

36th SESSION

Report
CG36(2019)12final
3 April 2019

Social rights of young people: the role of local and regional authorities

Current Affairs Committee

Co-rapporteurs:¹ Liisa ANSALA, Finland (L, ILDG) and Piero FASSINO, Italy (L, SOC)

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Resolution 442 (2019) | 2 |
| Recommendation 433 (2019) | 5 |
| Explanatory memorandum | 7 |

Summary

Following a series of debates, resolutions and other instruments to strengthen the integration, participation and engagement of young people at the local and regional level, this report focuses on the social rights of young people guaranteed by the European Social Charter.

It underlines the essential role that local and regional authorities play by virtue of their competences in the social field, in facilitating the access and effective exercise of social rights by young people, as well as the implementation of the Social Charter and its jurisprudence as being a source of inspiration for local and regional authorities to take action in this field.

The report calls on local and regional authorities to encourage their national authorities to sign and ratify the revised European Social Charter, and to accept the collective complaints procedure. It also invites them to disseminate the text of the Charter through their own communication channels and social networks, and raise awareness of the social rights of young people through various initiatives. It further recommends the governments of member States to develop and co-ordinate actions with other levels of governance to raise awareness of young people's social rights, and invites governments of the States' Parties to the Charter to involve local and regional authorities throughout the implementation of this legal instrument.

¹ L: Chamber of Local Authorities / R: Chamber of Regions
EPP/CCE: European People's Party Group in the Congress
SOC: Socialist Group
ILDG: Independent and Liberal Democrat Group
ECR: European Conservatives and Reformists Group
NR: Members not belonging to a political group of the Congress

RESOLUTION 442 (2019)²

1. The fundamental social rights of the citizens of the member States of the Council of Europe are guaranteed by the European Social Charter (ETS No.163, hereafter the “Social Charter”) which was opened to the signature of member States in 1961, subsequently coming into force in 1965, and was then revised in 1996.
2. It is an essential guiding document, setting the ground rules on fundamental social and economic rights at the pan-European level. It guarantees a broad range of human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare. The Social Charter explicitly refers to young people as being entitled to social rights in terms of education and labour market integration, or benefits for the newly married.
3. In order to develop concrete guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the rights set out in the Social Charter, in particular with regard to young people, a series of texts were adopted by the Council of Europe during the last decade which highlighted public authorities’ responsibility in facilitating young people’s access to fundamental rights.
4. The recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on “Young people’s access to fundamental rights” (2015(2013)) and “Towards a European framework convention on youth rights” (1978(2011)),³ as well as the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 on young people’s access to rights, were occasions to underline that, rather than adopting a specific treaty on the rights of young people, the aim should be to take measures in order to capitalise on the binding instruments, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (hereafter “ECHR”) and the revised Social Charter.
5. The Council of Europe Youth Department elaborates guidelines, programmes and legal instruments for the development of coherent and effective youth policies, as well as concrete tools such as the “Self-assessment for youth policy”, for the use of member States. Following the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, regular surveys will be carried out to look at the measures taken by member States, but also the projects and initiatives implemented by youth organisations and local and regional authorities.
6. The implementation of the Social Charter, and the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights, provide a wide range of good practices concerning access to, and exercise of, young people’s social rights. They consequently constitute a source of inspiration for local and regional actions in this field.
7. Local and regional authorities, along with social partners and civil society organisations, play a key part both in disseminating the Social Charter and in implementing it, with regards to young people’s access and enjoyment of the social rights enshrined in it. This crucial role of local and regional authorities in making the Social Charter effective in legal terms, (in line with the “social” responsibilities that form part of the core of each government level’s respective autonomy), should be supported by national, European and international action plans and programmes.
8. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (hereafter “the Congress”) – having drawn up resolutions and other instruments to strengthen the integration, participation and commitment of young people at local and regional levels – intends to focus on the social rights of young people guaranteed by the Social Charter, in order to ensure its implementation and to give concrete expression to the rights of young people.

² Debated and adopted by the Congress on 3 April 2019, 2nd sitting (see Document [CG36\(2019\)12](#), explanatory memorandum), co-rapporteurs: Liisa ANSALA, Finland (L, ILDG) and Piero FASSINO, Italy (L, SOC).

³ Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1978 (2011), Towards a European framework convention on youth rights, served as an opportunity to confirm that it is not necessary to adopt a specific treaty on the rights of young people, but that we should instead capitalise on the binding instruments which already exist in the Organisation: its Principle 7.1 invites member states “to take measures to facilitate young people’s access to fundamental rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the revised European Social Charter”.

9. Since 2014, the Congress has involved youth delegates in its own work, inviting young people from different backgrounds to participate in its sessions, to give their views during debates and to have exchanges with Congress members. In 2015, the youth delegates presented a motion at the 29th Session of the Congress on the resolution entitled “Local and regional authorities for the promotion of young people’s access to social rights”,⁴ drawing attention to the fact that access to quality education, secure employment, decent living conditions, transport, healthcare, technologies and opportunities for social, cultural and economic participation are prerequisites for the inclusion and active citizenship of all young people. They noted that creating a toolkit for local authorities to facilitate young people’s access to their rights, providing good practices and an overview of relevant policy instruments, would be useful.

10. In light of the above, and following the work of the Congress on human rights at the local level, the debate organised by the Chamber of Regions on the implementation of social rights at the regional level (2016), as well as the proposals of the youth delegates, the Congress invites local and regional authorities, and the associations that represent them (within the framework of the competences conferred on them), to:

a. put pressure on the national authorities of those member States which have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the revised European Social Charter (ETS No. 163), and to accept, in the spirit of the “Turin process”, the collective complaints procedure, so that the Social Charter and its complaints mechanism are perceived as awareness-raising spaces, where not only public authorities (e.g. social services) but, above all, young people themselves can show greater solidarity and involvement in the defence of their social rights (in particular with regard to young people in a more vulnerable situation: the unemployed, migrants, people with disabilities, etc.);

b. disseminate the text of the European Social Charter on the website of each local or regional authority, and to design a “user-friendly” version (accessible online) entitled, for example: “Social Charter explained to young people” (or “The place of young people in the European Social Charter”) through competitions, such as for the drafting and illustration of the user-friendly version organised at the local and/or regional level (this version would also serve as a guide for action (normative, political and financial) by local and regional elected officials);

c. consider social rights of young people a priority for their policies, and develop concrete actions relating to the exercise of certain social rights by young people (active employment support measures, health education measures, prevention of gender violence among young people, etc.), which could be disseminated and promoted via social networks. Such dissemination and promotion (online and potentially face-to-face) would likely stimulate young people’s participation and commitment to social rights;

d. invest in improving public access to information technologies through existing public services (youth centres, public libraries, media libraries, youth information and guidance centres, etc.), in the spirit of the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on access to social rights for young people in disadvantaged areas;

e. raise awareness of the social rights of young people through initiatives such as the celebration, in each local and regional community, of the International Youth Day (12 August) or the European Social Charter Day (18 October);

f. take part in the review that the Council of Europe Youth Department will carry out in 2019, which will be based upon the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, looking *inter alia* at projects and initiatives implemented by local and regional authorities.

⁴ CG/2015(29)23

11. Taking into account previous work, the Congress recommends that local and regional authorities implement the recommendations contained in Resolution 414 (2017), 386 (2015), 346 (2012), 319 (2010) and 259 (2008).⁵

⁵ Resolution 414 (2017) "Forever young? The role of youth policies and youth work at local and regional levels in supporting young people's transition to autonomy and working life" ; Resolution 386 (2015) "Bringing down barriers to youth participation: adopting a lingua franca for local and regional authorities and young people"; Resolution 346 (2012) "Youth and democracy: the changing face of youth political engagement"; Resolution 319 (2010) "Integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods"; Resolution 259 (2008) "Integration and participation of young people at local and regional level".

RECOMMENDATION 433 (2019)⁶

1. The fundamental social rights of the citizens of the member States of the Council of Europe are guaranteed by the European Social Charter (ETS No.163, hereafter the “Social Charter”) which was opened to the signature of member States in 1961, subsequently coming into force in 1965, and was then revised in 1996.

2. The Social Charter is an essential guiding document, setting the ground rules on fundamental social and economic rights at the pan-European level. It guarantees a broad range of human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare. It explicitly refers to young people as being entitled to social rights in terms of education and labour market integration, or benefits for the newly married.

3. In order to develop concrete guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the rights set out in the Social Charter, in particular with regard to young people, a series of texts were adopted by the Council of Europe during the last decade, which highlighted public authorities’ responsibility in facilitating young people’s access to fundamental rights.

4. The Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 on “Young People’s Access to Rights” adopted on 28 September 2016, as well as the recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on “Young people’s access to fundamental rights” (2015(2013)), and “Towards a European framework convention on youth rights” (1978(2011)),⁷ were occasions to underline that rather than adopting a specific treaty on the rights of young people, the aim should be to take measures in order to capitalise on the binding instruments, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the revised Social Charter.

