

# Make the European Parliament a global Child Rights Champion!

## In the European Parliament today:

- ★ None of its 20 standing committees has an explicit responsibility for children.
- ★ There is no systematic assessment of the impact of its legislative and non-legislative work on children.
- ★ Nobody tracks what share of the EU budget has been spent on children.

## With great power comes great responsibility

The next European Parliament must have the institutional capacity to stand up for the interests of children in every aspect of its work.

## What will this take?

- ★ Create a **permanent mechanism** in the European Parliament with explicit responsibility for protecting and promoting children's rights across all policy sectors in internal and external affairs.
- ★ Exercise the European Parliament's **budgetary control** to ensure EU funds work in the best interests of children both internally and externally.
- ★ **Raise awareness within the European Parliament and among European citizens** about children's rights and how EU policy, legislation and funds affect the lives of children in Europe and globally.
- ★ Make proactive efforts to **engage children in decision-making**, monitoring and evaluation through promoting their involvement within your constituency and in EU debates, and ensuring their access to relevant and age-appropriate information.

The next European Parliament must hold EU institutions to account for the **implementation of existing legal obligations**. It must also be at the forefront of advancing **new and more ambitious EU legislation and policy** on children's rights and ensuring **greater coherence between the stated objectives of EU internal and external action and the actual impacts on children's lives**, be they direct or indirect.

## Did you know that:

- ★ Everyone aged 0-18 is a child.

### In the EU

- ★ One in four children live in poverty.
- ★ Children make up one quarter of new asylum seekers every year.
- ★ 250,000 children are reported missing every year, 1 every 2 minutes.
  - ★ An estimated 800,000 children have a parent in prison.
- ★ More than 1 million children live in institutional care across Europe.

### Worldwide

- ★ Some 93 million children live with a moderate or severe disability.
- ★ 13 children under the age of five die of preventable causes every minute.
  - ★ One in five women report being sexually abused as a child.
- ★ 35 million children and youth under the age of 20 are international migrants.



<http://childrightsmanifesto.eu/> #childrightschampion

# Child Rights Manifesto

**Children make up half the population in developing countries.**

**Around 100 million children live in the European Union.**

**The lives of children the world over are affected daily by EU policies, legislation and actions.**

**All EU Member States are parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and have clear legal obligations to promote, protect and fulfill the rights of every child in their jurisdictions.**

**The Lisbon Treaty makes the promotion of children's rights an explicit objective of EU internal and external affairs and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights requires that the best interests of the child is a primary consideration in all EU action.**

**It is time to translate these commitments into concrete results for children!**

**As Member of the European Parliament:  
Make a commitment to be a Child Rights Champion!**



# What you can do for children in Europe

How Europe treats its children will determine its future. Children and families are among those worst affected by the economic crisis. Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth cannot be achieved without respecting children's rights and investing in their future.

As a Member of the European Parliament you can make a difference by placing children's rights and well-being at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy.

You can also make a difference in your country by ensuring that the existing EU acquis on children is properly implemented. You can further advance the protection of children's rights by systematically integrating a child focus in all policy sectors, parliamentary initiatives, legislative and non-legislative work.

## As a Member of the European Parliament you can:

- ★ Make children an explicit priority in the European Semester and Europe 2020 governance system.
- ★ Ensure that EU funds benefit children; in particular those most disadvantaged such as Roma children, children with disabilities and migrant children.
- ★ Support implementation of the European Commission's Recommendation 'Investing in Children' in Member States.
- ★ Ensure that children are explicitly prioritised in the implementation of regional and cohesion policies, the European Disability Strategy, the EU Framework for Roma Integration, in asylum and migration policies and the EU's equality and non-discrimination policy.
- ★ Support the development of EU-wide standards with regards to child protection and promote the transition from institutional to community based care.

# Our vision Realising the rights of every child, everywhere!

## This means:

**Ensuring that every child can exercise the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).**

**Treating every child first and foremost as a child, irrespective of social or ethnic background, gender, ability or migration status.**

**Recognising the value of children's own views and experience, and enabling them to participate meaningfully in all decisions affecting their lives.**

**Addressing the root causes of child rights violations by tackling poverty, discrimination and social exclusion and protecting against violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.**

**Investing in early childhood, health care, quality education as well as community-based care and rehabilitation services.**

**Ensuring that children grow up in stable, secure and caring relationships by supporting families and caregivers.**

**Providing inter-sectorial, integrated and child-focused responses to address the individual and collective needs of children.**

**Taking a long-term view and assessing the impact of our decisions today for future generations.**

# What you can do for children in the world

Worldwide, around 600 million children live in poverty. By 2050, almost 70 per cent of the world's children will live in poor and fragile countries. Children are central to development; they are also disproportionately affected by poverty, emergency and conflict situations. Building inclusive, stable, democratic and prosperous societies starts with respecting the rights of children.

As a Member of the European Parliament you can make a difference by encouraging EU institutions and development partners to put children's rights in all policies and actions, and by ensuring sufficient funding in EU instruments is allocated to children.

You can also ensure that the EU champions and implements a comprehensive post-2015 agenda with a clear focus on improving the realisation of children's rights everywhere, including in Europe.

In enlargement and neighbourhood countries you can advance children's rights by monitoring their implementation as a measure for assessing overall progress in relations with the EU.

## As a Member of the European Parliament you can:

- ★ Secure adequate funding for children in EU instruments and monitor the impact of EU aid on children's lives.
- ★ Hold EU institutions in Brussels and representations abroad to account for implementing their commitments under the UNCRC and the Lisbon Treaty in all actions that impact children, directly or indirectly.
- ★ Apply pressure on EU institutions to establish a comprehensive mechanism to honour policy coherence for development commitments across key policy areas.
- ★ Make children's rights an explicit priority in EU accession and neighbourhood policies and association agreements.
- ★ Ensure that children's rights are systematically addressed in EU human rights dialogues with third countries, taken into account in trade agreements, and mainstreamed in all discussions regarding the post-2015 framework.