Question for oral answer O-000017/2021
to the Commission
Rule 136
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on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Subject: Autism and inclusive employment

Autism is a complex lifelong disability experienced differently by each affected person. An estimated five million people in Europe are on the autism spectrum. Autistic people, irrespective of their support needs, face a high level of discrimination in all aspects of life, including education and vocational training, resulting in poor employment outcomes. Unemployment disproportionately affects autistic people, including those with an above-average level of education. Their employment rate is less than 10%, far below the rates of 47% for persons with disabilities and 72% for persons without disabilities. They are often underemployed, work in precarious and/or short term jobs with very low pay, often in institutions and sheltered settings, and are at high risk of poverty and social exclusion. The pandemic has left them with fewer education and employment opportunities as a result of dropping out, being laid off and the suspension of support services and evidence-based interventions. With regard to their right to fully participate in society on an equal basis with others, and with reference to the new Disability Strategy, the Employment Equality Directive, the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. What will the Commission do to improve the prospects for personal development and the employment outcomes of autistic people, specifically with regard to protection under legal frameworks covering social security, working conditions, minimum wages and non-discrimination in institutions; individualised and specialised support in education and training, and in the transition between these and employment; individualised approaches to identify needs and improve employability (including with modified recruitment procedures and evidence-based employer training courses), to ensure quality and inclusive employment with equal pay, as for persons without disabilities, as well as reasonable accommodation; the use of assistive technology; and use of EU funds in this context?

2. How concretely will the Commission improve and ensure the collection and monitoring of quality disaggregated data of the employment situation of autistic people, including those with co-occurring conditions, other disabilities and in institutions and sheltered settings?

3. What concrete measures does the Commission propose in order to take into account the quality of life, diversity of the situation and needs of persons on the autism spectrum, and the effects of the pandemic and of the intersectional discrimination they face in the areas of, among others, education,

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housing, employment, social protection and inclusion, and in order to ensure that the Member States address their specific needs when implementing the EU Disability Strategy?

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