

CRAG - Child Rights Action Groupⁱ

August 2010

Key messages regarding the consultation on a European Commission Communication on the Rights of the Child (2011-2014)

The 2006 Communication “Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child” promised to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure the European Union contributes to promoting and safeguarding children’s rights in all its internal and external actions and supports the efforts of the Member States in this field.

We are disappointed by the consultation document and concerned about its overall direction and limited scope, focussing almost exclusively on Stockholm Programme priorities. It does not match the commitments made by the European Commission and does not build on the excellent work that has already been done by other DGs, such as the RELEX family and DG Employment and Social Affairs, to implement the 2006 Communication.

We call on the European Commission to produce the ambitious Strategy promised and deliver a framework for EU action on child rights, setting strategic objectives to guide the different DGs on how to follow up with specific action. The Strategy should align action taken at EU level with action of Member States at national level and include child participation.

We see the objectives of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child to be:

- To ensure to promotion, protection and fulfilment of child rights in EU internal and external action;
- To support Member States efforts to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To achieve this, the Strategy should focus on:

1. mainstreaming child rights, with adequate resources and tools;
2. defining criteria for identifying priority actions and guidance for specific action at the DG level;
3. mechanisms for including meaningful child participation in EU decision-making;
4. monitoring and evaluating action undertaken;
5. enhancing data collection and common indicators at the EU level;
6. ensuring policy coherence and coordination among Member States, both in terms of soft law and in terms of adding a child-rights lens to the policy coherence for development;
7. communicating on child rights.

ⁱ The CRAG is an informal group of NGOs committed to working together on the follow-up and implementation of the European Commission Communication - Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child.