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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW

DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT

THE CONFERENCE OF INGOs OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Introduction for New Representatives



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE





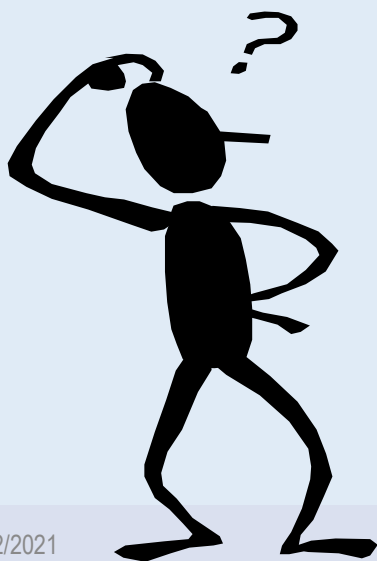
**HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT**



THE CONFERENCE OF INGOs OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Welcome to new representatives!



Welcome to you as new representative of your INGO!

Dear Representative,

I am very happy to welcome you to the Conference of INGOs!

As it is not possible to meet you « physically » in Strasbourg for the moment, the Standing Committee of the Conference welcomes you warmly through this presentation.

We hope it will give you a good overview about the Conference and your new responsibilities. We are so glad to have you among us and we are looking forward to working together with you and including your NGO's expertise!

We are all volunteers and count on each representative to contribute as actively as possible to our collective « mission »! Please feel free to address us any other question: anna.rurka@coe.int

Anna Rurka,
President of the INGO Conference



The Conference of INGOs

The Conference of INGOs is the body of the Council of Europe which brings together all international NGOs with “participatory status”. This status is granted by the Secretary General and is regularly revised.

The Conference of INGOs currently brings together more than 300 international NGOs working together

- to strengthen European citizens' access to human rights
- to protect democratic values and systems based on the Rule of Law.

The purpose of the Conference is therefore to commit itself to the participation of civil society in public life and to the right to freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression (which are closely linked) and are the essential elements of a dynamic civic space and sound democratic governance.

The Conference is committed to preserving an enabling environment for NGOs in member States and to facilitate dialogue between civil society, the public authorities and other stakeholders. This is a fundamental axis of its work in the Council of Europe and in all the 47 member States.

Vision

As a representative body, the Conference of INGOs constitutes an institutional connection between the Council of Europe institutions and more than 800 million Europeans.

Through the Conference of INGOs, the Council of Europe recognises a vibrant, pluralistic and dynamic civil society to be an indispensable actor of the democratic system, aiming to safeguard a civic space, acting for open, diverse and inclusive societies and accountable governments.

It is essential that the Conference's activities achieve impact within the Council of Europe and in its member States.

Therefore, the Conference of INGOs must simultaneously be

- **close to the grassroots organizations,**
- **working for a general interest of civil society,**
- **involved in the high-level decision-making process in the Council of Europe and other international organisations.**

Council of Europe Conseil de l'Europe

47 Member States États membres

 Albania - Albanie Tirana	 Estonia - Estonie Tallinn	 Lithuania - Lituanie Vilnius	 Russian Federation - Fédération de Russie Moscow - Moscou
 Andorra - Andorre Andorra-la-Vella Andorra-la-Vieille	 Finland - Finlande Helsinki	 Luxembourg Luxembourg	 San Marino - Saint-Marin San Marino - Saint-Marin
 Armenia - Arménie Yerevan - Erevan	 France Paris	 Malta - Malte Valletta - La Valetta	 Serbia - Serbie Belgrade
 Austria - Autriche Vienna - Vienne	 Georgia - Géorgie Tbilisi - Tbilissi	 Republic of Moldova - République de Moldova Chişinău	 Slovakia - Slovaquie Bratislava
 Azerbaijan - Azerbaïdjan Baku - Bakou	 Germany - Allemagne Berlin	 Monaco Monaco	 Slovenia - Slovénie Ljubljana
 Belgium - Belgique Brussels - Bruxelles	 Greece - Grèce Athens - Athènes	 Montenegro - Monténégro Podgorica	 Spain - Espagne Madrid
 Bosnia and Herzegovina Bosnie-Herzégovine Sarajevo	 Hungary - Hongrie Budapest	 Netherlands - Pays-Bas Amsterdam	 Sweden - Suède Stockholm
 Bulgaria - Bulgarie Sofia	 Iceland - Islande Reykjavik	 North Macedonia - Macédoine du Nord Skopje	 Switzerland Suisse Bern - Berna
 Croatia - Croatie Zagreb	 Ireland - Irlande Dublin	 Norway - Norvège Oslo	 Turkey - Turquie Ankara
 Cyprus - Chypre Nicosia - Nicosie	 Italy - Italie Rome	 Poland - Pologne Warsaw - Varsovie	 Ukraine Kyiv - Kiev
 Czech Republic - République Tchèque Prague	 Latvia - Lettonie Riga	 Portugal Lisbon - Lisbonne	 United Kingdom - Royaume-Uni London - Londres
 Denmark - Danemark Copenhagen - Copenhague	 Liechtenstein Vaduz	 Romania - Roumanie Bucharest - Bucarest	 United Kingdom - Royaume-Uni London - Londres



