



## Resolution 2068 (2015)<sup>1</sup>

Provisional version

# Towards a new European Social Model

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The European Social Model is an evolving set of principles and policies responding to the aspirations and expressed democratic votes of the peoples of Europe. It is inextricably interwoven with the process of closer European unity developed after the Second World War as embodied in the Council of Europe and the European Union, which share the same commitment to the values of human dignity, individual freedom, social solidarity, political liberty and the rule of law that form the basis of all genuine democracy.
2. While the characteristics of the European Social Model varied considerably from country to country, its contribution to economic and social progress came to be identified as an integral part of Europe's identity and became a reference for countries previously subjected to authoritarian regimes.
3. Developed in western Europe in a period of rapid economic and demographic growth, the European Social Model started to be challenged in the 1970s as a result of accelerated globalisation, off-shoring of manufacturing, the impact of new information technologies in all economic and social spheres, the ageing of the population, the transformation of family structures and lifestyles, increased migration flows and the break-up of a minimum of political consensus following the collapse of communist regimes in central and eastern Europe.
4. As noted by different international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), these challenges went hand in hand, particularly in recent years, with rising social and economic inequalities, corruption and large-scale phenomena of tax evasion and fraud putting into question social cohesion and threatening political stability in a number of countries. The austerity measures implemented in many European countries following the 2008 financial crisis compounded some of the existing problems.
5. Facing such trends, the Parliamentary Assembly notably regrets the continuous downgrading of employment and working conditions, young people's difficulties in accessing the labour market, the weakening of collective bargaining procedures and agreements, and the reduction of the scope and quality of public services, including for the most vulnerable (children, ethnic minorities, migrants or people with disabilities).
6. In this respect, the Parliamentary Assembly recalls some of its previous resolutions on these matters, such as [Resolution 1885 \(2012\)](#) on the young generation sacrificed, [Resolution 1993 \(2014\)](#) on decent work for all, [Resolution 2032 \(2015\)](#) on equality and the crisis, and [Resolution 2033 \(2015\)](#) on the protection of the right to bargain collectively, including the right to strike. The Assembly considers that high standards should notably be maintained regarding decent employment and working conditions for all, universal and sustainable social protection systems, inclusive labour markets, well-functioning social dialogue at various levels and quality public services. Social cohesion and solidarity should be promoted as transversal values underlying political action.

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1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2015 (26th Sitting) (see [Doc. 13795](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Ms Maria de Belém Roseira). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2015 (26th Sitting).

7. However, to be meaningful in the future, the European Social Model should not only counterbalance market dysfunctions and insufficiencies, but also promote new approaches to education and training, social and economic participation, environmental sustainability, new forms of public services delivery using new technologies and taking into account changes in family structures and lifestyles. A new European Social Model should not only be a safety net but also positively contribute to wealth creation through social investment.

8. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly calls on member States of the Council of Europe to take the following action:

8.1. as regards social rights in general:

8.1.1. ensure the compatibility of new policy measures with individual and collective social rights, in particular by consulting in advance national human rights institutions;

8.1.2. strengthen the implementation of social rights by reinforcing supervisory mechanisms, including by ratifying the Amending Protocol to the European Social Charter (ETS No. 128, "Turin Protocol") and its Additional Protocol Providing for a System of Collective Complaints (ETS No. 158);

8.2. as regards national socio-economic policies, promote non-discriminatory access to the labour market and decent employment conditions for all, as well as:

8.2.1. developing and implementing comprehensive strategies against child poverty;

8.2.2. developing and implementing strategies in favour of youth employment, notably addressing current difficulties for young people entering the labour market;

8.2.3. continuing to empower women and to integrate them into the labour market thanks to the provision of affordable, reliable and high-quality childcare services;

8.2.4. implementing innovative ways for continuous employment of the elderly in an ageing society (for example through flexible part-time models, mentorship, etc.);

8.2.5. developing and implementing specific employment strategies for the inclusion of groups which are regularly subject to discrimination (ethnic minorities, migrants, the disabled);

8.2.6. providing incentives or directly investing in new activities for increased job creation (in sectors such as renewable energies, digital technology infrastructures and innovative health and social services);

8.3. as regards national educational and training policies:

8.3.1. develop educational policies and systems aimed at creating equal opportunities from an early age (to break "cycles of disadvantage" through early intervention) and including strategies of life-long learning;

8.3.2. ensure professional training and continuous professional education in line with the latest "state of the art" technological progress (digital technologies, biotechnologies, etc.);

8.3.3. strengthen education systems which have proved successful in certain national contexts (for example "dual systems" combining training "on the job" and academic teaching);

8.3.4. orient young people in their transition between educational systems and the labour market to overcome mismatches between available profiles and jobs, and favour entrepreneurship;

8.4. as regards fiscal legislation and taxation policies:

8.4.1. strengthen the redistributive effects of taxation systems through relevant reforms (notably reassessing taxes on property and wealth and taxes on financial transactions);

8.4.2. improve tax compliance by fighting tax evasion and the use of tax havens, and redirect the revenues to social and economic investments, thus creating quality employment opportunities;

- 8.5. as regards social protection systems and social benefits:
  - 8.5.1. improve the sustainability of social protection systems, including by ensuring that social benefits are provided in a targeted manner;
  - 8.5.2. guarantee good governance of social benefit systems and fight any form of corruption to maximise the redistributive effects of these systems;
- 8.6. as regards public services and investment:
  - 8.6.1. put an end to current austerity policies and develop more sustainable measures as a way out of the enduring crisis, including by redirecting savings resulting from other measures to “social investment” policies with an emphasis on new types of infrastructure and services (including renewable energies, digital technologies and innovative health care and prevention);
  - 8.6.2. modernise the provision of public services using new digital technologies, developing citizens’ capacities in this respect and decentralising policymaking while ensuring universal access to these services;
  - 8.6.3. support local and regional authorities in fulfilling their respective responsibilities in terms of public services provided to their citizens.