



## Autism in Pink Meeting with MEPs: Handout

### Summary of Points

1. Lack of awareness of breaches of Rights of UNCRPD, especially with respect to women with autism.
2. Rights of people with disabilities are acknowledged, but if real understanding of autism itself and the way in which it affects each individual differently does not exist, then diagnosis may not take place. Even if it does, lack of understanding of individuals means that action cannot be tailored to individual circumstances. This leads to a lack of rights in reality, especially in women.
3. Inequality re gender in diagnosis. Many females are not being referred / diagnosed because autism is a thought of as a 'male' thing and there is a lack of understanding of 'masking' and of differences in female profile compared with male profile.
4. Inequality regarding employment: women with autism suffer triple discrimination due to i) being women, ii) having a disability, iii) specifically having autism. Women with autism are unemployed, underpaid, under-supported and in jobs that do not reflect their abilities.

### Action is urgently needed to

1. Look at specific disabilities especially autism in depth, and be more aware of gender differences, and how the same disability can have a range of effects, depending on the individual
2. Raise societal awareness, especially awareness of educational and health professionals
3. Reduce under-diagnosis and misdiagnosis of women with autism
4. Raise awareness of employers and benefit decision-makers
5. Increase awareness of women with autism, to know more about 'reasonable accommodation'

### Specific Recommendations

1. Ensure EU monitoring of the implementation of the UNCRPD, and that EDS 2010-2020 is harnessed to raise awareness of autism and autism in women
2. Ensure the review of EDS 2010-2020 planned for 2016 addresses the gender dimension in disability and autism in particular
3. Raise a parliamentary question asking how the issue of under-diagnosis of autism in women and girls can be addressed.

***Autism in Pink calls on Members of the European Parliament to build on the Resolution of December 11 2013 on women with disabilities and push for specific actions on autism in women within the framework of the EDS 2010-2020.***

***We are counting on you.***



This project has been funded with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein



### Possible Parliamentary Question:

A list of Actions 2010-2015 was brought out to implement the **EDS 2010-2020**. Presumably there will be a further list of actions for 2015-2020.

**UNCRPD Article 6 - Women with disabilities:** *'States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.'*

But the report on **Women and disabilities by Angelika Werthmann**, regrets that (pg 8, pt 2) the EDS 2010-2020 *'does not include any integrated gender perspective or any separate gender specific disability policies.'* The report also states that (pg 7, pt N) *'women and girls with disabilities can only enjoy equal rights if gender justice is realised'*, and insists that (pg 8, pt 2) *'disability policies should be gender mainstreamed'*.

**How can the issue of under-diagnosis of women with autism be addressed in the EDS List of Actions, given that lack of diagnosis seriously undermines the ability of women to enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms?**

**How can countries across the EU ensure that diagnostic tests are adapted to take into account the differences of women with autism (as is starting to take place in UK and Scandinavia)?**



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