

Eurochild

Child Participation Strategy

Children's Priorities are our Priorities



Updated 2021

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Summary - Eurochild Child Participation Strategy

Children's Priorities are our Priorities



National and EU governments are helped to set up child participation structures.



More opportunities for children of all ages and backgrounds to participate at EU and National level.



Children have more of a say in how Eurochild is run.



Members and other organisations are more skilled to work with children in a meaningful way.



This Child Participation Strategy builds on the previous version from 2017. It is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is supported by Eurochild's [child protection policy](#).

VISION - Children are experts in their own lives and it is essential that they participate in decisions that affect them. Participation improves the quality of decision-making and it contributes to children's development.

4 Objectives



1. National governments in EU countries are helped to set up structures for child participation

- The EU Strategy on the rights of the child will support EU countries to create structures that allow children to actively participate in society. Eurochild will actively work to support these initiatives to make sure they become reality.
- Eurochild will prepare child-friendly documents for children.



2. More opportunities for children of all ages and backgrounds to participate at EU and national level

- Through the National Eurochild Forums (NEFs) and Eurochild's Children's Council (ECC), Eurochild will work with members to ensure children from different backgrounds are represented in Eurochild's influencing work.
- We will support Eurochild's members to learn from each other.



3. Members and other organisations are more skilled to work with children in a meaningful way

- We will build on the 'We are Here Child Participation Toolbox', developed with our member Learning for Well-being Foundation.
- We will develop training activities for members and other organisations, including on doing child participation activities online.
- We aim to support child-led initiatives.



4. Children have more of a say in how Eurochild is run

- Children are involved in the General Assembly and have an advisory role to the Management Board.
- Children contribute to internal policies and are involved when new staff are recruited.

Building Blocks

Eurochild will work with our existing child participation structures and create a new structure of children who have previously been involved with Eurochild. These so-called Building Blocks will help to put our child participation objectives into practice.



Eurochild Children's Council – ECC: The ECC is made up of 12 children aged 10-17. They give advice to Eurochild, including on how we work, our key influencing issues and our events. They provide a direct link between children, the Eurochild secretariat and the Management Board. A new ECC will be appointed in spring 2022. Former ECC members will be able to become mentors to support the new ECC.



National Eurochild Forums – NEFs: Supported by Eurochild members in different countries, NEFs provide spaces for children at local and national level to share their ideas and views. In particular, they reach out to children from vulnerable backgrounds in their communities and countries.



Child Participation Reference Group - CPRG: The CPRG is an open to members with expertise in child participation. They support the implementation of the Child Participation Strategy. They also exchange good practices and contribute to building the capacity of our membership.



Child Rights Defenders: This is a new structure that will be developed with and for children. The aim of this structure is to stay connected with former ECC members and other children and young people who have been involved with Eurochild.

Chapter 1 – Vision and Objectives

Children are experts in their own lives and it is essential that they participate in decisions that affect them. Participation improves the quality of decision-making and contributes to children's holistic development. It is the foundation for healthy democracies and responsible citizenship.

This **Child Participation Strategy** builds on its predecessor adopted in 2017. It provides an update on Eurochild's current internal child participation structures, and outlines our vision, goals and activities already being implemented and/or foreseen over the current period until 2022. It will inform and later be integrated into Eurochild's strategic plan 2022-2025.

The Strategy is based on the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#), in particular Article 12 on the right of children to participate, and is supported by Eurochild's [Child Protection Policy](#) and it has been developed and co-designed with children and Eurochild members.¹ Eurochild aims to implement children's participation based on the **nine requirements for meaningful, safe and inclusive children's participation** based on the UNCRC.²

The Management Board takes responsibility for overseeing Eurochild's child participation work through the involvement of the Management Board sub-committee on child participation.

Vision

At Eurochild, we believe that effective, sustainable and relevant decisions can only be made if the people concerned are meaningfully involved in the process. Children are experts in their own lives and it is essential that they participate in decisions that affect them. Participation improves the quality of decision-making and contributes to children's holistic development. It is the foundation for healthy democracies and responsible citizenship.