5. The implementation of the Social Charter and the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights provide a wide range of good practices concerning access to, and exercise of, young people’s social rights and, consequently, constitute a source of inspiration for local and regional actions in this field.

6. Local and regional authorities, along with the social partners and civil society organisations, play a key part both in disseminating the Social Charter and in implementing it, with regards to young people’s access and enjoyment of the social rights enshrined in it. This crucial role of local and regional authorities in making the Social Charter effective in legal terms (in line with the “social” responsibilities that form part of the core of each government level’s respective autonomy) should be supported by national, European and international action plans and programmes.

7. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (hereafter “the Congress”) – having drawn up resolutions and other instruments to strengthen the integration, participation and commitment of young people at local and regional levels – intends to focus on the social rights of young people guaranteed by the Social Charter in order to ensure its implementation, and to give concrete expression to the rights of young people.

8. In light of the above, member States are recommended to:

a. sign and ratify the revised European Social Charter (ETS No. 163), for those Member States that have not yet done so, and to accept, in the spirit of the ‘Turin process’, the collective complaints procedure, as the implementation of the Charter and the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights offer a wide range of good practices concerning access to, and exercise of, the social rights of young people and, consequently, constitute a significant source of inspiration for local and regional actions in this field;

⁶ See footnote 2.

⁷ Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1978 (2011), “Towards a European framework convention on youth rights”, served as an opportunity to confirm that it is not necessary to adopt a specific treaty on the rights of young people, but that we should instead capitalise on the binding instruments which already exist in the Organisation: its Principle 7.1 invites member states “to take measures to facilitate young people’s access to fundamental rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the revised European Social Charter”.

b. involve local and regional authorities in the preparation of annual national reports or in the preparation of observations on possible collective complaints that are submitted to the European Committee of Social Rights by the Governments of the States' Parties, as well as in the follow up given to the committee's conclusions and decisions. This involvement remains consistent with Article 4(6) of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, which provides consultation for local authorities "during the planning and decision-making processes for all matters of direct concern to them". Indeed, the Social Charter, as the Council of Europe's "flagship" treaty in the field of social rights, is also the driving force behind social inclusion and the active participation of young people in the life of the community;

c. develop national action plans for raising awareness of young people's social rights in co-ordination with local and regional authorities, and in co-operation with youth leaders, the latter being voluntary or professional persons involved in work or action with and for young people in different contexts, for the dissemination of good practices at all levels of responsibility.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM⁸

1. INTRODUCTION: ORIGIN AND APPROACH OF THE REPORT

1. The European Social Charter (ETS no.163, hereafter the “Social Charter”) was opened for signature by the member States of the Council of Europe in 1961, came into force in 1965, and was then later revised in 1996. It is an essential guiding document, setting the ground rules on fundamental social and economic rights at the pan-European level. It guarantees a broad range of everyday human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare. At the level of implementation, there continues to be a need for concrete guidelines to suggest how national, local and regional authorities can implement these rules.

2. A series of texts adopted by the Council of Europe during the last decade, making recommendations to member States, have emphasised public authorities’ responsibility in facilitating young people’s access to fundamental rights.

3. The recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on “Young people’s access to fundamental rights” (2015(2013)) and “Towards a European framework convention on youth rights” (1978(2011)),⁹ as well as the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 “Young People’s Access to Rights”, were occasions to underline that rather than adopting a specific treaty on the rights of young people, the aim should be to take measures in order to capitalise on the binding instruments, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the revised Social Charter.

4. Regarding youth, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (hereafter “the Congress”) had initially focused its attention on their participation in local and regional life, and on youth policies/youth work at local and regional levels, in supporting young people’s transition to autonomy and working life. It has also concentrated on the empowerment of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods or groups, such as Roma.¹⁰

5. The implementation of young people’s social rights at the local and regional level became part of the Congress’ work programme since the presentation made by Congress youth delegates in 2015, of a motion for a resolution on “Local and regional authorities promoting young people’s access to social rights”, during the 29th Session of the Congress, asking for consideration to be given to measures aimed at, in particular, facilitating young people’s access to their rights.¹¹ They noted that “... Access to quality education, secure employment, decent living conditions, adequate transport, health care, technology and opportunities for social, cultural and economic participation are prerequisites for the inclusion and active citizenship of all young people”.

6. In 2016, a debate held in the Chamber of Regions on “Social rights in Europe: the implementation of the European Social Charter at regional level”, highlighted the necessary and crucial role of local and regional authorities in making the rights recognised by the Social Charter effective.

7. The current report ties in with the spirit of the “Turin Process” (deepening both subsidiarity and the social dimension of the pillars of the Council of Europe, by strengthening the Social Charter at the local and regional level, while taking account of synergies with the European Union),¹² and

⁸ This explanatory memorandum is based on the document prepared by Luis Jimena Quesada, Professor of Constitutional Law (University of Valencia, Spain) and former President of the European Committee of Social Rights.

⁹ *Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1978 (2011), Towards a European framework convention on youth rights*, served as an opportunity to confirm that it is not necessary to adopt a specific treaty on the rights of young people, but that we should instead capitalise on the binding instruments which already exist in the Organisation: its Principle 7.1 invites member states “to take measures to facilitate young people’s access to fundamental rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the revised European Social Charter”.

¹⁰ *Resolution 386 (2015), Bringing down barriers to youth participation: adopting a lingua franca for local and regional authorities and young people; Recommendation 128 (2003), The revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life; Resolution 366(2014), Empowering Roma youth through participation: effective policy design at local and regional levels.*

¹¹ Motion CG/2015(29)23, 2 October 2015.

¹² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/turin-european-social-charter/turin-process>.

with one of the priorities adopted by the Congress for 2017-2020 (“Building inclusive societies”). It also addresses the youth delegates’ concerns regarding boosting young people’s ability to exercise their rights.¹³ Besides, youth delegates contributed to the debates held by the Current Affairs Committee in 2018, and to the debate held in the 36th session of the Congress, in April 2019.

8. This new focus on the rights set out in the Social Charter that affect young people in particular has two consequences:

a. Firstly, as the Social Charter is the key European legal instrument for young people’s participation in social life, measures should be taken to raise awareness of the Social Charter among young people, in order to make them capitalise upon it, instead of insisting on drafting a specific European instrument on their rights;

b. Secondly, through work aiming to strengthen the promotion and protection of the rights covered (explicitly or otherwise) by the Social Charter, and by other instruments of the Council of Europe – in the context of an integrated approach – young people at the Council of Europe agreed themselves that there are practical problems concerning access to, and the exercise of, social rights.

9. In this context, bearing in mind the work carried out in the past by the Congress and the youth sector of the Council of Europe in this field, the present report seeks to give examples of good (or bad) practices, and to make recommendations, specifically taken from experiences of the implementation of the Social Charter.

2. SOCIAL RIGHTS RELATING MORE SPECIFICALLY TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CONTEXT OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

2.1. The importance of the European Social Charter

10. The Social Charter explicitly refers to young people as being entitled to social rights in terms of education and labour market integration (vocational guidance and training, Articles 9 and 10) and benefits for the newly married (social, legal and economic protection for family life, Article 16).

11. In any case, young people implicitly enjoy the other rights enshrined in the Social Charter (and in the case law of the European Committee of Social Rights - hereafter the “ESCR”) in the context of the two monitoring mechanisms: reporting system and collective complaints procedure, in the areas of work (Article 1), health (Article 11), social security (Article 12), social and medical assistance (Article 13), and entitlement to social welfare services (Article 14).

12. In addition, the Committee has addressed, from the angle of the Social Charter, situations of vulnerability affecting young people, including age discrimination in remuneration (Article 4) and gender dimension (Article 20), the status of young people with disabilities (Article 15) and migrants (Articles 18 and 19), protection against poverty and social exclusion (Article 30) and access to housing (Article 31).

13. There are also aspects which, although not explicitly provided for in the Social Charter (including the 1961 text), were nevertheless discussed during the preparatory phase (for example, it was recommended that university education should gradually be made free, and that a grant for students should be introduced),¹⁴ and continued to be discussed with a view to formal recognition in the text of the treaty (for example, proposal in 2003 for an Additional protocol to the revised Social Charter concerning the right to higher education).

¹³ Proposal for the preparation of a Toolkit for Local Authorities to Empower Young People to Access their Rights, Motion CG31(2016)18, 20 October 2016.

¹⁴ *Collected preparatory work of the European Social Charter*, Vol. II (1955): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/turin-european-social-charter/preparatory-work> p. 28 and p. 34.

