

Dear Commissioner Frattini,

On 13th June SOS-Kinderdorf International, in cooperation with FICE (Fédération Internationale des Communautés Educatives) and the International Foster Care Organisation launched a project aimed at improving the situation of children without parental care.

At the occasion of an event supported by European Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and organised in the European Parliament, the three organisations presented a set of 18 standards for children and youth living in out-of-home care in Europe. It was the result of a 3 year project: Quality4Children, based on an innovative process involving children, care takers, social workers and social scientists from 32 European countries.

Quality4Children was built on the strong conviction that no effective and sustainable improvement of the situation of children in-out-of-home care would be possible without strong partnerships.

The commitment to build up this cooperation was strengthened by the support given by the Council of Europe, Unicef, the European Parliament and the European Commission for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy to the project.

Following the Communication of the European Commission “Towards an EU strategy on the Rights of the Child”, the European Union will take a leading role in promoting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of children.

The long term EU strategy will be issued on 2008 and children with no parental care must have a special place in it. Moreover, we would like to stress the importance of having guidelines and standards for out-of-home child care, both to train authorities and to monitor effectively the protection of the rights of those children.

On 4th June in Berlin, the European Commission launched the European Forum on the Rights of the Child. We believe that this new tool could provide a useful platform for a cooperation between different stakeholders to improve the situation of children without parental care. In particular, it could open a space for those children to participate themselves in the debates, as they naturally and eloquently did in the European Parliament on 13th June.

We are very grateful for the support you have always shown to the Rights of the Child, and we ...

Signed:

FICE/ IFCO/ SOS-KDI

MEP Lissy Gröner