

VOTE FOR CHILDREN



Become a #ChildRightsChampion

Stand up for children in the
European Parliament elections



THE FACTS

on children in Europe and the world

25^M More than **25 million** children in Europe are at risk of **poverty and exclusion**.

45% More than **45%** of children in Romania and Bulgaria, and more than **30%** of children in Spain and Italy are at **risk of poverty or social exclusion**.



Migrant and refugee children face **social exclusion** and are **denied access to basic social services**.

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Hundreds of thousands of children in Europe are **confined to harmful institutions** due to poverty, disabilities or discrimination, even though 80% of them have a living parent and could grow up in the care of families and communities.

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More than half the world's children – **1.2 billion** – live in countries affected by **widespread poverty, conflict and discrimination**.



Girls face double discrimination due to their age and gender.

- Each year, **12 million** girls are married before the age of 18.
- **32 million** primary school-aged girls worldwide **do not attend school**.

32^M

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Outside of Europe, **1 in 6 children live in conflict settings**. Many of these children are victims of violence and are increasingly targeted in conflict, including at school.



Children in fragile countries are among those who will feel the **biggest impact from climate change**. European children will also be affected.

The EU has been a principled aid donor, defender of rights and champion of sustainable development. It must continue this legacy now, more than ever, to defend and protect children's rights at home and abroad and to ensure a sustainable future that leaves no child behind.

THE SOLUTION?

Become a #ChildRightsChampion

We need a Europe that delivers for every child. So, we are asking future MEPs to become Child Rights Champions by signing up through our website or signing this pamphlet.

If you sign-up via our website, we will verify your information. Child Rights Champions will be awarded a pin, which they can wear with pride. Our logo can also be placed on candidates' campaign websites and voters can see which candidates have committed to supporting children's rights on our website: www.childrightsmanifesto.eu

The Vote for Children coalition calls on European Parliamentary candidates to become Child Rights Champions to:

1 **BREAK** the cycles of poverty, inequality and conflict for future generations

By intervening early, we can break these cycles and empower children through education, social services and strengthened child-care and child protection systems.

The EU has a role to play in stopping the war on children beyond its borders by ensuring they are protected, and by recognising and supporting children as actors of peace.

2 **INVEST** in children inside and outside Europe

Investing in children is the best way to break these cycles and invest in everybody's future. Healthy, educated, resilient children lead to more prosperous, sustainable, stable and safe societies.

This investment is not just about money. It also means ensuring that rights-based and sustainable policies are adopted to create the Europe children need.

3 **LISTEN** to children's voices, **INVOLVE** them in decisions affecting them and **ACT** on children's views

Even though children are the future of Europe and have valuable opinions, we do not listen to them enough.

Politicians are accountable for decisions they take that affect children. MEPs must listen to children and involve them in decisions that affect them. They must act on children's views and take responsibility for decisions that impact them. The results will not only help children participate as active citizens and empower them as agents for change, but will transform our politics, our environment, our societies and the Europe of the future.

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Future MEPs can ensure the EU delivers for children by:

- 1. Re-establishing the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights** and working together with children, civil society and international organisations to build a more holistic internal and external agenda for children.
- 2. Ensuring the next long-term EU Budget invests in children** and areas that impact them, particularly through Cohesion policy (European Social Fund + and European Regional and Development Fund), the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and the Rights and Values and Erasmus+ programmes.
- 3. Making sure the EU adopts a Child Guarantee** so that every impoverished or socially excluded child in Europe can access basic services.
- 4. Ensuring political parties engage with and listen to children** by supplying child-friendly information about policies affecting them, providing opportunities for children to share their views and encouraging children to give feedback on the services they use.
- 5. Guaranteeing the new European Parliament promotes and protects children's rights** regardless of children's origin or migration status.
- 6. Ensuring the new European Parliament champions a comprehensive EU strategy** on ending all forms of inequality, segregation, discrimination and violence against children, including girls and young women, everywhere.
- 7. Making sure the European Parliament stands up for foreign and domestic policies which respect the rights of children** by providing comprehensive child protection systems, supporting the transition to family and community-based care, protecting children in conflict and investing in children so they can survive and thrive.

I, the undersigned, commit to this call to action and pledge to become a Child Rights Champion in the European Parliament:

Name:

Email:

Signature:

I agree to be kept informed via e-mail and that my name may be mentioned on the website www.childrightsmanifesto.eu

The Vote for Children coalition brings together organisations working on children's issues:

