

Economic, social and cultural rights of older persons – 18 October 2019, Brussels



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List of EU countries examined by the CESCR Committee at the end of 2019 and in 2020

EU Country	Document type	CESCR session	Start and end date
Denmark	Concluding observations	CESCR 66	30/09/2019- 18/10/2019
Slovakia	Concluding observations	CESCR 66	30/09/2019-18/10/2019
Latvia	List of issues	CESCR Pre-Sessional Working Group 65	21/10/2019-25/10/2019
Belgium	State party report under LoIPR	CESCR 67	17/02/2020 -06/03/2020
Italy	List of issues prior to reporting (LoIPR)	CESCR pre-sessional working group 66	9/03/2020 – 13/03/2020
Austria	State party report under LoIPR	CESCR session 68	28/09/2020 -16/10/2020
Finland	State party report under LoIPR	CESCR session 68	28/09/2020 -16/10/2020
Latvia	Concluding observations	CESCR session 68	28/09/2020 -16/10/2020

What have been the Committee's recommendations related to older persons' rights in Europe?

EU COUNTRY	DATE	REFERENCE	CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS RELATED TO OLDER PERSON'S RIGHTS
FRANCE	16/05/ 2008	E/C.12/FRA/CO/3	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fFRA%2fCO%2f3&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee remains deeply concerned about high suicide rate existing in the State party, especially among persons aged between 15 and 44, despite the various plans and strategies adopted by the State party to combat this phenomenon.</p> <p><u>Committee's recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -to strengthen efforts to analyse the motives for committing suicide, with a view to developing effective measures aimed at the prevention of suicide among particularly vulnerable groups, including young people, homosexuals, persons addicted to drugs or alcohol, detainees and older persons -to include in next periodic report statistical data, disaggregated on the grounds of age and gender, on the number of persons that have committed or attempted suicide, as well as information on progress made in implementing the various plans and strategies put in place to prevent suicide
SWEDEN	21/11/ 2008	E/C.12/SWE/CO/5	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fSWE%2fCO%2f5&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee notes the various initiatives, programmes and policies with regard to the realization of the right to work, aimed at groups whose access to employment is limited, such as young persons and older people, persons who have been on long-term social assistance and persons of foreign background</p> <p><u>Committee's recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -to provide detailed information, in the next periodic report, on the results and follow-up initiatives of the reforms policies and programmes adopted to improve the quality of life of the elderly, such as the competency study focused on staff in elderly care - to provide more detailed information on the 'Free Choice Act'

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	4/05/2009	E/C.12/GBR/CO/5	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fGBR%2fCO%2f5&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee is concerned that pension entitlements do not provide the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, including women, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities, with an adequate standard of living (art. 9)</p> <p>The Committee continues to be concerned that poverty and fuel poverty, especially among children, remain widespread in the State party, despite the level of its economic development and the positive steps it has taken poverty levels vary considerably between and within regions and cities as well as between different groups of society, with higher poverty levels among ethnic minorities, asylum-seekers and migrants, older persons, single mothers, and persons with disabilities (art. 11)</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -to ensure that the State pension reform of the Pension Act 2008, which introduces a new private saving scheme to come into effect in 2012, provides sufficient flexibility to enable especially the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups to benefit from both schemes and to increase their pension entitlements. -To carry out a targeted information campaign about the pension reforms to make people aware of their rights and responsibilities -To provide detailed information, in the next periodic report, on the impact of the pension reform, especially on the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups -to intensify the efforts to combat poverty, fuel poverty, and social exclusion, in particular with regard to the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups and in the most affected regions and city areas
NETHERLANDS	19/11/2010	E/C.12/NLD/CO/4 -5	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fNLD%2fCO%2f4-5&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee is concerned at reports that many older persons are denied appropriate care, including in nursing homes, due to the insufficient number of caregivers, the lack of sufficiently trained personnel and the absence of a comprehensive enactment on geriatric health care (arts. 12 and 2, para. 2).</p>

