

Council Conclusions on the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child: what to expect?

The Council of the European Union is expected to adopt the European Council Conclusions on the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child under the Slovenian Presidency (July – December 2021). The Working Party on Fundamental Rights, Citizens Rights and Free Movement of Persons (FREMP) is expected to start discussing this issue on 19 July, while the Conclusions could be adopted already in October 2021.

The Council Conclusions are legal documents that the Council negotiates and adopts to express a political position on a topic related to the EU's areas of activity. Council conclusions express political commitments or positions and are thus **not legally binding**. On the other hand, the Conclusions do have a political weight by outlining the Council position on a specific political topic and setting out future work foreseen in the specific policy area.

Hence, the Council Conclusions on the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child represent a crucial occasion for Member States to react to the European Commission's ambitious and comprehensive Strategy and take an official position on the topic. At the same time, they also are a key opportunity for civil society organisations working for and with children to ensure that Member States commitment will live up to children's expectations and respond to the challenges they are experiencing.

Over the last weeks, Eurochild has cooperated with the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG) to influence the work of the FREMP Committee on this issue. Jointly, we drafted:

1. A comprehensive joint reaction to the Strategy, including some recommendations to influence the future Council Conclusions. The document has just been shared with the Slovenian Presidency and EU Member States by the CRAG co-chairs. The aim is to obtain ambitious Council Conclusions that will reinforce the Commission's Child Rights Strategy and clearly outline the future commitments of Member States in the field.
2. A more concise list of recommendations on the issue to be used as an advocacy tool. We invite you to **tweak and share these recommendations with your national Justice Ministers and ministries** to influence the drawing up of the Council Conclusions from the national level. We would kindly ask you to let us know if you intend to do so and need any help from the Secretariat. We are fully committed to supporting you.

More information on this process and Eurochild's involvement will follow in the following months.

