

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0056/08
pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure
by Jan Andersson, on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
to the Commission

Subject: Elder abuse

Abuse of older people is increasingly being seen as an important societal problem and one that could well grow as many countries experience rapidly ageing populations. It has been estimated that as many as 10% of older people experience some form of physical, psychological, financial or mental abuse, be it in domestic settings or in care institutions. Increased support must be offered to carers, particularly those who are unpaid, in order to ensure adequate facilities to care for dependants.

The Commission announced the adoption of a communication on 'High-quality care for the elderly and the prevention of elder abuse' at the beginning of March. The communication was supposed to look at the causes of elder abuse and major issues related to it and to report on strategies for preventing and tackling elder abuse.

In its resolution P6_TA(2008)0066 on 'The demographic future of Europe' the European Parliament 'welcomes the Commission's intention to produce a communication on the abuse of older people in 2008 and calls for this communication to be the occasion for drawing up a comprehensive strategy for a large-scale information and action campaign in this field'.

1. Why did the Commission not adopt the planned communication in March 2008 and when will it be presented?
2. Will the communication present a comprehensive European strategy for preventing and tackling elder abuse, which will urge Member States to acknowledge the scale of the problem and support Member States in their efforts to protect the dignity of older people?
3. Will the Commission consider appropriate actions in this area such as raising awareness, funding of relevant research projects, definition of quality standards for care institutions and home care services, developing training modules for professional and family carers and financial support services for the latter, encouraging Member States who have not done so to ensure human rights legislation covers people in privately owned as well as public care homes, and organising exchange of good practices between Member States?

Tabled: 08.05.2008

Forwarded: 12.05.2008

Deadline for reply: 19.05.2008