

**Priority question for written answer P-000136/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
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Subject: The harmful effects of using the term 'parental alienation syndrome'

For several years, the term 'parental alienation syndrome' has been used in Polish jurisprudence concerning the custody of children after the parents have divorced to denote the negative effects of the separation of a child from one parent.

As a result, situations arise in which children are forced to have contact with a violent or sexually abusive parent (in the vast majority of cases, these are the fathers) after the divorce of their parents, even in situations where violence against the family was the grounds for the divorce.

If the children do not attend mandatory meetings with their fathers, the mothers are ordered by the courts to pay fines for obstructing contact. The fines, which can amount to tens of thousands of zloty, go to the fathers, even if they do not pay maintenance.

NGOs are warning that the rules described above have made it possible for people to exploit the system for financial gain. In addition, organisations such as GREVIO, the European Association for Psychotherapy and the WHO have identified the term 'parental alienation' as inappropriate and as posing a risk of trivialising domestic violence.

In view of the above:

1. How is the Commission working to remove this harmful term and the resulting abuse from national legislation in the Member States?
2. How does the Commission support women who have suffered as a result of abuse of the system described above? Are there designated support schemes that victims of such abuse can turn to for help?

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