

Who cares?

Roadmap for a Recommendation to fight child poverty

2-3 September 2010

Marche-en-Famenne

EN

INVITATION to the participative Conference

The European Union counts about 100 million children and young people aged between 0 and 18 years. In 20 of the 27 Member States, the at-risk-of-poverty rate is higher for children than for the overall population. **In 2008, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in EU-27 for children aged between 0 and 17 years was 20%.** This figure has undoubtedly increased even further owing to the effects of the recent economic crisis.

The experts' opinion is unanimous: in order to break the vicious circle of poverty, absolute priority should be given to children. In policies on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion, special emphasis is placed on the fight against child poverty for two main reasons: children form one of society's most vulnerable groups and the reduction in child poverty involves **breaking the cycle whereby poverty is passed on from generation to generation**, and, in consequence, poverty in general.

In the framework of the **Europe 2020 Strategy**, five measurable objectives for 2020 have been defined on a Europe-wide level, which will serve to guide the European process and which will need to be translated into national objectives. These shared objectives should guide the actions of the Member States and the Union. One of the five fields is the **fight against poverty**. Social inclusion should be promoted, in particular through the reduction of poverty, by aiming to offer a way out of the risk of poverty and exclusion to at least 20 million people.

The **Belgian presidency of the European Union** has chosen the fight against child poverty as one of its three priorities.

In this framework, the Secretary of State for Social Integration and Combating Poverty has the honour of inviting you to the participative Conference "**Who Cares? Roadmap for a Recommendation to fight child poverty**" which will be held on 2 and 3 September 2010. This Conference is a real opportunity to raise the awareness of Member States about the problems facing the children living in poverty, to influence the European policy on the fight against child poverty, and to ensure that child poverty is an essential part of the Poverty Platform. The Conference wants to provide the bricks to achieve a real European Recommendation on child poverty.

➤ The discussions and debates will be organised according to the concept of active participation:

Two discussion sessions will be conducted in the “Town Hall” and will aim to formulate **recommendations** for eradicating child poverty, as well as identifying obstacles to their implementation and the means for monitoring their results. The discussions will be introduced by real-life accounts, a short introduction to the subject and a presentation of the recommendations proposed by UNICEF, Eurochild and the King Baudouin Foundation. Speakers and facilitators distributed by tables of about ten participants will then encourage discussion, the results of which will be presented in a plenary session. The conclusions will be a substantial contribution to the European process with a view to the adoption of a Recommendation..

The debates will be organised around 3 thematic sessions. With a view to obtaining rich and productive debates, we will ask you to give your preference for two out of the three thematic sessions, as well as for one subtheme for each chosen thematic session:

1. **Adequate resources:** ensuring that children grow up in families with sufficient resources to meet their essential needs.

This session includes two aspects:

- Income and benefits
- Reconciling employment and family life

2. **Access to quality services:** Ensure children, while growing up, have access to the services and opportunities that will enhance their present and future well-being and enable them to reach their full potential, with particular attention to the most vulnerable children.

This session includes five aspects:

- Early childhood
- Education, with a special attention to Roma children
- Health care
- Environment/Housing
- Child Protection and Social Services

3. **Participation:** promoting the active participation of children and young people.

This session includes two aspects:

- Children’s right to be heard
- Children’s participation in social, cultural, recreational, sporting and civic activities



➤ The third session will comprise a visit to the “**Market Place**”, with an exhibition of projects, research presentations, expert interviews and videos, this with a view to an exchange of experiences and to provide good practices in the field of the fight against child poverty.

The documents on which the debates will be based will be sent to you as soon as possible. With a view to participation and interaction, we would like to insist on the importance of reading these documents before taking part in the Conference.

Transport and accommodation are provided by the organiser.

