



Assessment of the EU Presidency Performance from a Child Rights perspective

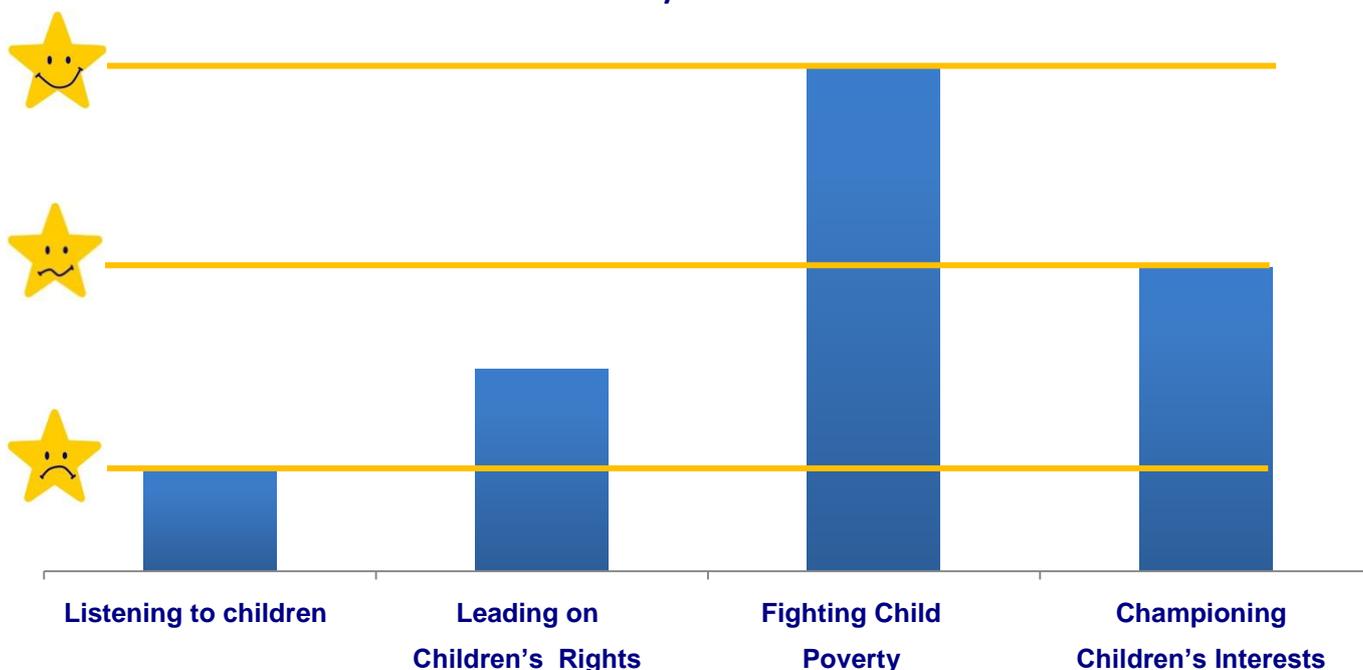
During their 6 month tenure of the EU Presidency, member states have an important responsibility to ensure the rights and welfare of children remain high on EU political agenda. Children represent 20% of our present but 100% of the future. Strong, genuine commitment to children’s rights and welfare is an investment in the future; it is also an obligation to which all Member states have signed up through their ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This is the second in a series of assessments of EU Presidencies. It assesses performance on 4 criteria:

- The extent to which they listened to, and involved children and young people themselves;
- Their vision and leadership for a strong children’s rights strategy at EU level;
- Their support for stronger action and cooperation at EU level to fight child poverty;
- The extent to which children’s interests are reflected in the broad Presidency programme.

HUNGARY'S EU PRESIDENCY

January–June 2011



 = EXCELLENT

 = AVERAGE

 = DISAPPOINTING

DID THEY LISTEN TO CHILDREN?