		<p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -accord priority to the improvement of the health-care system for older persons, in order to meet its obligation of ensuring availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of health care for them -adopt urgently a strategy on the health of older persons, in line with the Committee's general comment No. 14 (2000) on the right to the highest attainable standard of health. The Committee also urges the State party to monitor the quality of facilities, goods and services provided to older persons through an effective inspection mechanism - in view of the ageing population, the Committee encourages the State party to adopt a coherent and comprehensive strategy to address the difficulties faced by older persons -in this connection, the Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 6 (1995) on the economic, social and cultural rights of older persons
GERMANY	20/05/ 2011	E/C.12/DEU/CO/5 https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fDEU%2fCO%2f5&Lang=en <p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee notes with deep concern that the State party has not taken sufficient measures to improve the situation of older persons in nursing homes who reportedly live in inhuman conditions and continue to receive inappropriate care due to a shortage of qualified personnel and inadequate application of standards of care (art. 12).</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -to take immediate steps to improve the situation of older persons in nursing homes. The Committee particularly calls on the State party to allocate the necessary resources to train nursing care personnel according to the recently adopted standards of training. The Committee also calls on the State party to conduct more frequent and thorough inspections of nursing homes. In this regard, the Committee draws the attention of the State party to the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (General Assembly resolution 46/91 of 16 December 1991) as well as its general comment No. 6 on the economic, social and cultural rights of older persons (1995).
ESTONIA	2/12/ 2011	E/C.12/EST/CO/2 https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fEST%2fCO%2f2&Lang=en <p>The Committee requests the State party to include in its next periodic report more detailed information on:</p> <p>...</p> <p>(b) The coverage of health care for older persons, particularly older women, including the services provided to them;</p> <p>...</p>

		(g) The measures taken to ensure that the population benefits, without discrimination, from scientific progress and its application.
		The Committee further requests that the State party provide the relevant data for (a) to (f) on a disaggregated basis by year, sex, and urban/rural area, during the reporting cycle.
SPAIN	18/05/ 2012	E/C.12/ESP/CO/5 https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fc.12%2fESP%2fCO%2f5&Lang=en
		<u>Committee's observations:</u>
		The Committee notes with concern that pensions are in many cases below subsistence level, so that pensioners are at risk of falling into poverty. The Committee is particularly concerned about the situation of women who receive widows' pensions (arts. 9, 10, 11 and 12).
		<u>Committee recommendations:</u>
		- that the State party review the level of both contributory and non-contributory retirement pensions, with a view to ensuring that all pensioners are guaranteed an adequate standard of living , even in times of economic and financial crisis.
BULGARIA	30/11/ 2012	E/C.12/BGR/CO/4 -5 https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fc.12%2fBGR%2fCO%2f4-5&Lang=en
		<u>Committee's observations:</u>
		The Committee is concerned that the minimum wage, the unemployment benefits and old age benefits set in the State party are not sufficient to meet the living costs and to ensure a decent standard of living to the recipients and their families (arts. 7 and 9).
		<u>Committee recommendations:</u>
		- reinforce its National Programme for the Integration of Refugees throughout its territory, including through the implementation of language training courses more adapted to the persons in need, of social orientation and vocational training programmes, and providing special attention to vulnerable persons, including older persons and persons with disabilities.
		-to establish an effective system of indexation and regular adjustment of the minimum wage, unemployment benefits, pensions and other social assistance for older persons , to the cost of living, providing the recipients and their families with a decent standard of living .
DENMARK	17/05/ 2013	E/C.12/DNK/CO/5 https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fc.12%2fDNK%2fCO%2f5&Lang=en

		<u>Committee recommendations:</u>
		-to take steps to ensure that all disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals, including persons with disabilities, as well as children from low-income families and migrant children, and older persons can fully enjoy their right to take part in cultural life .
AUSTRIA	29/11/ 2013 E/C.12/AUT/CO/4	https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fAUT%2fCO%2f4&Lang=en
		<u>Committee's observations:</u>
		The Committee expresses deep concern that, in spite of the adoption of the Disability Equality Package in 2006, persons with disabilities still face significant obstacles in their enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, including access to employment, education, housing and social security benefits. In particular, the Committee expresses concern that persons with disabilities who perform occupational therapy activities receive little or no compensation for their work and are unable to contribute to an independent old-age pension scheme (arts. 2, 6, 7, 9 and 11–14)
		<u>Committee recommendations:</u>
		-to take concrete measures with specific targets to ensure that persons with disabilities can fully enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights as equal members of society, taking into account general comment No. 5 (1994) on persons with disabilities. In particular, the Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that persons who work in the context of occupational therapy have access to a diverse range of activities with sufficient pay, and are able to benefit fully from social security schemes so as to enjoy an adequate standard of living.
BELGIUM	29/11/ 2013 E/C.12/BEL/CO/4	https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fBEL%2fCO%2f4&Lang=en
		<u>Committee's observations:</u>
		The Committee notes with concern that youth unemployment among 15–24-year-olds remains high, especially in the Walloon Region (25 per cent in 2011) and the Brussels-Capital Region (45 per cent in 2011) as it does among certain categories, such as persons aged 55 to 64 , women, and persons with disabilities. The Committee is also concerned by the disparities in the jobless rate between regions. ... (art. 6).
		<u>Committee recommendations:</u>
		-to strengthen and continue its action to combat youth unemployment effectively, including for the least qualified, and

