



Doc. 14985

04 October 2019

Socio-economic inequalities in Europe: time to restore social trust by strengthening social rights

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

The Council of Europe was set up in post-war Europe with the aim of achieving “a greater unity between its Members” and “facilitating their economic and social progress”. Seven decades later, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in his report “Ready for future challenges – reinforcing the Council of Europe” (presented at the Ministerial Session in Helsinki on 16-17 May 2019), deploras increased socio-economic inequalities in many member States and links them with the eroding faith of citizens in European institutions. Violent social protest has rippled across some countries, straining democracy and antagonising society.

This echoes the conclusions of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) which, year after year, reminds member States – parties to the European Social Charter – of their duty to enforce social rights, to tackle extreme poverty and inequalities, and to rebuild social ties. The launch of the European Pillar of Social Rights by the European Union in 2017 represents a new opportunity for the harmonisation of social standards across Europe towards strengthening social rights for all.

The Parliamentary Assembly should contribute to this process, with a view to assisting in national and pan-European action against inequalities, by examining how:

- the member States (including parliaments) could benefit more from the potential of the European Social Charter;
- the authority of the ECSR could be strengthened;
- the parliamentary dimension of follow-up to ECSR decisions could be enhanced.

