

Eurochild

World Children's Day 2020

Webinar 1:

Putting Children at the Heart of Europe's Recovery

What is an 'economy of well-being'?

Why and how does it prioritize children?

Wednesday – 18th November 2020

Introductory Remarks

Your Excellency, Secretary General of OECD (Angel Gurría)

Honorable Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services of Finland (Krista Kiuru)

Dear Colleagues and Friends

Good morning to all of you

It is not usual for us, not to meet physically, however, during these unprecedented times, of social distancing, I am proud that Eurochild has managed, together with member organisations to spite the situation, and bring all of us together, on this virtual platform, to celebrate World Children's Day 2020 in a very meaningful way.

We cannot underestimate the magnitude of the multiple crises that humanity is currently facing.

The pandemic is far from being yet under control.

Managing and overcoming its worst effects is not only a public health issue
It is undoubtedly also a very economic issue, a very political issue and an
extremely social concern.

Beyond the pandemic, we are also facing a climate catastrophe due to the
irreversible damage done to our environment.

Faced with the scale and the urgency of these challenges, however, the pandemic
is giving us and our governments and authorities, the opportunity to reflect, to
develop the necessary strategies and to build new policies.

It is clear that the “Business as usual” or the “Status Quo” approach is no longer
an option.

It is, now, the time to think ‘outside the box’ and accelerate the necessary
reforms.

Many of the ideas that have been put on the margins for so long, must now move
into the mainstream, and given, a new lease of life.

Sustainability thinking global and acting local community
engagement. These are all concepts and aspirations, that have always been very
relevant, but now, we cannot afford, not to, bring them to life.

We, **now**, need to act!

We, **now**, cannot afford to continue using these aspirations as simple slogans!

Eurochild is convinced that respect for children's rights lies at the very heart of the solution to today's challenges.

It is for this reason, that Eurochild is organising these high-level webinars during the week, when we celebrate Universal Children's Day.

Through these webinars, we chose to address children's rights from a different perspective, every time.

We have also chosen to ask children themselves, to guide us, in stimulating constructive discussions during these webinars.

- Webinar 1, which is being held today will pose the question about:
What is an 'economy of well-being' and why and how does it prioritise children?
- Webinar 2, being held tomorrow will discuss the question of:
Why is tackling child poverty a pre-requisite to sustainably exit the crisis?
and
- Webinar 3, which will close this series of Breakfast Webinars on World Children's Day will indulge in realm of:
Why and how does protecting children's rights strengthen our democracies?

For each webinar, we also invite a 'national partner network', to co-host with Eurochild. Our National Partner Networks bring together national organisations that work with and for children.

I am pleased to welcome our co-hosts for:

- **The Central Union for Child Welfare of Finland** today's webinar;
- **The Plataforma de Infancia** of Spain to co-host tomorrow's webinar; and
- **The National Network for Children of Bulgaria** to co-host the third and last webinar on Friday.

For this occasion, Eurochild is also launching its new report: "**Growing up in lockdown: Europe's children in the age of COVID-19**", which provides a unique in-depth, country-by-country assessment, of the situation of children's rights and conditions in Europe. It also provides a set of recommendations to improve public policies both on a short and long-term basis, to effectively support children and families.

We are also delighted to organise today's webinar in partnership with OECD.

I am particularly honored to welcome the Secretary General of OECD, His Excellency Angel Gurría to open this first Webinar, by actually keynoting it.

I have had first-hand experience of the invaluable work that OECD does even through its research to provide advocacy to governments and policy makers.

I am also particularly excited to hear of the establishment of a Centre on Well-being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity (WISE) within OECD and which as I am informed will be launched next week.

The Secretary General, His Excellency, Mr Angel Gurría will be stimulating our discussion by addressing the question that we have identified for today's webinar, which is:

- What is an economy of well-being and why and how does it prioritise children?

Without much further ado, I now give the floor to the Secretary General of OECD, His Excellency Angel Gurría.

Your Excellency the floor is yours.