



Doc. 15310 – Compendium of written amendments
22/06/2021

(Final version)

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

Contents	Page
A. Draft Resolution	2
B. Draft Recommendation	7

A. Draft Resolution

1. The Covid-19 pandemic hit the world unprepared. Past erroneous macroeconomic policy choices – such as austerity measures taken by many countries to handle the previous financial and economic crisis of 2008-2010, or imposed by external rescuers on certain countries – weakened the resilience of our societies and States, including the health sector and social protection systems. Socio-economic inequalities kept widening as a result. The pandemic laid bare how badly previous policies had affected the most deprived and vulnerable parts of the population.
2. Against the imperative to save lives and avoid the collapse of national healthcare systems, most States temporarily resorted to stringent public health measures such as lockdowns and shutdowns, involving restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, thus effectively slowing down the pandemic, but also economic life. A resulting recession caused deep shortfalls in resources for enterprises, workers, and States, as well as in global investment flows, disproportionately affecting vulnerable parts of the population and regions across Europe, in sanitary, social and economic terms. All Council of Europe member States have already rolled out emergency support programmes for enterprises and vulnerable persons to stabilise the socio-economic situation. Against the background of the looming climate crisis, they must now ensure a just, efficient and transparent medium- and long-term use of these funds in order to pursue the strategic vision of the healthier, more inclusive and more sustainable development which is at the heart of the overarching public interest.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly emphasises member States' commitments to upholding fundamental social rights enshrined in the European Social Charter (ETS No. 35 and ETS No. 163) and refers to the statement of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) on Covid-19 and social rights, adopted on 24 March 2021. The Assembly is deeply concerned about the situation of the vulnerable population that has been harshly affected by the socio-economic crisis sparked by the pandemic. It fully supports the ECSR proposals to improve their situation.
4. The Assembly deplores that during the successive lockdowns and shutdowns, many women, especially mothers, had to carry the double burden of extra (unpaid) care work and home-schooling, while also being overrepresented in low-paid jobs, facing greater income insecurity, greater risk of unemployment and an increase in domestic violence. Moreover, single parents suffered disproportionately from the closing of schools and day-care facilities for children, putting them at increased risk of poverty.
5. In this context, the Assembly wishes to highlight a legal void in the European Social Charter: working migrants originating from countries non-bound by this treaty are excluded from the application of certain provisions of the Charter. This loophole, one of many, highlights the need

for the Charter to be modernised with new rights being recognised to meet the manifold challenges made more visible by the pandemic.

6. The Assembly believes that European States stand at a crossroads of a historic opportunity to rebalance their economic development with social and environmental needs in pursuing the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, as well as to address socio-economic inequalities caused by a flawed growth model. Alternative growth strategies with the objective of reducing the depletion of exhaustible resources and greenhouse gas emissions need to be developed and implemented urgently. The Assembly recalls its Resolution 2329 (2020) "Lessons for the future from an effective and rights-based response to the Covid-19 pandemic" which recommended that member States ensure that their economic recovery plans avert a "degradation of ecosystems likely to generate other epidemics of a zoonotic nature, and thus condition the aid put in place on the fulfilment of ambitious environmental and social criteria in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals". The Assembly therefore urges States to send clear signals to non-State actors about the direction of long-term macroeconomic policy orientations so as to better protect human well-being, dignity and the enjoyment of fundamental socio-economic rights.
7. The implementation of ambitious economic recovery measures requires the expansion of sovereign fiscal capacity in order to mobilise new or additional resources domestically or externally. Moreover, as the sovereign fiscal capacity varies widely across States in Europe, greater co-ordination and pooling of fiscal and financial resources to overcome the socio-economic crisis is necessary, in particular at regional and cross-border levels.

Amendment 1
Tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs,
Health and Sustainable Development

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 7, insert the following paragraph:

"The continuing global public health emergency calls for greater international solidarity between the wealthiest and the poorest countries in order to share the existing anti-Covid-19 vaccine stocks by targeting the most vulnerable population and health care staff. In this context, the Assembly believes that European countries should lead by example and donate part of their vaccine stocks to the neediest countries in a coordinated manner. They should support the worldwide expansion of production capacity for Covid-19 vaccines by endorsing the modalities for a temporary waiver on patents for those vaccines under the WTO's (World Trade Organization) Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement and foster compulsory licencing arrangements to enable the know-how and technology transfer for life-saving vaccines and essential medicines or treatments."

8. In light of the above considerations, and in order to put their socio-economic recovery on solid tracks and guarantee adequate social protection to all, the Assembly recommends that Council of Europe member States:

8.1. set conditions for enterprises to receive public financial support in order to guarantee the social rights of workers (such as preservation of employment), prohibit the distribution of dividends, strengthen sustainability of resources' use and adopt roadmaps for reducing the environmental footprint of their activities;

8.2. expand public investment programmes aiming to:

8.2.1. improve quality, affordability and accessibility of public services and infrastructure;

8.2.2. stimulate high-quality employment and job creation, based on local economic needs and pursuing the goal of decent work for all;

8.2.3. enhance educational and professional opportunities for young people;

8.2.4. expand lifelong learning and training schemes to accompany the adaptation of human competences and skills in building a more sustainable and more digitalised economy;

**Amendment 3
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and
Non-Discrimination**

In the draft resolution, paragraph 8, delete the words "and in" and insert the following words:

"in order to achieve dignity for all, political, economic and social policies must protect the rights of everyone. In".

