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The European economic crisis and the increasing illegal organ trade

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Mikael OSCARSSON and other members of the Assembly

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

The financial crisis in Europe has caused an increase in the illegal trade of human organs. Experts say that the black market in human body parts - traditionally based in India, China, Brazil and the Philippines - is spreading to Western European countries hit by the crisis such as Greece, Italy and Spain. Vulnerable and impoverished people are trying to sell their body parts encouraged by the internet, amoral organ traffickers and a growing need for transplants.

The trade has spread to the United States where, according to experts, there have been many recent cases of poor undocumented immigrants selling their kidneys online.

Jonathan Ratel, a European Union prosecutor, affirmed that organ trafficking is a growth industry thanks to the global financial crisis. He also stated that organ tourists mainly come from the United States, Great Britain, France, Israel, Italy and Germany, and often donors never earn a penny.

According to Organ Watch, a human rights organization in Berkeley (California) dedicated to research on the global traffic in human organs, 15 000 to 20 000 kidneys are sold illegally each year. The United Nations estimates that 5% to 10% of kidney transplants performed annually result from organ trafficking.

The Parliamentary Assembly should address this important issue of concern to all our citizens.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group