



European
Social
Charter

Charte
sociale
européenne

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

— Portugal and the European Social Charter —

Signatures, ratifications and accepted provisions

Portugal ratified the European Social Charter on 30/09/1991 and the Revised European Social Charter on 30/05/2002, accepting all of its 98 paragraphs.

It accepted the Additional Protocol providing for a system of collective complaints on 20/03/1998, but has not yet made a declaration enabling national NGOs to submit collective complaints.

The Charter in domestic law

Under Article 8§2 of the Constitution: "Rules provided for in international conventions duly ratified or approved, following their official publication, apply in municipal law as long as they remain internationally binding with respect to the Portuguese State."

Table of Accepted Provisions

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|----------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 3.1 |
| 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 5 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 6.3 |
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| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26.1 | 26.2 | 27.1 | 27.2 | 27.3 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31.1 |
| 31.2 | 31.3 | | | | | | Grey = accepted provisions | | | | |

Monitoring the implementation of the European Social Charter ¹

I. Collective complaints procedure ²

Collective complaints (under examination)

European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions (EUROMIL) v. Portugal (Complaint No. 199/2021)

The Committee [declared](#) the complaint admissible on 25 January 2022.

Collective complaints (proceedings completed)

1. Complaints inadmissible or where the Committee has found no violation

a. *Inadmissible*

Frente Comum de Sindicatos da Administração Pública v. Portugal (Complaint No. 36/2006)

The Committee [declared](#) the complaint inadmissible on 5 December 2006.

b. *No violation*

Sindicato dos Magistrados do Ministério Público (SMMP) v. Portugal (Complaint No. 43/2007)

- No violation of Article 12§3 (right to social security)

[Decision on the merits of 3 December 2008.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution CM/ResChS\(2009\)2 on 21 January 2009](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

European Council of Police Trade Unions v. Portugal (Complaint No. 40/2007)

- No violation of Articles 6§§1-2 (right to collective bargaining), 21 (right to information and consultation) and 22 (right to take part in the determination and improvement of the working conditions and working environment)

[Decision on the merits of 23 September 2008.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution CM/ResChS\(2009\)1 on 21 January 2009](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

European Council of Police Trade Unions v. Portugal (Complaint No. 37/2006)

- No violation of Articles 4§§1-2 (right to adequate remuneration and right to increased rate of remuneration for overtime work) and 6 §§1-2 (right to collective bargaining: joint consultation and machinery for voluntary negotiations)

[Decision on the merits of 3 December 2007.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution ResChS\(2008\)5 on 27 February 2008](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

World Organisation against Torture v. Portugal (Complaint No. 20/2003)

- No violation of Article 17 (right of children to social, economic and legal protection)

[Decision on the merits of 7 December 2004.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution ResChS\(2005\)2 on 20 April 2005](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

European Council of Police Trade Unions v. Portugal (Complaint No. 11/2001)

¹ The European Committee of Social Rights ("the Committee") monitors compliance with the Charter under two procedures, the reporting system and the collective complaints procedure, according to Rule 2 of the Committee's rules: « 1. The Committee rules on the conformity of the situation in States with the European Social Charter, the 1988 Additional Protocol and the Revised European Social Charter. 2. It adopts conclusions through the framework of the reporting procedure and decisions under the collective complaints procedure ». Further information on the [procedures](#) may be found on the [HUDOC database](#) and in the [Digest of the case law of the Committee](#).

² Detailed information on the Collective Complaints Procedure is available on the [relevant webpage](#).

- No violation of Articles 5 and 6 (right to organise and right to collective bargaining)
[Decision on the merits of 21 May 2002.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution ResChS\(2002\)5 on 17 July 2002](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

European Federation of Employees in Public Services v. Portugal (Complaint No. 5/1999)

- No violation of Articles 5 and 6 (right to organise and right to collective bargaining)
[Decision on the merits of 4 December 2000.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution ResChS\(2001\)4 on 7 February 2001](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

2. Complaints where the Committee has found a violation which has been remedied

World Organisation against Torture v. Portugal (Complaint No. 34/2006)

- Violation of Article 17 (right of children to social, economic and legal protection)
[Decision on the merits of 6 December 2006.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution ResChS\(2008\)4 on 27 February 2008](#) of the Committee of Ministers.

