

The Europe Kids Want

Sharing the views of children and young people across Europe to mark World Children's Day

20 November 2018



About 'The Europe Kids Want' project

Children and young people have a key stake in Europe's future. They **MATTER**. Not only because it is their future that is affected by today's decisions, but also because their involvement in decision-making helps them to understand democratic values and fundamental freedoms which underpin the European project. They are voters of tomorrow and change-makers of today.

As European leaders debate the future of Europe, **UNICEF and Eurochild** launched an online survey, inviting children and young people to share their views on the Europe they want. 'Europe Kids Want' gathered children's and young people's experiences of family-life, school, society and their thoughts on Europe. Please find the first findings in this brochure.



Who's involved?

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. The UNICEF Office for Relations with EU Institutions in Brussels works together with the EU in all areas relevant to UNICEF's work, promoting children's rights. For more information about UNICEF and its work, visit: www.unicef.org

Eurochild advocates for children's rights and well-being to be at the heart of policymaking. We are a network of organisations working with and for children throughout Europe, striving for a society that respects the rights of children. We influence policies, build internal capacities, facilitate mutual learning and exchange practice and research. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the foundation of all our work. www.eurochild.org

Special thanks goes to the Child Rights Intergroup in the European Parliament and the organisations involved in the Child Rights Action Group.

Understanding the results of the ‘Europe Kids Want’ poll

For World Children’s Day on 20 November 2018, we assessed the responses of 13,679 children and young people from over 23 countries in Europe. The findings shared in this brochure are based on the responses received by 10 October 2018. The survey is still open and available online at: bit.ly/EuropeKidsWant

Process and results

The ‘Europe Kids Want’ online poll was developed by children’s rights experts and tested with focus groups of children themselves. It is available in 29 languages and all questions are written in a child-friendly language so as to encourage responses from under 18-year-olds. No personal data has been collected in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679. The opinion poll is not representative of a specific sample, group or country nor exhaustive in terms of coverage of the targeted population or of the issues children may face in Europe and beyond. Findings of the survey are not necessarily providing comprehensive, complete, accurate or up-to-date information.

This brochure aims to offer a glimpse into the views of the children and young people who responded to this consultative process between 1 July - 10 October 2018. It is meant to support decision-makers in understanding children’s views on key issues that affect them.



The children and young people who responded to ‘Europe Kids Want’ are...

- **Age range of respondents:**

9 years or younger	3.2%
10-14 years	35.2%
15-17 years	39.2%
18 - 30 years	22.4%

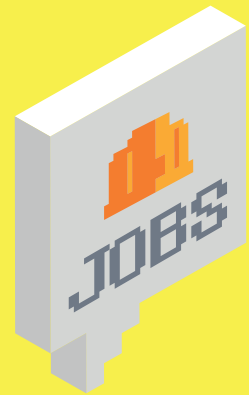
- Total number of children and young people: **13,679**
- Respondents mostly identified as: **Female (64.5%)**
- Number of responses to questions: **38,148**
- **Over 23 countries represented** (mostly in Europe)



53% of children and young people worry about **not finding a job**

Children and young people aged 10 and above are most worried about not finding a job. With 43.6% youth unemployment rate in Greece and 38.6% in Spain, concerns are visible among children as young as 10 years old in many European countries. Children from Italy, Serbia, Spain, Ireland and Bulgaria fear the most about not finding a job.

Do you think what you learn at school is preparing you for your future ?



Age group 10-14

Not very much	14.5%
Not at all	4.2%

Age group 15-17

Not very much	26.8%
Not at all	7.2%

Age group 18-30

Average	3%
Not very much	32.8%
Not at all	10.1%

In response to this question, it is noted that as children get older, the less likely they feel that school is preparing them for their future.

When asked about their fears for the future, the possibility of war and violence where they live and the threat of climate change worries children and young people the most. Stopping bullying and making sure that no one is treated badly because of being different are topping the most important issues for children to feel safer at school. Greater awareness of climate change and environmental degradation appears to affect the younger generation. Results also show that only a mere 11.4% do not worry about their future at all. It is interesting to note that the aspects that children and young people are most worried about are the same areas where they think that the European Union could be supportive.

Violence and climate change

at the top of children's fears



Thinking about your future, which of these things are you most worried about? (Choose a maximum of 3)

Not being able to find a job	53.1%
The possibility of war or terrorist attacks	48.2%
Climate change	41.2%
Not having enough friends or family members to support me in the future	21%
There is too much violence where I live	17.2%
Drugs and alcohol are used too much by people around me	17.2%
I'm not worried about my future	11.4%
Too many people from other countries moving to the country where I live	9.1%



2/3 of children feel positive towards people from other countries

Children and young people are curious and welcoming towards people from a different country, with a different language, culture or religion living in their area. When asked about how they would react if people from a different background come to live in their area, the majority of kids would be curious and would want to make the newcomers feel welcome.

Tolerance and being treated equally features prominently amongst the expectations of children when dealing with the online environment or in response to how people from other countries or backgrounds should be treated.

How would you feel if people from a different country, with a different language, culture or religion, came to live in your area?

