

Equal Chances for Children Social Rights of Children



MARIA HERCZOG
PRESIDENT OF EUROCHILD
FORMER MEMBER OF THE UN CRC
COMMITTEE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE
12-13 MAY 2015 STRASBOURG



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The effect of the economic and financial crisis on children and young people in Europe



- When social protection systems are undermined, it is the most vulnerable groups who are the most affected
- Access to preventive support services, health care, education, protection that are affordable, available and good quality contributing to the well-being of every child, but at the same time is an investment in the future, not a cost
- European policies and funding mechanisms should be directed at tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being based on a child rights approach at all levels, monitored, measured and evaluated regularly



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Poverty and deprivation



- Children are higher risk of living in poverty and social exclusion than any other population group

More than 1 child in 4 is at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, in the other regions of Europe it is even higher

More than 40% of children are living in poverty in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, in Kosovo 48,7%

Child poverty is increasing sharply if social transfers are not available or are decreased (EU average 34,7% before and 20,2% after) – (Eurostat, 2013)

Poverty and deprivation



- Poverty risk of children closely associated with the educational level and employment rate of parents
- Poverty experienced during childhood is associated with low education achievement and participation in all areas of life
- Poverty of the family is associated with the poverty, lack of resources of the local communities, municipalities, unequal distribution of and access to resources
- Investing in children – EU recommendations “only”

Pre-natal care, maternal health



- Access to health care, reproductive health care and education, quality matters,
- Poverty and deprivation related issues: malnourished expecting and breastfeeding mothers pre-mature, low weight babies,,
- Growing teenage pregnancies – many girls/parents in care themselves and the newborns at risk as well
- Post natal depression and its impact on children
- Disability, special needs, breast feeding

Rights of the Family



- Diverse family formations, challenges: one parent families, same sex couples, parents with special needs, child headed families, left behind children,
- Right to a family: children in alternative care, efforts to de-institutionalize children – different understanding, approach and strategy – UN Guidelines, EU Framework and expert group, Eurochild DeI Campaign, UNICEF efforts – “Islands of success” lack of comprehensive strategy and implementation in most countries
- Poor housing, homelessness – reason for out of family placement

Legal status of the child



- Birth certificate – consequences if not issued
- Migrant, refugee, unaccompanied and displaced children
- Right to identity – ethnic minorities, adopted children, abandoned in “baby boxes”, IVF, surrogacy

Health protection of children



- Access and eligibility to health care – isolation, poverty, lack of services, discrimination against children belonging to ethnic minorities, disabled, migrant, refugee children
- Malnutrition – quality of food – consequences on all areas of development
- Immunization, water, sanitation, accidents – East Macedonia Roma community work
- Children in persistent, chronic poverty are at greater risk of adverse outcomes for their health
- Addictions
- Health promotion, education, self-care

Special protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation



- CoE Policy Guidelines not implemented fully anywhere
- FRA assessment on the child protection systems in the 28 Member States
- EU NGO Child Right's Forum topic in 2015
- Limited resources, limited and incidental outreach and impact, mostly NGO driven, lack of state systems and commitment, integrated services
- World Vision and Child Pact research on the Balkans and Caucasus – recommendations to governments

Right to education



- Access to good quality early childhood education and care for all – in the EU only 8 countries guarantee legal rights an early place in ECEC
- In most EU countries legal entitlement starts at 3 or later (Eurydice, Eurostat, 2014)
- Parenting programs are limited (UNICEF, Eurofound 2014)
- Segregation, exclusion of vulnerable groups of children, limited integration, inclusion – High court approval in Hungary, 2015
- Digital media and children – access and protection (Day of General Discussion of the UN CRC, 2014)
- Early school leaving, cycle of low education, labor market participation, low wages

Child labor



- Growing poverty – increased child labor activities, more children are working, in Georgia 29% in Albania 19% of all children 5-17 years old are involved in work, Russia 1 million children.
- Hazardous occupations in agriculture, construction, small factories or on the street in Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine
- Many children reportedly work long hours also in the United Kingdom(CoE)
- Children from the Balkans are also working abroad

Rights of migrant, refugee, unaccompanied and displaced children



- Lack of access to health care, education, support
- Treated often as offenders not as victims or children in need of care and help
- Unresolved social problems in countries facing difficulties themselves – Greece
- Populist rhetoric blaming the “strangers”, anti-migration sentiments and political statements , UK, France, Hungary



Where to go?



- Put children's rights at a core priority on the political agenda
- Acknowledging state parties clear responsibility to support children & families
- Clear division of responsibilities and tasks between parents, families, communities, institutions: Does it take a village to raise a child? Who does what and how?

Thank you for your attention!