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Council of Europe – Legal standards for Non-Governmental Organisations

- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2007\)14](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the legal status of non-governmental organisations in Europe.
- [European Convention on the Recognition of the Legal Personality of International Non-Governmental Organisations](#) [CETS N° 124]

Important texts

- [Resolution CM/Res\(2016\)3: Participatory status for international non-governmental organisations with the Council of Europe](#)
- Council of Europe [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#)
- Council of Europe [Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process](#)

Participatory status with the Council of Europe

In recognition of the increasingly active role played by the INGOS since 1952, the Council of Europe decided to change their consultative status to a participatory status in 2003.

In July 2016, the Committee of Ministers adopted a new resolution on participatory status, **Resolution (2016)3**. It sets out the rules for the granting of participatory status to INGOS, gives more information on the background of the status, what it represents, the conditions to be met by INGOS and the possibilities it gives to INGOS to co-operate with the Council of Europe and increase the relevance and quality of INGOS enjoying participatory status.

The Conference of INGOS represents “civil society” at the Council of Europe and works to promote participatory democracy. In addition to holding two annual sessions a year, it organises events linked to the priorities of the Council of Europe.

[Resolution CM/Res\(2016\)3](#)

Rules of Procedure of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) of the Council of Europe

The Rules of Procedure give a framework to the Conference of INGOs.

- They determine
 - the Composition of the Conference of INGOs,
 - its Structure,
 - Its Terms of Reference and its Functioning.
- They define the role (terms of reference and functioning) of
 - the President, Vice- Presidents
 - the Standing Committee and its members,
 - Its Committees and Expert Council(s)
- They determine
 - the general principles and procedure of elections,
 - the responsibilities of the Verification and Dispute Committee
 - the Appellate Committee
 - the procedure for amendment to the Rules of Procedure.

New Rules of Procedure – NGOs' collective contribution to the future of the Conference of INGOs

The INGOs adopted new rules for the Conference during the December 2020 session, following a long participatory debate, and this, **with the aim of strengthening its impact, its flexibility and with a view to offer a bottom-up approach.**

With a large majority, the INGOs voted for Rules of Procedures allowing:

- lighter structures
- greater operational efficiency
- **the creation of Committees directly validated by INGOs in line with the priorities of the Council of Europe**
- The possibility of creating one or more Expert Council(s) with a mandate to study essential questions not yet covered within the Council of Europe
- a good ethical governance

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OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

THE CONFERENCE OF INGOs
LA CONFERENCE DES OINGs



The Conference of INGOs works closely with the staff of the Division for Democratic Innovation (Directorate General of Democracy). Thanks for its support!



Mary Ann HENNESSEY

Head of the Division for Democratic Innovation

INGO Conference Functioning – Transition to the new Rules

- Standing Committee (SC)
 - Gender equality (see slide below)
 - Youth (see slide below)
 - Migration (see slide below)

- Transition:
from Thematic Committees with their Working Groups
to new Committees directly created (and validated) by the INGOS

- Expert Council for NGO Law

- NGO Service Association

Action Plan 2018-2021

The Action Plan sets out the main orientation and specific priorities of the Conference's work for 3 years and aims to reinforce the voice of civil society in the Council of Europe.

The Action Plan shows how the Conference of INGOs provides both a conceptual and an operational response to the Council of Europe's, and more specifically the Secretary General's priorities, and contributes to the protection of the organisation's values which are being affected by current political and economic factors.