		<p>particularly in the Walloon and Brussels-Capital Regions, as well as unemployment among persons aged 55–64, women and persons with disabilities;</p> <p>-to reinforce the impact of its specific plans and policies to reduce joblessness among non-European Union migrants. The Committee requests the State party to provide in its next report detailed statistical information on the impact of its unemployment reduction measures and to evaluate them on a regular basis. The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 18 (2005) on the right to work.</p>
CZECH REPUBLIC	23/05/ 2014 E/C.12/CZE/CO/2	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fCZE%2fCO%2f2&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee notes with concern the slow progress of de-institutionalization in the State party since the adoption in 2007 of Government resolution No. 127 on the “concept of support for the transformation of residential social services into different types of social services provided in a community of users and supporting social inclusion of the user”. (arts. 12 and 10).</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -to base the implementation of the Strategy for the Reform of Psychiatric Care (2014–2020) on improving the enjoyment of all human rights by persons with psychosocial disabilities, including their right to independent living and inclusion in the community, and invest adequate resources in the process; -to integrate the lessons learned from pilot projects in deploying full-scale de-institutionalization; -to adopt action plans with clear timelines for the development of social services at the regional and municipal levels -to develop community-based care for older persons.
LITHUANIA	23/05/ 2014 E/C.12/LTU/CO/2	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fLTU%2fCO%2f2&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee is concerned that youth unemployment remains twice as high as the total national unemployment level, and that unemployment among persons over 50 years of age is increasing. Additionally, while noting the implementation of projects to increase employment in rural areas, the Committee is concerned at the increasing regional gap with regard to unemployment (art. 6).</p>

Committee recommendations:

-To continue and strengthen its efforts to combat unemployment, targeting the most affected regions and disadvantaged and marginalized groups. In that regard, the Committee notes the adoption of the Employment Increasing Programme for 2014 to 2020 to promote the creation of jobs in regions with high unemployment, and requests that the State party provide information on the progress achieved in its next periodic report.

FINLAND	28/11/ 2014 E/C.12/FIN/CO/6	https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fFIN%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en
<p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee remains concerned that women, particularly women from ethnic minorities, older women and women with disabilities, continue to face multiple forms of discrimination in the enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights. The Committee also notes with concern the persistent gender-based segregation of occupations and sectors, which is the main cause of the continuing gender-based wage gap (art. 3).</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <p>-to adopt all measures necessary to address the challenges faced by women from disadvantaged or marginalized groups in the enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights;</p> <p>-to take appropriate measures to eliminate the persistent gender pay gap by addressing the significant vertical and horizontal gender-based segregation in the labour market, which results in women occupying lower paid jobs and facing obstacles in the enjoyment of career opportunities on an equal footing with men;</p> <p>-to increase its efforts to provide necessary social support in terms of children's centres and parental leave, including through more awareness-raising on the equal sharing of responsibilities within the family and in the society.</p>		

SLOVENIA	28/11/ 2014 E/C.12/SVN/CO/2	https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fSVN%2fCO%2f2&Lang=en
<p><u>Committee's observations:</u></p> <p>The Committee is concerned about the increasing risk of poverty in the State party, faced by especially disadvantaged and marginalized groups such as older persons, including pensioners, women, persons with disabilities, Roma, single-parent families and families with only one employed parent. The Committee is also concerned</p>		

at regional disparities in poverty levels, with the eastern and south-eastern regions being most affected by poverty (art. 11).

Committee recommendations:

-to revise the eligibility conditions and rates for social security benefits , including social assistance , while taking into account the actual cost of living in the State party, and paying particular attention to unemployed persons, persons with disability, and **older persons** ;

- to ratify International Labour Organization Convention No. 118 (1962) concerning Equality of Treatment (Social Security).