We advocate for greater recognition of children as rights holders and believe that ensuring the rights of the child to be heard and participate in decisions that affect them is crucial to bringing about positive change for children and for societies. **Child participation is both a means to an end and an end in itself.**

With regards to addressing key social challenges such as child poverty, inequality and child protection, it is important that policies are informed by the lived experiences of children and young people.

Eurochild is strategically positioned to facilitate dialogue between children and EU policy makers, relying on our extensive network of members to ensure children's participation is embedded in national and local realities.

Responding to Changing Realities in the Context of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges and opportunities for Eurochild's child participation work. The inability to meet in person forced Eurochild members to be creative in finding new ways to work together and led to many positive experiences. However, it has also demonstrated new barriers to

¹ Eurochild's child participation work has continuously been evaluated including the functioning of the ECC, the NEFs and role of children in preparing events as well as the child participation reference group. This strategy is building on the outcomes of these evaluations.

² The nine requirements for meaningful, safe and inclusive children's participation include being transparent and informative; voluntary; respectful; relevant; child friendly; inclusive; supported by training; safe and accountable.

child participation, with lack of access to digital meetings and lack of access for children growing up in vulnerable circumstances. The significant impact of the **COVID-19 crisis** on our child participation work has been taken into consideration in the development of the updated Child Participation Strategy.

Through this strategy we set out how we intend to continue to promote and implement meaningful child participation.

Eurochild's Past Achievements in Child Participation

Thanks in part to Eurochild's advocacy, the [European Commission Recommendation 'Investing in Children – Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage'](#) calls on Member States to adopt a mechanism that promotes children's participation in decision-making that affects their lives. In 2018 Eurochild's flagship conference *Building a better Europe with children*, was organised through an accessible and interactive programme facilitated and moderated by and with children – **we showed that organising with children is possible and brings incredible added value**. In May 2019, children supported by Eurochild members were among the drafting committee of the [Bucharest EU Children's Declaration](#), which was adopted at the International Conference on *Children's Participation in Decision-Making and Policy-Making at European Union level*. Children called on EU leaders to make child participation a reality and priority.

[The Europe Kids Want survey](#), conducted by Eurochild and UNICEF in 2018 and gathering responses from over 20,000 children from all over the EU, revealed that only a fraction felt their opinions are being listened to when decisions are being made. Similarly, in 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, Eurochild worked with other international partners to ensure that **over 10.000 children across Europe participated in a consultation** to shape two EU flagship initiatives: the *Child Guarantee Initiative and Strategy on the Rights of the Child*. Eurochild members organised focus groups with children from diverse backgrounds, including very disadvantaged children, in 10 EU Member States for the **EC study on children's participation in political and democratic life** from Eurochild and RAND Europe. The Eurochild's Children's Council contributed to all aspects of the study, including research questions, providing their opinion on the final report and the child-friendly summary.

Eurochild works also to ensure that **children have a seat at the table**. In 2020 we worked with the European Commission to make sure that an unprecedented large group of children across Europe actively contributed to the European Forum for Children's Rights. Similarly, in 2019 [children addressed the European Parliament](#) on the occasion of the celebrations of the 30 years of the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child.

Eurochild supports members' child participation activities and **engagement with national governments**. Recognising the excellent work and outreach being done at national and local level, we strengthen collaboration between members and the Secretariat. Together we make sure our practices are constantly up-to-date and meet UNCRC standards, thanks for instance to our recently published [child participation toolbox](#)³ co-designed with the Learning for Well-being Foundation.

³ See also the Eurochild and Council of Europe [Training Tool on engaging children in advocacy work](#)

Eurochild Child Participation Priorities & Goals

Eurochild's priorities with respect to child participation include:

- Contributing to European, national and local plans and regulations to ensure children are meaningfully contributing to decision-making processes.
- Training and building capacity of adults and children on child participation at EU, national and local level.
- Working with our members and specialist organisations to enable participation of all children regardless of their background and ability, with a particular focus on engaging with marginalised children and children living in vulnerable circumstances.
- Advocating for more financial resources to make child participation processes a reality.
- Ensuring information on participation processes is accessible to children.
- Giving visibility and accountability to children's participation.