Priorities

The priorities announced in the Action Plan are organised as follows:

1. To protect and reinforce freedom of association and associated rights and to contribute to the democratic security in Council of Europe member states
2. To observe and reinforce civil participation in the decision-making within the Council of Europe and in its member states
3. To contribute to building an inclusive society and to protect access to education and to social, cultural and economic rights by vulnerable groups
4. Contribute to the blossoming of a modern European Cultural Identity
5. Continue to develop the institutional strengthening process of the Conference of INGOs to respond in a relevant way to the institutional evolution of the Council of Europe and geopolitical challenges.

Equality is central to fulfilling the Council of Europe's mission, and is therefore also a priority for the Conference of INGOs.

All entities of the Conference of INGOs will conduct actions to contribute to these priorities under the guidance of the Standing Committee whose role is to ensure consistency and coherence of the whole Action Plan.

Working Methods

The management body of the Conference of INGOs is the Standing Committee, composed of directly elected voluntary members of the Conference of INGOs.

The INGOs with participatory status, together with invited NGOs and experts contribute on a voluntary basis to the work through

- Committees (*working groups until April 2021*)
- debates,
- side events,
- country visits
- other activities led by the Conference of INGOs.

Among its working methods, there are sessions which include debates with Council of Europe personalities and institutions.

Country visits of the Conference of INGOs

The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe visits member States to meet local NGOs and public authorities to better understand the cooperation between NGOs and decision-makers and to discuss NGO participation in the public decision-making process.

-The Conference hears the point of view of both NGOs and authorities to find out what use is made of these participatory existing mechanisms.

Each visit is followed by a report which highlights the important issues for the NGOs at that specific moment and socio-political context. Recommendations are formulated to improve the effectiveness of cooperation between NGOs and the public authorities. The findings of the visits also contribute to advancing the Council of Europe's work in this field.

The participation of civil society in decision-making is one of the priorities of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and this work contributes to civil society's effective and meaningful participation in the political decision-making process.

List of intergovernmental Committees and other structures where the Conference of INGOs is represented

Comité directeur pour les droits de l'homme / Steering Committee on Human Rights	Jean Bernard Marie
Groupe de rédaction sur les migrations et les droits de l'homme / Drafting group on migration and human rights	Martine Schmelck,
Groupe de rédaction sur la société civile et les institutions nationales de droits de l'homme / Drafting group on civil society and national human rights institutions	Antoine Buyse
Comité d'experts sur le système de la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme / Committee of experts on the system of ECHR	Jeremy McBride
Comité de bioéthique / Committee of Bioethics	Miguel Cabral, Marie-José Schmitt
Commission pour l'égalité de genre / Gender Equality Commission	Anne Nègre
Comité européen de coopération juridique / European Committee on Legal Co-operation	Jeremy McBride, Cyril Ritchie
Comité directeur sur les médias et la société de l'information / Steering Committee on Media and Information Society	Didier Schretter
Comité européen sur la démocratie et la gouvernance / European Committee on Democracy and Governance	Gerhard Ermischer, Luminita Petrescu
Bureau élargi	
Working Group on Accountability under CDDG/ Groupe de travail sur la responsabilité publique sous CDDG	Gerhard Ermischer
Working group on democracy and technology (GT-DT) Groupe de travail sur la démocratie et la technologie (R-DT)	Didier Schretter Francesca Fannuci
Comité directeur pour les politiques et pratiques éducatives / Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice	Claude Vivier Le Got

List of intergovernmental Committees and other structures where the Conference of INGOs is represented

Comité Directeur Européen pour la Jeunesse / European Steering Committee for Youth	Anne Kraus Rares Augustin Craiut
Conseil Consultatif pour la Jeunesse / Advisory Council on Youth	
Comité mixte pour la jeunesse / Joint Council on Youth	
Comité directeur de la culture, du patrimoine et du paysage / Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape	Claude Vivier Le Got Gerhard Ermischer
Plateforme européenne de cohésion sociale / European Platform of social cohesion	Robert Bergougnan et Gérard Schaefer
Plateforme thématique sur les droits sociaux et économique / COE-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET / Thematic Platform on Social and economic Rights	Peter Verhaeghe (Caritas)
Comité ad hoc sur l'intelligence artificielle / Ad hoc Committee on artificial intelligence	Didier Schretter Francesca Fannuci
Comité ad hoc pour les droits de l'enfant – Ad hoc Committee for the rights of the child	Cristina Rigman
Steering committee on anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion	Gilbert Flam
Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues / Comité d'experts sur les questions relatives aux Roms et aux Gens du voyage	Claude Vivier Le Got
Committee of Experts on Combating Hate Speech / Comité d'experts sur la lutte contre le discours de haine (Gilbert Flam
Comité des Parties à la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes et la violence domestique / Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence	Anne Nègre
Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings / Comité des Parties à la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains	Marie Salphati