European Council of Police Trade Unions v. Portugal (Complaint No. 60/2010)

- Violation of Article 4§2 (right to a fair remuneration)
- Non-violation of Article 6§§1 and 2 (right to collective bargaining: joint consultation and machinery for voluntary negotiations) and Article 22 (right to take part in the determination and improvement of the working conditions and working environment) of the Revised Charter

[Decision on the merits of 17 October 2011.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution CM/ResChS\(2013\)18 on 13 December 2013](#) of the Committee of Ministers.
- [Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up 4 December 2015](#)

3. Complaints where the Committee has found a violation and where progress has been made but not yet examined by the Committee.

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4. Complaints where the Committee has found a violation and where progress has been made but which has not yet been remedied.

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) v. Portugal (Complaint No. 61/2010)

- Violation of Article 16 (the right of the family to social, legal and economic protection)
- Violation of Article 30 (right to protection against poverty and social exclusion)
- Violation of Article 31§1 (right to housing), read alone or in conjunction with Article E (non-discrimination)

[Decision on the merits of 30 June 2011.](#)

Follow up:

- [Resolution CM/ResChS\(2013\)7 on 10 April 2013](#) of the Committee of Ministers.
- [Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up 4 December 2015](#)
- [2nd Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up \(6 December 2018\)](#)
- [3rd Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up \(January 2021\).](#)
- [4th Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up \(28 January 2022\).](#)
- [5th Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up \(March 2024\).](#)

5. Complaints where the Committee has found a violation which has not yet been remedied

Associação Sindical dos Profissionais da Polícia (ASPP/PSP) v. Portugal (Complaint No. 179/2019)

The Committee [declared](#) the complaint admissible on 13 May 2020.

- Violation of Article 5 (right to organise)
- Violation of Article 28 (right of workers' representatives to protection in the undertaking and facilities to be accorded to them)

[Decision on the merits of the Complaint No. 179/2019](#) of 4 July 2023.

Follow up:

- [Recommendation CM/RecChS\(2024\)1](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 14 February 2024.

University Women of Europe (UWE) v. Portugal (Complaint No. 136/2016)

- Violation of Article 20 (Right to equal opportunities and treatment in employment and occupation without sex discrimination)

Decision on the merits of 6 December 2019.

Follow up:

Recommendation [CM/RecChS\(2021\)13](#) (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 March 2021 at the 1399th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

- [Assessment of the European Committee of Social Rights on the follow-up](#) (March 2024).

International Commission of Jurists v. Portugal (Complaint No. 1/1998)

- Violation of Article 7§1 (prohibition of employment under the age of 15)

Decision on the merits of 9 September 1999.

Follow up:

- [Resolution ResChS\(99\)4](#) on 15 December 1999 of the Committee of Ministers.

II. Reporting system³

Reports submitted by Portugal

Between 1993 and 2024, Portugal submitted 9 reports on the application of the Charter and 19 on the application of the Revised Charter.

The [18th report](#), concerns the follow-up given to the relevant decisions of the Committee in the framework of the collective complaints procedure.

The assessments of the Committee on the follow up to decisions in complaints have been published in March 2024.

On 15 January 2024, an [ad hoc report on the cost-of-living crisis was submitted by Portugal](#)⁴.

³ Detailed information on the Reporting System is available on the [relevant webpage](#). The reports submitted by States Parties may be consulted in the [relevant section](#).

⁴ In accordance with the [decision of the Ministers' Deputies](#) adopted on 27 September 2022 concerning the [new system](#) for the presentation of reports under the European Social Charter, the European Committee of Social Rights and the Governmental Committee have decided to request an *ad hoc* report on the cost-of-living crisis to all State parties.

Situations of non-conformity ⁵

Thematic Group 1 "Employment, training and equal opportunities" - Conclusions 2016

According to the applicable rules, Conclusions 2020 only refer to the information submitted by the Portuguese Government on the follow-up given to the relevant decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights in the framework of the collective complaints procedure (see above).

For the most recent Conclusions adopted concerning the relevant Articles, see Conclusions 2016.

► *Article 1§1 - Right to work - Policy of full employment*

The employment policy efforts have not been adequate in combatting unemployment and promoting job creation.

