Council of Europe project

ENHANCING SOCIAL HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARMENIA (2024-2026)

Key project achievements 2024-2025

European Social Charter | Charte sociale européenne

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About the project

The Council of Europe's project **"Enhancing social human rights in Armenia"** is the first fully fledged initiative on social rights in Armenia.

The project is part of the Council of Europe's comprehensive response to the 2023 refugee influx in Armenia and is an integral component of the Council of Europe's Action Plan for Armenia 2023–2026. Recognising the fundamental role of social rights in building sustainable democracy, the project aims to support the Armenian authorities in addressing pressing social rights issues, enhancing protection of social rights in line with the European Social Charter (the Charter) and other international standards, and responding effectively to crisis situations.

The **overall objective** of the project is to enhance the protection of social rights in Armenia in line with international standards to respond to crisis situations.

Project partners

- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia
- Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia
- National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia
- Human Rights Defender's Office of the Republic of Armenia

Beneficiaries

- Representatives of relevant ministries and the National Assembly
- Staff members of the Human Rights Defender's Office
- Staff members of the Health and Labour Inspection Body
- Social partners
- Civil society organisations
- Legal professionals
- Social workers

Implementation period

January 2024 – December 2026

Funding

EUR 950 000

Key achievements

1. STRENGTHENED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO ALIGN NATIONAL LEGISLATION WITH THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER AND OTHER RELEVANT EUROPEAN STANDARDS

- Prepared a comprehensive **needs assessment report on social rights in Armenia**, with a particular focus on labour rights of vulnerable groups.
- Developed a targeted and actionable **roadmap** for the implementation of the recommendations arising from the needs assessment on social rights.
- Supported the Government of Armenia in developing its **social housing strategy** through expert discussions and the submission of a report on social housing.
- Enhanced authorities' understanding of **trade union rights** through the development of a report outlining international standards and best practices.
- Strengthened authorities' understanding regarding the **inclusion of people with disabilities in vocational education and training** through expert discussions and the development of a comprehensive report.
- Increased **knowledge of the Charter and its treaty system** through workshops and working meetings.
- Facilitated constructive dialogue on **accepting additional provisions** of the Charter and the Collective Complaints procedure.
- Armenian authorities subsequently initiated the **process for ratification of Article 11 of the Charter**, marking a significant step toward enhanced protection of the right to health.

2. ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO APPLY AND MONITOR SOCIAL RIGHTS AS GUARANTEED BY THE CHARTER

26 **labour inspectors** strengthened their knowledge and practical skills on labour rights and the inclusion of people with disabilities in employment.

11 **labour inspectors** gained additional practical experience through a peer-to-peer exchange in Italy.

21 staff members of the **Human Rights Defender's Office** improved their practical capacity to collect, document, and process information on violations of social rights, with a specific focus on displaced persons.

72 **legal professionals** deepened their understanding of labour rights and human trafficking through three HELP courses adapted to the Armenian context, leading to more rights-based legal practice nationwide.

24 representatives of the **Human Rights Defender's Office, civil society organisations, and trade unions** enhanced their knowledge on the reporting procedure of the Charter and their role as third party organisations in the Charter monitoring system.

25 members of the **Republican Union of Employers of Armenia** improved their understanding of the Charter and its provisions, particularly regarding equality, occupational health and safety, and the prevention of violence and harassment in the workplace.

Two alternative reports were submitted in 2025 to the European Committee of Social Rights by the **Confederation of Trade Unions** and by **Disability Rights Agenda**, marking an important step in national-level reporting and advocacy.

