

Eurochild

World Children's Day 2020

Webinar 3:

Why and how does protecting children's rights strengthen our democracies?

Closing Remarks

Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca

To answer the key question of our session today I would like to highlight 3 key threads that we heard today:

1. Firstly, given that we are celebrating Children's Day in the rather worrying backdrop of the pandemic and socio-economic crisis I deeply agree with Minister Satcheva that when **we invest in children we invest in the prosperity of our societies**. As Milena underlined, children's rights need to be respected in the PRESENT but decisions taken today influence their future!

2. Secondly, all our speakers reiterated the **importance of child participation**. I could not agree more. Baroness Massey said that involving children in decision-making is strengthening their rights to speak out, it helps governments and Parliaments to get fresh insights they may never have thought of. Mr Adamson is correct in stating that "everything is a children's issue." We need to make child participation a core practice in our decision making.

3. There is immense political value in promoting children's rights. the recognition of children's valuable contribution to society still needs a lot of **support and capacity-building**. The EU's upcoming and the Council of Europe's existing Strategies on the Rights of the Child contribute to actively embedding a rights based approach to policies across the board. The commitment the Vice President made today are extremely important going forward - that countries will be working on national strategies on children's rights.

We can not rest yet though - the situation in Bulgaria shows the value in safeguarding the civil society space. Their role in promoting children's rights, their recognition and their safety. We must stand together for children and for child rights defenders.