List of intergovernmental Committees and other structures where the Conference of INGOs is represented

Comité européen des droits sociaux (sur invitation uniquement) / European committee of social rights	Peter Verhaeghe E. Marie
Centre Nord-Sud / North South Center	Christoph Spreng
Commission des questions sociales, de la santé et du développement durable de l'APCE / Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development of PACE	Thierry Mathieu
Commission sur l'égalité et la non-discrimination de l'APCE / Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of PACE	Anne Nègre
Commission migrations, réfugiés et personnes déplacées de l'APCE / Committee on migration, refugees and displaced persons of PACE	Martine Schmelck
Comité de pilotage du Forum mondial de la démocratie / World Forum for Democracy Steering Group	Maritchu Rall

Gender Equality

The Conference of INGO supports the Council of Europe's strong commitment to a de facto and substantive gender equality at all levels and in all areas and follows all Council of Europe standards.

The Conference of INGOs follows the Council of Europe's Equality Strategy 2018-2023 as well as the numerous recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers on equality.

Among the main challenges that gender equality poses in the member states:

- Combatting Gender Stereotypes and Sexism in the media, in education, against sexist hate speech
- Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women (including emerging issues on migration)
- Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women in Justice
- Achieving Balanced Participation of Women and Men in Political and Public Decision-Making

In this context, the Standing Committee of the Conference of INGOs created a "**Gender Equality Watch Unit**" to remain vigilant about the conditions under which States act in matters of gender equality, to support NGOs in their democratic mission and to monitor respect for human rights. The "Watch Unit" is operational by receiving information from the INGO network acting in the field, by making visible good practices in the field and by proposing an analysis in the light of the work carried out within the Council of the Europe and other international and European organizations and institutions, in particular on the basis of international legal instruments applying to gender equality.

Integrated Youth Approach - Bridging Generations

<https://rm.coe.int/road-map-youth-150618-en/16808b5fbb>

It is essential to take into account the youth perspective in the work of the Conference of INGOs.

A Task Force on Youth has the role to develop a youth perspective to the work of the INGO Conference:

- facilitating the **participation of young people**,
 - encouraging an **intergenerational**, more inclusive and representative dialogue
 - becoming a **platform for debate and support** known and recognised by young people in all member States
-
- **Youth INGO Representatives Programme** (thanks to INGO Service)
 - Specific actions
 - Explicit references are made in the delivered products (“Youth Check”) and action led by the Working Groups;
 - Collaboration and implementation of actions with CoE and external partners

Migration Task Force

Beyond the humanitarian emergencies, a change of paradigm is needed to build fully cohesive societies, with respect for human rights and laws in the countries.

This Taskforce will develop well-argued common positions, including a prospective analysis of post-migration phenomena, and allow the Conference of INGOs to react in an appropriate manner whenever it proves necessary, and to mutualise the knowledge and expertise of its members.

Functions:

- Receive and analyse information (alerts) from the INGO networks acting at the grassroots level on the protection and reception of migrants in the Council of Europe member States.
- Remain vigilant to the conditions in which NGOs operate for their humanitarian mission of welcoming and integrating migrants and also remain vigilant with regard to the defense of their rights. Collect and publish good practices in this area;
- Propose an analysis of the information received in the light of the work carried out within the Council of Europe and other international organisations, on the basis of international legal instruments applying to migration law;
- Develop and propose reasoned collective statements regarding the identified phenomena to the Conference of INGOs.

Expert Council on NGO Law

The Conference of INGOs already founded in 2008 its Council of Experts on NGO Law: an independent body made up of experts who conduct studies on laws in force or in preparation at national level, ensuring their compatibility with the Council of Europe standards in this area.

The Expert Council drafts and publishes legal opinions on the situations of countries where Democracy is threatened by restrictions imposed on civil society.

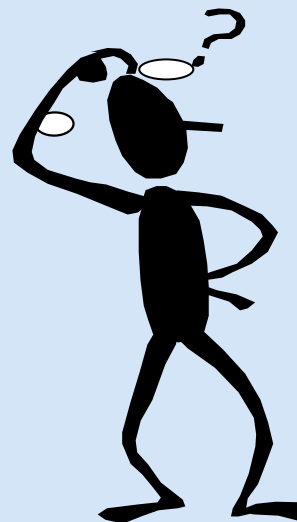
For examining the evolution of NGO law, there is a reading grid which consists of a legal framework and numerous reference documents.

