

**INFORMATION ON RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S OING CONFERENCE  
APRIL TO AUGUST 2024**

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1) the Expert Council on NGO Law of the Conference of INGOs has released 21/06/2024 new thematic study: "Civil society support to refugees and other migrants in Europe: the need to end the backlash on civil society space". Feel free of course to share it widely through your networks.

2) **On 1 July 2024**, the President of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations held, as every year, an exchange of views with the Ministers' Deputies. In his address, he reported on recent developments and achievements of the Conference, as well as its plans for the future. He also expressed the willingness of the Conference to further develop its close alliance with the Council of Europe and its various bodies. He highlighted the importance of implementing the [Reykjavík Declaration](#), Declaration particularly in light of the increased dialogue with civil society called for in the Secretary General's [Roadmap on Civil Society engagement with the Council of Europe](#).

In his address, President Ermischer also reminded the importance of defending the rights of civil society and the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in these times of an ever-shrinking civil space. In the ensuing exchange of views, several delegations reiterated strong support for the Conference of INGOs.

[The address of the President of the Conference of INGOs](#)

### **3) the Istanbul Convention**

Groundbreaking Council of Europe treaty to protect women and girls entered into force 10 years ago. Over the past decade, it has guided numerous states in advancing their legislation and policies in order to prevent and combat violence against women effectively. The convention makes a difference for women and girls and represents an important advocacy tool. Celebrating its 10-year anniversary means celebrating its transformative power and uniting behind this landmark treaty.

So far, [38 countries](#) have become party to the convention. In October 2023, the treaty entered into force in respect of the European Union, making it also party to the convention.

### **4) The World Forum for Democracy**

Democracy and Diversity - Can we transcend the divides? **Strasbourg, 6-8 November 2024)**

In a year during which around one half of the world's population has been called to the polls<sup>1</sup>, the 2024 edition of the World Forum for Democracy will address the critical threats posed by disinformation and divisive political narratives around diversity, including in the context of election campaigns. The Forum will focus on how electoral processes may inadvertently crystallise societal divides and provide fertile ground for populism to flourish. In light of the urgency of this challenge, the Forum will explore ways of raising understanding among citizens of the risks posed by populism for their fundamental rights and freedoms. To achieve this, the Forum will feature inspirational talks by thought leaders. Analytical labs will challenge proposed new solutions and identify ideas worth spreading. Moreover, the Forum will actively foster the creation of networks and communities of practice, serving as incubators for turning ideas into action.

**14 Oct 2024 - 16 Oct 2024 : General Assembly of the Conference of INGOs**