IRELAND

19/06/ 2015 E/C.12/IRL/CO/3

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fIRL%2fCO%2f3&Lang=en

Committee's observations:

The Committee is concerned at the increase in the number of people living in consistent **poverty** or at risk of poverty, particularly among children, single-parent families, **older persons**, persons with disabilities, migrants, Travellers and Roma. It is also concerned at the lack of integration of economic, social and cultural rights into poverty reduction policies as well as at the absence of concrete policies addressing the specific needs of the groups affected.

Committee recommendations:

- that the State party step up its efforts to reduce poverty, paying special attention to disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, including through the adoption of **poverty reduction programmes** and strategies with concrete targets and a time frame for implementation. It also recommends that the State party integrate a human rights-based approach in all poverty reduction programmes and strategies, guaranteeing entitlements to individuals and ensuring accountability.

GREECE

9/10/ 2015 E/C.12/GRC/CO/2

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fGRC%2fCO%2f2&Lang=en

Committee's observations:

The Committee is concerned about the restructuring of the State party's **social security system** that was carried out as a consequence of the austerity measures implemented and that led to drastic cuts in social security benefits and restrictive entitlements and conditions. It is also concerned that the current coverage and benefits are inadequate to ensure a decent living for the recipients and members of their families and are not in line with article 9 of the Covenant. The Committee is further concerned about the

insufficient assistance provided to persons whose benefits have been reduced or discontinued and at the cuts and stringent terms and conditions imposed on non-contributory **old-age benefits**, which have a negative impact on the living conditions of older persons and their families.

Committee recommendations:

- that the State party reconsider cuts to benefits from non-contributory schemes insofar as they affect the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, and reverse the cuts on **contributory social security benefits** as soon as possible. Referring the State party to the Committee's general comment No. 19 (2007) on the right to social security, the Committee recommends that the State party adopt a **human rights-based approach** in assessing the impact of cuts on benefits and provide disaggregated statistics in its next periodic report on how the austerity measures have affected the enjoyment of the right to social security.

FRANCE

23/06/ 2016 E/C.12/FRA/CO/4

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fFRA%2fCO%2f4&Lang=en

Committee recommendations:

-to make certain that the mechanisms for increasing the flexibility of the labour market that it is proposing do not have the effect of rendering employment less stable or reducing the social protection available to workers. It calls upon the Committee to ensure that any and all retrogressive measures relating to **working conditions** (...) are not discriminatory and do not have a disproportionate impact on **disadvantaged or marginalized groups**.

-to guarantee effective access to the various types of social security benefits, including **health-care benefits**, in overseas departments and regions and overseas communities;

- to expedite the adoption of the bill on the elimination of discrimination against **people living in situations of hardship**.

- to invest more resources in the most disadvantaged departments in order to equalize the level of **health expenditure** per capita;

-to deploy more qualified **health-care personnel** to overseas territories;

SWEDEN

23/06/ 2016 E/C.12/SWE/CO/6

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fSWE%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en

Committee recommendations:

-to include statistical information on the extent of **homelessness**, disaggregated by **age**, sex, urban/rural population and ethnic