Eurochild Child Participation Goals:

Goal 1 – National and EU governments are supported in establishing child participation mechanisms

Goal 2 – Opportunities for child participation at EU and national level to reach a more diverse group of children in terms of background and age

Goal 3 – Members and external actors have increased capacity to engage with children in a meaningful way

Goal 4 – Children have more opportunity to influence Eurochild's governance

Chapter 2 - Building Blocks

Eurochild works with the following child participation structures that help implement its child participation objectives.

National Eurochild Forums

National Eurochild Forums (NEFs) are spaces where ideas and views on particular issues of concern to children within their communities, countries and Europe are exchanged. NEFs are supported by national Eurochild members and involve children below the age of 18 from diverse backgrounds and with different experiences. They connect issues of local/national relevance with European debates and policies. The issues for discussion are agreed between Eurochild, the Eurochild Children's Council and the supporting organisations. NEFs provide a framework through which to reach out to other children in their communities and countries, in particular the most vulnerable children, ensuring that a wide range of views and experiences are represented in Eurochild's work. To date Eurochild has supported 5 National Eurochild Forums in Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Malta and Ukraine. In 2021 the focus will be to support and strengthen existing NEFs and the model of this work and depending on resources, we will expand the number of NEFs by 2 per year starting in 2022.

Eurochild Children's Council

The Eurochild Children's Council has been created by Eurochild to provide advice and insight on issues of concern, including Eurochild's key advocacy issues, governance decisions and its flagship biannual conference. It provides a direct link between children and the Eurochild secretariat and management board. The Eurochild Children's Council is made up of 12 children, aged 10-18, supported by Eurochild members from across Europe, including children who have been active in National Eurochild Forums or have been active in other national and local child participation activities. Due to the disruption caused by the Covid19 pandemic, it has been agreed that the second Eurochild Children's Council will have its 2-year mandate extended by one year. The 3rd Eurochild Children's Council will therefore be appointed at the General Assembly of 2022⁴ after a selection process to be launched in Autumn 2021.

A Mentor System for the Eurochild Children's Council

To ensure ongoing quality of Eurochild Children's Council activities, outgoing ECC members will have the opportunity to become mentors for incoming members. Mentors will be able to share experiences and act as a source of support and advisors to the new ECC. This role will be both virtual (as online buddies) and physical (through joining meetings and supporting new ECC members). Mentors begin their roles when the new ECC is selected and meet physically for the first time at the General Assembly/Members Day and they will support them for a period of 6-12 months.

⁴ The ECC's functioning over the past 2 years will be evaluated in 2021 as well as during bilaterals on experiences over the past months during the Covid19 pandemic and going forward. The size and the composition of the 3rd ECC will be based on the outcomes of the evaluation.

Child Participation Reference Group

The Child Participation Reference Group (CPRG) is an open group of members with expertise in child participation, including former members of the Eurochild Children’s Council. It serves to support the implementation of Eurochild’s Child Participation Strategy and ensure that local, regional and national best practices in child participation are shared and exchanged amongst members. The CPRG contributes to Eurochild’s advocacy work to embed child participation in the work of national governments, the EU, and inter-governmental institutions. It also supports Eurochild child participation structures in governance, conference planning and communication. **Part of our wider goal to build the capacity of our membership through exchange of good practice** and experience.

Child Rights Defenders - NEW

To facilitate the ongoing engagement of children and young people involved or previously involved with Eurochild, it is planned to develop a new structure for ‘Child Rights Defenders’⁵.

We will work with children to develop a concept that enables Eurochild to stay connected with former ECC members and other children who have been involved in our work, and allows us to more effectively harness the skills, experience and enthusiasm of children who have worked with Eurochild over the years.

