



Preparatory Action for a Child Guarantee



**Conference closing the first phase
Brussels, 17 February 2020**

**Crowne Plaza Hotel
rue Gineste no 3, Brussels**

Introduction

In its resolution of 24 November 2015 on reducing inequalities with a special focus on child poverty, the European Parliament called on the European Commission and EU Member States to introduce a "Child Guarantee". In 2017, it requested the Commission to explore via a *Preparatory Action*, the feasibility of a possible "Child Guarantee" for children in vulnerable situations.

The Commission, as part of this Preparatory Action, has commissioned a *Feasibility Study for a Child Guarantee*. The study has examined how to ensure that the EU's most disadvantaged children - *children living in precarious family situations, children in alternative care, children with a migrant background (including refugee children) and children with disabilities* - have access to five key social services: *adequate nutrition, free education, free healthcare, decent housing and free early childhood education and care*.

A consortium consisting of Applica and the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER), in collaboration with Eurochild and Save the Children, manages this study.

This conference is an opportunity to present and discuss with stakeholders the findings of the Feasibility Study for a Child Guarantee. The outcomes of the study, including the discussions at this conference, will feed into the Final Report of the Feasibility Study.

Draft Programme

8.00-9.00 Registration and welcome coffee

9.00-9.45 Opening session chaired by Eric Marlier, scientific coordinator of the Feasibility Study for a Child Guarantee, Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER)

- **Nicolas Schmit**, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights
- **Member of the European Parliament**, TBC
- **Voice of children**, short movie introduced by Christian Morabito, Save the Children

9.45-11.00 Session 1: Key figures, priorities for action and good practices, Chaired by Eric Marlier

- **Anne-Catherine Guio**, LISER: Key figures
- **Hugh Frazer**, Maynooth University: Priorities for action

Examples of good practices:

- Free school meals: **Gwyther Rees**, University of York
- Free inclusive education: **Pedro Perista**, Centre for Studies for Social Intervention Portugal
- Free healthcare: **Michael Rigby**, Keele University
- Affordable decent housing: **Marietta E.A. Haffner**, Delft University
- Free and available childcare: **Michel Vandebroek**, University of Ghent

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-12.00 Panel with Civil Society, Chaired by Eric Marlier:

- **Caroline Costongs**, EuroHealthNet
- **Jana Hainsworth**, EU Alliance for Investing in Children
- **Alfonso Montero**, European Social Network
- **Freek Spinnewijn**, FEANTSA
- **Brikena Xhomaqi**, Lifelong Learning Platform

12.00-12.45 Session 2: Legal framework for EU intervention and Enforcement of legal obligations, Chaired by Josefine Hederstroem, DG EMPL

- **Helen Stalford**, Director of the European Children's Rights Unit, School of Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool: EU and national legal framework and subsidiarity issues
- **Benoît Van Keirsbilk**, Defence for Children International: Actions which could improve the enforcement of legal obligations and role of the EU in this context
- **Discussants: Bruce Adamson**, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children and **Grigorios Tsioukas**, Fundamental Rights Agency

12.45-14.15 Lunch

14.15-15.30 Session 3: The role EU funds can play in supporting and triggering national Reforms, Chaired by Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG EMPL

- **José-Manuel Fresno**, Fresno Social Services Spain: Using EU funds for improving access of disadvantaged children to the five key social rights
- **Loris Di Pietrantonio**, Head of Unit ESF and FEAD Policy & Legislation, DG EMPL: Prioritising vulnerable children in the next MFF
- **Discussants: Marianna D'Angelo**, ESF Managing Authority Italy and **Marta Mlejnková**, FEAD Managing Authority Czech Republic

Discussion with the audience

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-17.15 Session 4: Panel on "What should be the scope of an EU Child Guarantee", Chaired by Fintan O'Toole, Journalist Irish Times

- **Brando Benifei**, Member of the European Parliament
- **Ministry of Demographics, Family, Youth and Social Policy, Croatia**, TBC
- **Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Germany**, TBC
- **Frank Vandenbroucke**, University of Amsterdam

Discussion with the audience

17.15-17.30 Joost Korte, Director-General DG EMPL: Conclusions and way forward