

14 June 2021

EU Alliance for Investing in Children welcomes the EPSCO Council adoption of the Council Recommendation establishing the European Child Guarantee

Today is a historic day for the protection of the rights of children growing up in poverty and social exclusion in the European Union.

After years of negotiations, evidence-based advocacy, and hard work, the EU Alliance for Investing in Children is delighted to welcome the EPSCO Council adoption of the Council Recommendation establishing the European Child Guarantee.

The EU has successfully set up an innovative framework which aims at breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty and social exclusion—by calling on EU Member States to guarantee access to basic rights and services for children in need such as children with disabilities and mental health issues, homeless children, children in migration or with minority ethnic origin (particularly Roma), children in the alternative (especially institutional) care system and children living in precarious family situations.

The Recommendation has been adopted by unanimity with the support of all the 27 Member States, which shows the EU's firm commitment to tackle child poverty in the EU and to champion the rights of the 18 million children growing up in poverty and social exclusion across the EU.

The EU Alliance is pleased to see that most of the requests made over the last months and years to have been included in the final text of this ambitious Recommendation.

The Child Guarantee does indeed require Member States to submit ambitious Child Guarantee National Action Plans within 9 months since its adoption and to nominate a national Child Guarantee Coordinator. It acknowledges the necessity of a right-based, integrated, person-centred, and multidimensional approach to addressing child poverty and social exclusion and it highlights the need for an enabling policy framework and includes comprehensive indications on the use of multiple EU funds to this end. The text requires Member States to ensure effective and free access to high quality early childhood education and care, education, school-based, out-of-school activities, at least one healthy meal each school day and healthcare and effective access of children to adequate nutrition and decent housing.

Our job is far from over. The end of this process phase is only a new beginning!

Member States must take the coming months to develop their national Child Guarantee Action Plans alongside the **programming for the next seven-year financial framework**. Allocating adequate EU resources for the implementation of the Child Guarantee is not only essential, but part of the ESF+ regulation and a specific requirement of the Recommendation.

One of the most important requirements of the Council Recommendation is the involvement of children in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the Child Guarantee Action Plans. This step needs further targeted investment towards the most vulnerable who have lower access to consultation tools



and mechanisms and have lower opportunities to raise their voices. Therefore, we **urge EU Member States to consult children** – especially those in vulnerable situations, **their parents** and **civil society organisations** working for inclusion and against poverty at local, regional and national level on the preparations of the Child Guarantee Action Plans. The participation must be meaningful and to achieve that we are looking forward to working closely with the newly appointed Child Guarantee National Coordinators.

We hope that the new **EU headline target of bringing at least 5 million children** out of poverty and social exclusion by 2030 **will not only be reached but surpassed by millions**. For that, we call on Member State governments to adopt an ambitious target that will be part of the Child Guarantee Action Plans and that it will exceed the EU target.

Over the last years, the partners of the EU Alliance for Investing in Children have been ceaselessly working with the EU institutions to ensure the adoption of a strong and ambitious framework. **We are now ready to work together at the EU and national level to turn this vital instrument into reality.**

We are looking forward to the day in the near future, when **not even one single child has to experience poverty**, and when all our children will be able to fulfil their potentials.

Endnote

The EU Alliance for Investing in Children has been advocating for a multidimensional, rights-based approach to tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being since 2014. This statement was endorsed by the following partner organisations of the EU Alliance for Investing in Children:

- Alliance for Childhood European Network Group
- ATD Quart Monde
- Caritas Europa
- COFACE Families Europe
- Don Bosco International
- Dynamo International – Street Workers Network
- European Roma Grassroots Organisations - ERGO Network
- Eurochild
- Eurodiaconia
- EuroHealthNet
- European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities – EASPD
- European Anti-Poverty Network – EAPN
- European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless – FEANTSA
- European Parents' Association
- European Public Health Alliance – EPHA
- European Social Network – ESN
- Inclusion Europe
- Lifelong Learning Platform
- Lumos
- Mental Health Europe
- Make Mothers Matter



- Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
- Roma Education Fund
- Save the Children
- SOS Children's Villages International.

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