Recently, the Expert Council has adopted [Guidelines on Protecting NGO Work in Support of Refugees and Other Migrants](#). These guidelines have been developed to help Council of Europe member States and international organizations to ensure, when taking action against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling and responding to the presence of refugees and other migrants, that their laws, policies and practices are consistent with standards relating to the treatment of non-governmental organisations and the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe.



How can I
participate?

How can
my NGO participate?



How can I participate as representative?

- Ask questions if something is not clear!
We can propose a « buddy » to mentor you!
- **Stay updated via the website** <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo>
- Reflect on HOW your NGO's expertise can contribute to the Conference's work
- Get involved **following your expertise**
- Report any difficult situation of your NGO in different countries
- Save important dates in advance!
- Be prepared to contribute in a constructive, respectful way.

Your Responsibilities as a Representative

- Forward important info to your NGO (in its diverse member countries!)
Write reports and articles for your NGO's newsletter
- Share with the Conference of INGOs information about the initiatives undertaken by your national members, about the impact of your project, your concerns and analyses.
- Propose recommendations and topics to be discuss by the Conference of INGOs.
- **Help prepare the future of the Conference of INGOs by staying informed about the drafting of the new Rules of procedure**
- Know and respect the [Code of Conduct](#)
- Know and Respect the [Communication Charter](#)
- Remind the treasurer of your NGO to contribute to INGO Service Association!
- Inform your NGO about the Conference and all its tools! (e.g. dialogue toolkit)
- Give a proxy to a colleague if you cannot participate to a vote for any reason!

How can my NGO participate?

- Ask your representative to give you updates on a regular basis (reports)
- Publish Council of Europe Info in your NGO's newsletter
- Inform your representative on the situation of your NGO in different countries
- Update INGO Info on the INGO Conference data base <http://coe-ngo.org/#/ingos>
- **Help prepare the future of the Conference of INGOs by staying updated on the progress of drafting of the new Rules of procedure**
- Please feel concerned about elections (vote! propose candidates!)
- Answer surveys! React to emails! Forward info to ALL your members!
- Participate to working groups, following your expertise!
- Propose speakers!
- Know and respect the [Code of Conduct](#)
- Know and Respect the [Communication Charter](#)
- Contribute to INGO Service Association
- Encourage and support the participation of (a) young NGO member to INGO Conference's sessions
- Make sure to answer the quarterly - year report!
- Be aware of the Conference's existing tools for dialogue and participation in decision making
- Remember: A COLLECTIVE ACTION HAS MORE IMPACT!

Code of conduct of the Conference of INGOs

Adopted by the Conference of INGOs on 10 April 2019

The Conference of INGOs adopted a Code of Conduct which supplements the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of INGOs.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to govern participation in the activities of the Conference. Its provisions apply to all, whether legal or physical persons, who participate in the activities of the Conference.

It defines general principles of behavior, like e.g. to respect and defend the values and principles of the Council of Europe, to act with integrity and honesty, not engage in sexist or discriminatory behavior, to take decisions solely in the general interest while pursuing their declared objectives, not to act in a way as to bring the Conference into disrepute or tarnish the Conference's image, **to undertake to comply with the Rules of conduct**. It defines **sanctions** that may be imposed for a breach of this Code of Conduct.

Communication Charter of the Conference of INGOs

This charter sets out to establish for the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe

- the references,
- the aims,
- the conditions of implementation, and
- the directives and principles to be observed
 - by the members of the Standing committee as well as
 - by member organisations of the Conference

Code Of Good Practice For Civil Participation In The Decision-making Process

The principal objective of this Code is to contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for NGOs in member States as well as in Belarus. It aims to define a set of general principles, guidelines, tools and mechanisms for civil participation in the political decision-making process.

The Code is intended to be implemented at the local, regional and national level. It is based on practical experiences from NGOs across Europe, and the sharing of their good practices and valid methods to engage with public authorities.

