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EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER

Addendum to the
11th National Report on the implementation of
the European Social Charter
submitted by

THE GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND

(Article 18§2)

Report registered by the Secretariat on
29 June 2016

CYCLE 2016

**WRITTEN REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO FINLAND
BY THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS
IN CONNECTION WITH
THE CONSIDERATION OF THE ELEVENTH PERIODIC REPORT
OF FINLAND**

29 June 2016

Article 18 § 2 (The right to engage in a gainful occupation in the territory of other States Parties – Simplifying existing formalities and reducing dues and taxes)

Questions

The Committee wishes to receive further clarifications as to how the costs related to the granting of first residence permits for an employed person are assessed and, in particular, what are the reasons for such an important increase of the fees during the reference period. It furthermore asks whether any measures are envisaged to reduce such fees or to ensure that their level is not excessively high.

The general rule which is based on the Act on Criteria for Charges Payable to the State (150/1992) is that the fees for a residence permit are assessed so that they cover the actual costs related to granting the permits. There are a few exceptions to this main rule when the fee is lower than actual costs or there is no fee at all. These exceptions concern, *inter alia*, minors and victims of trafficking of human beings. The amounts of fees are estimated on a yearly basis and they are based on actual costs of the year before.

The fee for a first residence permit for an employed person does not fall into the exception category and is 500 euros in 2016 (450 euros in case of electronic application). The said fee was 400 euros in 2011, 540 euros (450 euros in case of electronic application) in 2014 and 500 € (450 euros in case of electronic application) in 2015. The reason for the increase of the fee from 2011 to 2016 is simply the increase in actual costs. The main costs are costs related to personnel granting residence permits. There are usually more than two officials taking part in the process when a residence permit for an employed person is granted and therefore the fee is higher than for most of the first residence permits (455 euros in 2016, 425 euros in case of electronic application). The fee is lower in case of electronic application because it is a way to promote the electronic process. Digitalization and moving towards a more electronic or even automatic process is expected to cut down some of the costs.