



Doc. 13717

23 February 2015

Europe's public administrations in flux: public service under threat?

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2050 (2014)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2050 (2014) on "Europe's public administrations in flux: public service under threat?" and transmitted it to the relevant subordinate bodies.²
2. The Committee of Ministers agrees with the importance of the issue raised in the recommendation, aware that in times of austerity, budgetary restrictions may have an impact on the quality and delivery of certain public services. It considers that during such difficult periods, particular attention should be made to ensure that the obligations regarding economic and social rights are fully respected. The Committee of Ministers stresses that the most vulnerable population groups may in particular need more support in achieving their rights. It would in this respect draw attention to the recent activities of the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights in this field, in particular his issue paper on "Safeguarding human rights in times of economic crisis".³
3. The Committee of Ministers reaffirms its commitment to promoting social cohesion policies, in particular through fostering equality and non-discrimination, also crucial elements for a well-functioning democratic society. It considers that one of the ways to achieve a cohesive society is to use a human centred approach, fulfilling more effectively the relevant obligations and standards that member States have agreed to under the relevant Council of Europe conventions.
4. As referred to by the Assembly, a conference "Social cohesion – achievement and challenges in times of crisis" was organised under the aegis of the Committee of Ministers' Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on 10 and 11 September in Baku, during which the New Council of Europe Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion were reviewed and the Recommendation 2050 (2014) was discussed. The question of a possible third Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Cohesion will be examined by the relevant bodies in due course and in accordance with Resolution CM/Res(2011)7 on Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers.
5. Finally, the Committee of Ministers welcomes the commitment of the Assembly to the questions raised in the recommendation and its readiness to contribute to the relevant activities.

1. Adopted at the 1220th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (18 February 2015).

2. The European Committee for Social Cohesion, Human Dignity and Equality (CDDECS) and its sub-committees.

3. [CommDH/IssuePaper\(2013\)2](#) / 4 December 2013.

