



Collective Complaints As a Means for Protecting Social Rights in Europe

By Giuseppe Palmisano

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‘The collective complaints procedure before the European Committee of Social Rights is one of the most powerful tools to uphold social rights in Europe, yet it is also among the least well understood. Giuseppe Palmisano is uniquely well positioned to provide this assessment: his contribution is an indispensable guide not only to the users, but also to all those who care about social justice in Europe.’ —Olivier De Schutter is the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.

The collective complaints procedure was created in 1995 as an optional quasi-judicial monitoring mechanism specific for the protection of social rights, within the framework of the Council of Europe treaty system of the European Social Charter. In recent years, the importance and use of this procedure has increased considerably, in the context of a number of serious economic and social crises which are impacting negatively on the effective enjoyment of social rights in Europe. This short monograph explores and clarifies the specific features, the potential and limits of the collective complaints procedure, intended as a sui generis instrument for the protection of social rights, in the light of its evolutive application by the European Committee of Social Rights (the monitoring body of the European Social Charter) and its real impact on the state and conditions of social rights in the European countries concerned.

About the Author

Giuseppe Palmisano, former President and currently General Rapporteur of the European Committee of Social Rights, is Full Professor of International Law at the University of Roma Tre.

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