14. In any case, the lack of provisions explicitly extending the material scope of the Social Charter has not undermined the conception of the treaty as a “living instrument”, considering that higher education is already covered by Article 10 of the Social Charter, and that young people over 18 years of age should also be able (from the angle of Article 13) to have access to a minimum income, and to be able to live independently (among which, Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1885(2012): “The young generation sacrificed: social, economic and political implications of the financial crisis”, and Resolution 2197(2018): “The case for a basic citizenship income”). In Resolution 1885(2012), the Assembly noted in particular that there are growing numbers of young people ‘not in employment, education or training’ (so-called ‘NEETs’) who largely depend on family solidarity. However, as indicated in the explanatory memorandum of Resolution 2197 (2018),¹⁵ the European guaranteed minimum income schemes should help integrate such young people better into society, not least because this is a corollary obligation under Articles 13 and 14 of the Social Charter.

15. In the case of these areas, where there has been considerable insecurity in the context of the economic and financial crisis over the last decade (for example, the increase in youth unemployment or difficulties in accessing higher education because of the reduction in the number of student grants or the increase in university fees), restrictions are offset by the Social Charter as a legally binding instrument.

2.2. The voice of young people and the previous work of the Congress

16. In addition to the flagship document of the Council of Europe on social rights (and the place of young people in this treaty), and complementing the work done by other bodies of the organisation (Parliamentary Assembly, Committee of Ministers, the Youth Sector, etc.), the Congress has produced several texts on young people’s access to their rights (in general and/or more specifically, social rights) from a local and regional governance point of view.¹⁶

17. In Resolution 296 (2010) on the “Role of local and regional authorities in the implementation of human rights”, the Congress stressed the importance of the decisions taken by local and regional authorities, in view of their powers and responsibilities “relating in particular to education, housing, health, the environment and law and order”, as well as of “guarantee[ing] equal access to public services for all citizens and non-citizens, without any discrimination, while ensuring that social rights are upheld”, thereby playing a key part in “the recording of good practices in the human rights sphere”.

18. Similarly, in Resolution 334 (2011), “Developing indicators to raise awareness of human rights at local and regional level”, the Congress pointed out “the fact that human rights include civil, political, economic and social rights and that the competences of local and regional authorities refer to all these rights” and, therefore, the relevance of ensuring that the activities of local and regional authorities “are based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the European Social Charter, as well as on the work of the existing Council of Europe monitoring bodies”.

19. The Congress reiterated this methodology, and called for such a strategy in Resolution 365(2014): “Best practices of implementation of human rights at local and regional level in member States of the Council of Europe and other States”, while bearing in mind the work carried out by the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe to promote human rights, social integration and the active participation of young people (particularly through the “Enter!” project, which has been implemented since 2009).¹⁷

20. Moreover, the Congress has relied on previous instruments on integration, and the participation and commitment of young people at the local and regional level,¹⁸ in order to place

¹⁵ Doc. 14462, 5 January 2018, p. 12.

¹⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/youth>

¹⁷ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/cooperation-with-local-authorities>

¹⁸ Including, *Resolution 386 (2015), Bringing down barriers to youth participation: adopting a lingua franca for local and regional authorities and young people*; *Resolution 366 (2014), Empowering Roma youth through participation: effective policy design at local and regional level*; *Resolution 346 (2012), Youth and democracy: the changing face of youth political*

more emphasis on access to their social rights, while keeping in mind an integrated approach based on the indivisibility of all human rights. In its report “Voting at 16 – Consequences on youth participation at local and regional level”,¹⁹ the Congress, considering elections as the main “transmission channel” for citizens’ political participation, calls on authorities to promote the lowering of the voting age to 16, in local and regional elections.

21. In Resolution 414(2017)3, “Forever young? The role of youth policies and youth work at local and regional levels in supporting young people’s transition to autonomy and working life”, the Congress made concrete recommendations to local and regional authorities regarding:

a. information (for example, set up online and face-to-face youth counselling and information centres, which provide individual coaching and specific training sessions);

b. education (for example, encourage access to apprenticeships and provide support to those pursuing education beyond the age of 18);

c. employment (for example, establish a local government programme for official recognition of professional experience, or competences developed in the context of traineeships and volunteer work);

d. housing (for example, develop low budget housing opportunities for young people, with loan opportunities and municipal financial support) and;

e. health (provide regular information sessions, or training on sexual and reproductive rights, depression, violence and harassment or other health-related issues).

22. With a similar philosophy, in Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights,²⁰ the Committee of Ministers had referred explicitly to a large number of provisions of the 1996 revised Social Charter (Articles 1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 30 and 31) and called for “the relevant conclusions and decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights” to be taken into account. This recommendation stresses that access to certain social rights (quality education, secure employment, decent living conditions, adequate transport, health care, technology and opportunities for social, cultural and economic participation) is a “prerequisite for the inclusion and active citizenship of all young people”, and then includes a very detailed appendix setting out measures concerning the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The recommendation also suggests measures that can be taken by local and regional authorities.

23. The proposals made in this recommendation are incorporated, with a broader scope, in “Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on young people’s access to rights”, which also mentions the “decisions and conclusions of the European Committee of Social Rights and invites States, which have not already done so, to ratify the 1996 revised European Social Charter and the 1995 Protocol, providing for a system of collective complaints. In the appendix to this Recommendation, the Committee of Ministers also invites member States to “facilitate young people’s access to social rights by strengthening the implementation of the European Social Charter’s provisions”.

24. In the recommendation, the Committee of Ministers refers to the already cited Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2015(2013) on “Young people’s access to fundamental rights”, in which the Assembly welcomed the launch, in February 2013, of the Council of Europe campaign, “Nurturing human rights”, with a “view to promoting rights and freedoms enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, with an emphasis on young people. It believes that the

engagement; Resolution 319 (2010), Integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods; Resolution 259 (2008), Integration and participation of young people at local and regional level.

¹⁹ CG2015(29)8 final

²⁰ See also Kevin O’Kelly and John Muir: *Taking it seriously – Guide to Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights* (Ed. Mara Georgescu and Rui Gomes), Strasbourg, Council of Europe publishing, 2016, 68 pages

(<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900016806accfa>).

campaign should be further widened to also encompass the rights enshrined in the European Social Charter (revised)".

2.3. The subsidiary nature of the European Convention on Human Rights

25. The ECHR does not explicitly set out rights and freedoms relating to young people. The case law of the European Court of Human Rights does include some cases submitted by young applicants, which involved the protection of certain rights (civil and political and, indirectly, social). However, this case law remains very limited, compared to the case law stemming from the broader personal and material scope of the Social Charter. It is therefore very difficult to derive from the Court's case law examples of good (or bad) practices concerning access to social rights by young people, which could be taken into consideration at the local and regional level.²¹

26. Nevertheless, the ECHR's symbolic position as a flagship treaty of the Council of Europe, and various awareness-raising campaigns (concerning the rights enshrined in it), aimed at young people can be useful, as can the Social Charter, and social rights more directly related to young people – one example here being the project, "Hurry Up! Human Rights Revisited by Youth in Europe!" launched to mark the 60th anniversary of the ECHR (various activities took place during the 10 months of the project, from September 2010 to June 2011).

27. This initiative by the City of Strasbourg supported by the European Youth in Action Programme, and carried out in partnership with the European Court, brought together various cities and organisations: Dresden (Germany), which is twinned with Strasbourg, and seven members of the Club de Strasbourg: Budapest (Hungary), Timisoara (Romania), Katowice (Poland), Riga (Latvia), Stare Zagora and Ruse (Bulgaria) and Kutaisi (Georgia). In addition, in the spirit of the European Year of Volunteering, "Hurry Up" sought to encourage young people to become active citizens through the establishment of a network of young ambassadors for human rights and democracy in Europe.

2.4. The complementary nature of the action of the European Union (EU)

28. EU primary law (in particular, the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, TFEU) addresses the social issues affecting young people from the angle of the labour market and "the exchange of young workers" (Article 47). In addition, in order to develop the European dimension in the fields of education, vocational training and sport, the EU's action involves "encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors, and encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe" (Article 165), and aims to "facilitate access to vocational training and encourage mobility of instructors and trainees and particularly young people" (Article 166). In addition, in the area of EU external action, "in order to establish a framework for joint contributions from young Europeans to the humanitarian aid operations of the Union, a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps shall be set up" (Article 214).²²

²¹ See, for instance, selected case law of the European Court of Human Rights concerning young people aged 18 to 35 years published by the Research Division of the Court in 2012: *Research Report. Selected case-law of the European Court of Human Rights on young people*, Council of Europe/European Court of Human Rights, 2012, 26 pages (www.echr.coe.int, Case-law – Case-law Analysis – Research Reports). In particular, this selection presents a few dozen judgments of the Court (or decisions or reports of the former European Commission of Human Rights) concerning conscientious objection to military service, expulsion of second-generation migrants and forced labour (foreigners' rights are involved in many of these cases), a case concerning access to a professional career (from the angle of the protection of family life and the recognition of academic qualifications involving obstacles *ratione materiae* or falling within a state's margin of discretion in terms of the exercise of a profession) and two cases relating to university studies (concerning the language of instruction for some courses and the wearing of religious symbols). The Court's subsequent case law provides interesting examples, *inter alia*, of young migrants who were victims of forced labour (*Chowdury and Others v. Greece* of 30 March 2017, violation of Article 4 § 2) and of young people with disabilities faced with physical barriers to access to university premises (*Enver Şahin v. Turkey* of 30 January 2018, violation of Art. 14 (non-discrimination) in conjunction with Art. 2 of Protocol No. 1 (right to education)), etc., but the impact of this case law is still limited with regard to implementation of young people's social rights at local and regional level.

