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Child poverty: a cause of continuing human rights violations and a barrier to children's full development

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

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

Of the 100 million young people under the age of 18 in the European Union, nearly 20.5% are living in poverty in 2012. According to UNICEF, in the developing countries, almost one child in three is currently living on less than a dollar a day. The precarious situation in which many families find themselves leads to difficulties in accessing health care and education, and creates an environment conducive to child exploitation, whether sexual or commercial.

Protecting children and upholding their fundamental rights are priorities for the Council of Europe, in particular through its programme "Building a Europe for and with children" and its Strategy 2012-2015. In Resolution 1800 (2011) on "Combating poverty", the Parliamentary Assembly already called on member States to commit to ending child poverty by 2025.

The process of eradicating child poverty entails providing comprehensive support to families whose distress is having a knock-on effect on their children. What is required here is a multidimensional approach designed to ensure that all children enjoy equal opportunities for development. Helping families to improve their living conditions, e.g. by finding employment or decent housing, would enable them to raise their children in a healthy, stable environment and would break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. There must also be equality of opportunity for all children in terms of access to food, education and health care.

The Assembly calls upon all member States to resolutely pursue the fight against child poverty, in particular through targeted national strategies, and to ensure that poverty is taken into account in the Council of Europe's work as one of the causes of violations of children's rights.

