Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Compulsory military service in Europe : implications for democratic security, human rights and the rule of law

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Mr Max LUCKS and other members of the Assembly

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

The Russian Federation's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine has fundamentally undermined security in Europe. There is every indication that the military and hybrid threat emanating from the Russian Federation constitutes a new and lasting reality for Europe. Against this background, numerous European States have taken or considered measures to strengthen their military resilience, including through the expansion, reactivation or reintroduction of compulsory military service.

Such decisions are based on legitimate security considerations and on the sovereign responsibility of States to ensure their defence capabilities and the resilience of democratic societies. At the same time, it is essential that these measures remain fully compatible with the fundamental values of the Council of Europe and respect civil liberties, human rights and the rule of law. This concerns, in particular, issues of proportionality, equality of treatment, protection of freedom of conscience, and the legal safeguards governing systems of compulsory service.

Doubts regarding the compatibility of such measures with obligations arising from membership of the Council of Europe could constitute a vulnerability within Europe's democratic security architecture. Such perceptions could be deliberately exploited by the Russian Federation in the context of disinformation and influence campaigns aimed at undermining public trust in democratic institutions and European values.

Against this background, the Parliamentary Assembly should examine and debate, in the framework of a report, the implications of defence policy decisions relating to compulsory military service for democratic security, human rights and the rule of law in Europe.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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