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## International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

**2 trillion euros for the banks bail out - how much for our children?**

**Europe is at risk of experiencing severe social crisis as a result of the present world economic situation. This unquestionably affects the poor the most. On the 17th October, the International Day against poverty, Eurochild calls on EU leaders to ensure support for the most vulnerable groups of society, especially children.**

Earlier this week, the EU announced a rescue package of €2 trillion for the financial sector to avert the looming global economic crisis. **Eurochild** - a network of organisations and individuals promoting the rights and welfare of children in Europe - urges policy-makers to pay urgent attention to the potential social impacts of the crisis. Already some 72 million European citizens live in or on the edge of poverty, an estimated 19 million of them are children. A rise in unemployment and over-indebtedness could push many more under the poverty threshold.

*“There has never been a more important time to invest in our children,” says Jana Hainsworth, Secretary General of Eurochild. “Besides a moral obligation, the long-term social economic cost of not investing is just too high. We need **all** European citizens to be able to fulfill their potential and we need to ensure that all families, communities, services and children themselves have the necessary means to enable that to happen.”*

European Ministers for Labour and Social Affairs are meeting on the eve of the International Day for the eradication of poverty and social exclusion in Marseille. The meeting, lead by Martin Hirsch High Commissioner for active inclusion against poverty, is opening a window of opportunity for putting social progress and the fight against poverty at the heart of the EU agenda. There is no better litmus test for the well-being of society, than the well-being of its children. We need a commitment to eradicate child poverty now. There could be no better long-term legacy for the French Presidency.

The 17th October is the day to put socially excluded groups in the forefront of political communication. **Eurochild** calls on politicians to take a decisive action that will sustain long term efforts to eradicate poverty. If there is anything positive to take from this financial crisis, it is that EU leaders can never again allow the free market to override the need to ensure equality and social justice. Let's start by investing in our children.

**About Eurochild:** [Eurochild<sup>AISBL</sup>](http://www.eurochild.org) is an international network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to improve the quality of life of children and young people. Its work is underpinned by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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Press release



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