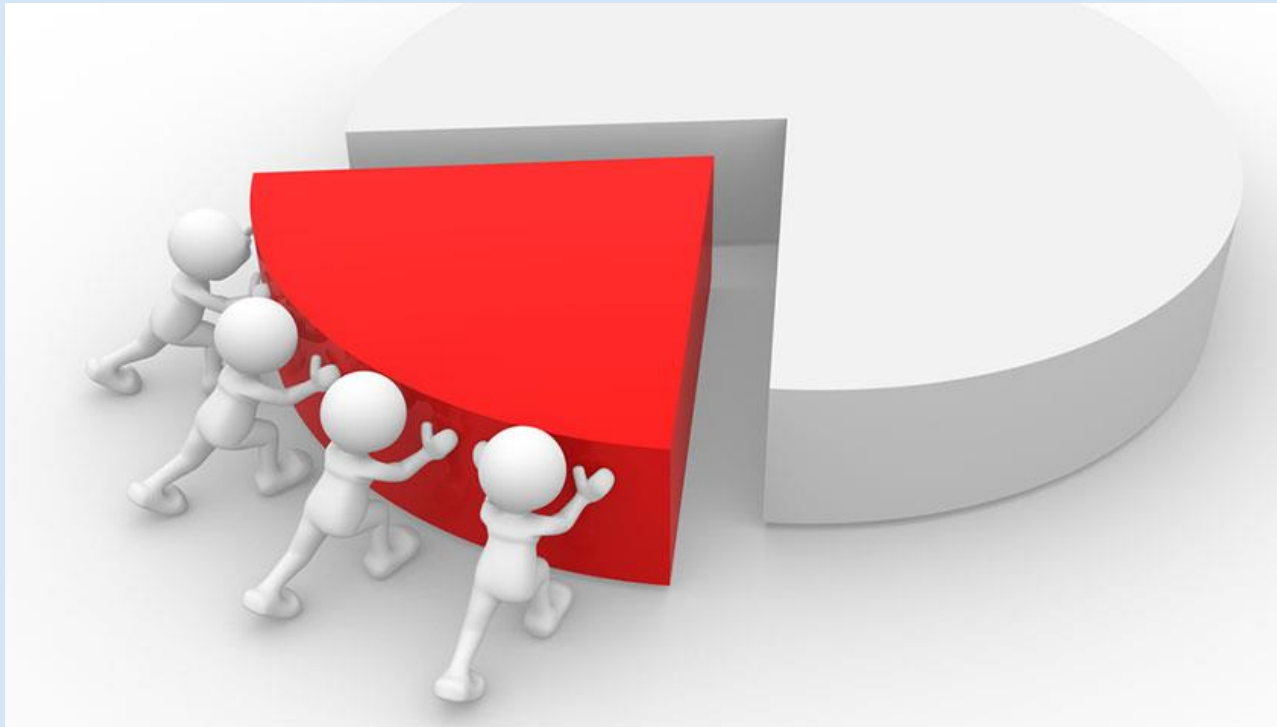
An additional objective of the Code of Good Practice is to be a relevant and effective tool for NGOs – from the local to international level – in their dialogue with parliaments, governments and public authorities. It aims to be an interactive and action-oriented instrument, so that NGOs and public authorities across Europe can effectively utilize it. It is also targeted at public authorities – which include parliament, government, and public administration at the local, regional and national level.

Association OING Service

...la mise à disposition des ressources nécessaires

Contribuez! <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/ingo/ingo-service>

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INGO Service Association...

raising and making available the necessary resources

Please contribute!

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/ingo-service>

Do You Speak “Council of Europe NGO language”??

« Conference of INGOs - specific Glossary - work in Progress »

Working with NGOs at the European level and in a mutual approach as the INGO Conference does sometimes generate specific vocabulary and abbreviations which are not always easy to understand. Don't worry if you don't understand all of it immediately! The members of the Standing Committee are working on a « Conference of INGOs - specific Glossary »

However, in the meantime, you can find glossaries that might help:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/glossary>

<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/glossary>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/execution/glossary>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/artificial-intelligence/glossary>

<https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/resources/documents/2016/1/council-of-europe-gender-equality-glossary?lang=en>

<https://www.ilga-europe.org/resources/glossary>

Premier outil de communication entre la Conférence et ses membres:

Le site internet de la Conférence <http://www.coe.int/fr/web/ingo>

Pour plus d'informations sur le Conseil de l'Europe en général: <http://www.coe.int>



COUNCIL
OF EUROPE

CONSEIL
DE L'EUROPE



The first communication tool between the Conference and its members:

The website of the Conference of INGOs: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo>

For more information on the Council of Europe in general: <http://www.coe.int>

Together **we**
can **make a**
difference!

The Conference of INGOs will hopefully be able to have its next session in Strasbourg in October 2020, once the sanitary situation will allow it!



Council of Europe, Agora Building

Any question(s) left? Don't hesitate and please contact: anna.rurka@coe.int