The concept will be ready in early 2022. Based on the concept and depending on resources we hope to roll out this structure in 2022.

All child participation building blocks, as well as the Management Board Child Participation sub-committee, have their terms of references and guidelines. **A continuous (online) dialogue between all these structures, the Eurochild secretariat, the MB sub-committee on child participation and Eurochild members working with children will ensure clear links and synergies between the work of the different groups.** This is coordinated by Eurochild staff responsible for child participation as well as communication.

Recognition and Certification

Children taking part in Eurochild’s activities will receive an official certificate, which recognises and values their participation.⁶

⁵ Working title for this structure – it is recommended to find a title which will not be reduced to an abbreviation

⁶ The Youth Pass certificate could be used for this as well: <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/about-youthpass/certificates-and-languages/>

Chapter 3 - Eurochild's Child Participation Goals

Goal 1 – National and EU governments are supported in establishing child participation mechanisms

Eurochild has persistently advocated for national child rights strategies establishing, among other things, clear mechanisms for child participation in decision making. The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child⁷ provides an unprecedented framework for it to become a reality. It calls for the creation of an EU Children's Participation Platform and encourages Member States to set up, improve and fund new and existing child participation mechanisms at local, regional and national level.

To achieve this goal Eurochild intends to strengthen its technical assistance to our members and engage with EU institutions in order to ensure that these child participation proposals are implemented and become a commitment at national level.

We also aim to facilitate the involvement of children in prominent EU events such as the EU Forum on the Rights of the Child, the Conference on the Future of the Europe and the annual European Parliament event on children's rights.

Due to the positive results already achieved in our mutual work with the European Commission, we aim to conduct trainings on child participation and safeguarding for relevant Commission staff. This will be planned, organised and executed in collaboration with children with the aim of creating sustainable structures for child participation in the work of the European Commission.

At the national level, several Eurochild members already involve children in European, national, regional and local advocacy work or are willing and planning to involve children. In order to influence national and local policies a close and trustful relationship with Eurochild members is important and Eurochild will act as bridge builder to link the EU work with the national and local level. We will work to further increase capacity and collaboration, in particular with our NEFs, helping us to gather the voices of children at national and local level. This will feed directly into our advocacy work on European level.

Eurochild will prepare **child-friendly documents for children**, including information on EU topics on which they will be involved, legislation, policies and histories. A **communication strategy** will support the influencing work of the NEFs and the ECC and will ensure that the impact of child participation is made public, see chapter 4.

Goal 2 – Opportunities for child participation at EU and national level to reach a more diverse group of children in terms of background and age

Eurochild aims for children and adults to participate at an equal level to realise their rights. Eurochild aims to do more to **ensure participation of children from diverse backgrounds**, including geography, ethnicity, age and gender, and with lived experiences relevant to the improvements in policies and practices that Eurochild is trying to bring about⁸.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/eu-strategy-rights-child-and-european-child-guarantee_en

⁸ According to the non-discrimination principle (Art 2 UNCRC)

There are several challenges to overcome when trying to meaningfully involve children from disadvantaged backgrounds. These include: lack of access to specific groups of vulnerable children (e.g. children in contact with the justice system; Roma children); lack of accessibility for children to participate (language, disability, poor connection/network, etc.); lack of experience in working with younger children and a lack of awareness amongst children of existing opportunities for them to participate; children not trusting adults looking to work with them; lack of expertise on the needs of specific groups of children to enable organisations to work with them.

One way Eurochild aims to overcome these challenges is through the National Eurochild Forums, which work closely with children from a variety of backgrounds at the local level. In addition, **children need positive experiences with participation**. They need to be given a second chance to participate and meet role models as encouragement. Face to face discussions amongst children, not only led by adults can also inspire children to participate. **Innovative ways of working with children** need to be further explored, e.g. intensive online discussions, involving children through digital media⁹; opinion pieces, interviews, blogs, etc.

