



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Report from the Council of Europe, Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations, Session 25 - 29 June 2018, Strasbourg

The June 2018 session was dominated by the increase in populist movements in Europe and the associated increasing restrictions on the influence of NGOs. Globalisation has led to an imbalance, populism and the new emergence of violence against minorities. This is precisely where the Council of Europe has an important role to play: The task of uniting rather than dividing and guaranteeing fundamental human rights in the Member States. If human rights' representatives are hindered in their work, if freedom of expression and freedom of the media are no longer guaranteed, action is needed. Civil society needs to put its finger on the sore spots. That is what we are committed to.

Strategic plans, Roadmap 2018 - 2020

The three committees have started their work for the years 2018 - 2020. More information can be found under the following links.

General information: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo>

Information on the strategic plans of the three committees:

<http://rm.coe.int/action-plan-hr-committee-2018-2020-revised-june-2018/16808b3a82>

<http://rm.coe.int/action-plan-democracy-english-2018-2020/1680772f8f>

<http://rm.coe.int/action-plan-education-and-culture-committee-2018-2020-en/1680768118>

These strategy plans also contain information on the working groups within the committees. Andante participates in the following working groups within these committees:

1. Poverty: <http://rm.coe.int/fiche-presentation-twg-2018-20-poverty-en/16808c9bb6>
2. Europe, cultural heritage and creation <http://rm.coe.int/fiche-presentation-wg-2018-20-heritage-and-creation-en/16808b1ddb>
3. Digital Citizenship <http://rm.coe.int/fiche-presentation-twg-2018-20-digital-citizen-en/16808b1dd9>

Training for the European Social Charter

We had the opportunity to learn more about the European Social Charter during a training session. The Social Charter is the counterpart to the European Convention on

Human Rights in the field of economic and social rights. The Social Charter guarantees human rights in relation to housing, health, employment and social protection. All the States of the Council of Europe have signed the Social Charter. More information on the Social Charter can be found at <http://www.coe.int/socialcharter> .
Of particular interest in this context is the possibility of collective complaints procedures by non-governmental organisations.

Call to our member organisations

Andante is a European umbrella organisation. Women from around 20 organisations and 14 European countries are united in our organisation. We represent about 1.2 million women. Networking is very important to us. For this reason, in consultation with the Andante Coordination Committee, I would like to call on each organisation to name a contact person who has a particular interest in working in the Council of Europe and who is prepared to report information of her country and organisation to me as my representative and to receive information from me. Please send information to the following e-mail address: sybille.bader@andante-europa.net or directly to our secretariat secretariat@andante-europa.net

Migration

In the course of our Andante Study Days in April 2018, we dealt with the topic of migration. Our position paper has meanwhile been sent to all members in the three Andante languages. The paper has also been or will be sent to the members of the national parliaments visited in this context. The Conference of NGOs also addressed the issue of migration. In this context, I refer to the conference's migration strategy paper <https://rm.coe.int/migration-road-map-2017-2018-en/16806ecd51>

Besides many interesting meetings and conversations, it was a special highlight for me in this session that I was accompanied for two days by a member of the office of the Swiss Catholic Women's Federation and another interested person. This possibility also exists and contributes to making the important work in the Council of Europe visible and tangible

August 2018, Sybille Bader



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