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Universal access to maternal healthcare

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

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

In Europe, with its different health systems, maternal health is a vulnerable area characterised by disparities in universal access to healthcare and information, which leads to health inequities, especially for vulnerable groups. Many women face these inequities, which vary from issues such as language barriers to the urban versus rural divide, and women having to travel long hours in order to receive care. Due to changing demographics and increased mobility, women often face problems in relation to maternal healthcare, especially considering the lack of statistics and proper indicators on measuring the quality of maternal healthcare. The situation is particularly dire for refugee and minority women.

According to preliminary results from the Safe Motherhood Week's Europe-facing Survey, 34% of women sampled across all countries feel that their pregnancy or motherhood has prevented them from advancing in the workplace and 14% of women have felt discriminated against in the workplace during their pregnancy. 33% of women took one or more medications during their pregnancy. One in four surveyed felt that they did not have the appropriate information and support immediately before and after giving birth.

It is high time for Council of Europe member States to improve the situation, with a view to guaranteeing equitable access to maternal healthcare in Europe:

- by providing all women regardless of migration status or minority origin better information and equitable access to healthcare with a view to all women enjoying a safe and healthy motherhood, before, during and after pregnancy;
- by ensuring access to maternal healthcare, which is interconnected to a range of policies such as resilient health systems, maternity leave and responsibility for future generations;
- by boosting co-operation between states and NGOs to exchange best practices in the area of maternal healthcare by establishing monitoring and data collection processes.