So far, Eurochild's activities have mostly involved children aged 10 -18 years old. With this Strategy, Eurochild aims to work with members with expertise in **working with younger children** and share these experiences with other members. In particular, cooperation with NEFs will be sought to better involve children in this age bracket.

To achieve this goal Eurochild supports members to ensure children from local and national level and with diverse backgrounds are represented in Eurochild's EU advocacy work through the National Eurochild Forums and the Eurochild Children's Council.¹⁰

Eurochild will cooperate with the EU to ensure that children with vulnerable backgrounds can participate in EU decision-making processes.

We will facilitate peer learning among our members based on their expertise and project partnerships and bring this to the EU and national level.

Goal 3 – Members and external actors have increased capacity to engage with children in a meaningful way

Ensuring meaningful and safe participation of children requires serious time commitment as well as technical expertise, facilitation skills and proper safeguarding measures. With the participation of children now mainly taking place online a new set of skills and expertise is required.

Policy makers, practitioners, academics and also civil society increasingly sees the value of children's participation and are seeking support and expertise. Eurochild has extensive experience and expertise in engaging with children in a meaningful and rights-based way.

To achieve this goal Eurochild will build on the 'We Are Here – Child Participation Toolbox', co-

⁹ The platform <http://www.youngdigital.net/> includes inspiration material for involving children and young people through digital media.

¹⁰ Eurochild is involved in a project 'Reaching In: promoting children's participation in inclusive public decision making' in cooperation with the University of Central Lancashire, the Central European University and with support from the Open Society Foundation.

designed with the Learning for Well-being Foundation, which offers a unique resource. It offers a practical set of tools to implement meaningful children's participation and encourage collaboration between generations. The Toolbox builds on a child rights perspective to support **meaningful child participation in a variety of settings**. It builds on an understanding that participation can come in many forms, and through a variety of engaging activities helps prepare children for these different situations. Uniquely, the Toolbox also offers tools to help find **meaningful ways for children and adults to work together, thereby contributing towards building a culture of child participation across Europe** as well as greater **understanding and collaboration between generations**.

Building on the Child Participation Toolbox we want to further develop training activities for members as well as external actors and multipliers to further grow their capacity to engage with children in the right way. This will include the development of a master trainer programme, with the longer term objective of creating a pool of trainers, running a series of workshops and eventually depending on resources setting up a Eurochild Child Participation Academy.

In response to the increasing **digitalization of child participation practices** as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we plan to adapt the toolbox trainings to be available online. A pool of resources will also be created in order to allow those working online with children to share and exchange practices.

Eurochild will support **child-led initiatives**: a minimum of 2 child-led initiatives per year. Child-led initiatives mean that children and young people are encouraged to bring in their own ideas and take the leading role in an own initiative project. This includes developing, shaping, realising, implementing and evaluating the idea. Adults will have a supporting, protecting and assisting role throughout the process. These intergenerational partnerships will contribute to, challenge, and transcend barriers to realizing children's rights.¹¹

Goal 4 – Children have increased opportunities to influence Eurochild's governance

What is governance? Governance is defined as the decisions and actions of the people who run an organisation - governance is the way rules are set and implemented.

The Eurochild **General Assembly** has the powers to elect Management Board members, approve the annual budget, adopt strategic plans and other internal policies, change Eurochild's statutes and internal rules, admit or exclude members, appoint the Ethics and Election Committees, and appoint or dismiss the Secretary General. The **Management Board** provides leadership and strategic direction to the Eurochild Secretariat. It meets at least four times per year and works in sub-committees between meetings, including a sub-committee on child participation. The Management Board is responsible for management, administration and representation of the organisation. Some of these responsibilities are delegated to the **Secretary General**, who oversees the implementation of the decisions as leader of the Brussels-based Secretariat team.

¹¹ Eurochild cooperates in a 7-year International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership (ICCRP) on a global project with a focus on intergenerational partnerships.

