
On 16 January 2008 the European Parliament adopted the resolution “Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child”, which was prepared as a response to the 2006 European Commission Communication. The European Children’s Network (EURONET) welcomes the adoption of this resolution and commitment of the European Parliament to call for action to protect children’s rights within and outside the European Union. The EP resolution will boost further EU actions to protect the rights of children and in particular the process to develop a comprehensive EU strategy on the rights of the child which should start with the launching of a consultation process by means of a Green Paper in 2008.

EURONET has been active in sending briefings to members of the EP Civil Liberties Committee outlining the key amendments and articles that needed to be supported or to be rejected. EURONET is pleased that many of its recommendations on the resolution have been taken into account and have strengthened the resolution.

The key achievements made by EURONET in the EP Resolution are:

- Frequent references to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols and the need to have the UN CRC as a basis for the EU strategy on children’s rights and to explore the possibility of the EU to accede to the UN CRC and its optional protocols.
- The resolution repeatedly refers to the best interests of the child, as laid down in the UN CRC, which should always be a primary consideration, e.g. in relation to the abandonment of children and placement of children in institutions.
- The welcoming of children’s rights in the objectives of the EU Lisbon Treaty, thus providing a legal framework for children. The EP Report does not include EURONET’s call on the Member States to ratify the Lisbon Treaty by the end of 2008.
- Call for the creation of a specific budget line for children’s rights, in order to finance work to implement the Commission communication and to fund NGO networks in this field.
- Requesting the insurance of children’s participation in the development of the EU Strategy on the rights of the child. Children’s participation should be one of the main aims of the Forum. In addition information on children’s rights should be disseminated to children in a child-friendly way.
• Call for improvement in the **gathering of comparable statistical data** on the situation of children in the EU and the inclusion of children’s participation in the collecting of data.

• Calling all EU Member States to establish an **ombudsperson for children’s rights** to promote the upholding of children’s rights and implement the UN CRC.

• Calling for the inclusion of children’s rights as laid down in the UN CRC in the priorities of the Multiannual Framework of the **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights**.

• The European Parliament looks forward to the consultation document of the Commission in 2008 aimed at establishing the main priorities of the EU’s future action in the field of children’s rights, with the goal of adopting a **White Paper**. However, the EP report does not include a timeline for the adoption of the White Paper, which EURONET called for.

• The establishment of a **coordination unit in the European Parliament**, which will work closely with the Commission inter-service group, and which will link up and rationalize all Parliamentary initiatives and activities relating to children’s rights. This will contribute to **mainstreaming of children’s rights** in EU activities, legislations and policies, which EURONET called for.

• The call for an **effective monitoring system** to ensure the implementation of the commitments made in the Commission Communication.

• The **condemning of all forms of violence against children** in any setting, including the home and calling for Community legislation to prohibit all forms of violence and referring in this respect to the recommendations in the UN Secretary-General’s study on Violence against Children.

• The support for a **Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Elimination of Violence against Children**.

• Calling Member States to adopt ambitious and achievable targets for reducing – and eventually eradicating – **child poverty**.