			<p>groups, and on the measures taken to address homelessness and the results achieved in that regard, in the next periodic report under the Covenant;</p> <p>-to take measures to provide alternative forms of mental health treatment, in particular outpatient treatment;</p>
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	23/06/ 2019	E/C.12/GBR/CO/6	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fGBR%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <p>- to take all necessary measures to ensure adequate pension benefits, care and treatment of older people, including by carrying out training programmes for doctors and health-care professionals about the rights of older persons and the treatment of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.</p> <p>-to review its policies and programmes introduced since 2010 and conduct a comprehensive assessment of the cumulative impact of the austerity measures on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, in particular women, children and persons with disabilities, that is recognized by all stakeholders.</p>
POLAND	7/10/ 2016	E/C.12/POL/CO/6	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fPOL%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee's observations</u></p> <p>While welcoming the proposal to increase the amounts of disability and retirement pensions in 2017, the Committee is concerned about: (a) the lack of progress towards a unified pension system; (b) the fact that the income criterion for granting social assistance is lower than the minimum subsistence level for most types of families; (c) the number of persons living in extreme poverty who do not receive assistance; ... (art. 9).</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <p>-To adopt measures towards the unification of the pension system, and standardized rules and regulations;</p> <p>- To guarantee coverage and appropriate benefits for all workers and non-contributory benefits for all disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and families so that they may enjoy an adequate standard of living;</p> <p>-to calculate social assistance benefits on the basis of an accurate poverty assessment;</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to address the practical difficulties faced by disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups in seeking and receiving assistance. -that the State party step up its efforts to guarantee targeted support to all persons living in poverty or at risk of poverty, in particular children, families with three or more children, the unemployed, pensioners, farmers, migrants, Roma, including those from European Union countries, and other individuals and groups who are discriminated against and marginalized, including the homeless, who are not in receipt of social benefits.
SPAIN	25/04/ 2018 E/C.12/ESP/CO/6	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fESP%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -that the State party continue its efforts to implement fully the Spanish Employment Activation Strategy 2017–2020, by, among other means, giving due consideration to groups disproportionately affected by unemployment; - to take the necessary measures, with the participation of all social stakeholders, in particular the trade unions, to eliminate the deficit shown by the pension system, in order to ensure the system's sustainability
GERMANY	12/10/ 2018 E/C.12/DEU/CO/6	<p>https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fDEU%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en</p> <p><u>Committee recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -that the State party increase the level of the basic social benefits by improving the calculation methods of the subsistence level, in the light of the judgment of the Federal Constitutional Court of 23 July 2014. It urges the State party to review the sanctions regime in order to ensure that the subsistence minimum is always be applied. - that the State party intensify its efforts to secure a sufficient number of qualified caregivers for older persons, in accordance with the World Health Organization Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, and ensure that such caregivers enjoy just and favourable conditions of work. It reiterates its previous recommendations (E/C.12/DEU/CO/5, para. 27) that the State party take immediate steps to improve the situation of older persons in nursing homes, allocate the necessary resources to training nursing care personnel and conduct more frequent and thorough inspections of nursing homes. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general

comment No. 6 (1995) on the economic, social and cultural rights of older persons.

- that the State party take all measures necessary to ensure that all persons in the State party, including asylum-seekers, **have equal access to preventive, curative and palliative health services**, regardless of their legal status and documentation, and review the Law on Basic Unemployment Benefits for Non-Nationals and the Act on Benefits for Asylum Applicants accordingly.

ESTONIA

08/03/ E/C.12/EST/CO/3
2019

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fEST%2fCO%2f3&Lang=en

Committee recommendations:

- That the State party ensure that **digital assistance** and face-to-face support are easily available for those who have neither access to the Internet nor the digital skills to **access information and communications technology-based public services**. It also recommends that the State party ensure that all persons in the State party enjoy the benefit of scientific progress and its applications, including information and communications technology, without discrimination.

-that the State party ensure that the level of **State pension insurance** benefits is sufficient to provide beneficiaries, particularly those who are living alone, with an adequate standard of living and to reduce the prevalence of **pensioners at risk of poverty**. It also recommends that the State party extend the coverage of the mandatory funded pension scheme to the self-employed and reopen the opportunity for those who were born between 1942 and 1982 to enrol in the pension scheme. In this context, the Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 19 (2008) on the right to social security.

-to take effective measures to **reduce the high at-risk-of-poverty rate**, including through adequate social assistance and active employment services, and to take every possible measure to target the most disadvantaged individuals living under the absolute poverty line.

BULGARIA

08/03/ E/C.12/BGR/CO/6
2019

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fBGR%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en

Committee recommendations:

- that the State party conduct a needs assessment and introduce specific care solutions and services for the diagnosis and treatment of **persons with mental health conditions, including among older persons**, as well as allocating a sufficient budget to ensure **adequate care and services for older persons**, within the framework of the National Strategy for Long-term Care. The Committee also

recommends that the State party increase the **capacity of geriatric services**, and that community-based care and integrated health and social services be available and accessible to older persons, including in rural and isolated areas. It further recommends that health practitioners be trained on early diagnosis and care of mental health conditions, especially among older persons, and that training and support be provided to both formal and informal caregivers.

-that the State party pursue its efforts to adjust **the levels of social allowances** and establish a sustainable system of indexation and, if necessary, carry out recalculations of social allowances, with a view to guaranteeing **an adequate standard of living** for beneficiaries and their families. The Committee also recommends that the State party allocate the necessary financial resources and training to strengthen the administrative capacity of social workers, with a view to ensuring adequate and individualized support for beneficiaries.

-that the State party take measures to increase the availability of **health care** and recruit qualified medical doctors and nurses to work in disadvantaged regions and districts, including by providing incentives.