

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 – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Poll Question:** The Covid crisis will have deep and long-lasting economic repercussions.

Taking account of the current crisis, if you had to prioritise one public investment that will make the biggest difference to children's well-being and to building an economy of well-being, what would that be?

1. Expanding **early childhood education and care** for all young children
2. Improving the quality and inclusiveness of **primary and secondary education**
3. Protecting **household incomes** with minimum income schemes
4. Strengthening **children's participation** in the development, delivery and evaluation of services
5. Providing free, high quality **healthcare** for all families and children

**Response:**

I must admit that it is a most difficult choice to just identify one of these five areas.

These areas are all, of utmost priority. In fact I see them as an important value chain, in breaking the cycles of disadvantage and to build the necessary environment for well-being.

Having been asked to prioritize, I will therefore choose early childhood education and care as being fundamental.

I perceive early childhood education and care as the foundation to all of these important parts of the value chain. Let me take an analogous example, good childhood education and care is like the need for strong foundations when building a house. If we do not put the proper foundations to the development of a child, we will not be able to ensure that the child can be able to achieve its full potential during the whole process of its life.

We must remember that as the experts in the field, describe early years, early childhood education and care, is catalyst to the development of the brain architecture.

I usually also go even a step further than early childhood education and care. I also identify maternal health services as being fundamental to the development and potential of a child.

Maternal Health gives us the opportunity of looking at any potential vulnerability that the child could be born into, and therefore, it gives us the possibility of addressing those vulnerabilities at a very, very early stage in its life.