²² In the case of the EU, reference should also be made to the European Solidarity Corps (https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en), which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe. In the case of the Council of Europe, reference should be made to the *European Convention on the Promotion of a Transnational Long-Term Voluntary*

29. With regards to access to social rights by young people in soft-law instruments, the preamble to the European Pillar of Social Rights²³ underlines the need to address economic and social insecurity with a view to the “provision of better opportunities for youth” (para. 7) in “a Union where young people receive the best education and training, and can study and find jobs across the continent”, given that “the social consequences of the crisis have been far-reaching – from youth and long-term unemployment to the risk of poverty – and addressing those consequences remains an urgent priority” (paras. 9-10). To deal with these consequences, Chapter I of the Pillar (Equal opportunities and access to the labour market) highlights “active support to employment”, stating that “young people have the right to continued education, apprenticeship, traineeship or a job offer of good standing within 4 months of becoming unemployed or leaving education” (para. 4.b).

30. This chapter of the pillar indeed reiterates the main thrusts of the European Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee, which calls on member States to ensure that all young people aged under 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. The key challenge consists of ensuring the comprehensive and lasting implementation of the youth guarantee, and extending its application to all young people.²⁴

31. Alongside the above general provisions of EU primary law and soft law (pillar) relating to young people, reference should be made to the Youth Strategy agreed by EU ministers. The current strategy lays down a co-operation framework for the period from 2010-2018,²⁵ setting out initiatives in eight areas: employment and entrepreneurship, social inclusion, participation in civil society, education and training, health and well-being, voluntary activities, youth and the world and creativity and culture.

32. The EU Youth Strategy is also supported by other complementary initiatives, including the Erasmus+ Programme.²⁶ A huge range of practical measures is set out in each annual guide to the programme. The awareness-raising measures planned for 2018²⁷ carry on from those conducted in previous years, e.g. a European information campaign on access to social rights for young people, “Inclusion Express”, in 2015, with local activities to promote access to social rights for young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.²⁸

3. PROBLEMS AND GOOD PRACTICES RELATING TO ACCESS BY YOUNG PEOPLE TO SOCIAL RIGHTS AT LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

3.1. Social rights of young people and multifactor aspects

Service for Young People (adopted on 11 May 2000). For its part, the Congress, in *Resolution 346 (2012), Youth and democracy: the changing face of youth political engagement*, recommended the introduction of “local policy on voluntary activity, while guarding against such voluntary activity being used as a substitute for paid employment, to enable young people to develop personal and professional skills”.

²³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en. See *Interinstitutional Proclamation on the European Pillar of Social Rights* by the European Parliament, Council and Commission (OJ C 428 of 13 December 2017, p. 10).

²⁴ See Communication from the Commission of October 2016, “*The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on*” [COM(2016) 646 final] and its Communication of December 2016, “*Investing in Europe’s Youth*” [COM(2016) 940 final].

²⁵ In May 2018, the European Commission presented proposals for a new EU Youth Strategy for the period from 2019-2027 (https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/youth_com_269_1_en_act_part1_v9.pdf, retrieved on 5 September 2018).

²⁶ Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing ‘Erasmus+’: the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1288&from=EN>).

²⁷ European Commission: *Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2018*.

²⁸ Project run by Youth Express Network, information available at: <http://youthexpressnetwork.org/inclusion-express/>. Further information on this project and others available (in French) in Agence du Service Civique: *Rapport d’activité 2016*, p. 22 (https://www.service-civique.gouv.fr/uploads/ressource_block/fb7654839e1d0c732f715b1d7b7b3093caee4bf6.pdf).

33. The size and constitutional arrangements of a country (degree of local/regional decentralisation) can have a significant impact on practices and funding regarding measures targeted at young people.

34. In France, it has been necessary to launch major programmes to promote the social inclusion of young people with autism.²⁹ Recent figures from the country showed that 90% of young persons with autism between the age of 16 and 19 did not continue to attend school. Yet, the fundamental goals of schools could be better served in the case of children and adolescents with autism, if they could continue attending school beyond the age of 16, which is the age at which compulsory schooling ends in France. For that reason, the ECSR considered that the denial, in practice, of the right of children and adolescents with autism to continue attending school beyond compulsory school age, despite the fact that this was the legal right of all pupils, amounted to a missed opportunity for the persons concerned to attain their potential in the mainstream school environment.³⁰

35. In contrast, the size of Andorra (with a small number of cases of young people with autism) has made it possible to introduce programmes such as “Young people in inclusion” (“*Joves en inclusió*”), which is aimed at including young people with autistic spectrum disorders in the community. The programme has been run on a trial basis since 2017 by a private entity (*Fundació Privada Tutelar del Principat d’Andorra*), in co-operation with the Andorran Government and the municipality concerned (Escaldes-Engordany).³¹

36. Moreover, international co-operation is also possible in this area. For instance, in the context of the co-operation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Azerbaijan and the Turkish Co-operation and Co-ordination Agency (TIKA), a beekeeper (“*Arıcı*”) vocational course was organised in 2015 for 12 jobseekers with disabilities living in the Shamakhi district.³² In addition, with support from TIKA, 20 young people took part in a mosaic design course in Ramana Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for Young Persons with Disabilities in 2016.³³

37. At the same time, the awareness-raising measures concerning young people’s social rights may depend on the local environment (urban or rural). For instance, we can see the difference between a campaign seeking to discourage young people from taking risks (with their lives and health) with the dangerous practice of “balconing” (e.g. on the Balearic Islands in Spain)³⁴ and a campaign focusing on the protection of young people’s health in farming families (e.g., the “Fit4life – get involved”, “Fit 4life – ” campaign, in Austria).³⁵

²⁹ In particular, successive action plans covering the periods 2005-2007 (1st Autism Plan), 2008-2010 (2nd Autism Plan) 2013-2017 (3rd Autism Plan) and 2018-2022 (4th Autism Plan: <http://comprendrelautisme.com/quatrieme-plan-autisme-2018-2022/>). The content of these Autism Plans has been influenced substantially by the work of the Council of Europe: see the decisions of the ECSR of 4 November 2003 (Complaint No. 13/2002, *International Association Autism-Europe (IAAE) v. France*) and of 11 September 2013 (Complaint No. 81/2012, *Action européenne des handicapés (AEH) v. France*).

³⁰ Decision of the ECSR of 11 September 2013 (Complaint No. 81/2012, *Action européenne des handicapés (AEH) v. France*), paragraphs 92-93.

³¹ The programme initiated with five young people with autism aged 16 to 25 years in Escaldes-Engordany operates through objectives (continuous assessment) on a comprehensive basis in all areas of daily life with a view to supporting their transition to independence and working life: looking after themselves (shopping, taking a taxi), leisure (going to the cinema), employment. *11th report by Andorra on the implementation of the ESC*, 22 November 2017, RAP/RCha/AND/11(2018), p. 70: <https://rm.coe.int/11e-rapport-de-l-andorre/168077630d/> (French only).

³² *11th report by Azerbaijan on the implementation of the ESC*, 3 April 2018, RAP/RCha/AZE/11(2018), p. 42 (<https://rm.coe.int/11th-report-from-azerbaijan/16807b6c7d/>).

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ This practice (which involves jumping into a swimming pool from a hotel balcony or climbing from one balcony to another) has caused some very serious accidents involving young tourists. See Segura Sampedro, Juan José et al.: “Balconing: An alcohol-induced craze that injures tourists. Characterisation of the phenomenon”, *Injury*, 48(7), July 2017, pp. 1371-1375: This is a five-year retrospective study (covering 2010-2015) conducted on the Balearic Islands (46 cases). In 44 cases (95.65%), alcohol consumption was present, accompanied by other drugs in 17 cases (36.96%). The conclusion was that alcohol and other drug consumption were almost always involved in balconing. Good practices introduced in 2018 to attempt to counter the problem have included awareness-raising campaigns (with videos) in the UK and in partnership with the UK Embassy in Spain; awareness-raising campaigns by the local authorities (municipality of Calvià and the town of Palma de Mallorca) in co-operation with hoteliers (distribution of leaflets to warn people, etc.); and new rules and instructions stepping up fines for balconing and alcohol consumption in public places.