I would be curious to get to know them	36.7%
I would want to make sure they feel welcome	31.3%
I would feel that if people came to live in my area they need to learn the language and follow the traditions of my area	17.8%
I would feel uncomfortable if they would come to live in my area	3.8%

Making new friends and speaking the local language are the two most important issues for children and young people to feel at home, when asked if they had to go and live in a new place. They thought that this were the most important things in a human relationship.

If you had to move to a new place where you didn't know anybody, what are the 2 most important things that would help you feel at home? (Choose a maximum of 2)

Making new friends	63.1%
Being able to speak the language spoken at the new place	57.8%
Being able to go to school	29.9%
Being with others who speak my language or come from a similar background	25.9%
Taking part in sports or other after-school activities	16.4%



What do you think would make your school a safer place for you /your schoolmates? (Choose a maximum of 3)


Making sure no one is treated badly because of being different	61.5%
Stop bullying	43.3%
Making sure no one can use or buy drugs or alcohol in or around the school	36.1%
Better school buildings and grounds	33.9%
My school is already a safe place	24.6%
More and better security, such as cameras at the school gate	20.7%



6/10 children think that treating different people equally would make **school a better place**

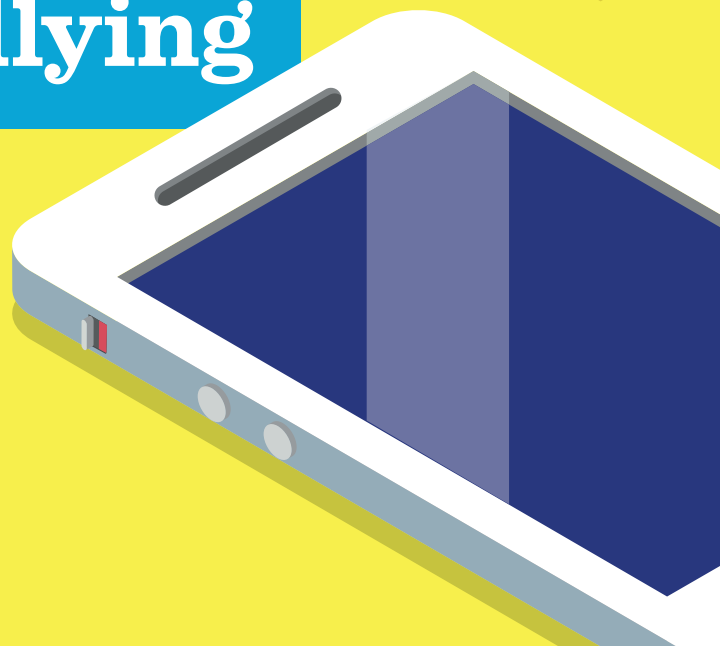
Worries about being online:

Other people can say cruel things or post unkind videos or photos	47.8%
I'm afraid that other people find out things about me I don't want them to know	37%
People I chat with can pretend to be somebody they're not	33.5%



Children and young people **of all ages** are worried about **online bullying**

They fear being targeted by cruel messages, unkind photos or videos of themselves.






4/6 children are **unhappy** with the way cities or towns engage with them

While children are aware of their rights (87% of respondents have heard of children's rights), they do not always feel that their opinions are heard by adults when making decisions. Among all settings, family, school and cities/towns, children and young people feel that city and local decision-makers listen the least to their views.

Do you feel adults listen to you and your opinions when making decisions?

	Always	Sometimes	Never
In my family	45.7%	49.9%	4.4%
In my school	14.6%	67.9%	17.6%
In my city/town	7.3%	45.5%	47.2%



The Europe we want

“**43% of children** think the EU makes their **life better.**”

Children of all age groups are aware of the European Union. Only 3% of children and young people responding to the poll do not know the EU. And almost half of all respondents think the EU makes their life better.


Top three recommendations for the EU

What should the EU do to improve your life or future opportunities?

1	Helping to keep peace in the world	53.5%
2	Protecting the environment	45.6%
3	Helping to make sure everyone is treated equally	41.3%



Realising the ‘Europe Kids Want’ - What the European Union can do

- 1.** Children’s rights should be at the heart of EU internal and external policies. Since 53% of children are worried about their future employability, the EU needs to invest in reducing inequality and breaking the cycle of disadvantage through child-centred policies such as education reform, early childhood development, health promotion, community development and family strengthening. This commitment has to be reflected in the new Multiannual Financial Framework towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
 - 2.** Decision-makers must involve children and young people in global, European, national and local policy dialogues. Children are important drivers of change and should be empowered to participate in decision-making as key partners for the realisation of more inclusive societies.
 - 3.** Children and young people are exposed to various forms of violence, with bullying online and offline having an increasing impact on their lives. The EU has already taken steps towards their protection – in family, at school, online, etc. – and should continue to raise awareness, as well as sharing good practices to prevent violence and abuse, particularly in schools, online bullying and hate speech. Diversity is one of the core values of the EU and two thirds of children and young people are positive about it, which greatly contributes to prevent violence at all levels.
 - 4.** The EU and all the EU Member States have committed to promote and protect the rights of the child. They must therefore ensure that all children are protected, especially the most vulnerable, regardless of their origin or migration status.
 - 5.** The EU must respect the Paris Agreement on climate change to secure a healthy future for all children.
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There is still time to give
your opinion and be
part of the game

Bitly.com/EuropeKidsWant

Available in 29 languages



**Make your voice heard
at the European Elections 2019!**

