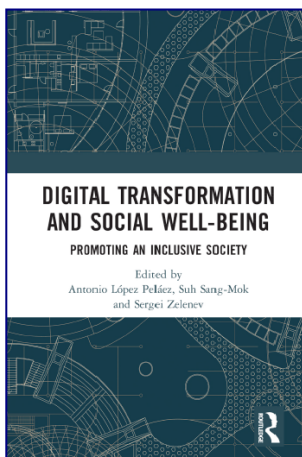
*(author: Max Rubisch, Österreichisches Komitee für Soziale Arbeit)*

groups using contemporary digitalisation models will have lasting consequences on social well-being and human welfare.

This book can also be seen as an awareness-raising effort with regard to numerous sensitive, or potentially sensitive points, and a plea for the reconsideration of some policies or even policy priorities that are seen as detrimental nationally or globally. Many of the authors make quite concrete proposals for improving the policies and practice of social work, and social policy seen large.

Editors

## Publications



### Digital Transformation and Social Well-Being

Promoting an Inclusive Society

Edited by *Antonio López Peláez, Sang-Mok Suh and Sergei Zelenev*

With this book, ICSW contributes to one of its founding objectives: to put the basic features affecting social welfare on the current public agendas. The authors of this book have made an effort to explore how social inclusion could be promoted in a better way, how people could move rapidly along the road towards the cherished goal of creating a "society for all", using the new tools offered by digitalisation.

Highlighting the complexities of digitalization, the book provides theoretical and practical insights, including case-studies from several countries aimed at demonstrating how overcoming disparities across social

## Useful Links

The ICSW and IASW Joint World Conference website:  
<http://swesd2022.com/theme/swesd/html/overview/01.php>

EAPN Europe – Full Joint Statement:  
<https://www.eapn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/eapn-EAPN-Caritas-ED-Joint-statement-Min-Income-5550.pdf>

Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe: An Activity Report:  
<https://rm.coe.int/activity-report-of-the-president-of-ingos-since-june-2022/1680a8b91d>

AGE Platform Europe:  
<https://www.age-platform.eu/>

European Commission: Minimum Income:  
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?lan-gld=en&catId=89&furtherNews=yes&newsId=10417#navItem-1>

Proposal for a Council of Europe Recommendation on adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion:  
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?lan-gld=en&catId=89&furtherNews=yes&newsId=10417#navItem-relatedDocuments>

EIGE Gender Equality Forum 2022:  
<https://eige.europa.eu/events/eige-gender-equality-forum-2022>



## Colophon

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Contributions and comments can be sent to:

ICSW Europe  
Gabriela Siantova, Secretary and Editor  
E-mail: [gabriela.siantova@icsw.org](mailto:gabriela.siantova@icsw.org)

ICSW European Region:

President: Ronald Wiman (Finland)  
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Board member: Vadim Moldovan (Moldova)  
Board member: Alina Petrauskienė (Lithuania)



Global Office:  
International Council on Social Welfare  
Website: <http://www.icsw.org>  
E-mail: [icsw@icsw.org](mailto:icsw@icsw.org)