In recent years, children have been involved in different aspects of Eurochild's governance processes, including being consulted on Eurochild's strategic plan 2019-2021, participating in Eurochild's General Assembly and being involved in recruitment processes of Eurochild staff.

Eurochild aims for its most important organisational decisions and their implementation be informed by the views of children. Therefore, children are involved in the General Assembly, have an advisory role to the Management Board, contribute to development of internal policies, can be involved in Eurochild's activities and working structures, as well as in staff recruitment processes.

Children's involvement in the General Assembly

The Eurochild Children's Council (ECC) participates in the annual General Assembly and Members' Day. Over the past years this meant co-facilitation of discussions with other participants, leading their own workshop on topics they felt were important, or reporting to the General Assembly on their activities. The Secretariat is supporting the ECC to step up their role, giving more opportunities to advise on the agenda and contribute to the sessions. While the ECC has no legal voting rights at the General Assembly, they will contribute to the development of background papers, including the most important internal policies like strategic plans or child participation strategies. They will also be given the space to express their views on the related decision making items, before the official vote of the General Assembly.

Members of the ECC will also **contribute to the election of members of the Management Board** by preparing questions for candidates to the Management Board and sharing their opinions at the General Assembly before the voting.

Children's advisory role to the Management Board

The Eurochild Children's Council has an important advisory role to the Management Board, through participation of its representatives in relevant parts of the Management Board meetings, and proposing topics for discussions.

The ECC delegates members to the Management Board, the **MB sub-committee on child participation** and, where relevant, other MB sub-committee meetings. These will organise and adapt the agenda to their participation. The ECC will agree on how many representatives will participate as well as whether there is a rotation of representatives.

Children's involvement in development of internal policies, working structures and activities

The Eurochild Children Council has a consultative and advisory role in the development of Eurochild's most important and relevant internal policies. They contribute to the development of the child participation strategy, the strategic plan, and other policies such as the code of ethics.

Children and young people are also directly involved in the implementation through events, activities, working groups and committees or external representation of Eurochild. This has recently been officially acknowledged by a new dedicated article in Eurochild's revised internal rules.

Children's involvement in Eurochild staff recruitment

Based on our current practice of involving children in recruitment processes and in cooperation with the ECC, guidelines will be developed on how to involve children in recruitment processes. All ECC members will receive training. Child rights defenders could also be involved in recruitment processes. Depending on the staff function children can be involved in diverse ways, to be stipulated by the guidelines.

CHAPTER 4 – A Communications Strategy to support Child Participation

To achieve stronger awareness among decision makers, civil society, media and other potential partners that children are rights holders and protagonists with the ability to influence decision-making requires a shared narrative on the importance of child participation and connecting this to broader debates on democracy and citizens' engagement.

A **communications strategy**, including a social media policy, will support the Child Participation Strategy. Children as well as their supporting organisations will be involved in communication activities.

A **social media policy** will be created with help of experts – this will be a short internal document to assist staff and members to engage with confidence with the children engaged in child participation activities of Eurochild and will be attentive to children's protection concerns.

The **various audiences** from whom we seek endorsement for stronger awareness and understanding of child participation include EU and national policy and decision makers; members; partners; CSOs; children engaged in democratic spaces; child rights advocates and media.

Narrative to support the communications strategy:

In the last few years, there has been growing recognition of the concept of children's participation. However, there are gaps in understanding of the value and the purpose of investing in children's participation. Eurochild will work with its National Eurochild Forums, as well as the Eurochild Children's Council to construct messages that respond to such gaps and assumptions. These will aim to confirm that **child participation is a right; child participation is valuable to the individual and society; and child participation is possible**. To demonstrate this concrete examples will be communicated including good practices, case studies, results of children's surveys and consultations, showcasing situations with children in leadership, as well as the impact of children's participation on EU, national and local policies.

Profiling children and ensuring inclusivity

Eurochild aims to engage children from all sections of society in its work, with specific attention to those in marginalised situations. With this aim, it is important to communicate profiles of children with utmost sensitivity. Profiling children with lived experience of poverty or exclusion requires child protection training of communications staff and of reporters. Eurochild will endeavour to celebrate the children's sense of agency to ensure that children are profiled externally with dignity and that the focus is on their work at local and European levels, rather than only their backgrounds.