³⁵ The campaign “Fit 4life – sei dabe!” was launched in 2011 by the Farmers’ Social Insurance Fund (*Sozialversicherungsanstalt der Bauern, SVB*). Based on studies of the situation of children and young people in farming families, the specific aims of the campaign in 2016 were to reduce the number of falls through structural and technical measures, minimise the after-effects of accidents of this kind and to help individuals in specific target groups to improve

3.2. “Conventional” good practices for promoting certain social rights (health) adapting to young people’s “modern” access methods

38. As it is well known, prevention campaigns tackling smoking, alcoholism and drug addiction are traditionally conducted in all countries and at all levels of government. Even though the whole population is affected by these issues, the need for information and dissuasion are obviously greater among young people. From this point of view, States’ commitments in respect of Article 11 of the Social Charter (health), and the case law of the ECSR in this area³⁶ include various examples of good practices, some of which are described below.

39. The anti-smoking preventive measures taken in Austria have included the setting up of a smokers’ info-line and quit-line and the “Live your life”. No smoking, “YOLO” campaign. “YOLO” (You Only Live Once) was the slogan of a campaign launched by the Federal Ministry of Health for young teenagers on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day on 31 May 2015. Young people use the slogan to encourage each other to seize the opportunity to refrain from smoking. “YOLO” expresses the gist of young people’s attitude towards life, i.e. living in the here and now. Information is presented online at www.yolo.at, on Facebook and on WhatsApp.³⁷

40. In Italy, as part of the efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, the Ministry of Health has in recent years conducted intensive information and awareness-raising activities to combat alcohol abuse among young people. For instance, the campaign, “La vita è sempre una anche se hai bevuto” (“You’ve only got one life even if you’ve been drinking”), launched in summer 2012 used various communication methods and tools.³⁸ In 2015, there was a campaign called, “Alcol Snaturato” – Una serata speciale (“Denatured alcohol – A special evening”). “Alcol Snaturato” is the title of a song which the Ministry of Health produced in co-operation with a well-known national group. The aim of the campaign was to draw attention to the behaviour of young people who abuse alcohol, and to correct the perception spread among young people by the media that alcohol helps you succeed.³⁹

41. In any case, these three conventional issues (smoking, alcohol, drugs) aside, the right to the highest attainable standard of health must cover both physical and mental well-being in line with the definition of health by the World Health Organization. In this connection, it is necessary to instil a sense of individual responsibility among young people, too, in areas such as food, sexuality and the environment. An interesting initiative aimed at students is the Spanish Network of Healthy Universities.⁴⁰

3.3. “More general” good practices geared to grant access to social rights by young people

42. An example of a “multidimensional” and “integrated” good practice (launched by the President of the Regional Parliament of the Canary Islands) was the exhibition “The European Social Charter: our rights”, held by the regional authorities (executive and legislative) in Santa Cruz de Tenerife from April-May 2017, with the co-operation of Tenerife colleges of art and design, with students themselves being the artists/protagonists of the exhibits (bus shelters with the Social

their balance and co-ordination: *5th report by Austria on the implementation of the ESC*, 4 November 2016, RAP/RCha/AUS/5(2017), pp. 31-32.

(<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806c2fad>).

³⁶ *Digest of the Case Law of the European Committee of Social Rights*, 1 September 2008, p. 87, <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016804915a0>)

³⁷ *5th report by Austria on the implementation of the ESC*, 4 November 2016, RAP/RCha/AUS/5(2017), pp. 72-73: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806c2fad>.

³⁸ Use was first made of the most widely read national daily and periodical print media and of online media. A radio advert was then broadcast on the commercial networks with the largest national and local audiences. In addition, to help get the message over to young people, the campaign relied on active collaboration from the portal, Studenti.it, which ensured over 100 000 targeted contacts. Again for young people, a mobile phone app with informative and recreational content was also developed in co-operation with Sony; in only 20 days, there were 14 000 downloads and 220 146 views. In terms of events linked to the campaign, the Ministry of Health also funded the holding of an Alcohol Prevention Day in various years [16th report by Italy on the implementation of the ESC, 7 March 2017, RAP/RCha/ITA/16(2017), pp. 40-41: <https://rm.coe.int/16806fe976>] (French only).

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *29th report by Spain on the implementation of the ESC*, 19 October 2016, RAP/RCha/ESP/29(2017), p. 3: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806c2fc2> (French only).

Charter logo, photos, sculptures, etc.), with messages and images designed to provide visual illustrations of all the rights enshrined in the Social Charter.

43. The exhibition was accompanied by the declaration of 18 October as “European Social Charter Day”, in Brussels in June 2017, at the Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE), on the proposal of the President of the Regional Parliament of the Canary Islands. In addition to the 18th October, it would be appropriate to hold activities to promote young people’s social rights on other key dates, such as for instance on UNESCO’s annual International Youth Day on 12 August.

3.4. Modern means of access to social rights and the heterogeneous nature of young people in terms of education

44. According to UNESCO, “young people” are a heterogeneous group in constant evolution. Consequently, even though it takes account of the definition used by the United Nations according to which the term “young people” cover a group aged from 15 to 25 years, it considers that “being young” varies greatly from one country to another, and the definition therefore remains flexible, depending on the context.

45. Be that as it may, the use of online platforms fosters access to social rights by young people, as they allow networking of politically and socially engaged young people and the sharing of knowledge. Media, social networking and blogs, etc., can give young people a voice and open up channels for direct responses to government officials at all levels. From this point of view, the challenge of achieving good governance (open and transparent) and online democracy should be coupled with the prior challenge of educating young people, to be able to use the new information technology centres (ITCs) provided by local and regional authorities.⁴¹

46. In particular, young people should not be seen as a homogeneous block. For instance, young people born in the information era are now frequently referred to as “digital natives”. But there is still an urban-rural literacy gap,⁴² and young people who are economically and socially disadvantaged tend to be less digitally literate.⁴³ To address this challenge, the European Commission adopted a Digital Education Action Plan in January 2018.⁴⁴

3.5. Access of young people to education

47. There are currently at least two main challenges regarding access to education for young people: firstly, young people need help to complete upper secondary education in order to reduce the school drop-out rate; secondly, they need help to access higher education with grants or loans that can be repaid at a reasonable rate. Unfortunately, public expenditure and deficit reduction measures adopted in some countries, in response to the economic crisis, have led to increased university fees and the replacement of grants by loans at unreasonable interest rates.⁴⁵ As a result, there is a real student debt problem in Europe and across the world.⁴⁶

48. In this connection, Article 10 of the 1961 Social Charter (revised in 1996), as interpreted by the ECSR, covers the right to higher education with a very broad scope (e.g., the right to access to education and the right to financial assistance). Nevertheless, a concern for legal certainty led

⁴¹ Reference should be made here to a well-known quote by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (*The Social Contract*, 1762, Book I): “however feeble the influence my voice can have on public affairs, the right of voting on them makes it my duty to study them”.

⁴² *Enhancing youth political participation throughout the electoral cycle, A Good Practice Guide*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, 2013, p. 13 (http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Electoral%20Systems%20and%20Processes/ENG_UN-Youth_Guide-LR.pdf).

⁴³ European Commission: *The International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS): Main findings and implications for education policies in Europe*, 2014. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/study/2014/ec-icils_en.pdf.

⁴⁴ *Commission staff working document on the Digital Education Action Plan*, COM(2018) 22 final, Brussels, 17.1.2018, SWD(2018) 12 final, p. 10.

⁴⁵ OECD: *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris 2017 (https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/eag2017_eng.pdf).

⁴⁶ Toca, Gonzalo: “Universitarios endeudados: una polémica global”, *esglobal*, 28 August 2018 (<https://www.esglobal.org/universitarios-endeudados-una-polemica-global/>)

young people's representatives (in particular, AEGEE-Europe/European Students' Forum) to put forward a proposal in April 2002 to amend the Social Charter with a view to increasing the impact of Article 10 through separate recognition of a right to higher education.⁴⁷

3.6. Access of young people to the labour market

3.6.1. Economic crisis and employment insecurity among young people

49. The Council of Europe, in particular the ECSR, was confronted with measures restricting the fundamental social rights enshrined in the Social Charter during the most sensitive period of the economic crisis, especially when examining certain Greek cases. More specifically, the first two decisions which directly addressed the issue of austerity and labour market flexibility measures (adopted under the influence of the Troika), that had a particular impact on young people, were adopted by the ECSR on 23 May 2012.

50. In the first decision (Complaint No. 65/2011, GENOP-DEI v. Greece), the ECSR concluded that Article 4§4 of the Social Charter had been violated, as domestic legislation allowed dismissal without notice or compensation during the first twelve-month period for workers on open-ended contracts.

