



**Eurochild webinar Education - A gateway to well-being for children
Disadvantaged Children damaged by the pandemic – closing the education gap
Introduction to the video**

Last week the eyes of the world were on the cop26 climate conference in Glasgow, struggling to agree a solution to devastating climate change.

For 10 days our attention was drawn away from the other global issue that is upsetting our lives – reducing the impact of the covid 19 pandemic.

And there are some parallel messages in the 2 crises; inaction on global warming will impact most severely on disadvantaged communities and, unless we take action now, the education of disadvantaged children will suffer disproportionately from the effects of separation that the pandemic is causing.

But we have an advantage – the damage to the education of children in need caused by the pandemic comes at a time when the European Union has a major initiative to address the inequalities caused by poverty through the European Child Guarantee. It is Europe's Cop26 opportunity for children – and we need action now.

As Antonio Lopez-Isturiz White said in his inspiring introduction about the potential of the Child Guarantee “These next few months will be crucial for the rights of the child”

...and, as with climate change, we have scientific evidence to inform the action needed – and solutions that will have a lasting effect.

Science tells us why children cannot learn unless they feel comfortable and motivated and unless we first form relationships for learning with them.

So, if during the pandemic relationships have been fractured and wellbeing has been damaged, they must first be restored to give children full access to the education which is their right. Because of their deprived circumstances, disadvantaged children are suffering a more severe fracture in relationships for learning and are finding restoration of their wellbeing harder, than other children.

So simply providing extra, or more varied, on-line learning or extra catch-up lessons on return to school is not a solution to restoring educational inequality – it will leave disadvantaged children further behind.

They need to be nurtured in surroundings where they feel included, happy and receptive to learning – and they need specific targeted support to both repair and continue the development of their social and emotional wellbeing into adulthood.

The good news is that interventions that create this harmonious school environment and provide support for social and emotional wellbeing are available and are tried and tested.

One such intervention is the Including Children Affected by Migration programme which has been developed and implemented over the past 3 years in partnership with Eurochild and Terre des Hommes by teams from the UK, Spain, Italy and Romania. Furthermore, the ICAM partners have developed training programmes and processes for getting the programme into schools by establishing it in all schools in a city, county or country.

We offer the experience of the ICAM programme as an example of a practical solution to the damage caused by separation during the pandemic which could be applied to all disadvantaged children in a region and fulfil their Child Guarantee .

The following short video outlines this solution.