

High-Level Conference on Social Rights - the European Social Charter

18-19 March 2026, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova

Multilevel governance for the effective implementation of the rights to housing and health protection

*Side event co-organised by the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
in Onisifor Ghibu Library of the Palace of the Republic (entrance at 21A Nicolae Iorga street)*

18 March 2026, 14:00 to 16:00

Background

Human rights and democracy are increasingly under threat in what is described as a “cost-of-living crisis”. In this context, the rights to housing and health protection (articles 31 and 11 of the European Social Charter (revised)) are particularly important, not least as preconditions for guaranteeing other human rights and full democratic participation.

The Reykjavik Declaration adopted in May 2023 by the Heads of State and Government of Council of Europe member States also emphasised that social justice is crucial for democratic stability and security, reaffirming the commitment to the protection and implementation of social rights under the European Social Charter system. In April 2025, the Secretary General’s Roadmap Towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe once again underlined the need to make democracy stronger and more adaptable and inclusive, including by “promoting social rights and addressing the impact of socio-economic inequalities on the lack of trust in what democracy can offer to all”.

Intentions

The effective implementation of social rights enshrined in the European Social Charter (revised) requires strong multilevel governance and well-coordinated action across all levels of public authority. Ensuring the rights to housing and health protection in particular depends on clear allocation of responsibilities, sustained political commitment, and constructive co-operation between national, regional and local actors. Against this backdrop, the side event aims to foster dialogue on how multilevel governance arrangements can be strengthened to translate social rights standards into tangible outcomes on the ground. It will provide a platform for national and local elected representatives and stakeholders to share experiences, identify challenges, and explore practical approaches to reinforcing co-operation in key social rights areas.

Exchanges will draw on the results of recent work of PACE and Congress, including PACE Resolution 2626 (2025) on “Analysis and guidelines to guarantee the right to housing”, Resolution 2644 (2026) on “65th anniversary of the European Social Charter: social rights as the foundation of resilient democracies and social justice” and a toolkit for parliamentarians to fully engage with the Charter, as well as a Congress mapping study on local and regional competences in guaranteeing social rights and Congress Recommendation 534 (2025) on “Addressing the housing crisis in European cities through social housing innovations”.



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Wednesday, 18 March 2026	
13:45 – 14:00	Welcome and coffee in front of the meeting room - Onisifor Ghibu Library, Palace of the Republic
14:00 – 14:05	Moderation: <i>Paul Galles, PACE rapporteur on the "65th anniversary of the European Social Charter: social rights as the foundation of resilient democracies and social justice"</i>
14:05 – 14:15	Opening: National and local perspectives on social rights implementation - Saskia Kluit, Chairperson of the PACE Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development - Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, Congress Standing Rapporteur on Human Rights
14:15 – 14:30	Introductory Session: Social rights between international standards and practice - Doina Gherman, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova - Aoife Nolan, President of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR)
14:30 – 15:05	The right to housing: how to make it a reality for all? (article 31 of the revised ESC) - Jimmy Moloney, Congress rapporteur on "Social housing innovations" - Aurora Floridia, PACE rapporteur on "Analysis and guidelines to guarantee the right to housing" - Svetlana Rusu, Head of the Public Policy and Legislation Department, Office of the Ombudsman of Moldova
15:05 – 15:45	Health protection: how to ensure equal access to health and a healthy environment? (article 11 of the revised ESC) - Aurora Floridia, President of the Parliamentary Network for a Healthy Environment - Jonathan Denis, Congress Deputy Spokesperson on Environment and Climate Change - Mădălina-Mihaela Antoci, Board Member of the National Youth Council of Moldova (CNTM)
15:45 – 16:00	Presentation of conclusions by PACE and Congress - Saskia Kluit, Chairperson of the PACE Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development - Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, Congress Standing Rapporteur on Human Rights
Thursday, 19 March 2026	
See separate programme	Participation in the High-Level Conference on Social Rights - the European Social Charter
PACE and Congress participants	
	PACE: members mentioned above, and members of the Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau for the HLC on Social Rights - the European Social Charter Congress: members mentioned above, and other Congress members to be invited

To register for this side event, please follow [this link](#).