51. In the second decision (Complaint No. 66/2011, GENOP-DEI and ADEDY v. Greece), the ECSR concluded that there had been a violation of various provisions of the Social Charter (Articles 7§7, 10§2, 12§3 and 4§1) after examining the restrictive provisions concerning annual leave, the training and apprenticeship systems for young people, the social security cover in "special apprenticeship contracts" between employers and young people aged 15 to 18 years and the provisions on extremely low pay (a small percentage of the national minimum wage) payable to workers aged under 25, "which is below the poverty level" (paragraph 65) and clearly discriminatory on the ground of age (paragraphs 68-70).

52. Another decision worth the mention, with respect to Articles 4 and 7 of the European Social Charter (the right to a fair remuneration, the right of children and young persons to protection), is the collective complaint submitted by the European Youth Forum (YFJ) against Belgium (N150/2017), requesting the Committee to find that the practice of unpaid internships is in violation of these articles. The ECSR declared the complaint admissible on 5 December 2017.

3.6.2. Preventing the economic crisis from becoming a crisis of values among young people

53. The economic crisis over the past decade has created insecurity for young people not only on an economic and social level (in terms of lack of employment opportunities) but also on a political and cultural level (in terms of influence in the employment sector). In particular, there is a tendency to focus on the issue of young people's democratic participation (including the voting age), but the concern about the degree of political apathy among young people should go hand in hand with measures to combat young people's passivity in the world of work (e.g. low level of trade union membership and of involvement in collective bargaining).⁴⁸

54. This "industrial relations" apathy reflects a crisis of values alongside the economic crisis. While economic crises are cyclical and may be followed by periods of economic recovery, crises of values can result in a lost generation that is hard to win back. This apathy makes any effort to challenge certain measures seeking to combat unemployment (flexicurity, training, etc.), by young people, very complicated. It would therefore be advisable to expand the scope of good practices

⁴⁷ The proposal was taken up by the Governmental Committee of the Social Charter, but in the end was not acted upon: *Proposed additional protocol to the revised European Social Charter concerning the right to higher education*, Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter, Strasbourg, 30 July 2003 [TS-SG(2003)24].

⁴⁸ *15th report by Estonia on the implementation of the ESC*, 3 January 2018, RAP/RCh/EST/15(2018), pp. 39-41: <https://rm.coe.int/15th-national-report-from-estonia/1680779ff7>: "In Estonia as well as in other countries, trade union membership is more common among older employees, which means that when these employees reach pensionable age, it has a significant negative impact on collective negotiations, unless they are replaced by new generations of young employees who are interested in joining trade unions and holding collective negotiations. According to the working life study, young employees in Estonia are not joining trade unions – only 2% of the 15–29-year-olds belonged to trade unions in 2015; (...)".

for youth participation in political life to include the industrial relations field:⁴⁹ e.g. the promotion of trade union activity and collective bargaining in the spirit of Articles 5 and 6 of the Social Charter.

55. This also ties in with the spirit of UNESCO's new Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021).⁵⁰ Among other things, the strategy is geared towards the processes which enable young people of both sexes to assert their rights, assume their responsibilities as active citizens, and take part in community life: by becoming volunteers, members of youth organisations, initiators of social projects, innovation pioneers or entrepreneurs,⁵¹ by co-operating with youth media and by taking part in decision-making processes.

3.6.3. Good practices and co-operation by local and regional authorities

56. Even though central government is usually responsible for employment policy, co-operation by local and regional authorities is very important in this area. The operational arrangements for local implementation of strategies initiated at national level give rise to local partnership processes that enable the use of the various regions' resources to be optimised.

57. Over the past decade, Iceland, for example, has gradually combined national projects with co-operation programmes with local authorities:⁵²

a. At the central government level, reference should be made to the "Youth in Action" (*Ungt fólk til athafna*) project, which sought to minimise the effects of long-term youth unemployment. The project was launched at the beginning of 2010, and aimed at individuals aged between 16 and 29, who were unemployed and registered to receive unemployment benefits. The main focus of the project was to maintain their activity for three years following the loss of employment. The government project focused on activation measures through education and training, job-training and voluntary work.

b. Formal collaboration with local authorities – Job-square (*Atvinnutorg*) programme. At the beginning of 2012, the programme was set up by the local authorities in Reykjavík, Hafnarfjörður, Kópavogur and the Suðurnes region. The aim of the programme was to meet the needs of people under the age of 25 in these areas, who were neither involved in study programmes, nor participating in the labour market. This was a joint project involving the Directorate of Labour, the Ministry of Welfare and the municipal councils in the areas concerned. The aim was to make young people, who were drawing financial support from the social service departments of their municipalities, more active.⁵³

58. Finland has also combined central and local government measures in a similar way:

a. The "Youth Guarantee" – this measure came into force at the beginning of 2013 in order to ensure that all young people aged under 25, and all recent graduates aged under 30, were provided with a job or work trial, study placement, workshop or rehabilitation placement, no later than three months after becoming unemployed. The key project served to deepen the co-operation between the public sector, the private sector and the third sector in providing support to young people. The objective was to gather the best municipal practices and expand the functional models to the national level. The One-Stop-Guidance Centres (*Ohjaamo*) play an important role in gathering together in a single service point all multisector services targeted at

⁴⁹ See *Commission staff working document on Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights*, Brussels, 26 April 2017, SWD(2017) 201 final, pp. 37-38.

⁵⁰ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002271/227150f.pdf>.

⁵¹ Country factsheet – *Spain and the European Social Charter*, p. 7 (<https://rm.coe.int/spain-and-the-european-social-charter/1680492969>): Reduced employer contributions under measures to promote business creation and youth employment (Act 11/2013 of 26 July 2013).

⁵² For an assessment of the employment situation in the country, see ECSR: *Conclusions 2017*, Iceland (Article 1 – the right to work, § 1 – full employment; <https://hudoc.esc.coe.int>).

⁵³ *29th report by Iceland on the implementation of the ESC*, 22 September 2016, RAP/RCh/ICE/29(2016), pp. 11-12 and 14-15.

(<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806ac9ea>); and the *30th report by Iceland on the implementation of the ESC*, 22 September 2017, RAP/RCh/ICE/30(2017), p. 83 (<https://rm.coe.int/30th-national-report-from-iceland/168075a488>).

young people (training, employment and rehabilitation). In particular, they provide individualised support to young people between 15 and 29 years of age who have no job or place of study.⁵⁴

b. Another good practice seeking to combat poverty and social exclusion linked to unemployment was conducted by the Finnish government between 2012 and 2015. It was a municipal employment experiment involving 26 projects and 65 municipalities. The objective was to reduce structural unemployment by finding new labour market integration models based on local partnerships. When planning services promoted employment, these models increasingly considered the needs of both the unemployed jobseekers, and the local labour markets. In a versatile way, the municipal project developed rehabilitating and activating municipal services, in order to promote the employment of those in a poor position within the labour market.⁵⁵

3.7. Access to housing by young people

3.7.1. In general

59. Young people's difficulties in accessing housing are closely linked to changes affecting young people and their diverse nature, as their situation in relation to employment (and hence their economic opportunities and financial possibilities) varies depending on their levels of education and the regions where they live in each country. By way of example, "France is one of the EU member States where young people move out of their parents' homes the earliest. However, it is also one of the countries where families provide most assistance with moving out – with not moving out probably being most closely related with job insecurity."⁵⁶

60. Given this contrasting situation, the French authorities have altered the country's housing legislation, in particular with the definition of criteria for decent housing (Decree No. 2002-120 of 30 January 2002), the introduction of urgent measures to prevent evictions (circular UHC/DH2 No. 2004-10 of 13 May 2004), and the establishment of an enforceable right to housing (the "DALO Act", No. 2007-290 of 5 March 2007).⁵⁷ With more specific regard to measures designed to foster access to housing by young people, greater flexibility has been introduced in the conditions relating to subletting to students and apprentices.⁵⁸

61. In Finland, attention should be drawn to the government's adoption in February 2008 of the "Housing First" programme aimed at reducing long-term homelessness, with the central target of halving homelessness by 2011. In any case, the programme not only achieved, but actually exceeded, the target,⁵⁹ leading the ECSR to note that Finland continued to be committed to tackling homelessness, in compliance with Article 31§2 of the Social Charter.⁶⁰ Under the programme, solutions to social and health problems cannot be a condition for organising accommodation. On the contrary, accommodation is a requirement which also allows other problems of homelessness to be resolved. Having somewhere to live makes it possible to

⁵⁴ The idea being to set up some 40 Ohjaamo centres in various parts of the country: *12th report by Finland on the implementation of the ESC*, 28 October 2016, RAP/RCha/FIN/12(2017), p. 60

(<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806c2fb0>).

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 59.

