
Council of Europe: Mijatovic, “address poverty systematically, including by pursuing fiscal policies based on human rights”

“With extreme poverty on the rise, I call on all member states to address poverty systematically and comprehensively, including by pursuing fiscal policies that are firmly based on human rights”, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatovic, said today, on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Eradicating poverty is the first of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Since 2021, however, poverty has been on the rise again. The pandemic has significantly reversed progress made on poverty reduction in Europe, exacerbating pre-existing and structural deficiencies in social protection systems. “In 2022, the war in Ukraine, high energy prices, trade disruptions and rising inflation are destabilising an already weakened system, pushing more and more families into poverty”, the Council of Europe said in a statement. According to a report by the European Investment Bank, “the impact of rising energy and food prices is particularly dire in countries in Central and South Eastern Europe, where a relatively larger share of the population is at risk of poverty, while savings rates and incomes tend to be lower overall”. In July 2022, Germany’s main foodbank reported that over two million persons had sought assistance, as 600,000 more people now live below the poverty line than before the pandemic. According to a report on poverty in the UK, the country was facing a “tide in poverty” in 2021. In Spain, thousands of people rely on emergency food aid and demand for social housing has sharply increased.

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