

**Question for oral answer O-000093/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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Subject: Breaches of the human rights of children with disabilities

The 2011 report of the Greek Ombudsman on the 'Functioning Conditions of the Social Care Centre for Children with Disabilities' highlighted the degrading living conditions of children with disabilities at the Lechaina Children's Care Centre. Children were strapped to their beds and were living in cages with ceiling-high wooden bars and gates. The report concluded that the cages and all practices involving the use of long-term restraints were 'clearly illegal' and 'in direct contradiction with the obligation for respect and protection of the human rights of the residents', and urged the Greek Government to take immediate steps to rectify the situation.

On 14 November 2014, a BBC report revealed that disabled children at the centre continue to suffer these horrific conditions. They are still being locked in cages, struggling to get the help and support they need.

The Mental Disability Advocacy Centre (MDAC) has indicated that similar caged beds are used in at least two other EU Member States, and has stressed that being kept in a cage is seriously detrimental to patients' psychological health.

While Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that the Union must respect the responsibilities of the Member States with regard to the organisation, delivery and management of health services and medical care, it also provides that EU action must be directed towards improving public health, including by obviating sources of danger to physical and mental health. Furthermore, the EU has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, putting itself under an obligation to protect the human rights of persons with disabilities.

1. What concrete steps will the Commission take to ensure that this inhuman practice is put to an end throughout the EU and that minimum standards for protecting and safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities, as listed in the above-mentioned UN convention, are upheld, including in healthcare settings?
2. How does the Commission intend to ensure that EU policies and funds instigate real reforms that favour community services and family-based care as opposed to a system based on institutional care for disabled children and adults?

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Deadline for reply: 17.12.2014