

LEGAL SURVEY OF ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN MEDITERRANEAN NATIONS

In Vitro Fertilization and other techniques that are comprehensively called Assisted Reproductive Technology(ART) have raised the interest and concern of public opinion, communication media, politicians, religious institutions, philosophers since Louise Brown was born in 1978. Still this interest continues and increases because always new developments of these techniques give the possibility to people to change the options of reproduction that nature fixed since the beginning of human being, establishment of sexual behaviour and family constitution in the societies : a few decades in comparison with many thousands of years. Furthermore the interest for ART is running over the solution of infertility problems and touching other desires that are not at all medical. No other field of Medicine has raised such a widespread interest especially by the political process.

As a consequence of these events and concerns many commission and committees on a governmental base or not have analysed the legal, medical, ethical, religious aspects of ART and its consequences establishing regulations or guidelines to be followed where ART is practiced. The word “guideline” is here used to designate sets of rules to be followed voluntarily (e.i. infertility societies). The word “regulation” is used to designate sets of rules adopted by legislative action, with penalties for violations. Guidelines/Regulations reflect sometimes more the social and religious situation rather medical perspective and are also in evolution .

The situation of ART legal issues in Mediterranean countries has not been investigated until now and the necessity of a survey came as a natural interest of Mediterranean Society for Reproductive Medicine.

The purpose of this work is tabulating the practice of ART in most Mediterranean countries and their guidelines/regulations with particular interest to difference existing among them and methods of surveillance