

## Aangenomen aanbevelingen en resoluties PACE *21-24 juni 2011*

### **1. The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (June 2010 – May 2011)**

In its annual progress report, submitted to the Parliamentary Assembly in accordance with its mandate, the Monitoring Committee gives an account of its activities since June 2010. It also provides more general considerations about the achievements and challenges of the parliamentary monitoring procedure since the establishment of the committee 15 years ago, and draws some conclusions in the light of the completion of the second cycle of reporting upon countries which are not subject to a monitoring procedure or a post-monitoring dialogue.

Furthermore, in view of the forthcoming 15th anniversary of the establishment of the committee, and in the context of the ongoing debate on the reform of the Assembly, the committee elaborates on the challenges facing the Assembly monitoring in the future, and possible ways to address them, in order to improve the efficiency and impact of the exercise. It raises a number of questions for further reflection.

24/06/2011  Resolution 1827

[The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure \(June 2010 – May 2011\)](#)

### **2. Towards a European framework convention on youth rights**

The period of transition between childhood and adulthood is a crucial time for the development of individuals as fulfilled and responsible members of society. Young people need to have the possibility of entering adult life and assuming an autonomous existence through the exercise of a number of rights, including democratic participation, the right to further education and training, the right to employment, housing and social protection, as well as access to information through the Internet and the right to a healthy environment.

Many of these rights are universal, but the particular situation of young people makes their enjoyment all the more important for this population category and represents an investment for Europe's future. Despite this generally accepted evidence, young people's access to their rights in today's Europe is complicated by many political, economic and social obstacles. Problems in accessing higher education and training, entering the job market and finding affordable housing are just a few of the difficulties faced. Participation of young people in decision-making at all levels is also essential for ensuring inclusive and open democracies in Europe and beyond.

The present report provides an overview of young people's access to their rights in Europe and the existing mechanisms for their implementation. Member states are invited to examine the possibility of drafting a framework convention on youth rights, using the ten principles set out in the present text as a guideline.

24/06/2011  Recommendation 1978


[Towards a European framework convention on youth rights](#)

### **3. Reversing the sharp decline in youth employment**

Europe's young generation is severely affected by unemployment: about one in five young people has no job and youth unemployment rates remain twice as high as for the rest of the population. This is despite the fact that most young Europeans today have better levels of education than their parents and that many European countries face labour shortages in a growing number of sectors. If governments fail to offer realistic solutions to youth unemployment, Europe may well have to pay a high price for a "lost generation" and compromise its competitiveness, security, social peace and future development prospects.

The mismatch between the qualifications of young people and labour market needs, rapidly changing labour market conditions, structural economic shifts and eroding public spending on integrated pro-employment strategies are among the main causes of youth unemployment or underemployment. The situation is further aggravated by the economic crisis.

Member states are urged to adjust public policies so as to fully implement the labour-related provisions of the revised European Social Charter and give priority to reducing youth unemployment. They should thus promote better qualifications and skills, more mobility and inter-generational solidarity, improved access to job offers and apprenticeship schemes, as well as a greater interaction between employers, state employment agencies and young jobseekers. The report also stresses the need for Europe's policymakers to help southern Mediterranean countries to fully tap their development potential by offering a better future to their youth in their quest for jobs and sustainable livelihood.

24/06/2011  Resolution 1828  
[Reversing the sharp decline in youth employment](#)

### **4. The role of parliaments in the consolidation and development of social rights in Europe**

The report analyses the role played by parliaments in their legislative, representative and oversight functions, and the way in which parliaments can and should influence public policies to ensure progress with the implementation of social rights.

The consolidation of existing social rights and the development of new ones require substantial parliamentary involvement through the existing parliamentary networks and international organisations, starting with the Parliamentary Assembly at European level, and up to the Inter-Parliamentary Union globally.

As a specific case in point, the report addresses a series of aspects related to the right to health, including its institutional setting and scope, and calls for an additional Protocol to the revised European Social Charter, which will determine clearly and develop the European standards with regard to the right to health, including the right to a healthy environment – as one of the major rights linked to the right to life.

23/06/2011  Resolution 1824  
[The role of parliaments in the consolidation and development of social rights in Europe](#)

23/06/2011  Recommendation 1976  
[The role of parliaments in the consolidation and development of social rights in Europe](#)

### **5. Expansion of democracy by lowering the voting age to 16**

The participation of young people in democratic life should be promoted, in particular that of 16- and 17-year-olds who already have responsibilities within society, but do not have the right to vote.