Young people participated in the EU Presidency conference *Involving youth in decision-making and improving youth employment*. The conference recognized that "Young people have countless recommendations to which we must pay attention to"¹



The views and experiences of children and young people were not taken into account in key Presidency events, such as the 2011 meeting of People Experiencing Poverty or the Conference on Demographic Change

DID THEY LEAD ON THE EU CHILD RIGHTS AGENDA?



Hungary convened a meeting of the inter-governmental group Europe de l'Enfance. However, they did not follow-up on the Declaration adopted at the previous meeting² nor reflect on the recent EC Communication on children's rights³



Council conclusions on tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being highlight that child poverty and well-being should be tackled from a child-rights perspective⁴



Member States recognised that the protection of fundamental rights, notably by combating discrimination and segregation, is essential for improving the situation of marginalized communities, including Roma⁵

DID THEY STRENGTHEN EU COOPERATION TO FIGHT AGAINST CHILD POVERTY?



Council conclusions on tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being were adopted, calling for a comprehensive approach to tackle multidimensionality of child poverty and well-being, including putting forward in 2012 a Recommendation on child poverty and well-being⁶



By commissioning work on child well-being indicators, the Hungarian Presidency contributed to the preparation of the future Recommendation on child poverty and well-being⁷



An EU Framework on National Roma Integration Strategies was endorsed. Roma integration has been prioritized and addressed within different forums. Member States agreed that in order to stop the inter-generational transmission of poverty and social exclusion, the situation of Roma children needs to be improved from the earliest possible age⁸

DID THEY CHAMPION CHILDREN'S INTERESTS THROUGHOUT THEIR PROGRAMME?



Cooperation of Member States in the field of early childhood education and care was established at European level⁹



Hungary championed European cooperation on family policies and demographic change and pushed for the adoption of a joint declaration by the Trio Presidency (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) and Poland¹⁰. From Eurochild's perspective the approach does not take a child rights perspective but rather only refers to children as the 'future generation'¹¹



The Presidency supported EU efforts to make progress on the children's hotlines, child alert systems and child friendly justice¹². Whilst welcomed, long-term progress will only be made through concerted efforts to address, prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against children and to protect their rights



The Hungarian presidency contributed to raising awareness about the importance of achieving and maintaining high childhood immunization coverage, particularly in difficult to reach populations. A framework for Member States' cooperation was set out¹³



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Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to promote the welfare and rights of children and young people. Our aim is to voice and promote the interests of children and young people in the European Union and in particular those who are vulnerable and exposed to poverty and social exclusion. Our work is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

¹ Miklós Soltész, Hungarian State Secretary for Social, Family, and Youth Affairs of the Ministry of National Resources at EU Youth Conference and DG Meeting on Youth Employment, 2-4 March, 2011, Budapest – Gödöllő, Hungary

² Declaration of the Permanent Intergovernmental Group 'Europe de l'Enfance', meeting on 16 November 2010 in Brussels

³ Communication from the Commission "An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child" Brussels, COM(2011) 60 final, 15.2.2011

⁴ Council conclusions on tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being, 17 June 2011, Luxembourg

⁵ Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, 19 May 2011, Brussels

⁶ Idem footnote 3

⁷ TÁRKI (2011): Child well-being in the European Union – Better monitoring instruments for better policies. Report prepared for the State Secretariat for Social Inclusion of the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, Budapest

⁸ Idem footnote 4

⁹ Council conclusions on early childhood education and care: providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow, (2011/C 175/03)

¹⁰ Declaration by the trio Presidency (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) and Poland on the impacts of reconciliation of work and family life on demographic dynamics, 1 April 2011, Gödöllő, Hungary

¹¹ Eurochild Policy statement: Key messages on the demographic renewal - Not only a numbers game!, 01.12.08

¹² Conference on child alert and child-friendly justice, 25-26 May 2011, Brussels

¹³ Council conclusions on Childhood immunisation: successes and challenges of European childhood immunisation and the way forward, 6 June 2011, Luxembourg