



## Press release

### **Why involve us? Children's participation in the policy-making process**

In advance of the publication of the **Communication on the Rights of the Child**, to be released by the European Commission in July 2006, **Eurochild**<sup>AISBL</sup> organised a reception in the European Parliament on 7 June 2006.

On this occasion, a group of 16 children and young people at risk of social exclusion from 6 European countries (Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Latvia, Portugal and the UK) presented their experiences of participating in political decision-making at a local or national level, as well as their demands and arguments as to their involvement in all processes concerning them - as stated in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The children were coming from several different projects and organisations:

- the National Children & Youth Board in the UK;
- the Youth Migration Service in Lübben, Germany;
- a youth out-reach project in Göppingen, Germany;
- the Children's Parliament in Cyprus;
- the Children and Young People's Assembly in Wales "Funky Dragon";
- Latvian Save the Children, participated in the Children's report to the UN CRC;
- CEBI Foundation, Portugal;
- a centre for unaccompanied minors (Minor Ndako vzw), Belgium.

This event represented a unique opportunity for them to present their views and concerns at the European level. The children and young people also drafted a "Manifesto", explaining the reasons why they should be involved, the advantages for society, as well as the conditions needed for them to participate.

Their presentation was followed by a panel discussion with Lissy Gröner, Member of the European Parliament (PES, DE) and host of the event, Catriona Williams, President of **Eurochild**<sup>AISBL</sup>, and Adam Tyson, Head of the Social Inclusion Unit of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission.

The event was attended by some one hundred participants from the European Institutions, national representations in Brussels, NGOs and others.

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***Eurochild AISBL** is an international network of organisations, who are working in and across Europe to improve the quality of life of children and young people. Our work is based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The fight against child poverty and social exclusion is at the heart of our work programme. Eurochild AISBL is funded within the Community Action Programme to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion of the European Commission.*

#### **Eurochild**

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