

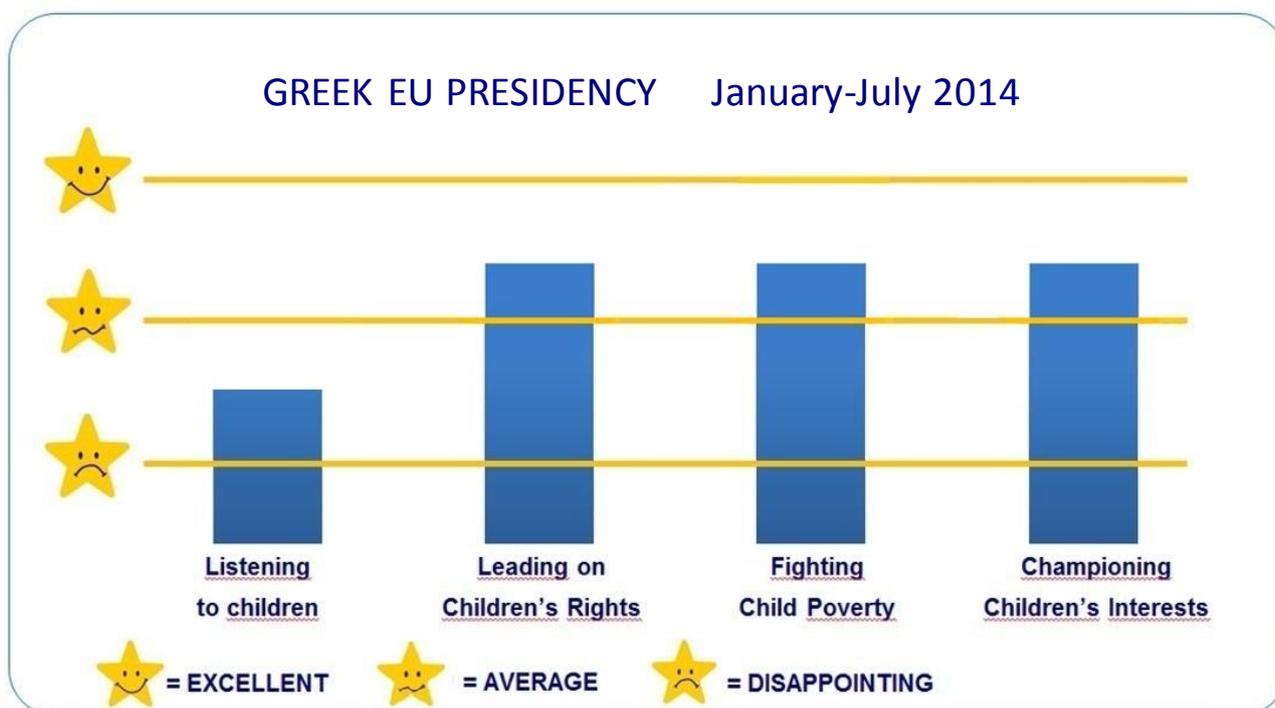


EU PRESIDENCY SCORECARD

Performance assessment of the Greek EU Presidency from a Child Rights perspective

The Greek Presidency showed some positive initiative in relation to child poverty, youth issues and children's rights. The Presidency programme placed special emphasis on children and young people and poverty. The Presidency was particularly concerned with social issues and the consequences of the crisis in the EU given the up-coming mid-term review of the Europe 2020 Strategy and in this regard Council conclusions were adopted relating to youth empowerment and mentioning child poverty.

On the initiative of the Greek Ombudsman for Children, the Presidency lent its support to a consultation meeting on the Recommendation on investing in children. Furthermore the trend of consulting youth on social issues was continued in the Greek Presidency during the EU Youth Forum Conference. In relation to children's rights the Presidency took the lead in preparing the legislative approach to the directive on the procedural rights of children suspected or accused of a crime which will hopefully contribute to a more child-friendly justice system in the EU.



During their 6 month tenure of the EU Presidency, Member States have an important responsibility to ensure that the rights and well-being of children remain high on the EU political agenda. Children represent 20% of our present, but 100% of the future. Strong, genuine commitment to children's rights and well-being is an investment in the future; it is also an obligation to which all member states have signed up under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is the eighth in a series of assessments of EU Presidencies. It assesses performance on four criteria: Listening to children, vision and leadership for strong children's rights strategy, action and cooperation at EU level to fight child poverty, and children's interests in the Presidency programme.

This scorecard evaluates the extent to which a Member State promotes children's rights during their tenure of the 6-month EU Presidency. It does not reflect how well the country fares in its overall treatment of and investment in children and young people.

Find this and all other EU Presidency Scorecards at www.tinyurl.com/eupresidency-scorecards

DID THEY LISTEN TO CHILDREN?



On 10-14 March, the Hellenic Presidency, together with the European Youth Forum and the Greek Youth Council, hosted [the EU Youth Conference in Thessaloniki](#). Building on the structured dialogue process it underlined the main focus of the Greek Presidency on youth issues: social inclusion of all young people with a clear emphasis on youth entrepreneurship. The EU Youth Conference included participants from representatives who deal with youth issues and youth themselves. The Conference, which follows those of the Irish and Lithuanian presidencies kept continuity given that the EU Youth Conferences of the previous presidencies had also focused on social inclusion of young people.

DID THEY LEAD ON THE EU CHILD RIGHTS AGENDA?



