PRESS STATEMENT

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Communication on the Rights of the Child:
NGOs call for commitment to make European Children’s Strategy a reality

The European Children’s Network, representing children’s rights NGOs from across Europe, welcomes today’s European Commission Communication “Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child”. “This is a significant first step towards the recognition of children’s rights at EU level. What is needed now is ongoing political commitment from all EU institutions to turn this Strategy on the Rights of the Child into reality” said the Children’s Network President Simone Ek.

To guarantee that the Communication paves the way to a European Union which works for and with children, the European Children’s Network calls on the EU Institutions to ensure:

1. A European Commissioner for children’s rights to ensure genuine visibility for the strategy and political accountability

2. Meaningful participation of children through providing child-friendly ways for children to engage in policy making, and genuinely take children’s views into account in policies. NGOs with experience in involving children should be partners in this process

3. ‘Child rights proofing’ of all EU legislation and policies led by the European Commission, based on the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

4. A European Forum for the Rights of the Child which is a genuine driver for change and action, and engages all relevant stakeholders on an equal footing, including children and children’s rights NGOs

5. Close involvement of civil society, particularly children’s rights NGOs, in all aspects of a European Children’s Strategy, to ensure its success

6. Sufficient resources to enable implementation of the Communication

EURONET’s Secretary-General Mieke Schuurman, said "With the initiative of Commissioner Frattini to draft a Communication on Children’s Rights the EU has the opportunity to play a leading role in creating a Europe that actively protects children from harm, listens to their views and supports their development. An investment in Europe’s 94 million children is an investment both in Europe’s present and in its future."

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Notes to editors:
The European Children’s Network (EURONET) is a coalition of networks and organisations campaigning at a European level for the interests and rights of children. Its activities include policy development research, and projects involving children and young people directly.

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