The protection of social rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights:
The right to respect for private and family life

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ABSTRACT

The protection of human rights is divided into two parallel systems within the framework of the Council of Europe. The main shortcoming of the European Convention on Human Rights is that it provides almost exclusively for civil and political rights. Therefore, the protection of social rights comes up against the substantive limits of the text. Social rights are guaranteed under the European Social Charter, which should be complementary to the Convention in the social field. Nonetheless, applicants lodge individual complaints before the Court and although the vast majority of the applications directly concerned with social rights have been declared inadmissible, in other cases the Court has ruled on social matters.

The right to respect for private and family life as enshrined in Article 8 of the ECHR would be the adequate framework to encompass social rights and, in the light of the case law, there are already some social rights that can be considered as enforceable under that provision. This raises questions about the limits of the Convention interpretation by European judges and demonstrates that a deep debate on the links between two control organs, the European Committee of Social Rights and the European Court on Human Rights, is needed towards an effective enjoyment and protection of social rights within the Council of Europe.
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECtHR or the Court</td>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
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<td>ESC or the Charter</td>
<td>European Social Charter (1961)</td>
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<td>rESC</td>
<td>Revised European Social Charter (1996)</td>
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<td>CCP</td>
<td>Collective Complaint Procedure under the European Social Charter</td>
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<td>ECSR or the Committee</td>
<td>European Committee of Social Rights (former Committee of Independent Experts, renamed in 1998)</td>
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<td>CoE</td>
<td>The Council of Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ibidem</td>
<td>To refer the footnote cited just before Paragraph</td>
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<td>Para.</td>
<td>Paragraph</td>
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<td>Article 8 (2) ECHR</td>
<td>Article 8 paragraph 2 of the ECHR</td>
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<td>Supra footnote 23</td>
<td>Refers to the footnote number 23 mentioned above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Airey case</td>
<td>Referring to a relevant case already mentioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACE</td>
<td>Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe document</td>
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<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td><em>Exempli gratia</em>, for example</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 7

I. SOCIAL RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE 10

A) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS 10
   1) THE CURRENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT 10
   2) SOCIAL RIGHTS UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS: PRINCIPLES OF INDIVISIBILITY, INTERDEPENDENCE AND INTERRELATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS 12

B) TWO PARALLEL SYSTEMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS 14
   3) THE LIMITED SCOPE ratione materiae OF THE CONVENTION 15
   4) NO WATER-TIGHT DIVISION SEPARATING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS FROM CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS 15
   5) DEVELOPING THE SYSTEM OF SAFEGUARDS OF SOCIAL RIGHTS WITHIN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE 16
   6) THE CHOICE OF THE FORUM: THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS 18

C) THE JUSTICIABILITY OF SOCIAL RIGHTS 19
   1) POLITICAL (UN)WILLINGNESS 20
   2) TECHNICAL ABILITY: JUDICIAL ADJUDICATION 20
   3) ECONOMIC OR MATERIAL ABILITY: ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS 21
   4) HUMAN RIGHTS IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY 22

II. METHODOLOGY FOR INTERPRETATION OF THE CONVENTION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ARTICLE 8 23

A) THE USE OF WIDE CONCEPTS 23
B) AN EXAMINATION OF THE INTERPRETATION METHODS 25
   1) CONSTRUCTIVE INTERPRETATION AS A MEANS TO DEFINE NOTIONS 25
   2) CONSENSUAL INTERPRETATION AND THE EUROPEAN COMMON STANDARD 26
   3) STATES’ MARGIN OF APPRECIATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL POLICY 29
   4) THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE CONVENTION 30
   5) THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CONVENTION 35
6) Limits of the Interpretation: Between the Judicial Activism and the Autolimitation

C) States’ Positive Obligations Under Article 8 of the Convention

1) Negative and Positive Obligations: Problematic Dichotomy
2) Tripartite Approach: Obligation to Respect, Protect and Fulfil
3) Obligation of Means and Obligation of Results

III. Application of Interpretation Methods to Article 8 in the Case Law: An Adequate Framework to Protect Social Rights

A) Poverty as a Human Rights Violation

1) First Inadmissible Decision: A Merely Negative Convention
2) Escalating on the States’ Obligations: The Obligation to Respect or the “Horizontal Effect”
3) Towards the Obligation to Fulfil?

B) The Right to Social Benefits: Towards the Respect for Private and Family Life and Home

1) Eligibility for Social Benefits
2) The Right to a Level of Social Benefits to Maintain a Proper Standard of Living

C) The Right to Social Assistance Including Effective Counselling to Access to Social Rights

1) Placement of Children in Public Care: Interference in Family Life and Proportionality of Measures
2) The European Social Charter: Effective Access to Social Rights as an Enhancement of the Enjoyment of Civil and Political Rights
3) Conclusion


1) Characterisation: The Right to Respect for Private Life and the Provision or the Payment of Medical Treatment
2) The Problematic of Allocation of Public Fund
3) Obligation to Utilise the Maximum of Available Resources
4) Conclusion
E) THE RIGHT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY 77
1) THE “PRIVATE LIFE” OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND STATE’S POSITIVE OBLIGATIONS TO “RESPECT” IT 77
2) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN ARTICLE 8 AND SOCIAL RIGHTS 79
3) CONCLUSION 81
F) FINAL CONSIDERATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 8 OF THE ECHR 82
1) THE RIGHT TO HOUSING 82
2) THE RIGHT TO ACCESS TO A PROFESSION 83

IV. CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS FOR THE NEXT YEARS 85

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY 89

VI. ANNEX 102

A) EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: LIST OF ADMISSIBILITY DECISIONS 102
B) EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS 102
C) EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: LIST OF JUDGMENTS 103
D) EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS: LIST OF DECISIONS 105
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