

**Question for written answer E-007946/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Residential institutions in the EU

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which has been ratified by all EU Member States, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), ratified by the EU directly, guarantee children and disabled persons respectively the right to be supported and included in a community. One major impediment to the realisation of the EU's commitment to these vulnerable groups is the continued use of residential institutions by Member States instead of community-based care alternatives.

Although research has consistently demonstrated the lasting damage done to later life prospects of those raised in institutions and the superior economic efficiency of community-based alternatives, eight million children are currently institutionalised worldwide.

While the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) regulations prohibit EU funds from being devoted to renovating residential institutions or building new ones, the lack of strong sanctions associated with this legislation may prevent the EU from effectively enforcing this policy in Member States which have a long history of reliance on institutions.

Can the Commission state:

1. what steps are being taken to ensure compliance with the ESIF restrictions, especially in cases related to fundamental rights;
2. what the EU intends to do, beyond the issue of funding restrictions, to dismantle residential institutions and promote transferring residents to community-based care alternatives?