



T +33(0)388412560

www.coe.int

pressunit@coe.int

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European Committee of Social Rights finds 277 violations related to children, families and migrants in 31 countries in 2015

Strasbourg, 27.01.2016 – The European Committee of Social Rights ([ECSR](#)) today published its [annual conclusions](#) for 2015 showing 277 violations of the [European Social Charter](#) across 31 Council of Europe member states.

The ECSR adopted 762 conclusions on the articles of the Charter relating to children, families and migrants:

- the right of children and young persons to protection (Article 7);
- the right of employed women to protection of maternity (Article 8);
- the right of the family to social, legal and economic protection (Article 16);
- the right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection (Article 17);
- the right of migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance (Article 19);
- the right of workers with family responsibilities to equal opportunity and treatment (Article 27);
- the right to housing (Article 31).

“Social rights are suffering in this difficult economic and political climate. States have an obligation to protect vulnerable persons including elderly people, children, people with disabilities and migrants. The Social Charter is the Social Constitution for Europe and an essential component of our human rights architecture. I call on our Member States to respect the Charter standards and findings”, said Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland.

There were 432 conclusions of conformity and 91 cases where the Committee was unable to assess the situation due to lack of information.

The Committee in particular expressed its concern on the rights of refugees, on the notion of light work for children, on the rights of posted workers, on language tests and housing requirements in the context of family reunion, on expulsions in case of threat to national security, or offence against public interest or morality and on remuneration during parental leave.

Background:

The European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty signed in Turin on 18 October 1961 which safeguards day-to-day freedoms and fundamental rights: housing, health, education, employment, legal and social protection, freedom of movement for individuals, non-discrimination. The substance of the Charter was supplemented by a revised version of 1996.

The European Committee of Social Rights is a body composed of 15 independent and impartial members. It rules on the conformity of the law and practice of the States Parties with the Charter. The Committee has two procedures to ensure that States Parties comply with their commitments under the Charter: national reports and collective complaints. In the framework of the reporting procedure it adopts “conclusions” and in respect of the collective complaints procedure it adopts “decisions”. A Protocol opened for signature in 1995, which came into force in 1998, allows national and international trade union organisations, employers’ organisations and non-governmental organisations to submit to the Committee their complaints about violations of the Charter.

Contact: [Giuseppe Zaffuto](#), Spokesperson/Media officer, Tel. +33 3 90 21 56 04