**Amendment 4
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and
Non-Discrimination**

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 8.1, insert the following paragraphs:

"X.X Mainstream equality into all measures taken to respond to the socio-economic crisis, and to this end: X.X.1 incorporate equality impact assessments as an integral element of on-going public health, economic and social policy responses to the crisis, aimed at identifying and eliminating the actual or potential discriminatory effects of these responses; X.X.2 ensure equal opportunities by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices as part of the sustainable development goals and the pledge to leave no one behind;"

**Amendment 5
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and
Non-Discrimination**

In the draft resolution, at the end of paragraph 8.2.1, insert the following words:

"and promote equal access to these services and infrastructures".

**Amendment 6
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and
Non-Discrimination**

In the draft resolution, at the end of paragraph 8.2.3, insert the following words:

" , in order actively to promote their access to the labour market".

8.2.5. guarantee adequate minimum income and social protection, in particular for more vulnerable population groups, including young people in transition towards autonomous living and single-parent families;

Amendment 7
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 8.2.5, insert the following paragraph:

"ensure adequate housing and decent living conditions for all;"

8.2.6. reclaim strategically important economic sectors for future prosperity, well-being and social equality, notably as regards sustainable energy, telecommunication networks, mobility, housing, healthcare, water and food supply, as well as scientific research and development capacity;

Amendment 2
Tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 8.2.7, insert the following paragraph:

"urgently expand production capacity for Covid-19 vaccines and medicines worldwide through know-how and technology transfer via compulsory licensing arrangements, as well as a temporary waiver under the WTO's TRIPS agreement, as appropriate, and donate part of the existing vaccine stock to the countries most in need;"

8.2.7. strengthen the foundations of the digital economy and its governance through resources-saving organisation of human work, as well as ensuring equal access to digital tools;

Amendment 8
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 8.2.7, insert the following paragraph:

"combat all forms of gender-based violence and domestic violence".

8.3. consolidate public finances by:

8.3.1. building mechanisms to allow public finances to be decoupled from the volatility of financial markets and developing a framework to collectively deal with the debt accumulated due to the pandemic (which could also be used for other debt);

8.3.2. increasing the share of domestic fund-raising from private sources, especially through progressive taxation that protects lower income groups;

8.3.3. raising new resources through the introduction of a tax on financial transactions, in particular with regard to high-frequency trading;

8.3.4. considering forms of property taxation and/or levies for the wealthiest parts of society in order to shift the burden of the crisis from the shoulders of the less fortunate to those of the most affluent;

8.3.5. enhancing inter-State co-operation in tax matters through the Inclusive Framework proposed by the Organisation for

Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) along the lines of Assembly Resolution 2370 (2021) "Fighting fiscal injustice: the work of the OECD on taxation of digital economy" in order to ensure a more adequate taxation of the digital economy and establish a new common corporate tax base;

- 8.3.6. in the case of member States of the European Union, revisiting the fiscal requirements of the EU Stability and Growth Pact in line with the need to maintain spending at least during the recovery period;
- 8.4. ensure efficient and transparent allocation of support funds to the private sector, based on long-term development priorities linked with Sustainable Development Goals, the Green Agenda and other country-specific social goals, involving parliamentary scrutiny of investment proposals and their implementation;
- 8.5. put in place a system of checks-and-balances with measures aimed at effectively eliminating gender pay gaps and all types of discrimination in employment;

Amendment 9
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

In the draft resolution, paragraph 8.5, replace the words, "put in place a system of checks and balances with measures aimed at effectively eliminating gender pay gaps" with the following words:

"adopt positive measures to eliminate the gender pay gap and gender pension gap".

Amendment 10
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

In the draft resolution, after paragraph 8.5, insert the following paragraph:

"ensure that crisis response bodies and those working on recovery measures are gender-balanced, diverse and inclusive; their work must also be evidence-based (notably through the use of data disaggregated by gender and other discrimination grounds) and gender-sensitive, ensuring that equality is mainstreamed throughout;"

- 8.6. implement Resolution 2361 (2021) "Covid-19 vaccines: ethical, legal and practical considerations" in order to help make Covid-19 vaccines a "global public good, accessible to all, everywhere" and to "overcome the barriers and restrictions arising from patents and intellectual property rights in order to ensure the widespread production and distribution of vaccines in all countries and to all citizens".

B. Draft Recommendation

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its Resolution ... (2021) "Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic" and underscores the need for member States to honour their commitments under the European Social Charter (ETS No. 35 and ETS No. 163) by investing more in effective implementation of social rights. They can do so by expanding their fiscal capacity and public investment programmes, as well as by ensuring targeted support to private enterprises, where necessary, in exchange for the latter's commitment to fully upholding socio-economic rights, maintaining and developing employment opportunities, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and engaging in greening (rather than green-washing) their activities.
2. The pandemic context has highlighted the relevance of the European Social Charter as a benchmark for human development. As the Charter celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, the Assembly pays tribute to the ability of this living instrument to gradually embrace new developments in the socio-economic landscape of member States. It welcomes that the United Nations have in the recent decade recognised a series of new rights as fundamental human rights and believes these should be reflected in the European Social Charter, as well.
3. The Assembly thus recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 3.1. mandate the European Committee of Social Rights to study the feasibility of 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 under the jurisdiction of States Parties;
 - 3.2. call on the four countries which have not yet ratified the Protocol amending the European Social Charter (ETS No. 142, "Turin Protocol") to do so as soon as possible and, regarding the election of the members of the European Committee of Social Rights by the Assembly, to ensure, in the absence of rapid progress, that the Assembly can fully discharge its appointed function in the Charter's monitoring machinery by adopting a unanimous decision to that effect;
 - 3.3. call on all member States to sign, ratify and fully implement as many provisions as possible of the European Social Charter and its Protocols.

Amendment 11
Tabled by the Committee on Equality and
Non-Discrimination

In the draft recommendation, at the end of paragraph 3.3, insert the following words:

"and to accept in particular the system of collective complaints provided for under the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter (ETS No. 158)".