

# PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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## Recommendation 1963 (2011)<sup>1</sup>

### Combating poverty

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, referring to its [Resolution 1800 \(2011\)](#) on combating poverty, recalls that it is convinced that Council of Europe member states should uphold their commitments to secure fundamental rights and freedoms for all.

2. The Assembly considers that governments should take further steps towards the ratification of the relevant European treaties, in particular those that can have a direct impact on the situation of people affected by poverty.

3. The Assembly therefore wishes to reiterate the importance of implementing the provisions enshrined in Article 30 of the European Social Charter (revised) (the Charter, ETS No. 163) to ensure “the effective exercise of the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion”. Member states are called upon “to take measures within the framework of an overall and co-ordinated approach to promote the effective access of persons who live, or risk living, in a situation of social exclusion or poverty, as well as their families, to, in particular, employment, housing, training, education, culture and social and medical assistance”.

4. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

4.1. take all necessary measures to promote the ratification and implementation of the European Social Charter (revised) and its protocols and to enable supervision of the implementation of the Charter (revised) under Article C thereof, including through the collective complaints procedure;

4.2. ensure, in particular, that Article 30 of the European Social Charter (revised) becomes part of its core provisions under Article A, paragraph 1.b, enabling policy formulation and progress review in combating poverty. All Council of Europe member states should agree to be bound by the provisions of Article 30;

4.3. ask member states to duly take into account the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Principles and Guidelines for a Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies in their public policy making and relevant budgetary decisions;

4.4. promote the signature, ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe social rights protection instruments, in addition to the European Social Charter (revised), namely:

4.4.1. the European Convention on Social Security (ETS No. 78), the Supplementary Agreement on the Application thereof (ETS No. 78A), and its Protocol (ETS No. 154);

4.4.2. the European Code of Social Security (revised) (ETS No. 139);

4.5. review the current structure of its programme of activities to improve the co-ordination of current measures and to introduce, as necessary, transversal actions aimed at combating poverty and improving access to all human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural – for people affected by poverty;

4.6. take measures to strengthen the Council of Europe’s capacity to develop evidence-based policies and programmes, including measures to conduct comparative analyses of poverty and social exclusion indicators across member states, in addition to the current Mutual Information System on Social Protection of the Council of Europe (MISSCEO);

4.7. ensure that its policies and programmes in the field of poverty and social exclusion take into account the gender dimension;

4.8. take measures to ensure the availability of and regular comparison of relevant gender-disaggregated data, such as minimum wage or equivalent instruments, and work (employment) benefits, in those Council of Europe member states which are not member states of the European Union, providing substantive ground for future policy making;

4.9. take urgent action to implement specific transversal measures aimed particularly at protecting the rights of families, children, women, people with disabilities, the elderly, and people from minority and migrant communities in situations of poverty, granting them the right to family reunion and the possibility of a normal family life;

4.10. design and establish non-bureaucratic, accessible and effective institutions such as a poverty ombudsperson, to whom people living in poverty can address their concerns, opinions and demands;

4.11. take due account of the forthcoming biennial debate in the Parliamentary Assembly on the state of human rights and social rights in Europe and provide an update on the measures taken to safeguard the human rights of people affected by poverty, for example on the monitoring of the progress made in combating poverty in 2013, prior to such debates.

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1. Assembly debate on 12 April 2011 (13th Sitting) (see [Doc. 12555](#), report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Volontè; and [Doc. 12577](#), opinion of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, rapporteur: Ms Ferić-Vac). Text adopted by the Assembly on 12 April 2011 (13th Sitting).

