

COUNCIL OF EUROPE NEWS



European Court of Human Rights launches new on-line application form

The European Court of Human Rights launched a new service on a trial basis to enable applicants to fill out the Court's application form on-line via its internet site. Initially, this service will be available only for applicants using Swedish or Dutch application forms. Depending on the outcome of the trial, it may subsequently be extended to the other official languages of the member States.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION NEWS

EU steps up fight against trafficking of humans and child abuse

New laws to protect the most vulnerable people against terrible crimes.

The Commission is calling for tougher laws against human trafficking and the sexual abuse of children, saying current efforts to combat these crimes don't reflect their scale and gravity.

There are few reliable statistics on the number of people trafficked into or within Europe, but it is probably of the order of several hundred thousand. Yet in 2006, the most recent year for which numbers are available, prosecutors brought just 1 500 criminal trafficking cases to court. Only 3 000 victims received assistance.

Trafficking in humans is extremely profitable, and most traffickers are professional and organised criminals. Most are based outside the EU but there are now growing networks inside too, especially since the bloc's eastward expansion.

The commission has also revised legislation against the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Here again, reliable estimates are hard to obtain. But studies suggest certain forms of sexual violence against children are on the rise in Europe and that a significant minority of children in Europe, between 10% and 20%, are sexually assaulted during their childhood.

In particular, the proposal seeks to criminalise use of the internet to prey on children and to step up enforcement of laws against child pornography. In 2008 more than 1000 commercial and about 500 non-commercial child abuse content websites were found, about 70% in the US.

UNITED NEWS



14 - 22 March 2009

**European-wide Action Week
Against Racism
'Look Deeper - Value Diversity'**

Every year on the occasion of the European-wide Action Week Against Racism around 21 March, people all around Europe get

together promoting diversity, solidarity, equality and tolerance. In 2008, the Action Week celebrated its 16th birthday with activities in 47 countries, involving tens of thousands of people all around Europe in the fight against racism, discrimination, intolerance and exclusion. All over Europe, from Iceland to Greece and from Portugal to Russia, activities were organised, involving a whole country in one common action.

Again this year, from 14 to 22 March, various non-governmental-organisations in almost all European countries will raise together their voice against one common threat: racism.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



XIV. European Social Work Symposium Diversity & Inclusion - Challenges for Social Work

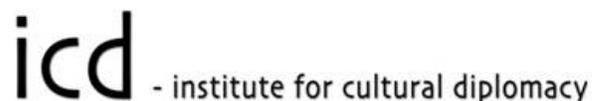
The Faculty of Applied Social Sciences & Social Work at University Niederrhein (Germany) will host the XIV. European Social Work Symposium in cooperation with the Social Work Network Partners from all over Europe from 27 to 28 April 2009.

How do modern societies cope with diversity and difference? In what ways do we support integration and inclusion? What are helpful approaches to enhance societal participation and - in this sense - to manage diversity? The challenges will be addressed by the XIV. European Social Work Symposium in Mönchengladbach / Germany to be held from 27 to 28 April 2009.

Workshops to be held in German/English/Spanish with translation provided or only in English.

More information and registration forms can be found at the following website:

<http://www.hs-niederrhein.de/index.php?id=23974&L=6>



Europe Meets Russia: A Forum for Young Leaders (Berlin, April 28th – May 2nd)

The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) is delighted to announce the launch of a new program, **Europe meets Russia: A Forum for Young Leaders (EMR)**. The first Weeklong Seminar for this forum will take place in Berlin from April 28th - May 2nd, 2009. By taking part in this seminar, young leaders will gain an insight into cultural diplomacy, and learn from influential figures in the fields of politics, academia, and civil society. Students and young professionals will develop contacts on social and professional levels through participation in interesting lectures, challenging workshops, and group discussions that cover the state of the European-Russian relationship, from economic, political and cultural perspectives.

Further information, including the application form, can be found under:

www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_program_emr_introduction