► *Article 1§2 – Right to work – Freely undertaken work (non-discrimination, prohibition of forced labour, other aspects)*

The Merchant Navy Criminal and Disciplinary Code provides for prison sentences against seafarers who abandon their posts even when the safety of the ship or the lives or health of the people on board are not at stake.

► *Article 10§4 - Right to vocational training - Long term unemployed persons*

It has not been established that special measures for the retraining and reintegration of the long-term unemployed have been effectively provided or promoted.

► *Article 10§5 - Right to vocational training - Full use of facilities available*

It has not been established that foreign nationals, lawfully resident have equal access to financial assistance for studies.

► *Article 18§1 - Right to engage in a gainful occupation in the territory of other States Parties - Applying existing regulations in a spirit of liberality*

It has not been established that the existing regulations are applied in a spirit of liberality.

► *Article 25 - Right of workers to protection of their claims in the event of the insolvency of their employer*

The average time to satisfy workers' claims in case of insolvency of their employer is excessive.

Thematic Group 2 "Health, social security and social protection" - Conclusions 2017

According to the applicable rules, Conclusions 2021 only refer to the information submitted by the Government on the follow-up given to the relevant decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights in the framework of the collective complaints procedure (see above).

For the most recent Conclusions adopted concerning the relevant Articles, see Conclusions 2017.

► *Article 3§3 – Right to safe and healthy working conditions – Enforcement of safe and healthy working conditions*

- Measures taken to reduce the number of accidents at work are insufficient;
- The labour inspection system does not have sufficient human resources to adequately monitor compliance with occupational health and safety legislation.

► *Article 12§1 – Right to social security – Existence of a social security system*

The minimum level of sickness benefit is inadequate.

► *Article 12§4 – Right to social security – Social security of persons moving between States*

- Equal treatment with regard to social security rights is not guaranteed to nationals of all other States Parties;
- Equal treatment with regard to access to family allowances is not guaranteed to nationals of all other States Parties.

⁵ Further information on the situations of non-conformity is available on the [HUDOC database](#).

► *Article 13§1 – Right to social and medical assistance - Adequate assistance for anyone in need*

- The level of social assistance paid to a single person without resources is inadequate;
- Nationals of States Parties are subjected to a length of residence requirement of one year to be entitled to social assistance.

► *Article 14§1 – Right to benefit from social services - Promotion or provision of social services*

It has not been established that there is an adequate number of staff and that staff have sufficient qualifications.

Thematic Group 3 “Labour rights” - Conclusions 2022

► *Article 2§2 – Right to just conditions of work – Public holidays with pay*

Work performed on a public holiday is not adequately compensated.

► *Articles 2§4 – Right to just conditions of work - Elimination of risks in dangerous or unhealthy occupations*

Not all workers exposed to residual risks are entitled to adequate compensatory measures such as reduced working hours or additional leave.

► *Article 4§4 – Right to a fair remuneration – Reasonable notice of termination of employment*

- The notice periods applicable to probationary periods in the private sector are insufficient below four the notice periods applicable to probationary periods for fixed-term or seasonal contracts in the private sector are manifestly unreasonable;
- There is no notice period for permanent civil servants on probation.

► *Article 5 – Right to organise*

The criteria used to determine representativeness are not clear, predetermined and objective.

► *Article 6§1 – Right to bargain collectively – Joint consultation*

The criteria used to determine representativeness in respect of joint consultation are not adequate.

► *Article 6§3 – Right to bargain collectively – Conciliation and arbitration*

The circumstances in which compulsory arbitration is permitted go beyond the limits set by Article G of the Charter, in the private sector and the public sector.

► *Article 6§4 – Right to bargain collectively – Collective action*

The right to call a strike is primarily reserved to trade unions, and the establishment of a trade union is subject to an excessive timeframe.

Thematic Group 4 “Children, families, migrants” - Conclusions 2019

According to the applicable rules, Conclusions 2023 only refer to the information submitted by the Portuguese Government on the follow-up given to the relevant decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights in the framework of the collective complaints procedure (see above).

For the most recent Conclusions adopted concerning the relevant Articles, see Conclusions 2019.

