

European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS)

Set up by the Committee of Ministers under Article 17 of the Statute of the Council of Europe and in accordance with Resolution CM/Res(2011)24 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.

Type of committee: Ad hoc committee

Terms of reference valid from: **1 January 2020 until 31 December 2021**

PILLAR/PROGRAMME/SUB-PROGRAMME
<p>Pillar: Human Rights Programme: Social Rights Sub-programme: Social Rights</p>
MAIN TASKS
<p>Under the authority of the Committee of Ministers, the European Social Cohesion Platform (PECS) will promote the Council of Europe's work in the area of social cohesion, in particular the European Social Charter and its collective complaints procedure in order to ensure equal and effective access to social rights. In particular the PECS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) ensure the mainstreaming of social cohesion throughout the Council of Europe by further developing the concept, by contributing to impact assessments of the various activities in the different sectors with regard to achieving social cohesion, including the relevant activities aimed at building inclusive societies, and by promoting specific actions which contribute to social cohesion. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that everyone can enjoy their social rights, as guaranteed by the European Social Charter and other relevant instruments, in practice and without any discrimination, with a special emphasis on vulnerable groups, persons with disabilities and young people, taking into account the findings of the relevant monitoring mechanisms. For this purpose, the PECS will support co-operation activities carried out upon the request of member States;(ii) foster the exchange of good practices and innovative approaches in the field of social cohesion among member States, as well as with relevant international organisations and other stakeholders; promote dialogue with the European Union, the United Nations and other international organisations, with a view to identifying opportunities for co-operation in the field of social cohesion;(iii) examine new trends in and challenges to social cohesion;(iv) hold an exchange of views annually in order to evaluate its activities and advise the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General on future priorities in its sector, including possible new activities and those that might be discontinued;(v) take due account of gender and children's rights perspectives and to promoting and protecting rights of persons with disabilities in the performance of its tasks;(vi) contribute to the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular with regards to Goal 1: No poverty; Goal 3: Good health and well-being; Goal 4: Quality Education; Goal 5: Gender Equality; Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; Goal 13: Climate action and Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong institutions.
SPECIFIC TASKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Examine new trends and challenges to social cohesion in specific areas such as eradication of child poverty, digitalisation and IT developments, protection and integration of migrants and refugees, social and health protection, in particular combating poverty and exclusion which may foster violent radicalisation, and the access of vulnerable groups, persons with disabilities and young people to social rights, while including a human dignity and anti-discrimination perspective in this work.(ii) Prepare a study on the impact of digitalisation and IT developments on social rights.(iii) Review progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), as evidenced by monitoring mechanisms and promoted through standard-setting and exchange of experiences and good practices.

COMPOSITION

Members:

The governments of Council of Europe member States are invited to designate one or more representatives of the highest possible rank in the field of social cohesion.

The Council of Europe will bear the travel and subsistence expenses of one representative from each member State (two in the case of the State whose representative has been elected Chair).

Each member of the Platform shall have one vote. Where a government designates more than one member, only one of them is entitled to take part in the voting.

Participants:

The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and at the charge of their corresponding administrative budgets:

- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;
- European Court of Human Rights;
- Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights;
- Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe;
- European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission);
- European Committee of Social Rights;
- Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB);
- Committees or other bodies of the Council of Europe engaged in related work, as appropriate, in particular:
 - o Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security;
 - o Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH);
 - o Gender Equality Commission (GEC);
 - o Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI);
 - o Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI);
 - o European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC);
 - o European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ);
 - o Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI);
 - o European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG);
 - o Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE);
 - o European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ);
 - o Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ);
 - o Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP).

The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and without defrayal of expenses:

- European Union, including, as appropriate, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND);
- Observer States to the Council of Europe: Canada, Holy See, Japan, Mexico, United States of America;
- Countries concerned with the Council of Europe policy towards neighbourhood regions;
- United Nations including its specialised agencies, programmes, funds and other entities, in particular International Labour Organisation;
- Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) (including ODIHR);
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues (NVC) under the aegis of the Nordic Council of Ministers;
- European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and/or Business Europe and International Organisation of Employers ("social partners");
- other non-governmental organisations upon invitation from the PECS.

Observer:

The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and without defrayal of expenses:

- European Youth Forum.

WORKING METHODS**Plenary meetings:**

48 members, 2 meetings in 2020, 2 days

48 members, 2 meetings in 2021, 2 days

Bureau meetings:

7 members, 2 meetings in 2020, 1 day

7 members, 2 meetings in 2021, 1 day

The Platform will appoint from amongst its members a Gender Equality Rapporteur, a Children's Rights Rapporteur and a Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.

The rules of procedure of the Platform are governed by Resolution CM/Res(2011)24 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.

Whenever appropriate, it will prioritise environmentally sound working methods, such as virtual meetings facilitated by information technology and written consultations.

BUDGETARY INFORMATION*

	Meetings per year	Number of days	Members	Plenary €K	Bureau €K	Working groups	Secretariat (A, B)
2020	2	2	48	40.8			1 A
2021	2	2	48	40.8			1 A

*The costs include the per diem, travel costs, interpretation, translation and document printing. These costs are calculated on the basis of the 2020 standard costs.