



On Universal Children's Day, join us in fighting for the rights of the most vulnerable

"May this day serve to remind us to never let our children's best interest drop off our radar", said Maud de Boer- Buquicchio, President of Missing Children Europe and former deputy Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, to commemorate Universal Children's day.

In the EU, 1 in 4 children live in poverty, children make up 1/4 of new asylum seekers every year and 250,000 children are reported missing annually.

Children and families are being disproportionately affected by the current economic crisis. The EU's long-term budget 2014-2020 provides a crucial opportunity to rebuild trust in the European Union.

Investment in children makes sense – economically, socially and politically. It is the only sustainable way of overcoming social and economic inequalities in the long term. It also means acting upon existing legal obligations to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Lisbon Treaty which explicitly sets the objective to promote children's rights in internal and external EU affairs.

Unless backed by adequate resources and effective policies, commitments to children remain little but empty promises. Therefore, children's rights organisations today, call on Member States and the EU to ensure that:

1. Investment of EU resources goes to promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, in particular child poverty, through the EU Structural Funds under the MFF's Heading 1.
2. Sufficient levels of funding go to the promotion of fundamental rights and citizenship, including children's rights and child protection under the MFF's Heading 3.
3. Development aid is at least 90% of Heading 4 and that children are a priority in programming cycles so as to have a true impact on poverty eradication. A final agreement on the Development Cooperation Instrument still needs to be reached as soon as possible so that programme implementation can start on time in 2014.

To facilitate the engagement of future Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in this work, Eurochild, in cooperation with Missing Children Europe and many other child rights organisations, have prepared a [Child Rights Manifesto](#) that outlines concrete proposals for making children's rights in the EU and the world a priority through the work of future MEPs.

The Child Rights Manifesto will be presented today at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, on the occasion of the Universal Children's Day. Maud de Boer-Buquicchio will be moderating the panel. The event seeks to encourage MEPs to make children's rights a priority and to become [Child Rights Champions](#).

Join the conversation on twitter with the hashtag #childrightschampion

Missing Children Europe is the European federation for Missing Children with 27 member NGOs in 21 European countries. Learn more about us on www.missingchildreneurope.eu.

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