**Council of Europe and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO)**

**“Giving Europe a human touch”**

**Information on activities - 2015**

During 2015, the Conference of INGO developed activities around diverse themes and in various models of reflexion and action.

“The Council of Europe’s work benefits extensively from contacts and co-operation with the dynamic elements of society, as represented by NGOs. One of the main challenges currently facing the Organisation is to strengthen NGOs and civil society and to develop participatory democracy on a pan-European basis” (in the site of INGO-CoE)

IFWS - Europe participated in some of the activities on one hand participating in the semester meetings and on the other hand contributing to some of the thematic groups in operation.

The Winter meeting of the INGOs Conference took place on January and the Summer meeting was held in june in Strasbourg

These are some of the activities developed during the conferences:

1. presentation and approval of the 2014 activity report of the Standing Committee and reports of the thematic committees for information (CONF/DEM 2014 RAPACT; CONF/EDUC 2014 RAPACT; CONF/HR 2014 RAPACT; CONF/GEE 2014 RAPACT).
2. elections to diverse positions of the Conference: President; 3 Vice-presidents, 2 rapporteurs and 1 Gender Equality Expert. See the info of Antonina Dashkina on the results of the elections. She got elected as one of the vice-presidents of the Conference. This is an important achievement to the IFWS Europe and has the potential to increase the visibility and contribution of the Social Workers associative organization in Europe, via the Council of Europe and the Conference of INGO. Anne Nègre was elected as Gender Equality Expert.
3. The main thematic committees are:
   1. Human Rights Committee
   2. Education and Cultural Committee
   3. Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee
4. Within the scope of the Human Rights Committee the following working groups operated:
   1. Extreme Poverty and Human Rights;
   2. Human Rights and Co-development;
   3. Climate Change and Human Rights;
   4. Human Rights Defenders, and
   5. Mediterranean Europe
5. Inserted in the Education and Cultural Committee, the following working groups operated:
   1. Teaching intercultural dialogue - living together in Europe
   2. The teacher in interaction with his environment : a shared responsibility
   3. History teaching: towards a European narration for a real education for democratic citizenship
6. The diverse Committees and working groups provided information on the activities already held and the plans for the next months and organized thematic debates during the INGO Conference.
7. In several occasions it was pointed out the need to give full use to the documents and materials already done or those which are under preparation. The Dialogue Toolkit is referred as an important tool to address main areas of concern of NGO on their role and societal contribution.

Upon a recommendation of the Council of Europe’s Forum for the Future of Democracy, the Conference of INGOs drafted a Code of Good Practice on Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process. The principal objective of the Code of Good Practice is the definition of a set of European principles and guidelines for NGO participation in decision-making processes that are to be implemented at local and national level in Council of Europe member States.

The fact that the INGOs Conferences are held in the same dates of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe allow the opportunity of the diverse NGOs to meet the representatives of their countries and to follow the debates of the Assembly, that is an extra potential of the closeness between the two events.

**Publications:**

- [The Religious Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168030654c)

- [Rights of Persons with Disabilities](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680488783)

- [Proceedings - International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016805a0cba)

**Documents of the INGO Conference approved in 2015**

ONF/PLE(2015)RES1

[Resolution adopted on 29 January 2015 on the terrorist attacks in Paris on 7, 8 and 9 January 2015](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016802f044a)

CONF/PLE(2015)RES2

[Resolution adopted on 29 January 2015 on "Civil society, peace and democracy in Ukraine"](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016802f044c)

CONF/PLE(2015)REC1

[Recommendation adopted on 25 june 2015 on "The violation of economic, social and cultural rights by austerity measures : a threat to democracy"](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168059192a)

CONF/PLE(2015)REC2

[Recommendation adopted on 25 June 2015 on a "New Disability Strategy"](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045a92a)

CONF/PLE(2015)REC4

[Recommendation adopted on 30 November 2015 on the law on "Undesirable" Organisations](http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168048f119)

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