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Guaranteeing the human right to food

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 2286 (2024)

Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2286 \(2024\)](#) “Guaranteeing the human right to food”, which it has forwarded to the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), the Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security and the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) for information and possible comments. It thanks the Assembly for drawing attention to the subject, as all member States of the Council of Europe face common challenges and share a unified goal of guaranteeing food security.

2. The Committee of Ministers notes that, whilst Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognises “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food”, the European Social Charter (Revised) does not contain a comparable provision. However, the Committee agrees with the ECSR and the Governmental Committee that access to sustainable, adequate food is both a prerequisite for and a key element of the enjoyment of a range of European Social Charter rights, including Articles 11 (the right to protection of health), 17 (the right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection) and 30 (the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion).

3. As concerns the Assembly's recommendation in paragraph 8.1, the Committee of Ministers informs the Assembly that it adopted the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment at its 134th Ministerial Session on 14 May 2025. To ensure implementation, the Ministers' Deputies were invited to consider setting up an intergovernmental multidisciplinary committee on environment in the context of the negotiation of the Programme and Budget for the next biennium.

4. The strategy specifically refers to environmental degradation undermining food security, and its accompanying action plan contains an action on food security in times of crises. The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation are mentioned as external partners, thus re-establishing institutional synergies (paragraph 8.2).

5. Given the link with a healthy environment, the Committee recalls the study carried out by the CDDH on the need for and feasibility of a further instrument or instruments in the field of human rights and the environment. The Committee of Ministers, at its above-mentioned Ministerial Session, instructed its Deputies to move forward as quickly as possible in their consideration of a possible binding or non-binding instrument in this field. The Assembly's recommendation in paragraph 8.3 to consider the possibility of supplementing the Organisation's normative framework to guarantee the right to food will be borne in mind in any future work, as appropriate.

6. Finally, the Committee of Ministers recalls the ECSR's work in the context of the review on the cost-of-living crisis, which engages directly with issues related to the right to food in the Council of Europe.

1. Adopted at the 1534th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (9 July 2025).

