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Improving the prevention of socio-economic abortions in Europe

Motion for a recommendation

tabled by Mr Valeriu GHILETCHI and other members of the Assembly

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

Resorting to abortion continues to be very significant in Europe- it targets a third of all pregnancies; there are 4.5 million voluntary abortions a year against 8.5 million births. Generally, in Central and Eastern Europe, the rate of abortion is reducing, although it is still very high in Western Europe. The rate is reducing in certain countries such as Denmark, Switzerland and Italy whereas it is rising in others such as Belgium, Spain and the United Kingdom, particularly among the youth.

75% of women who have had an abortion state that they were constrained by a social or economic necessity. This challenges the effectiveness of the prevention of abortion and presents a challenge to the European society in terms of respect of the women and family social rights, particularly the "*special protection [that] should be accorded to mothers for a reasonable period before and after childbirth*" (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art 10.2).

During the Conference on population and development held in Cairo, governments were committed to "taking appropriate steps to help women avoid abortion, which in no case should be promoted as a method of family planning" (7.24) and to "reduce the recourse to abortion"(8.25). The Parliamentary Assembly has often reaffirmed this commitment, particularly with regards to fighting against Prenatal sex selection (Resolution 1829 (2011)).

It is therefore necessary and possible, by identifying and sharing good practices, to improve the prevention of abortion addressing its socio-economic causes.

By relying on the experience of countries that have succeeded in significantly reducing the rate of abortion, good practices that prevent abortion prior to pregnancy and once pregnancy is ongoing should be identified and the Committee of Ministers should be recommended to adopt them.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
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