► *Article 7§1 - Right of children and young persons to protection- Prohibition of employment under the age of 15*

- The duration of light work permitted to children under the age of 15 during school term is excessive and therefore such work cannot be qualified as light;
- The legislation on the prohibition of employment under the age of 15 is not effectively enforced.

► *Article 7§3 – Right of children and young persons to protection – Prohibition of employment of children subject to compulsory education*

The daily and weekly working time during school term for children subject to compulsory education is excessive.

► *Article 7§5 - Right of children and young persons to protection – Fair pay*

It has not been established that young workers wages are fair and apprentices allowances are adequate.

► *Article 16 – Right of the family to social, legal and economic protection*

The situation is not in conformity on account of the substandard housing conditions of Roma families.

► *Article 19§10 – Right of migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance - Equal treatment for the self-employed*

The ground of non-conformity under Article 19§12 applies also to self-employed migrants.

► *Article 19§12 – Right of migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance - Teaching mother tongue of migrant*

It has not been established that the teaching of the mother tongue to migrant workers' children is adequately promoted and facilitated.

► *Article 31§1 - Adequate housing*

The measures taken to improve the substandard housing conditions of Roma in Portugal are inadequate.

► *Article 31§2 – Right to housing - Reduction of homelessness*

- It has not been established that there is adequate legal protection for persons threatened by eviction;
- The law does not prohibit eviction from shelters or emergency accommodation without the provision of alternative accommodation.

► *Article 31§3 – Right to housing - Right to affordable housing*

It has not been established that the provision of social housing is sufficient.

The Committee has been unable to assess compliance with the following rights:

Thematic Group 1 “Employment, training and equal opportunities”

- ▶Article 18§3 - Conclusions 2016
- ▶Article 20 - Conclusions 2016

According to the applicable rules, Conclusions 2020 only refer to the information submitted by the Portuguese Government on the follow-up given to the relevant decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights in the framework of the collective complaints procedure (see above).

Thematic Group 2 “Health, social security and social protection”

- ▶Article 11§1 - Conclusions 2017
- ▶Article 11§3 - Conclusions 2017
- ▶Article 13§4 - Conclusions 2017
- ▶Article 14§2 - Conclusions 2017
- ▶Article 23 - Conclusions 2017

According to the applicable rules, Conclusions 2021 only refer to the information submitted by the Government on the follow-up given to the relevant decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights in the framework of the collective complaints procedure (see above).

For the most recent Conclusions adopted concerning the relevant Articles, see Conclusions 2017.

Thematic Group 3 “Labour rights”

- ▶Article 4§1 - Conclusions 2022
- ▶Article 29 - Conclusions 2022

Thematic Group 4 “Children, families, migrants”

- ▶Article 7§8 - Conclusions 2019
- ▶Article 7§9 - Conclusions 2019
- ▶Article 7§10 - Conclusions 2019
- ▶Article 17§2 - Conclusions 2019
- ▶Article 19§2 - Conclusions 2019
- ▶Article 19§8 - Conclusions 2019

III. Examples of progress achieved in the implementation of rights under the Charter (non-exhaustive list)

Thematic Group 1 "Employment, training and equal opportunities"

- ▶ Act No. 105/97 on equality between women and men.
- ▶ Act No. 134/99, as implemented by Legislative Order No. 111/2000 prohibits any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, ancestry or national or ethnic origin in the exercise of economic, social or cultural rights.
- ▶ Decree No. 132/99 contains the principles on the organisation and functioning of employment services.
- ▶ Adoption of Law 38/2004 on the Prevention, Habilitation, Rehabilitation and Participation of Persons with Disabilities, as well as of Law 46/2006 explicitly prohibiting direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of disability *inter alia* with respect to education and training.
- ▶ Inclusion of measures for the promotion of the insertion in the labour market of persons with disabilities in the national employment plan 2003-2006 (Council of Ministers Resolution 185/2003) and setting the socio-professional integration of persons with Disabilities as an objective in the national action plan (Council of Ministers Resolution 192/2003).
- ▶ Simplification of the formalities for issuing work permits (Act No. 20/98).
- ▶ Abolition of the quota of foreign nationals allowed to work in undertakings with more than five employees (Act No. 20/98).

