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Austerity measures – a danger for democracy and social rights

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Andrej HUNKO and other members of the Assembly

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

When adopting its opinion on “Over-indebtedness of states – a danger for democracy and human rights”, the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee decided to suggest that a new, separate report be prepared by it in order to deal with the austerity measures currently being implemented by a number of Council of Europe member states. In the Committee’s view, these measures may pose as grave a danger to democracy and human rights (in particular, social rights) as the indebtedness of states they are designed to combat.

While it is necessary to balance the budgets of over-indebted states in the medium and long term, it is important that this be done in a manner which is respectful of citizen’s democratic and human rights (including social rights): governments should give citizens a say in if, how and when the state debt should be cut and should honour member states’ international commitments and obligations. Budget cutting alternatives which do not directly threaten social rights and the European welfare state should be privileged over common, short-sighted austerity measures which disproportionately affect vulnerable groups.

At the same time, it is necessary to learn the lessons of the financial and economic crisis which is at the origin of much of the current indebtedness of states – and thus the resulting austerity measures, and further improve regulatory mechanisms at all levels (national, European and international) in order to avert new crises in line with Parliamentary Assembly [Resolution 1673 \(2009\)](#) on “Challenges of the financial crisis for the world economic institutions”.

The Assembly thus recommends that the governments of member states take the necessary measures to face the consequences of the economic and financial crisis in a fully democratic way which does not violate citizens’ human rights, including their social rights.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
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