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Over-indebtedness of States: a danger for democracy and human rights

Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Mr Paul WILLE and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

The economic and financial crisis that unleashed itself on the world in 2008 forced most European States to take emergency action to save banks and industries, often taking measures showing no consideration for public finances in the medium and long term.

In 2010, the public debt is likely to attain 83.2% of GDP in France, 100% in Belgium, 110% in Ireland, 115% in Italy and 120% in Greece. The explosion of public debt is making it impossible for the States to effectively pursue policies geared to the well-being of their citizens and the strengthening of social cohesion, and it has diminished their capacity to deal with the dramatic situations faced by the most vulnerable layers of the population, which the economic crisis itself has made worse. In this context, the risk of major implications for the maintaining of values and standards championed by the Council of Europe is a very real one.

The inability of States to repay their debt and their allocation of an excessive share of tax revenue to cover its cost will significantly burden our future generations and undermine their living conditions. One can but fear a regression in the implementation of the European Social Charter, which has been signed and ratified by most of the Council of Europe's member States and guarantees the fundamental rights to housing, health, education, employment and social protection. And that deterioration in living conditions will have a significant impact on the exercise of democracy, respect for human rights and the preservation of the rule of law.

The Parliamentary Assembly must take up this fundamental issue with a view to inciting the Council of Europe's member states to take measures aimed at reducing States' indebtedness and guaranteeing respect for the political, social and economic rights of all European citizens.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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