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Promotion of child-friendly age assessment practices for unaccompanied minors

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

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

The problem of age assessment procedures related to the administrative detention of unaccompanied minors was brought to light during the implementation of the Parliamentary Campaign to End Immigration Detention of Children.

As reported by Eurostat, the number of unaccompanied minor asylum-seekers arriving to Europe has increased tremendously over last three years, with almost 90 000 registered in 2015. In cases where the age of the unaccompanied minor is not proved by their documents, the majority of European countries impose specific medical examinations and other methods to determine their real age. The Medecins du Monde (MdM) organisation considers that these medical tests are not reliable and are “used as a tool to regulate migration flows rather than as a tool to promote the fair treatment of particularly vulnerable children.”

The Parliamentary Assembly in its [Resolution 1810 \(2011\)](#) on unaccompanied children in Europe: issues of arrival, stay and return set out a number of principles to be respected during the age assessment procedure. In its [Recommendation 2056 \(2014\)](#) on alternatives to immigration detention of children, it asked the Committee of Ministers to establish guidelines for child-friendly age assessment procedures, but no concrete follow-up has been given to this recommendation.

Some European countries, such as the United Kingdom, have developed national guidance procedures to assist the relevant authorities in undertaking age assessments. The Assembly should take stock of different acceptable, inter-disciplinary and gender-sensitive practices in this area which are compatible with the Council of Europe human rights’ standards and respect children’s rights, while elaborating and promoting guidelines for child-friendly age assessment procedures.

