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Conference “50 Years of the European Social Charter: Accomplishments and Social Challenges for Croatia and Europe”

11 November 2011
Zagreb (Croatia)

The Conference will be held on November 11, 2011 in the Old City Hall in Zagreb (*Stara gradska vijećnica, Ulica Cirila i Metoda 5, Zagreb*) to mark the 50th Anniversary of adoption of the European Social Charter in times of a complex social and economic situation in Croatia and Europe, when the Republic of Croatia is at the end of its path to enter the European Union, and is expected to sign the Revised European Social Charter.

The European Social Charter of the Council of Europe declares rights and freedoms of all individuals and establishes a monitoring system that guarantees the respect of these rights and freedoms by the States Parties. The Charter was opened for signing in Torino, in 1961, and the Revised European Social Charter from 1996 is gradually replacing the first Treaty. The Charter guarantees 23 social and economic rights: the rights of employees, all citizens, and special rights of certain groups that our left outside of employment (mothers, children and families, disabled people, migrants and elderly people).

The Charter guarantees a set of basic rights that are to be exercised without discrimination: the right to work, adequate working conditions, health and safety at work, just pay, right to organise, collective bargaining, professional orientation, vocational education, health protection and social security. The Revised European Social Charter adds the rights to housing, protection against lay offs, dignity at the workplace, rights to information, and consultation in the process of collective lay offs, and other rights. The Republic of Croatia had signed the European Social Charter and the Additional Protocols in 1998, and had ratified it in 2003.

The Conference “50 Years of the European Social Charter: Accomplishments and Social Challenges for Croatia and Europe” is organised under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Croatia, Ivo Josipovic, and the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship. The President of the Committee for Social Rights of the Council of Europe, Luis Jimena Quesada, is a special guest of the Conference.

The Conference is divided in three parts – in the first part, the speakers will explain the importance of the European Social Charter and Croatia’s efforts to develop into a socially just and democratic country. In the second part the meaning, amendments and the revision of the Charter will be explained, as well as the mechanisms of implementation and the influence on the improvement of social rights in European countries. The speakers will reflect on the challenges of the implementation of social rights in the European Union member states brought by the economic crisis. The third part of the Conference will focus on the social situation in Croatia, and the problems of implementation of the Charter, also in light of the integration of the country to the European Union and the barriers to fulfilling fundamental social rights.

DRAFT AGENDA

9:00 – 9:45

Introductory greetings:

Nedjeljko Marković, Pragma President

Representative of the City of Zagreb and the Assembly of the City of Zagreb

prof. dr. sc. Jasna Omejec, President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia

prof. dr. sc. Ivo Josipović, President of the Republic of Croatia (*tbc*)

9:45 – 10:15

Coffee Break

10:15 – 12:15

“The European Social Charter and Social Rights in Europe”

prof. dr. sc. Luis Jimena Quesada, The President of the Committee for Social Rights of the Council of Europe

“Croatian social policy and the European Social Charter”

prof. dr. sc. Vlado Puljiz, professor emeritus

12:15 – 13:30

Lunch Break, Working meetings in Rooms C and D

13:30 – 16:00

“Europeanisation, Civil Society and Social Changes”

prof. dr. sc. Siniša Zrinščak, Department of Social Work, Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb

“From Barriers in Entrepreneurship, Openness, Labour Market and State to Enjoying Economic and Social Rights. The Role of Employers in the Creation of a Democratic Society”

mr. sc. Anny Brusić, Director in the Croatian Employers' Association

“Barriers in Implementing Social Rights in Croatia and the Importance of the Charter for Croatian Social State”

Krešimir Sever, President of the Independent Croatian Trade Unions

“Participative Democratisation: the Development of Zagreb's Social Policy”

The City of Zagreb, Office for Social Protection and People with Disabilities

“The Social Situation in Croatia and the European Social Charter: New Legal Solutions and Social Rights of the Citizens of Croatia”

Tatjana Katkić Stanić, Director in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

“The European Social Charter in Croatia: Reporting and Cooperation”

Gordana Dragičević, Head of Department in the Ministry of Economics, Labour and Entrepreneurship

“The European Social Charter and the System of Collective Complaints”

Štefica Stažnik, Government Agent before the European Court of Human Rights

“Social Challenges and Changes: Can the Charter Inspire?”

Nedjeljko Marković, Pragma President

16:00 – 17:00

Discussion and Conclusions

The organiser would like to thank:

The City of Zagreb, the Assembly of the City of Zagreb and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Croatia for their expert, financial and operational support in organising the Conference

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the President of the Republic of Croatia, prof. dr. sc. Ivo Josipović and
the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship