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## Press Release

### ***EU leaders commit to fighting Child Poverty***

Eurochild<sup>AISBL</sup> welcomes the commitment of EU leaders to **fight poverty**, and especially child poverty, as mentioned in the final Conclusions of the spring summit of 8-9 March 2007 in Brussels<sup>1</sup>. It is also pleased that this issue has been selected by the EU in 2007 and is developed as a strategic priority in 20 member states' national reports on strategies for social protection and social inclusion<sup>2</sup>.

"Eurochild welcomes the long overdue attention that is now being given to child poverty and children's well-being within the EU", said Jana Hainsworth, Secretary General. "We are calling for all EU member states to implement the commitments of their leaders and set clear targets for the reduction of child poverty, matched with serious, long-term investment in services for children and families", she added.

According to Eurochild's recent review of member states' strategies on social inclusion<sup>3</sup>, child poverty is on the increase in several member states. Even in traditional social welfare states, there are growing inequalities in society that have a disproportionate effect on children. Monetary benefits are crucial, and it is worrying that, in some Member States, these are falling in value or failing to meet real need. While Eurochild is supportive of a more balanced policy mix to tackle child poverty, adequate cash transfers must be at the heart of any policy strategy to tackle poverty.

Eurochild also welcomes the launch of the "European Alliance for Families" in the Council Conclusions which is intended as a platform for exchange of views and good practices on family-friendly policies. There is a need to support parents, especially in their role as principal care givers and educators of children, and efforts to alleviate the multiple challenges faced by families - particularly those living in poverty - are very welcome. Nonetheless, Eurochild are concerned that the overriding focus of this initiative on maximising labour market participation and addressing the challenge of demographic change risks missing the point - the right of every child to a healthy, happy and safe start in life.

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**Note to the editors:**

**Eurochild**<sup>AISBL</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/93135.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/93135.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> For the EU's Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/social\\_inclusion/jrep\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/jrep_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> "Ending Child Poverty within the EU? A review of the 2006-2008 national reports on strategies for social protection and social inclusion", report available on [www.eurochild.org](http://www.eurochild.org)