Parliamentary Assembly
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Overcoming age-based discrimination against older persons

Motion for a resolution
tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

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

Older people have the same rights as everyone else. In accordance with international standards such as the United Nations Principles for Older Persons and Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2014)2 on the promotion of human rights of older persons, guaranteeing the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for older personss means respecting the principles of self-fulfilment, independence, participation and non-discrimination.

Today, however, age-based discrimination against older people is widespread in Council of Europe member States. It takes the form, for example, of restrictions on access to credit facilities, higher car insurance premiums regardless of driving history, arbitrary age-limits on exercising certain professions and activities, or requirements to apply online to benefit from public assistance measures. Older people are also discriminated against in the labour market as younger people on entry-level salaries are often preferred to older candidates with valuable experience, but whose salary may cost more due to seniority.

The Commissioner for Human Rights has underlined that human rights should not be denied or diminished with age: we must instead work harder to overcome the specific barriers that older people may face in realising their rights. These include false but often socially accepted narratives of older people being sick, dependent and passive, which are also widely relayed by the media.

Through the preparation of a thorough, evidence-based report, the Parliamentary Assembly should identify good practices and adopt a set of recommendations aimed at assisting States in overcoming age-based discrimination through law, policy and practice.