Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Combating eugenics and discrimination against people with disabilities

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Mr Luca VOLONTÈ and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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People with disabilities still experience discrimination in their daily lives. The type and extent of discrimination varies depending on the cultures. They are perceived and treated differently, being considered as inferior. People with disabilities suffer various forms of discrimination, including being rejected by and segregated from mainstream society.

In technologically advanced societies, people with genetic disabilities increasingly suffer from a new widespread prejudice: eugenic ideology which considers their very existence as a medical error. In some European countries, over 90% of fetuses diagnosed as Down syndrome are routinely eliminated before birth. Eugenics is a reality in countries where prenatal screening has become systematic, in turn leading to the stigmatization of persons with genetic disability and their families, in particular those with Down syndrome.

European and international law has repeatedly condemned eugenic ideology since the Nuremberg trials in Articles 4 and 10 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons. Other European and international norms, such as the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, the Convention of the Rights of the Child as well as the Oviedo Convention, contain similar provisions.

The Parliamentary Assembly should therefore analyse and discuss this subject and invite the member States of the Council of Europe to adopt measures in order to implement their commitment “that every human being has the inherent right to life and (...) to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others”, as required, inter alia, by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

VOLONTÈ Luca, Italy, EPP/CD
AGIUS Francis, Malta, EPP/CD
AGRAMUNT Pedro, Spain, EPP/CD
ALIGRUDIĆ Miloš, Serbia, EDG
BONDARENKO Olena, Ukraine, EPP/CD
CONDE Agustín, Spain, EPP/CD
DİŞLİ Şaban, Turkey, EPP/CD
ERKAL KARA Tülin, Turkey, EPP/CD
FALZON Joseph, Malta, EPP/CD
FRANKEN Hans, Netherlands, EPP/CD
FRITZ Erich Georg, Germany, EPP/CD
FRUNDA György, Romania, EPP/CD
GHILETCHI Valeriu, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
GRAHAM Sylvi, Norway, EPP/CD
GROZDANOVA Dzhema, Bulgaria, EPP/CD
GRUBER Attila, Hungary, EPP/CD
HALICKI Andrzej, Poland, EPP/CD
HERKEL Andres, Estonia, EPP/CD
IVANIĆ Mladen, Bosnia and Herzegovina, EPP/CD
KYRIAKIDES Stella, Cyprus, EPP/CD
MARCZUŁAJTIS-WALCZAK Jagna, Poland, EPP/CD
MAYER Edgar, Austria, EPP/CD
MOTA AMARAL João Bosco, Portugal, EPP/CD
NEGELE Gebhard, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD
NEUGEBAUER Fritz, Austria, EPP/CD
NYKIEL Mirosława, Poland, EPP/CD
ORZECHOWSKI Maciej, Poland, EPP/CD
OSCARSSON Mikael, Sweden, EPP/CD
PERNASKA Lajla, Albania, EPP/CD
PINTADO Ángel, Spain, EPP/CD
POSTANJYAN Zaruhi, Armenia, EPP/CD
POURBAIX-LUNDIN Marietta, de, Sweden, EPP/CD
QUINTANILLA Carmen, Spain, EPP/CD
ROTNICKA Jadwiga, Poland, EPP/CD
SANÍN Luz Elena, Spain, EPP/CD
SOBOLEV Serhiy, Ukraine, EPP/CD
SOKOLOVA Irena, Bulgaria, NR
TOSHEV Latchezar, Bulgaria, EPP/CD
TSISKARISHVILI Petré, Georgia, EPP/CD
VEJKEY Imre, Hungary, EPP/CD
VIROLAINEN Anne-Mari, Finland, EPP/CD
WACH Piotr, Poland, EPP/CD
WOHLWEND Renate, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD

1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group