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Brussels, 10 February 2026

Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly opposes harmful protocol on coercion in mental healthcare

On 28 February, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe issued a negative opinion on the "[Draft Additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine](#)." Rejecting coercive measures, the opinion recommends a stronger focus on mechanisms that promote autonomy, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The Parliamentary Assembly joins [strong opposition by civil society](#), [mental health professionals](#), the Council of Europe's own [Commissioner for Human Rights](#), the [CRPD Committee](#) and Council of Europe members like [Bulgaria](#).

The opinion also reaffirms the Parliamentary Assembly's commitment to a transformation in European mental healthcare towards rights-based practices as detailed in their previous [recommendations](#) and [resolutions](#).

However, this opinion is non-binding, and the final decision on the future of the protocol remains with the Committee of Ministers.

Opposition to the draft additional protocol stems from the fact that it would [solidify and likely increase the incidence of involuntary placement and treatment in psychiatric care](#). Forced treatment and placement, or coercion, on the basis of disability constitutes grave human rights violations. Moreover, it risks ensuring the continued institutionalisation of persons with disabilities. The protocol stands in direct violation of international human rights agreements such as the UN [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), posing serious legal conflicts.

Those who seek to advance the protocol ignore its inevitable harms as well as viable alternatives to coercion as outlined in the [WHO](#)

QualityRights initiative and the Council of Europe's Compendium report: Good practices to promote Voluntary Measures in Mental Health Services.

We, the undersigned call now on the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers to **withdraw the draft additional protocol**.

The adoption of this protocol would be damaging for people across Europe. Withdrawing the text will allow Europe to join the turning tide towards human rights-based mental health services and systems.

The undersigned:

Members of the European Parliament

MEP Tilly Metz (Greens/EFA, Luxembourg)

MEP Maria Walsh (European People's Party, Ireland)

MEP Sebastian Everding (GUE/NGL, Germany)

MEP Alex Agius Saliba (Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Malta)

MEP Luke Ming Flanagan (GUE/NGL, Ireland)

MEP Catarina Martins (GUE/NGL, Portugal)

MEP Brando Benifei (Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Italy)

MEP Katrin Langensiepen (Greens/EFA, Germany)

MEP Marco Tarquinio (Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Italy)

MEP Ondřej Krutílek (European Conservatives and Reformists Group, Czechia)

Non-governmental organisations

John Patrick Clarke, Vice-President

European Disability Forum

Olga Kalina, Chair

European Network of (Ex)-Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

Andrej Vršanský, President

Mental Health Europe

Jyrki Pinomaa, President

Inclusion Europe

Harald T. Neerland, President

Autism-Europe

Nadia Hadad, Co-Chair of the Board

European Network on Independent Living

Kirsi Konola, President

European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities

Felicitas Kresimon, General Secretary

Confederation of European Firms, Employment Initiatives and Cooperatives (CEFEC)

Athina Fragkouli, President

Society of Social Psychiatry P. Sakellaropoulos



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