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Women's right to access appropriate reproductive health services in the Russian Federation

Written declaration No. 594

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

We the undersigned members of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly are strongly concerned about the three draft laws submitted to the State Duma of the Russian Federation aiming to severely restrict access of women to abortion. They aim:

- to require women to visualise and listen to the heartbeats of the foetus before being given permission to access a legal abortion;
- exclude coverage of abortion from the Obligatory Medical Insurance;
- to prohibit the sale of safe medication that terminate pregnancies.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has clearly stated that “ultrasound scanning is not routinely required for abortion”. It only serves emotionally manipulate women. Excluding insurance coverage for a service that only women need is discriminatory and will affect poor, rural women and women in vulnerable situations. The State medical system must additionally ensure the availability of various methods of abortion suitable at different stages of pregnancy. These proposed measures will lead to backstreet abortions and increase maternal mortality and morbidity rates and are an affront to women's rights.

All individuals are entitled to the highest attainable standard of health, which the State must ensure. We call on parliamentarians in Russia to turn down the above draft laws.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

SUTTER Petra, De, Belgium, SOC
BARNETT Doris, Germany, SOC
BİLGEHAN Gülsün, Turkey, SOC
BRUYN Piet, De, Belgium, NR
CHRISTOFFERSEN Lise, Norway, SOC
FINCKH-KRÄMER Ute, Germany, SOC
HEINRICH Gabriela, Germany, SOC
KOBAKHIDZE Manana, Georgia, SOC
LESKAJ Valentina, Albania, SOC
MAGRADZE Guguli, Georgia, SOC
MAHOUX Philippe, Belgium, SOC
MITCHELL Olivia, Ireland, EPP/CD
MULIĆ Melita, Croatia, SOC
OHLSSON Carina, Sweden, SOC
RAWERT Mechthild, Germany, SOC
SCHMIDT Frithjof, Germany, SOC
SCHWABE Frank, Germany, SOC
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STRIK Tineke, Netherlands, SOC
TAKTAKISHVILI Chiora, Georgia, ALDE
VĚSAITĚ Birutė, Lithuania, SOC
VRIES Klaas, de, Netherlands, SOC
VUČKOVIĆ Nataša, Serbia, SOC
WURM Gisela, Austria, SOC

Total = 24

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