Sincerely,

Philippe COURARD

Secretary of State for Social Integration and Combating Poverty



SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT À L'INTÉGRATION SOCIALE ET À LA LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETÉ
 STAATSSECRETARIS VOOR MAATSCHAPPELIJKE INTEGRATIE EN ARMOEDEBESTRIJDING
 SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND COMBATING POVERTY

Gouvernement fédéral
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This Conference is organised by the Federal Public Service for Social Integration, anti- Poverty Policy, Social Economy and Federal Urban Policy, in partnership with the King Baudouin Foundation, UNICEF, Eurochild and the European Commission



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eu trio.be

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Agenda

2 September 2010

9.30 Registration

➤ Opening session

The Opening session takes place in the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium

10.00	Opening Speech	Chair Julien Van Geertsom, President PPS Social Integration, Belgium
10.05	Video message: Children's voices	
10.10	Breaking the vicious circle of poverty	Philippe Courard, Belgian Secretary of State for Social Integration and combating poverty
10.25	Child poverty within the 2020 strategy	László Andor, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (TBC)
10.35	Child Poverty and the trio Presidency	Trinidad Jimenez, Spanish Minister for Social Policy (TBC)
10.45	Overview of aims, objectives and "Town Hall" proceedings and explanation of the Market Place sequence	Natasha Walker, Lead Facilitator
10.50	Who's here? Facilitated introduction of participants at tables	
11.00	Background Input: Why should the EU be focussing on child poverty and well-being? What is different about child poverty?	Rapporteur Hugh Frazer, European independent expert

➤ First Session

Adequate Resources

11.15	Children's Voices	Video
11.20	Why we need to act? Recommendations to provide children in Europe with adequate resources	Jana Hainsworth, Secretary General of Eurochild
11.30	Adequate resources for families	Pervenche Berès, MEP Party of European Socialists (TBC)
11.40	Introduction to the Round Table Discussion	Lead Facilitators
11.45	Who's here? Facilitated introduction of participants at tables	
11.50	First Round Table Discussion: How can we ensure that families are able to meet their essential needs?	

➤ Lunch

14.45	Synthesis of first Round Table Discussion	Rapporteur Hugh Frazer, European independent expert
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➤ Second Session

Access to Services and Opportunities

15.00	Children's Voices	
15.05	Why we need to act? Recommendations to provide children in Europe with access to services and opportunities	Françoise Pissart, Director King Baudouin Foundation



15.15	Access to quality services	Z. Balog, Hungarian State Secretary in charge of child poverty (TBC)
15.25	Introduction to the Round Table Discussion	Lead Facilitators
15.30	Who's here? Facilitated introduction of participants at tables	
15.35	Second Round Table Discussion: How can we help children access essential and relevant services and opportunities?	
17.30	Outlook and open comments in plenary	
17.50	Closing and Invitation to evening reception	Philippe Courard, Belgian Secretary of State for Social Integration and combating poverty
18.00	➤ <i>Closure</i>	
20.00	➤ <i>Dinner</i>	

➤ 3 September 2010

➤ <i>Re-Opening</i>		
9.00	Welcome	Chair Julien Van Geertsom, President PPS Social Integration , Belgium
9.10	Synthesis of 2 nd round table discussions	Rapporteur Hugh Frazer, European independent expert
➤ <i>Third Session</i> Children's Participation		
9.35	Children's Voices	
9.40	Why we need to act? Recommendations to encourage children's participation in Europe	Margaret Wachenfeld, Senior Policy Advisor UNICEF
9.50	Child participation	Henna Maria Virkkunen, Finnish Minister for Education and Science (TBC)
10.00	Introduction to the Round Table Discussion	Lead Facilitators
10.05	Who's here? Facilitated introduction of participants at tables	
10.10	Third Round Table Discussion: How can we help children voices to be heard on issues affecting them?	
11.30	➤ <i>Break</i>	
12.00	Synthesis of third Round Table Discussion	Rapporteur Hugh Frazer, European independent expert
The closing session takes place in the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Mathilde of Belgium		
12.15	Closing Panel "Moving Ahead": Implementing, governing and monitoring action towards improving children's lives in Europe - Philippe Courard, Belgian Secretary of State for Social Integration and combating poverty - Mr Rethelyi, Hungarian Minister for Social Affairs, Education, Health care and Culture (TBC)	
13.15	➤ <i>Closing intervention</i> Chair Julien Van Geertsom, President PPS Social Integration	
13.30	➤ <i>Lunch</i>	
15.00	➤ <i>Closure</i>	