⁵⁶ *Le logement autonome des jeunes*, Opinion of the French Economic, Social and Environmental Council (CESE) (presented by Claire Guichet, rapporteur for the sustainable spatial development section), 2010-2015 term – sitting of 23 January 2013:

https://www.lecese.fr/sites/default/files/pdf/Avis/2013/2013_06_logement_autonome_jeunes.pdf (retrieved on 6 September 2018), p. 9.

⁵⁷ Country factsheet: *France and the European Social Charter*, p. 12 (<https://rm.coe.int/pdf/1680492889>).

⁵⁸ *Le logement autonome des jeunes*, Opinion of the French Economic, Social and Environmental Council (CESE) (*supra*), p. 13.

⁵⁹ See FEANTSA: "Finland: target of halving long-term homelessness reached", 31/3/2011, *FEANTSA Flash Newsletter*, 31 March 2011 (<http://www.feantsa.org>), and Association for Innovative Social Research and Social Planning: "Finland 2010: The Finnish National Programme to reduce long-term homelessness", *Synthesis Report* (www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu). The latest figures (2018) show that Finland (5.5 million inhabitants) is the only country in Europe that has succeeded in reducing homelessness year on year. Compared with a total of 18 000 homeless persons 10 years ago, the figure has fallen to under 7 000, i.e. 0.14% of the population.

⁶⁰ *Conclusions 2011*, Finland, Article 31 (right to housing, paragraph 2 – reduction of homelessness <https://hudoc.esc.coe.int>).

strengthen life management skills and is conducive to purposeful activity.⁶¹ The programme includes an earmarked grant for increases in personnel needed to produce support services, enabling the implementation of approved programme projects. Additionally, the projects carried out by municipalities receive state funding to cover a maximum of 50% of staff costs.⁶²

3.7.2. Situations of vulnerability

62. Access to housing by young people in vulnerable situations (e.g., migrants, Roma and Travellers) is a complex issue given the wide range of different lifestyles that exist in each country.

63. In Norway, various practical measures have been taken to assist foreigners in finding accommodation, such as reserving quotas of existing housing stock for refugees and immigrants, promoting research into multicultural living environments, and disseminating information on the legislation providing for equal treatment in access to housing.⁶³

64. In Ireland,⁶⁴ in addressing the issue of transient sites under the 2014-2018 Traveller Accommodation Programme, many local authorities referred to the lack of demand for such sites. The Irish authorities have therefore adopted a series of measures:

a. The role of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees was highlighted.⁶⁵ An analysis is also prepared each year for the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC), of which three members are representatives of Traveller organisations.

b. The government awarded Approved Housing Body status to CENA – Culturally Appropriate Housing in October 2013. CENA is Ireland’s first traveller-led approved housing body.⁶⁶ It can apply for State funding for housing projects and does indeed receive administrative and financial support from the State.

c. In December 2015, the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM) launched a programme to review fire safety in traveller accommodation.

3.8. Combatting gender discrimination and other discriminatory stereotypes among young people

65. In spite of the progress made in the field of education (new teaching methods, collaborative work, new technologies, etc.), gender discrimination is still a major concern in our societies. In particular, traditional macho stereotypes still, unfortunately, exist among young people in all Council of Europe member States.

66. Reference should be made here to the various actions taken in Spain on 8 March 2018 on International Women’s Day (underground and rail strike, pickets outside big shops, leading female presenters not broadcasting, etc.), as part of an unprecedented “feminist” general strike

⁶¹ Tannio, Hannele, and Fredriksson, Peter: “The Finnish Homelessness Strategy: From a ‘Staircase’ Model to a ‘Housing First’ Approach to Tackling Long-Term Homelessness”, *European Journal of Homelessness*, Volume 3, December 2009, pp. 181-199.

⁶² More information on this programme is available (in French) in Pleace, Nicholas: *Le logement d’abord*, Observatoire européen sur le sans-abrisme, 2014 (https://www.gouvernement.fr/sites/default/files/contenu/piece-jointe/2014/09/dihal_hl_-_etude_feantsa_nicholas_pleace.pdf).

⁶³ Country factsheet: *Norway and the European Social Charter*, p. 7: Article 19§4 – right to equal treatment with regard to access to housing (<https://rm.coe.int/16806b795f>).

⁶⁴ *15th report by Ireland on the implementation of the ESC*, 31 October 2017, RAP/RCh/IRL/15(2018), pp. 4-6 (<https://rm.coe.int/15th-simplified-report-of-ireland-on-follow-up-of-cc-in-2017/168078245e>).

⁶⁵ The Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACCs) have a pivotal role in the management and maintenance of Traveller accommodation and in resolving local issues including, *inter alia*, accommodation standards, health and safety issues and transient sites. Their overall role is to advise local authorities on the provision and management of accommodation for Travellers, and to provide a liaison between Travellers and members and officials of the appointing local authority. At least one quarter of the membership of an LTACC must comprise local Travellers and Travellers groups.

⁶⁶ Along the same lines, in *Resolution 366(2014) on empowering Roma youth through participation: effective policy design at local and regional levels*, the Congress invited local and regional authorities to “publicly commit to working with young Roma and their organisations to improve their access to their social rights; (...) employ Roma teachers and teaching assistants; (...) employ Roma mediators to offer career guidance and counselling”.

(protesting against harassment and violence affecting women and wage discrimination) in the country.

67. The wide range of good practices in this area (emergency hotlines to protect women victims of gender-related offences, training for judges, antidiscrimination institutions, etc.)⁶⁷ are of particular interest here, and show the importance of ongoing non-sexist education (for the whole population) and training (for the relevant professionals).⁶⁸

68. Stereotypes concerning traditional roles go a long way to explaining the limited range of employment choices for women and the obstacles they face in their careers. To address these issues, the German Federal Government has carried out a number of initiatives, including:

a. the project « *Zukunft für Mädchen und Jungen* » (“Girls’ Day and Boys’ Day”) since 2011;

b. the nationwide project, “*Neue Wege für Jungs*” (New Paths for Boys) since 2005;

c. the *Nationale Kooperationen zur Berufs- und Studienwahl frei von Geschlechterklischees* (National Co-operation on Making Vocational and University Course of Study Choices Free of Gender Clichés) since 2016 (www.klischee-frei.de); and

d. the initiative, “*MINT Zukunft schaffen*” (Creating MINT Future (MINT: Mathematics, computer science, natural sciences, technology)), as well as the TOTAL-E-QUALITY label.⁶⁹

69. In the same context, other good practices are tackling sexual harassment at work, where most of the victims are young women (Sweden).⁷⁰

70. In terms of combatting the gender wage gap (most significant in the case of young women finding their first jobs), progress has also been made in practice (Iceland),⁷¹ as changes have occurred in legislation and case-law (some countries have brought their legislation into line with ECSR case law, in order to not make pay comparisons within the same undertaking, and enable pay comparisons between several companies).⁷²

71. Even leisure activities are subject to sexist violence. As a good practice to combat this problem, Spain has introduced so-called “violet points” (in the traditional colour of feminism). These are places, at festivals and other similar events, where information can be obtained and any acts of gender discrimination against young women can be reported.

72. Similar good practices are also needed to combat other discriminatory stereotypes among young people, in particular regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and bodily diversity: for instance, in Belgium, various assistance and awareness-raising measures have been introduced to combat homophobic and transphobic stereotypes and clichés among young people. These include, in particular, the establishment of an information centre by the

⁶⁷ See Gender Equality Commission: *Compilation of good practices on women’s access to justice*, Council of Europe, 2015, 136 pages.

⁶⁸ See Gender Equality Commission, *Compilation of good practices to combat sexism in Council of Europe member states*, Information Document (Revised 2), Strasbourg, 4 June 2018, 47 pages (<https://rm.coe.int/compilation-of-good-practices-to-prevent-and-combat-sexism-revised/16808b15a5>).

⁶⁹ *35th report by Germany on the implementation of the ESC*, 28 December 2017, RAP/RChA/DEU/35(2018), p. 24 (<https://rm.coe.int/35th-report-from-the-government-of-germany/1680779fb6>).

⁷⁰ During 2013-2016 the Swedish Discrimination Ombudsman (DO) received 117 complaints about sexual harassment in working life. The vast majority of these (99) complaints were submitted by women. Most of the cases concern young women having been subjected to sexual harassment by a male superior at the workplace: *17th report by Sweden on the implementation of the ESC*, 24 October 2017, RAP/RChA/SWE/17(2018), p. 19 (<https://rm.coe.int/17th-report-from-the-government-of-sweden/168077e399>).

⁷¹ On 1 January 2018, new legislation came into force in Iceland prohibiting gender wage gaps. It is now illegal to pay men more than women in firms employing at least 25 staff (requirement to obtain an official certificate proving their equal pay policy). Non-compliance with this wage parity is punishable by fines.

⁷² ECSR: *Statement of interpretation on Article 20 of the 1996 revised European Social Charter/Article 1 of the 1988 Additional Protocol: equal pay comparisons*, Conclusions 2012, January 2013 (<https://hudoc.esc.coe.int>).