Developing communication messages and products for children, with children

Eurochild's communication on child participation will aim to reflect the views of the children it works with. Through training on media and communications, the children will be introduced to theory and approaches on what works when communicating in public, online via social media or otherwise. They will be supported to share their views via **blogs**, vlogs, through takeovers of Eurochild's **social media** channels, interviews with the **media**.

A **dedicated section on the Eurochild website** allows children to actively contribute to messages to reach out to broader audiences. **Child friendly information** will be designed actively with children,

seeking their views on written and visual content. This child friendly information will be age – appropriate to ensure the different age groups are able to get involved.

Children will be invited to brainstorm and suggest ideas for communication products with clear understanding of purpose of each communication. Their input will be credited in all occasions.

How will we reach our audiences?

To communicate with external audiences Eurochild will use the following means:

- **Social media** – Instagram will be a focus to reach younger audiences; to reach policy makers, civil society and media, Twitter and Instagram will be more relevant¹². Eurochild will use its own channels that have over 15,000 followers in total.
- **Press and Broadcast Media** – national media will be reached via members supporting children active in NEFs and the ECC.
- **Eurochild website and newsletters** – Eurochild will have a **dedicated space on its website and in the newsletter for children** to regularly participate by sharing their opinions, working on common articles/blogs and peer to peer interviews.
- **Development of videos** on what the ECC and Eurochild is doing (e.g. using the animation style of Max and Laura), and about children’s rights.
- **Visually appealing content** (infographics/photo campaigns) will be produced as updates for outcomes of influencing campaigns.

¹² Compliant with age restrictions – e.g. Instagram age restriction is above 13 years.

Chapter 5 - Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring & evaluation system helps keep track of the steps that we have taken, and how successful they have been. It is important because, if we do not monitor our child participation activities, we have no way of finding out whether we have met our goals and made a difference.

In a global initiative - a number of the major international NGOs collaborated in the development of measurement tools with which to evaluate children's participation in the context of any particular project or programme. These tools provide a conceptual framework for the analysis of children's participation using the following approach:

- **Scope** – what degree of participation has been achieved (consultative, collaborative or child-led), at what stages of programme development, and with which children? In other words – what is being done?
- **Quality** – to what extent have participatory processes complied with requirements for ethical and effective practice?¹³ In other words – how is it being done?
- **Outcomes** – what have been the outcomes of children's participation, on children's personal development and communities, and on the wider realisation of their rights? In other words – why is it being done and what has changed? The indicators of effectiveness are determined by those involved – both children and adults¹⁴.

The evaluation of the different aspects of the Child Participation Strategy – i.e. functioning of the National Eurochild Forums, the Eurochild Children's Council, the Child Participation Reference Group is carried out regularly. After each meeting in which children have participated for example, an evaluation of the meeting will take place with the children. Eurochild will also hold regular informal online meetings to check in with members and children in order to ensure that our activities and child participation practices are meaningful and of a high standard.

The goals set out in the Child Participation Strategy will be evaluated by considering what exactly has been done to achieve these goals as well as the impact of these activities. [The Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit for child participation](#) developed by Gerison Lansdown and Claire O'Kane will be used to support the monitoring and evaluation process.

Crucially, children will be actively involved in monitoring and reviewing the strategy, as well as experienced CPRG members.

¹³ There are nine basic requirements for effective and ethical participation set out in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No 12 Para 134 states that all processes, in which a child or children are heard and participate, must be: transparent and informative; voluntary; respectful; relevant; child-friendly; inclusive; supported by training for adults; safe and sensitive to risk; and accountable.

¹⁴ Lansdown G and O'Kane C, (2014) [A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation, Booklet Three](#), Save the Children/WVI/Plan/UNICEF/The Concerned for Working Children.