

**Question for written answer E-000078/2023/rev.1  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Angelo Ciocca (ID)**

Subject: Protection of children of separated parents

Far too many young people feel let down by the Italian child welfare system.

While Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states that 'the child's best interests must be a primary consideration', Italian courts all too often overlook this in practice.

At a hearing on 22 November 2022, a number of very young members of the association representing the children of separated parents testified that children's courts and welfare services in Italy failed to comply with European standards.

The above article also states that 'every child shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis a personal relationship and direct contact with both his or her parents, unless that is contrary to his or her interests'. However, courts frequently rely exclusively on psychological reports rather than the 'facts' for the purpose of assessing parental fitness, even with regard to alleged domestic violence.

Given the importance attached to the interests of the child by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the EU institutions:

1. How will the Commission ensure that the rights of children 'removed' from their parents in Italy are upheld, including in the specific cases reported by the above association?
2. Will it introduce common EU rules on the legal validity of psychological reports and the actions of the welfare services?
3. What can it do to help monitor the running of children's homes in Italy?

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