

High-Level Conference on the European Social Charter 18–19 March 2026 | Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Possible Discussion Topics could be suggested or supported by Türkiye for the High Level Conference on the European Social Charter:

Türkiye would like to emphasize the vital importance of upholding social rights. As fundamental human rights, social rights form the cornerstone for the long-term sustainability of societies and economies by fostering a healthy and digitally skilled population. Therefore, prioritizing social rights is not only a moral obligation but also a practical necessity to promote social cohesion, reduce inequalities, eliminate all forms of discrimination, strengthen democratic values and governance, and ultimately empower civic engagement.

- Improving awareness of the Charter in the State Parties (Türkiye believes that enhancing understanding of the European Social Charter is essential for its effective implementation.)
- Supporting the ratification of the Revised European Social Charter adopted in 1996 (Türkiye already ratified the Revised Charter)
- Promoting the acceptance of the 1991 protocol by member States (Türkiye already accepted the 1991 protocol)
- The reform process has led to significant progress in aligning member states' policies with enhanced social rights protections. The reform's emphasis on improved dialogue among Charter bodies, member states, and social partners has fostered better cooperation and information sharing, increasing transparency and accountability in monitoring compliance. The reform has established a strong foundation for strengthening social rights across Europe. In line with the reform process, a living handbook has been prepared to codify the Governmental Committee's working methods. This handbook consolidates and clarifies the Committee's procedures, roles, and working practices. On the other hand, the activities of the Working Group of the Governmental Committee are very beneficial for the effective execution of the Governmental Committee's duties, and the continuation of working group meetings is important. Nevertheless, sustained efforts remain essential to bridge existing gaps, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and guarantee the uniform application of these rights across all member states. Enhancing dialogue and institutional cooperation among the Council of Europe, the European Union, the United Nations, and other international partners will foster a more coherent and harmonized approach to advancing social rights. This can be effectively facilitated through the organization of meetings, conferences, the exchange of best practices, and other collaborative initiatives.
- Emerging and ongoing challenges such as artificial intelligence and the future of work, the cost-of-living crisis, climate change and environmental rights, as well as demographic shifts involving youth, ageing populations and migration are reshaping the landscape of social rights in Europe. These issues directly affect people's access to decent work, social protection, housing, health, and education. At the same time, persistent gaps in gender equality and rising inequality undermine social cohesion and equal opportunities. In this context, democratic stability depends heavily on inclusive policies that protect and promote fundamental social rights for all. Addressing these interconnected issues through the framework of the European Social Charter is essential to ensure that no one is left behind in the face of rapid societal, economic, and technological transformation.
- Encouraging the expansion of the HELP (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals) program in member states. The main objective of the Council of Europe's HELP program is to enhance the capacity of judges, lawyers, prosecutors, labour

inspectors, and experts on labour and social rights in all member states and beyond, enabling them to apply European human rights standards in their daily work, especially concerning the European Social Charter. HELP provides high-quality training through online courses covering a range of human rights topics. Legal professionals, who are at the forefront of protecting human rights, must be well versed in European human rights standards to apply them effectively, and the HELP program is essential in meeting this need. Furthermore, HELP courses can be tailored to the specific needs of countries, institutions, and professionals. While HELP courses focused on the European Convention on Human Rights at the beginning, it gradually moved to cover also other instruments like the European Social Charter or Council of Europe Conventions in key areas.