

EURONET Manifesto for Children

This manifesto is addressing all candidates for the election to the European Parliament (June 2004)¹

About 76 million children (every human being up to 18 years) live in the EU 25 member states. Their voices are rarely heard and they are generally not encouraged to participate in matters that affect them. More than 21% of children in the EU are living in relative poverty and many children in the EU are trafficked or sexually exploited. It is time to build a Europe for children and make children's rights real.

1. Children in Europe have a right to their say: **Promote children's participation in decisions that affect them, and give due weight to their views.**
2. More than 21% of children in Europe live in relative poverty in one of the richest regions of the world: **Eradicate child poverty in all EU member states.**
3. Six hundred million children around the world are living in extreme poverty: **Ensure that children's rights and interests are taken into account in EU external-affairs policy and action**
4. Children are trafficked and sexually exploited across Europe: **Enforce laws that can protect children against traffickers and abusers and offer protection to victims.**
5. Child pornography is abhorrent: **Take action to extend and continue EU action programmes and make the internet safe from this form of abuse.**
6. Many children in the Central and Eastern European region are living in institutions: **Take action to ensure that children can live in a family and appropriate environment.**
7. Many children grow up in polluted areas and child-unfriendly cities: **Guarantee a clean, healthy and child-friendly environment for children to grow up in and ensure access to the highest standards of health care whether in or out of hospital.**
8. Children in Europe still face discrimination: **Take action to end all forms of discrimination against children.**
9. Children are now included in the draft European Constitution: **Ensure that children's rights and interests are no longer ignored in European legislation and policy.**
10. Children are invisible in EU policy and programmes: **Promote the establishment of an EU Representative on children's rights to ensure co-ordination of European policies on behalf of children.**
11. Children are only targeted by few funds in the EU budget: **Ensure that more money is directed at children in the EU budget.**
12. Over 2 million children have been killed and more than 6 million injured as a result of conflict since 1990: **Promote serious and effective implementation of the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict.**

¹ This manifesto, which includes the voices of children in Europe, is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and its Optional Protocols.