Member states are invited to create the necessary preconditions for the participation of young people in civic life, through education and the promotion of community involvement, and to look into the possibilities of lowering both the voting age to 16 and the minimum ages to stand for different elections.

23/06/2011  Resolution 1826  
[Expansion of democracy by lowering the voting age to 16](#)

## 6. More women in economic and social decision-making bodies

Although women in Europe represent an increasingly high proportion of the labour market, they remain considerably under-represented in top management, including in economic and social decision-making bodies.

In order to redress this situation, which is the result of multiple forms of discrimination, radical changes in society should be promoted, to eradicate the mentality which precludes women access to certain key sectors which are erroneously considered to be men's strongholds. Furthermore, progressive measures should be introduced to enable women to reconcile family and professional responsibilities without having to choose between them. Finally, positive measures should be envisaged to help women break through the "glass ceiling" which holds them back in the area of professional competition, including the obligation for large companies to have at least 40% of women on their governing boards.

23/06/2011  Recommendation 1977  
[More women in economic and social decision-making bodies](#)


23/06/2011  Resolution 1825  
[More women in economic and social decision-making bodies](#)

## 7. National parliaments: guarantors of human rights in Europe

All branches of state power (the executive, legislature and judiciary) are bound to ensure respect for human rights. National parliaments are often overlooked in this context. Yet they are key to the effective implementation of international human rights norms at national level and are in an excellent position to protect human rights through legislating, being involved in the ratification of international human rights treaties, holding the executive to account (in particular concerning the swift and effective implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights), liaising with national human rights institutions and fostering the creation of a pervasive human rights culture.

The report examines ways to better exploit parliaments' potential in this respect and proposes basic principles to be respected by the parliaments of the Council of Europe member states.

National parliaments should establish appropriate parliamentary structures to ensure rigorous and regular monitoring of compliance with and supervision of international human rights obligations, where possible through dedicated human rights committees whose remits should be clearly defined and enshrined in law.

23/06/2011  Resolution 1823  
[National parliaments: guarantors of human rights in Europe](#)

## 8. Living together in 21st-century Europe: follow-up to the report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe

The Political Affairs Committee welcomes as most timely the report of the Group of Eminent Persons on "Living together – Combining diversity and freedom in 21st-century Europe" and their proposals as a basis for further reflection on Europe's future, against the backdrop of the Organisation's ongoing reform process. It notes that on several issues the Group's findings corroborate positions already taken by the Assembly. The challenge has been, and still is, to ensure implementation.

The present report suggests that the Parliamentary Assembly is ready and willing to contribute to the changes which are needed to ensure greater cohesion in European societies, so that everyone may fully benefit from living together. It therefore pro-

poses that, *inter alia*, the Assembly reflect on ways to overcome the current “crisis of leadership” in Europe; encourage politicians and elected representatives at all levels to speak out on the challenges currently raised by the threats to the European project; reflect on the proposal for an annual Forum against extremism, address the demographic crisis in Europe, as well as continue to address the challenges raised by extremism and the rise of xenophobic or racist parties.

Among many other specific recommendations addressed to the Committee of Ministers in the fields of migration, intercultural dialogue, education, the role of the media, youth and women, as well as social cohesion and gender mainstreaming, the report also recommends that the Committee of Ministers consider launching a major “Campaign on living together” along the lines of the two “All different – all equal” campaigns.

22/06/2011  Recommendation 1975

[Living together in 21st-century Europe: follow-up to the report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe](#)

## **9. Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly**

The Parliamentary Assembly is a unique interparliamentary assembly which can be proud of its achievements over the last sixty years.

Taking stock of the current context and its mission, the Assembly’s reform will aim to strengthen its political relevance and effectiveness, to make it more visible and to improve its members’ participation, while reinforcing interaction between the Assembly and national parliaments. In addition, inter-parliamentary co-operation should be improved, including with the European Parliament.

The Assembly’s members are therefore invited to consider a swathe of measures, ranging from policy actions, which would imply a change of practice and not necessarily a change of rules, to modifications of its working methods and structures which would imply a change of its Rules of Procedure.

22/06/2011  Resolution 1822

[Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly](#)


## **10. The interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants**


As Europe struggles to cope with the relatively large-scale arrival of mixed migratory flows by boat from Africa, arriving mainly through Italy, Malta, Spain, Greece and Cyprus, the surveillance of Europe’s southern borders has become a regional priority. The passengers are often travelling in unseaworthy vessels, at the mercy of unscrupulous traffickers, and there have been many fatal incidents.

The Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population once again expresses its deep concern at some of the measures taken to deal with these desperate people. Sometimes they are “pushed back” to their country of origin, which calls into question the well-established principle of non-refoulement, and there seem to be different ideas about what constitutes the “place of safety” where those who are rescued must be taken. Even joint operations run by the European Union’s border agency Frontex do not have all the adequate guarantees that human rights will be fully respected. Finally, countries on the southern borders of the European Union are having to face a disproportionate burden in dealing with these flows, which is unfair.

States have a clear moral and legal obligation to save persons in distress, but beyond this they should rigorously apply international law in dealing with these migratory flows. That means treating those intercepted humanely, giving them a fair

chance to seek international protection when it is needed, and keeping detention to a minimum. Frontex staff need proper training in all these matters and the international community needs to spell out with greater consistency exactly how maritime law should be applied.

21/06/2011  Resolution 1821  
[The interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants](#)

21/06/2011  Recommendation 1974  
[The interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants](#)

## **11. The situation in Tunisia**

In January 2011, two weeks after the “Jasmine Revolution” in Tunisia launched the wave of democratic transformations in the Arab world, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted [Resolution 1791](#) (2011) on the situation in Tunisia. It resolved, *inter alia*, to follow closely the political developments in the country and to find appropriate ways for assisting it in its progression towards democracy.

The present report takes stock of developments in Tunisia since January 2011 and welcomes positive changes and reforms initiated by the transitional authorities in order to meet the democratic expectations of Tunisians. At the same time, the report points to the challenges faced by Tunisia.

Finally, the Political Affairs Committee calls on the Council of Europe (Parliamentary Assembly, Committee of Ministers and Secretary General) to further support and assist Tunisia on its path towards democracy and suggests a series of concrete measures to this effect.

21/06/2011  Resolution 1819  
[The situation in Tunisia](#)

21/06/2011  Recommendation 1972  
[The situation in Tunisia](#)


## **12. Asylum seekers and refugees: sharing responsibilities in Europe**

It is recognised under the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees that asylum places a heavy burden on certain countries and that solutions cannot be found without international co-operation.

The large-scale arrival of boat people on Europe’s shores over the last decade has brought with it new challenges, not only in terms of reception, but also processing of asylum claims, resettlement, relocation and returns. The arrivals brought about by recent conflicts in North Africa have once again put the spotlight on the issue of responsibility sharing, in particular in relation to Malta, Italy and Greece.

Paradoxically, the number of asylum claims in Europe is not insurmountable, even if for small countries such as Malta, the strain is much more marked. The issue is, however, creating tension across Europe with “frontline” states pleading for responsibility sharing. The so-called “Dublin system”, which supposedly regulates responsibility for dealing with asylum claims in the European Union, is in need of reform. Member states of the Council of Europe have to show more solidarity with the “front-line” states, and they must encourage the European Union to provide further support to states under pressure, notably through funding, through the border control agency Frontex and also through the newly established European Asylum Support Office. The European Union should also be ready to share information and give

support to European countries, non-member states of the European Union, on issues relevant to managing mixed flows of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

21/06/2011  Recommendation 1973  
[Asylum seekers and refugees: sharing responsibilities in Europe](#)


21/06/2011  Resolution 1820  
[Asylum seekers and refugees: sharing responsibilities in Europe](#)

### **13. Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of Morocco**

In February 2010, the Parliament of Morocco made an official request for “Partner for Democracy” status with the Parliamentary Assembly. The report offers an overview of the institutional and political situation in Morocco. It concludes that the request of the Parliament of Morocco meets, both in form and in substance, the requirements laid down in Rule 60 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. It therefore proposes to grant Partner for Democracy status to the Parliament of Morocco.

At the same time, the report stresses the need for Morocco to continue and deepen reforms aimed at consolidating democratic transformations, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. It singles out benchmarks which are of key importance for this.

It suggests that the Assembly should review in two years' time the state of progress achieved in implementing the political commitments undertaken by the Parliament of Morocco and the political and institutional reforms.

21/06/2011  Resolution 1818  
[Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of Morocco](#)

### **14. Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the financial years 2012-2013**

Recognising that it must play its part in the general reform process at the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly has set up an ad hoc committee on reform, whose proposals – after their adoption by the Assembly – should be implemented in January 2012. At the same time, the Assembly welcomes the decision by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Committee of Ministers to draw up the Council of Europe’s budget and programme on a biennial basis for 2012 and 2013, but would like to see greater flexibility in its application.

20/06/2011  Resolution 1817  
[Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the financial years 2012-2013](#)