Resolution on harmonising the rights of autistic persons

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on harmonising the rights of autistic persons.

There are approximately 100 million persons with disabilities in the EU, among whom 5 million are on the autism spectrum, representing more than 1 in 100 persons. Autistic persons do not all have the same specific characteristics and should therefore be able to benefit from the best possible support according to their own needs in their daily lives and when travelling within the EU.

While stressing the usefulness of the **European Disability Card** for persons with invisible disabilities, such as autism, Parliaments stressed that it is crucial for the scope of this card to include all situations where special conditions or preferential treatment are offered by private operators or public authorities to persons with disabilities, and for this card to ensure these persons' right to free movement across the EU, by facilitating the mutual recognition of disability status for card holders.

Moreover, the resolution called for the adoption of a **European legal status** for persons with disabilities, allowing for mutual recognition and accreditation in all Member States, taking into account the specificity of autism and ensuring the protection and inclusion of all autistic persons.

Member States are urged to:

- facilitate access to autism **diagnosis** for children and adults with a focus on at-risk individuals;

- develop access to reasonable accommodation in all facets of healthcare and diagnosis, with the aim of ensuring that autistic persons enjoy equal access to both physical and psychological healthcare. Members insisted on the development of infrastructures adapted to the reception of autistic persons in hospitals, train stations, airports and in public transport, creating **autism-friendly spaces such as 'silence rooms'**;

- foster the **training** of professionals on autism across all sectors of society, such as the education, health, social, transport and justice sectors, by embedding mandatory autism training in their respective curricula, with the active involvement of autistic persons, their families and representative organisations;

- reform **guardianship systems** to allow the exercise of legal capacity by autistic persons, giving them access to supported decision-making systems, while ensuring that adequate safeguards are in place;

- promote and ensure a legislative and policy framework for the participation of autistic persons in the labour market

- ensure that autistic persons are empowered and have full access to the justice system and to participate in political and public life.

Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to:

- fund and implement autism prevalence studies across all Member States;

- help build understanding of autism and to actively engage in **awareness-raising campaigns**;

- adopt cross-sectoral national strategies to provide sufficient earmarked **funding** for their effective implementation.

Lastly, the resolution highlighted the importance of including a component in the allocation of EU funds dedicated to anti-discrimination policies against autistic persons, especially women and girls, who face particularly high levels of poverty, social exclusion and violence, and of making forced sterilisation punishable as a criminal offence on the basis of the crime of sexual exploitation of women and children.