

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000193/25  
to the Commission**

**Carolina Morace (The Left), Gaetano Pedulla' (The Left), Dario Tamburrano (The Left), Valentina Palmisano (The Left)**

(17 January 2025)

*Subject:* Forced sterilisation of persons with disabilities in the European Union

Forced sterilisation is a serious violation of human rights, contrary to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), ratified by the EU.

There are at least 14 EU Member States that still allow this practice, allowing legal guardians or other authorities to decide on the sterilisation of persons with disabilities without their free and informed consent.

This practice violates the principles of dignity, equality and individual autonomy, perpetuating discrimination against persons with disabilities and disproportionately affecting women with disabilities, in violation of the EU Gender Equality Strategy.

Some Member States have already banned this practice, providing examples of good practices that could be replicated at European level.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission intend to propose binding legislation to definitively ban forced sterilisation in the European Union?
2. What measures does it intend to take to monitor and prevent violations of the rights of persons with disabilities in this area?

Submitted: 17.1.2025

**Answer given by Ms Labbib on behalf of the European Commission**

(19 May 2025)

The Commission agrees that forced sterilisation is a grave violation of fundamental rights, such as the right to human dignity, the right to integrity of the person, prohibition of torture or inhuman or degradation treatment and the right to private and family life, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU <sup>(1)</sup> and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) <sup>(2)</sup>, to which the EU and its Member States are Parties. Moreover, the European Court of Human Rights <sup>(3)</sup> has determined that State Parties have a positive obligation to ensure legal safeguards to protect women from non-consensual sterilisation.

In October 2023, the EU acceded to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) which requires from its Parties to criminalise forced sterilisation. Directive 2024/1385 on combating violence against women and domestic violence recognises certain criminal offences under national law, such as forced sterilisation, as violence against women. The directive is to be transposed by 14 June 2027 and the Commission will assist Member States in the process through workshops in 2025.

The Commission is working on a progress report to assess the implementation of the strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030, and participated in the constructive dialogue with the UNCRPD Committee on 11-12 March 2025. Those processes will help to identify gaps and barriers that remain for persons with disabilities and, if deemed necessary, update its objectives and actions.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Articles 1, 3, 4 and 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, OJ C326/02, of 26.10.2012.

<sup>(2)</sup> Articles 15 and 16 of the UNCRPD: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>.

<sup>(3)</sup> The European Court of Human Rights has ruled on cases of forced sterilisation and found violations of Article 3 and Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. See e.g. V.C. v. Slovakia, no.18968/07, 8th November 2011; N.B. v. Slovakia, no.29518/10, 12th June 2012; I.G. and Others v. Slovakia, no.15966/04, 13th November 2012.