

27.4.2015

0018/2015

WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on autism

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Lapse date: 27.7.2015

Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on autism¹

1. Autism is a lifelong complex brain disorder that appears during early childhood, and affects around 1 per cent of the population. The effects of autism can range from mild to severe impairments of a person's ability to understand everyday information, communicate and interact socially with other people. The causes of autism are still being investigated.
2. There is currently no cure for autism, but it has been demonstrated that early and intensive intervention can help overcome the symptoms of autism and significantly improve the level of independence of people with autism.
3. Despite the importance of early diagnosis to provide adequate support and education, early detection is still lacking across Europe.
4. The Commission and the Council are called upon to support accurate detection and diagnosis of children and adults with autism.
5. The Commission and the Council are also called upon to adopt a strategic and holistic approach to respond to the challenges faced by people with autism throughout their lives. A European strategy should aim at encouraging research on autism, prevalence studies and exchange of best practices regarding evidence-based interventions for children with autism, as well as support and habilitation services for adults.
6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.