Thematic Group 2 "Health, social security and social protection"

- ▶ Executive Law No. 232/2005 has created the Solidarity Supplement for the Elderly (CSI), a monetary benefit designed to combat poverty among the elderly.
- ▶ Under the PARES project, expansion of the network of social facilities by creating 19 000 new places in nursing homes and day centres by 2009.
- ▶ Under Act No. 32/2002, specific emergency assistance (housing, food and benefits in kind to cover basic needs) is available to all persons who are in a situation of exceptional need.
- ▶ Legislative Decree No. 84/2000 has amended the legislation on the guaranteed minimum income.
- ▶ The Ministerial Order No. 40/2014 of 17 February 2014 laid down the norms governing the correct removal of materials containing asbestos and the packaging, transport and management of the construction and demolition waste generated, with a view to protect the environment and human health.
- ▶ The Law No. 42/2012, which approved the regimes governing access to and pursuit of the professions of senior occupational safety specialists and occupational safety specialist, repealed Article 100 of Law No. 102/2009, under which employers could commit a serious administrative offence if they hired a specialist who did not fulfill the requisites laid down in Article 100(1).
- ▶ As regards unemployment benefits, the qualifying period was shortened from 450 to 360 days of registered work during the previous 24 months and new rules were introduced, which extend the coverage of unemployment benefits to certain self-employed persons (Executive Law no. 65/2012 of 15 March 2012, Executive Law no. 12/2013 of 25 January 2013).
- ▶ As regards sickness benefits, the coverage was extended as a result of a modification in the way the reference pay is calculated, i.e. by taking into account the whole period from the beginning of the reference

period till the day before the occurrence of the incapacity for work (Executive Law no. 133/2012 of 27 June 2012).

▶ Entitlement to invalidity pensions was extended as a result of the adoption of new rules (Executive Law no. 246/2015 of 20 October 2015) which take account of the person's objective permanent incapacity for work, regardless of the causes (before the adoption of this law, only invalidity resulting from a specific list of diseases was recognised as such).

▶ The 5-years time limit for claiming survivors' pensions was cancelled.

Thematic Group 3 "Labour rights"

▶ Act No. 45/98 removed age as a criterion for determining the level of the statutory minimum wage.

▶ Legislative Decree No. 84/99 guarantees the right to organise for all public employees.

▶ The Government has stopped defining by decree the minimum services to be guaranteed in the event of a strike where the parties are unable to reach agreement (decision of the Constitutional Court declaring that certain provisions of the Act on the right to strike were unconstitutional).

▶ Act No. 14/2002 of 19 February 2002 concerning the exercise of the freedom of association and collective bargaining and participation rights of staff members of the Public Security Police.

Thematic Group 4 "Children, families, migrants"

▶ Six-weeks post-natal leave has been made compulsory (Act No. 142/99) and maternity leave has been increased from 98 to 120 days (Act No. 18/98).

▶ The right to time off for nursing mothers has been extended to cover the whole period of nursing, including in the case of part-time work (Act No. 142/99).

▶ Act No. 134/99 repealed Decree No. 55/1977 which gave nationals alone the right to apply for subsidised housing.

▶ The scope of the provisions relating to family reunion has been extended (Decree-Law of 8 August 1998).

▶ Act No. 30-E/2000 provides equal treatment for nationals of the Parties with respect to legal aid.

▶ The 2007 Penal Reform (Law No. 59/2007 of 4 September 2007) created the autonomous crimes of pornography involving minors and the sexual abuse of minors, including the criminalisation of the acquisition or possession of pornographic material (Article 176 (3) of the Penal Code).

▶ Act No. 135/99 introduced a series of protective measures for heterosexual couples having co-habited for two years or more. In 2001, these measures were extended to homosexual couples.

▶ Act No. 142/99 improved provisions for maternity and paternity leave.

▶ Prohibition of the employment of minors subject to compulsory education (Constitutional Act No. 1/97); the minimum age for employment has been fixed as 16 and light work has been defined (Act No. 58/99); illegal employment of young persons is regarded as a very serious offence and sanctions have been stepped up (Acts Nos. 113, 114, 116 and 118/1999).

▶ General prohibition of night work between 8 p.m. and 7 a.m. for young persons under 16 years of age and between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. for young persons over 16 years of age has been introduced (Act No 58/99).