

Ending child poverty – Measuring is the key!

Spanish and Belgian EU presidencies will cooperate to develop an EU recommendation on child well-being and the fight against poverty by the end of 2010¹. This was one of the results of Eurochild's Annual Conference in Cyprus, ending today².

Urging for new indicators of child poverty and well-being

Furthermore, Eurochild members at the conference are calling for more child-centred indicators and subjective measures of children's well-being.

In the closing plenary, **Philippe Courard**, Belgian Secretary of State for Social Integration and the Fight against Poverty (Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health), stated political leaders don't have to be afraid of indicators. They should support their development, and more particularly, use them as an instrument to help making a decision.

He went on wondering why it's so hard for the EU to set clear targets on child poverty reduction:

"The promises are there, the studies are made, the strategies are clear. Why don't we deliver? How come that in Europe we have no problem to set a quantified target on employment, but apparently we fear to say that we want to reduce the number of poor children in Europe by 50% by 2015?"

All EU Member States need to measure the progress that they are making in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the child. This is particularly important as we approach the 2010 European year to combat poverty and social exclusion.

Children are Triple A investment for society

Any Euro spent on children must be considered as a long term investment in human capital as well as a moral and humanitarian obligation. **Francisco Asensio Garcia**, Head of Unit responsible for childhood in the Ministry of Health and Social Policy in Spain said that there is no excuse not to undertake such investments:

"No matter if economies grow or are in the middle of a recession, children should be granted sufficient resources to enable their physical and mental development."

Eurochild's President, **Catriona Williams**, concluded that investment in young children is essential for the overall improved situation of a country's GDP:

"In these times of the global financial crisis, it is crucial that there is sufficient investment in young children to ensure that they reach their full potential."

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1 Find more information on the Website of the European Commission at www.ey2010againstopoverty.eu

2 Find more information about Eurochild's Annual conference at www.eurochild.org

3 Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to promote children's rights and improve the quality of life of children and young people. Eurochild's work is underpinned by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.