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Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2205 (2021)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary [Recommendation 2205 \(2021\)](#) "Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic", which it forwarded to the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) for information and possible comments.

2. The Covid-19 pandemic is undoubtedly having a very significant impact on socio-economic rights. The Committee of Ministers has already addressed certain aspects of the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic through its relevant intergovernmental committees and through the ECSR and its monitoring procedures. For example, the Committee recalls that, in its 2020 request to the States Parties to the Charter for national reports on Group 2 provisions (for Conclusions 2021 on health, social security and social protection)², the ECSR formulated various general observations and asked targeted questions regarding the States Parties' responses to the health crisis and its effects, including on the initial results achieved. Moreover, in its Statement on Covid-19 and social rights of 24 March 2021, the ECSR underlined the crucial importance of investment in social rights and noted that States Parties to the European Social Charter must take all measures necessary, including through the redistribution of resources, to combat the virus and to secure the social rights of their populations. Furthermore, the Committee draws attention to the establishment of the European Committee for Social Cohesion (CCS), tasked, *inter alia*, with ensuring that everyone can enjoy their social rights, as guaranteed by the European Social Charter and other relevant instruments, in practice and without any discrimination, and with examining new trends in and challenges to social cohesion, in particular with regard to issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. The Committee of Ministers takes note of the Assembly's specific proposal 3.1 for adding new rights to the catalogue of rights already protected by the Charter and of expanding the reach of existing rights to all persons living within the jurisdiction of the States Parties. It wishes to point out that the Revised European Social Charter guarantees a very wide and comprehensive set of rights, and the interpretation of the provisions of the Charter takes into account not only current conditions and relevant international instruments, but also emerging new issues and situations. In this respect, it would also draw attention to the work of its Ad hoc Working Party on improving the European Social Charter system (GT-CHARTÉ), which will be called on, in the second phase of its work, to examine longer term substantive and procedural issues related to the Charter.

4. With respect to the Assembly's specific [recommendation 3.2](#), the Committee of Ministers invites the member States that have not yet done so, to consider the ratification of the Protocol amending the European Social Charter (ETS No. 142, "Turin Protocol").

1. Adopted at the 1429th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (17 March 2022).

2. <https://rm.coe.int/questions-to-states-parties-of-the-resc-conclusions-2021/16809f05c1> <https://rm.coe.int/questions-to-states-parties-of-the-1961-charter-conclusions-2021/16809f05bf>



5. The Committee also welcomes the Assembly's proposal to call on all member States to sign, ratify and fully implement as many provisions as possible of the European Social Charter and its Protocols. In this respect it notes that States having ratified the Revised European Social Charter are to report on non-accepted provisions every five years after the date of ratification, and that this exercise encourages the States to re-evaluate their decisions and to progressively accept these provisions. Moreover, the Committee of Ministers, in its decisions of 11 December 2019 concerning the follow-up to the CDDH report identifying good practices and making proposals with a view to improving the implementation of social rights in Europe "invited the ECSR to make full use of the opportunities for dialogue offered by Article 22 (non-accepted provisions) of the European Social Charter of 1961 (ETS No. 35), and to include in this exercise a dialogue with the member States that are not yet Party to the Revised Charter, with a view to encouraging them to ratify it".

6. Finally, the Committee of Ministers takes note of the Assembly's recommendation to call on States to accept the collective complaints procedure and reaffirms its call on the member States that have not yet done so to consider the ratification of the Protocol. It notes the positive impact that this procedure has shown on the visibility and impact of the Charter for more than 20 years.