Flemish Community (www.transgenderinfo.be)⁷³ and the holding of an awareness-raising campaign, “Et toi t’es casé-e?” (<http://www.etoitescase.be/>).⁷⁴

73. Proper education at an early age is necessary to prevent these discriminatory stereotypes taking hold among children and teenagers. An example of a good practice here was the decision by the Croatian government to withdraw a biology textbook which took a discriminatory approach regarding sexual orientation, in response to a decision by the ECSR.⁷⁵

74. Nevertheless, education (formal or non-formal) is not enough on its own as a means of preventing and combatting discriminatory stereotypes. From this point of view, informal education, in the broad sense, includes the key role of the media in this area. In Belgium, for instance, the good practice guide launched by the Association of Professional Journalists (with the co-operation of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation) sought to deconstruct preconceived ideas containing negative stereotypes connected with existing journalistic practices in Belgium, and elsewhere, in terms of youth representation and participation in the media. One of the projects, “Parlons Jeunes” (“Young talk”) (in co-operation with the Metro free daily newspaper, the material by the young people was subsequently posted on the website, www.enlignedirecte.be), aims to give a voice to groups of young people from various backgrounds, by letting them try out the profession of a journalist, focusing on a specific topic per issue (poverty, political participation, etc.).⁷⁶

3.9. A challenge: improving access to social rights and combatting lack of take-up

75. With regards to this cross-cutting issue, raising young people’s awareness of their rights and how to exercise them also requires the existence of accessible mediation and judicial procedures.⁷⁷ The authorities’ positive obligations in terms of awareness-raising are all the more important, since potential young beneficiaries are often not aware of their rights; paradoxically, however, those who do not always meet any relevant conditions are aware of them.

76. Reference may be made here to a number of recent measures adopted in France in this area.⁷⁸

a. The simplification of administrative domiciliation of persons of no fixed abode provides them with an address where they can receive mail and, above all, access certain rights and welfare benefits.

b. In terms of combatting lack of take-up, special meetings to determine eligibility for social benefits (*rendez-vous des droits*) met immediate success: since their launch in 2013, more than 650 000 such meetings have taken place.

c. An entitlements simulator (<https://mes-aides.gouv.fr/>) and a social rights portal (<https://www.mesdroitssociaux.gouv.fr/>), as well as hundreds of digital mediation points throughout the country, are available to users to facilitate procedures for them.

d. A pilot scheme has been started with some municipal social welfare centres (*centres communaux d’action sociale*) to provide digital safes, to enable the individuals concerned to keep all the documents necessary for the exercise of their various social rights.

⁷³ With a freephone line (0800 96 316) and an email address (contact@transgenderinfo.be): 11th report by Belgium on the implementation of the ESC, 27 October 2016, RAP/RCh/BEL/11(2017), p.49

(<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806c2fae>) (French only).

⁷⁴ Including a teaching guide (for professionals in the education, sport and youth sectors), factsheets, videos and TV ads.

⁷⁵ Decision on the merits, 30 March 2009 (Complaint No. 45/2007, *INTERIGHTS v. Croatia*, Article 11§2 ESC).

⁷⁶ *La presse quotidienne et les jeunes. Un “Guide de bonnes pratiques” à l’usage des jeunes et des journalistes*, AJP, 2015 (<http://www.ajp.be/bonnespratiques/>), pp. 11-12.

⁷⁷ In *Resolution 334 (2011), Developing indicators to raise awareness of human rights at local and regional level*, the Congress undertook to “continue to encourage the establishment at local and regional level of independent complaint mechanisms such as local ombudspersons”.

⁷⁸ 17th report by France on the implementation of the ESC, 29 November 2017, RAP/RCh/FRA/17(2018), *supra*, pp. 15-17 (French only).

e. The digitisation of entitlements and information flows does not prevent the provision of the necessary human support for individuals suffering the greatest exclusion.

f. The modernisation of social workers' professional practices and further development of their skills (including the use of information technologies) improve access to rights by the individuals they support.

4. CONCLUSIONS

77. The European Social Charter forms the most striking binding legal source for young people's social rights, providing a framework for synergies with the Council of Europe's other instruments and mechanisms in this area, in particular the activities and initiatives of the Congress and the youth sector⁷⁹.

78. Local and regional authorities, along with the social partners and civil society organisations, play a key part both in disseminating the Social Charter and in implementing it, with a view to helping young people access and exercise the social rights enshrined in it. This crucial role of local and regional authorities in making the Social Charter effective in legal terms (in line with the "social" responsibilities that form part of the core of their respective autonomy) should be supported by national, European and international action plans and programmes.

79. The Social Charter is a vehicle for protecting young people's social rights (as beneficiaries), while also being a platform that benefits from young people's potential active role. Given the values it represents (equality, solidarity, social inclusion, participation), the Social Charter (as a European covenant on social democracy or a European social constitution) can benefit from the dynamism and leadership of young people.

80. Member States should be invited to accept (if they have not yet done so) in the spirit of the "Turin process", the collective complaints procedure and the revised European Social Charter, since the implementation of the Social Charter, and of the case law of the ECSR, provide a wide range of good practices concerning access to, and the exercise of, social rights by young people. This can therefore serve as a significant source of inspiration for local and regional measures in this area.

81. Local and regional authorities should also be involved in both the process at the time when the annual national reports are drawn up (or when observations on possible collective complaints are prepared), and submitted to the ECSR by the governments, of the States' Parties, and when the Committee's conclusions and decisions are followed up. Such involvement is consistent with Article 4, paragraph 6, of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, which provides that "local authorities shall be consulted [...] in the planning and decision-making processes for all matters which concern them directly". As the Council of Europe's flagship treaty in the field of social rights, the Social Charter is also the driving force for the social inclusion of young people and their active participation in the life of the community, the momentum for which mainly comes from the local and regional levels.

82. It is recommended to develop action plans for raising awareness of young people's social rights at local and regional level through training programmes and exchanges of best practices between elected representatives and youth workers.⁸⁰ In the context of such training and exchanges, knowledge of the Social Charter (good practices involving its implementation and the case law of the ECSR) would be an important factor in realising the spirit of Congress Resolution 334 (2011), "Developing indicators to raise awareness of human rights at local and regional level". The relevant activities could be organised in co-operation with national

⁷⁹ See also the Enter! European Youth Week, Strasbourg, 1-5 July, an event organised in the framework of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe (<http://70.coe.int/home/>)

⁸⁰ Youth workers are people involved in work or activities with and for young people, either on a voluntary basis or professionally and in several contexts, including youth organisations, youth services, youth centres, youth/social work training institutions, or any other structure operating in the area of non-formal education with young people. ("Glossary" – Appendix to Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhood to social rights).

associations or federations representing local and regional authorities, and during the above-mentioned consultation processes.

83. With regards to the promotion of the Social Charter, the Rapporteurs consider that local and regional authorities should be invited to publish the text of the Social Charter on their respective websites. In particular, it would be worthwhile devising a reader-friendly, online version, such as “European Social Charter explained to young people” or “Young people’s role in the European Social Charter”).⁸¹

84. Activities such as a competition for drawing up and illustrating the reader-friendly version could be held at the local and/or regional level. It would also serve as a guide for standard-setting, political and financial action by local and regional elected representatives, which would ultimately make it easier for them to have a kind of “youth impact” study. In addition, it would be a “cross-cutting” instrument giving young people easier access to their rights, and would therefore increase their ability to exercise them on a daily basis.

85. Local and regional authorities can also develop practical measures involving the exercise of certain social rights by young people, such as: employment support; health education measures; prevention of gender violence among young people, which could be disseminated and promoted through social media (which young people use on a daily basis). Such dissemination and promotion (online, but potentially also face-to-face) could also foster youth participation and engagement in promoting social rights.

86. To that end, it is also necessary to invest in improving public access to information technologies through existing public services (youth centres, public libraries, media centres, youth information and counselling centres, etc.), in the spirit of the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhood to social rights.

87. Finally, the rapporteurs believe it to be of the utmost importance to invest in raising awareness of young people’s social rights. This can be done through measures such as celebrations by local or regional authorities of the International Youth Day (12 August), or the European Social Charter Day (18 October). Such “days” can be an opportunity for local and regional authorities to encourage those States which have not yet done so, to accept the 1996 revised Social Charter and the collective complaints procedure, so that the Social Charter and its complaints mechanism can serve as awareness-raising vehicles. This would ensure that not only public authorities (e.g., welfare services) but also, and above all, young people themselves show greater solidarity and greater engagement in defending their social rights (in particular regarding young people in a more vulnerable situation, e.g., unemployed, migrants or with disabilities, etc.).

⁸¹ See the example of the booklet (in comic strip format), “*Tell me, what is the European Social Charter?*” (2011), produced by the ESC Department to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Charter: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168047e17e>.