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Press Release

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

Eurochild^{AISBL} urges EU member states to do everything possible to eradicate child poverty

Of the 72 Million People still experiencing poverty in the EU many are children!

Across the European Union (EU), families with children under 16 are still more likely to be at risk of poverty than the rest of the population as a whole (20% compared to 16%). As a consequence, at the Spring Summit 2006, heads of state and government concluded that EU member states should take measures to “**rapidly and significantly reduce child poverty**”.

However, although many member states have identified child poverty or poverty among families with children as a strategic priority in their National Action Plans for Social Inclusion and Social Protection (NAPs/Inclusion), more needs to be done.

After a preliminary assessment of this year’s Member States’ NAPs/Inclusion from the perspective of child rights as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Eurochild has found that:

- Many member states (as well as the EU) are shying away from setting clear targets on reducing the number of children living in poverty,
- Children’s right to participate are too often neglected and none of the national reports evaluated so far have taken direct account of children’s views, nor the organisations that work with them
- Almost none of the national reports on social inclusion make reference to national children’s strategies or action plans, wherever such a plan exists.
- Mainstreaming social inclusion across the area of child poverty has only been a partial success.

For this reason Eurochild has issued the following recommendations:

- Eurochild calls on member states and the EU to set clear targets for the reduction of child poverty.

- Policy responses to child poverty and social exclusion must take account of the views of children and the organisations that represent them.
- Eurochild calls on Member States to build on the infrastructure and strategies in place for the implementation of the UNCRC when developing policies that tackle child poverty and social exclusion.
- Tackling child poverty and social exclusion demands a cross-sector approach and integrated policies at all levels of government. Other policies (eg economic, employment, education, social, cultural and environmental, regional development) need to support the strategy to combat child poverty and social exclusion.

Eurochild aligns itself with the EAPN appeal to actively promote social cohesion and the eradication of poverty at national level, and to mainstream the fight against poverty into the activities undertaken during the 2007 EU Year of equal opportunities. It urges all relevant actors to reinforce genuine participatory approaches of people experiencing poverty adopted at all levels, including a strong engagement in the preparation of the NAPs/Inclusion. Member states should take an example on the many good practices that already exist.

This is also why Eurochild was pleased to be involved in the 5th European Round Table on Poverty and Social Inclusion, held in Tampere, Finland on 16-17 October under the Finnish Presidency of the EU, This meeting is an important part of the EU's approach to tackling poverty and social exclusion.

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Note to the editors:

Eurochild^{AISBL} 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. Eurochild is funded by the European Commission within the Community Action Programme to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion. However, the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission.