



Doc. 12799

23 November 2011

Combating poverty

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1963 (2011)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1963 \(2010\)](#) on “Combating poverty”. The eradication of poverty and economic suffering is crucial if member states are to achieve the type of just and inclusive society to which they aspire.
2. The Committee of Ministers supports the Assembly’s human rights approach in this respect, in particular with a view to promoting the effective respect of social rights. In this regard, it acknowledges the direct bearing that the relevant provisions of the European Social Charter (revised) have on the fight against poverty and social exclusion, and it therefore calls on those States Parties to the Charter, which have not yet done so, to consider accepting Article 30 of the Revised Charter as well as the collective complaints procedure.
3. As advocated by the Assembly, the Committee of Ministers would also invite member states to consider the ratification and implementation of the other instruments enumerated in paragraph 4.4 and draw their attention to the relevance of OHCHR Principles and Guidelines for a Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies.
4. The Committee of Ministers recalls that the New Council of Europe Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion (2010) provide important policy tools in this field. In particular, the Strategy highlights the fact that one of the greatest challenges to social cohesion in Europe consists in the emerging pattern of a fragmented society with rising inequalities between rich and poor and that policies must ensure that steps are taken to promote the well-being and empowerment of families, which are critical for the quality of life and prevention of poverty. The Council of Europe’s forthcoming activities in this area will focus on the promotion and implementation in member states of the Action Plan for Social Cohesion, with a view to reducing poverty, fighting social exclusion, building a secure future for all and promoting full respect for human rights.
5. In line with the Assembly’s position, the Committee of Ministers looks to ensure that the Council of Europe gives special attention in its work to all relevant transversal perspectives. It would highlight in particular the need for a gender perspective to be integrated in policies and programmes in the field of poverty and social exclusion and would in this respect recall the relevant provisions of Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 on gender equality standards and mechanisms and its Declaration “Making gender equality a reality” in which the Committee of Ministers requests member states to take all the necessary measures to “ensure economic independence and empowerment of women by guaranteeing that equality is respected in the labour market and economic life, by guaranteeing an equal pay for equal work or work of equal value”.
6. The Committee of Ministers would also point out that a number of transversal actions have already been introduced aimed at combating poverty and improving access for people experiencing poverty to all human rights, including from the angle of social shared responsibilities and the inclusion of the (new) poor, taking into consideration the changes in the extent and content of poverty.

1. adopted at the 1126th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (16 November 2011)



7. Finally, in response to the Assembly's call for the development of policies in the field of poverty and social exclusion, the Committee of Ministers would signal its Guidelines on improving the situation of low-income workers and on the empowerment of people experiencing extreme poverty (2010) and the related recent publication on "Strengthening social cohesion – Improving the situation of low-income workers – Empowerment of people experiencing extreme poverty". The publication is designed to assist policy makers and service providers at national and local levels to develop strategies to improving the situation of people living in poverty or living at risk of poverty.