
The European Children’s Network (EURONET) welcomes the outcomes of the vote on 20 December 2007 in the LIBE Committee on the European Commission Communication “Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child”, of July 2006. EURONET is pleased that many of its recommendations on the report have been taken into account and have strengthened the report.

EURONET has two proposals for amendments:

- **Article 2:** welcoming the new legal basis for children’s rights in the new EU Treaty of Lisbon. **ADD:** Calls on the Member States to ratify the Lisbon Treaty before the end of 2008.
- **Article 40:** welcomes the calling for a White Paper, however, a target date is missing here. **ADD:** The White Paper should be aimed for in 2009 before the new Commission is installed.

The European Children’s Network is urging you to support the report when debated and voted on in the Strasbourg plenary session of next week. In this briefing EURONET is asking you in particular to support the areas which are related to EURONET’s core areas of work or are focusing on cross-cutting issues:

EURONET welcomes the articles which emphasise and reference the importance of basing the EU strategy and other relevant actions, such as the work programme of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (Article 11), on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its optional protocols (Articles 1, 164: first part). The UNCRC has been ratified by every EU member state as well as nearly every other country in the world, and is the recognised international reference for children’s rights. EURONET supports the call for the EU’s accession to the UNCRC and its optional protocols. (Article 17)

**Article 4:** Include in the impact assessment a section devoted to the extent to which children’s rights are taken into account legally, which will ensure the mainstreaming of children’s rights in EU actions.

**Article 5:** stressing the need for sufficient finances to implement the Communication, the funding of NGO networks and the need for children’s participation.

**Article 6:** calling for an effective monitoring system to ensure the implementation of the commitments described in the Communication.

**Article 12:** improving the gathering of comparable statistical data on the situation of children in the EU.

**Article 19, 119:** calling on all Member States to establish an ombudsman for children’s rights where they are not already established.

**Article 36:** important to ensure the safe and meaningful participation of children in the Forum.
Article 37: welcomes the establishment of a coordination unit in the European Parliament to ensure the mainstreaming of children’s rights in all its policies and activities.

Article 39: welcomes the call for child-friendly information.

Articles 42, 43, 50: all forms of violence against children in any setting must be condemned, supporting the UN Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children and supporting the appointment of a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Elimination of Violence against Children.

Articles 63, 67, 160, 170 c), d): welcomes the call for the creation, in the interests of the defence of children’s rights, of an adequate, effective and proportionate regulation system aimed at prohibiting the broadcasting of harmful images and contents; welcomes the recognition that a review of the mass media’s unrestricted right of access to children is needed; supports the call on the Commission to propose regulations on aggressive and misleading advertising.

Article 95: adopt ambitious and achievable targets to reduce, and eventually eradicate, child poverty.

EURONET would like to remark specifically references to the role of the family in the relation to the development of the child (e.g. letter J). Recognition of the central role of the family in relation to the survival, protection and development of the child lies at the core of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, a children’s rights approach acknowledges that children’s interests and needs are not always identical to those of their parents or families (for example where children are sexually abused by family members). The European children’s rights strategy must therefore be focused on the rights of children, while recognising the importance of supporting families as part of implementing children’s rights.

For further background information on children’s rights and the Commission Communication, please see a EURONET briefing of February 2007.

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Annex: Additional amendments from EURONET member, SOS Kinderdorf International

1http://www.europeanchildrensnetwork.org/docs/FileManager/euronet/briefing_euronet_on_childrens_strategy_february_2007_fin.pdf