On 19-20 June, the Greek Presidency and the European Commission organised a conference on the quality of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) where a proposal for a ECEC European Quality Framework was presented and discussed. The framework is the fruit of years of Eurochild advocacy to focus on quality and shifting away from a narrow understanding of ECEC as a service to working parents. Eurochild Secretary-General Jana Hainsworth [participated at the conference](#).



On 6 June, [Justice Ministers from the Member States agreed on a general approach](#) for measures that will guarantee special safeguards for children during criminal court proceedings. The European Commission put forward a directive in 2013, aiming to establish specific protection for children during court proceedings. The proposed directive includes a right of access to a lawyer, the right for the child to be notified of their rights under the directive, the right to an individual and medical assessment where appropriate and the duty of authorities to inform a holder of parental responsibility and to consider alternatives to deprivation of liberty prior to the final determination in the case.



On 8-9 May the Hellenic Presidency along with Smile of the Child hosted the [South-eastern European Forum "Missing Children in the Context of Child Trafficking"](#). Public officials, representatives of international and non-governmental organisations from Europe and the USA and experts in the field of trafficking spoke at the event. In addition on 2 June, the Smile of the Child and the European Federation for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children "Missing Children Europe" co-organized a [seminar entitled "When every minute counts" on cross border child alert cooperation in life threatening cases of missing children](#) held under Auspice of the Presidency in the context of activities taking place across Europe under the framework of International Missing Children's Day. The event aimed to raise awareness of missing children with particular focus on cross border cooperation between national stakeholders involved in child alert mechanisms across Europe.



The Presidency [hosted a High Level Political Conference](#), jointly organised with FRA in March 2014 entitled "Violence against women in the EU: from childhood to adulthood". The Conference launched the results of the [biggest survey in the EU on the subject of violence against women](#). The report details incidents of physical and sexual violence experienced by women in adulthood and childhood highlighting the fact that gender based violence is an issue for adults and children alike.



On the 11-12 July the [1st Conference of the European Anti-bullying Network: "School bullying and cyber-bullying across Europe"](#) was held under the hospices of the Hellenic Presidency. The aim was to discuss the establishment of the European Anti-bullying Network, develop a common European strategy to tackle bullying and implement an awareness campaign surrounding the issue. Also on the topic of children and technology, the Hellenic Presidency organised a [conference on "Protection of minors in the digital age"](#) in April. The conference addressed the issue of whether or not in an age where rapid technological change and digital media converge, existing legislation is sufficient to deal with challenges related to the protection of minors.

DID THEY STRENGTHEN EU COOPERATION TO FIGHT AGAINST CHILD POVERTY



On 9 May a [consultation meeting](#) took place under the auspices of the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union and organised by the Greek Ombudsman in collaboration with the DG Employment and Eurochild. The event included topics such as the mechanisms of implementation and promotion of the EC Recommendation "Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of disadvantage", the utilisation of European structural funds and the involvement of Greek public agencies and NGOs in the formation of a national alliance for investing in children in Greece. Speakers from the European Commission, Eurochild, FRA, Independent Network of Experts on Social Inclusion, European Ombudspersons, Greek state authorities, public organisations and NGOs were present.



In the margins of the [Council on General Affairs and Policy of the Hague Conference on Private International Law](#), the Greek Presidency deposited the EU's instrument of ratification of the "Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance". The ratification is a crucial step in the further development of the relations between the Union and third states in the area of maintenance obligations and could impact positively on the well-being of children and reduce risk of poverty for them.



On 10 March, [the Council adopted a conclusion on the social situation](#) in the EU stressing the importance of a balance between the social and economic elements of the Europe 2020 strategy. The Conclusion highlighted that "investing in children and in young people should be a political priority given the long-term gains stemming from their higher labour market participation and educational performance". However, the Country Specific Recommendations which were [adopted by the Council on 27 June](#) did not fully reflect this balance with a continued overall focus on employment and economic issues.

DID THEY CHAMPION CHILDREN'S INTERESTS THROUGHOUT THEIR PROGRAMME?



The Education and Youth Council, which took place on 20-21 May, [adopted two relevant resolutions](#). The resolution on the EU Work Plan for Youth is a medium-term plan, intended to enable the EU and its member states to address the high youth unemployment rates and the consequences of the current crisis on young people through a number of key initiatives and political priorities. It sets out three priorities including empowerment, with a special focus on access to rights, autonomy, participation and active citizenship. The resolution on the structured dialogue process represents a forum for continuous joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field, involving a wide range of young people and youth organisations. In addition, the Council also adopted a conclusion on promoting youth entrepreneurship to foster social inclusion, focusing on creativity, innovation and green jobs and inviting member states to recognise the importance of entrepreneurial education from an early age.



In [Council conclusions adopted on 20 June](#), health ministers agreed to assume initiatives for the promotion of a healthy diet and physical activity as efficient preventive measures during the lifecycle to confront obesity and chronic diseases, with an emphasis on children and the elderly. Among others, the European Commission and Member States are urged to consider appropriate action contributing to the implementation of the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020.



The [economic crisis, migration and e-Health were discussed at Informal Meeting of EU Health Ministers](#) in Athens on 29 April. Among the topics for discussion was the distribution of agricultural products to school children. The Presidency intended to examine proposals from the meeting and submit a progress report to the Council on the subject.

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Avenue des Arts, 1-2 - B-1210 Brussels – Belgium
T +32 (0)2 511 70 83 - www.eurochild.org - info@eurochild.org

Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to promote the rights and well-being of children and young people. Our work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and work in respect of its underlying principles.

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