The project implementation in numbers

4 thematic reports

5 publications

1 study visit

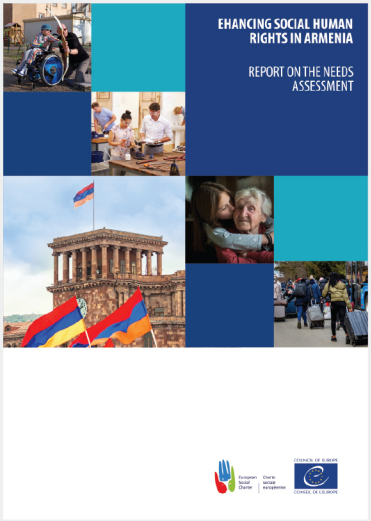
23 events organised

400 participants attended project events

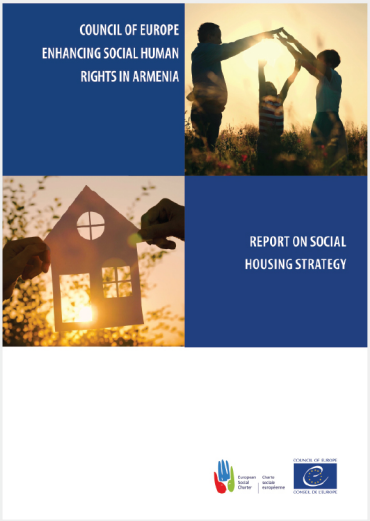
3. RAISED AWARENESS OF SOCIAL RIGHTS AMONG NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS AND PERSONS FROM VULNERABLE GROUPS INCLUDING DISPLACED PERSONS

- Supported Armenia's Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs by developing **awareness-raising materials** for the recently introduced vulnerability assessment system.
- Raised national stakeholders' **awareness of the social rights of vulnerable groups** by producing and disseminating information materials including factsheets on social rights.
- Promoted multistakeholder engagement and dialogue on social rights by organising two **donor coordination meetings**.

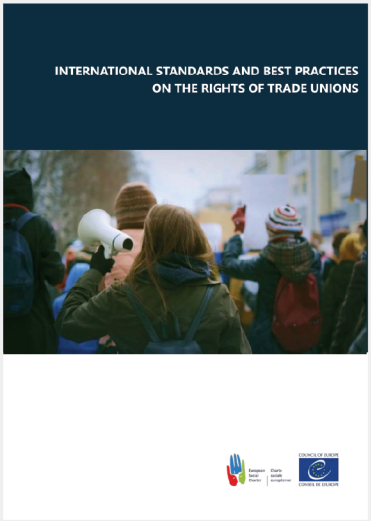
Thematic reports



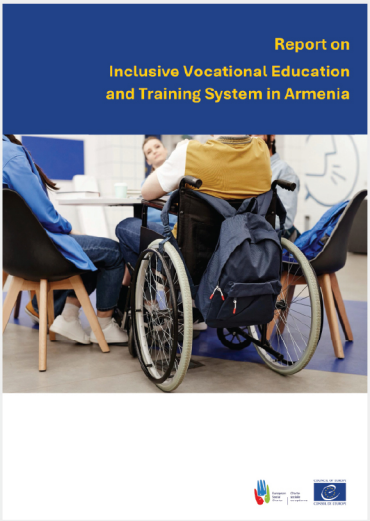
Needs assessment report in respect of social rights in Armenia



Report on social housing strategy



International standards and best practices on the rights of trade unions



Report on inclusive vocational education and training system in Armenia

Expected results

NATIONAL LEGISLATION, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT (INCLUDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING), AND LABOUR RIGHTS, IS ANALYSED AND COMPREHENSIVE, GENDER-SENSITIVE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THESE RIGHTS IS FURTHER DEVELOPED IN LINE WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES.

DECISION-MAKERS ARE WELL AWARE OF THE PROCEDURE FOR ACCEPTING NEW PROVISIONS OF THE CHARTER, AS WELL AS THE COLLECTIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE.

PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL SUPPORT, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CARE TO WOMEN, CHILDREN, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND OLDER PERSON, IS FACILITATED IN LINE WITH THE STANDARDS OF THE CHARTER.

THE STAFF OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER'S OFFICE, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, AS WELL AS LEGAL PROFESSIONALS HAVE DEVELOPED CAPACITIES TO IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE OBSERVANCE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARTER AND THE CASE LAW OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS.

DISPLACED INDIVIDUALS, PEOPLE FROM VULNERABLE GROUPS (RECIPIENTS), NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, ARE BETTER AWARE OF THEIR SOCIAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES, AND OF THE OF SOCIAL SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THEM AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS.

European Social Charter

European Committee of Social Rights

Council of Europe Office in Yerevan

Council of Europe project
Enhancing social human rights in Armenia

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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