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WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on neonatal health

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Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on neonatal health¹

1. Every year in the EU there are over 2 000 000 failed pregnancies, 50 000 babies are stillborn or die in their first year and about 90 000 babies have major congenital anomalies, while 500 000 pregnancies end preterm.
2. Foetal, neonatal and infant mortality, as well as preterm birth and morbidity rates, vary widely among the countries. About 50 % of foetal deaths and preterm births are unexplained.
3. The rate of perinatal and neonatal complications has risen in many countries, increasing the risk of major adult illnesses. Neonatal morbidity is a long-term burden for individuals and society, resulting in social and health inequalities.
4. The available data are rarely comprehensive and fail to measure key indicators.
5. The Commission and Council are therefore called upon to encourage policies and specific activities addressing inequalities in the provision of quality and risk-appropriate healthcare for mothers and babies and improvement of the recruitment, education and training of specialised healthcare staff.
6. The Commission and the Council are also called upon to include perinatology and neonatology as a key priority area for EU-funded health research and to support the establishment of European research centres and networks and European registries with comparable data on maternal and newborn health.
7. 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.