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## “Europe starts in Turin”-level conference on the European Social Charter

Strasbourg, 16.10.2014 – A high-level [conference on social rights](#) : in the context of the Italian Presidency of the European Union, and with the co-operation of the City of Turin, the Council of Europe is holding an *Teatro Regio* art 17 and 18 October focusing on the [European Social Charter](#), an instrument which provides Europe with a true social constitution.

The [Charter](#) establishes a system of legal standards which help to reduce economic and social tensions while facilitating sustainable and mutually beneficial development in the States Parties.

The main aim of the conference is to bring together European policy-makers and reaffirm the importance of social rights in times of crisis.

Secretary General [Thorbjørn Jagland](#) will open the event together with Giuliano Poletti, Minister of Labour and Social Policies of Italy and Piero Fassino, Mayor of Turin.

Deputy Secretary General [Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni](#) will participate in the closing session.

Salim Maslumov (Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Azerbaijan, on behalf of the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers), Anne Brasseur (President of the Parliamentary Assembly), Laura Boldrini (President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies), László Andor (European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and Antonio Tajani (Vice-President of the European Parliament) will also take part.

Michele Nicoletti (Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly) will be the General Rapporteur of the Conference.

The main subjects to be discussed at the three panels will be:

- Austerity measures in a period of crisis: the impact on social rights, the participation of citizens and the contribution of the European Social Charter to the crisis exit phase;
- The contribution of the collective complaints procedure to the respect of social rights in Europe;
- Synergies between the law of the European Union and the European Social Charter.

The conference will be on live streaming. A link will be available on <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/high-level-conference-esc-2014>

**A press conference is scheduled on Saturday 18 October (1.30 pm).**

Links for [accreditation](#) and to the [programme](#)

### **Background:**

The European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty signed in Turin on 18 October 1961 which safeguards day-to-day freedoms and fundamental rights: housing, health, education, employment, legal and social protection, freedom of movement for individuals, non-discrimination. The substance of the Charter was supplemented by a revised version of 1996.

The European Committee of Social Rights has two procedures to ensure that States Parties comply with their commitments under the Charter: national reports and collective complaints. A Protocol opened for signature in 1995, which came into force in 1998, allows national and international trade union organisations, employee governmental organisations to submit to the Committee their complaints about violations of the Charter.

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