

Investing in Children:

Preventing and Tackling Child Poverty and Social Exclusion, Promoting Children's Well-Being

LEFKOSIA (NICOSIA) 18-19 OCTOBER 2012

Filoxenia Conference Centre

Organised by the Cyprus Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, with support from the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion)

Europe has been experiencing the worst economic crisis since the 1930's which has a significant negative impact on the quality of life of European citizens. The risk of poverty and social exclusion has increased in most Member State. Children (under 18) remain more at risk of poverty or social exclusion than the overall population with a rate of 27.1% as against 23.5%. Authorities are struggling with austerity measures while often trying at the same time to balance these towards fairer economic and social outcomes. Unfortunately, the negative social consequences of many austerity measures appear to greatly affect some of the most vulnerable groups of the population, giving rise to more severe forms of child poverty and social exclusion across the EU and calling for more systematic social impact assessment of policies. The current crisis is also compromising the ability of the EU to further promote general child well-being. With this conference, the Cyprus Presidency wants to pass the message that even in these difficult times, more investment in children is needed and remains feasible as long as it is recognized as a priority and mainstreamed into all policy areas. The ultimate aim is to generate a dynamic political commitment of the actions ahead.

Europe's social and economic future greatly depends on its capacity to eliminate child poverty and to break the transmission of disadvantage across generations. It is time to acknowledge that tackling and preventing child poverty as well as promoting child well-being is a right on its own. An ageing Europe cannot afford to let its people's future potential go wasted.

Fighting against child poverty is a crucial social investment in Europe's long-term future and will make a direct contribution to the Europe 2020 objective of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Against the backdrop of the economic recession and austerity measures, the Conference envisages to arrive at conclusions and recommendations that:

- Raise the momentum and commitment from key EU and national actors for political measures that are necessary to address child poverty & well-being issues;
- Raise the momentum and commitment from key EU and national actors to implement the upcoming Commission Recommendation;
- Identify and exchange good practices related to current policy reforms;
- Make proposals for an EU Roadmap on children's well-being (i.e. what concrete actions can underpin the Recommendation's implementation, including monitoring with the help of indicators).

*A background paper with more political information will be sent to participants before the conference.

Conference Rapporteur: Fran BENNETT, University of Oxford

Thursday 18 October 2012

9:00-10:00	Registration
10:00-10:30	<p>Welcoming address and introduction to the conference</p> <p><i>Moderator: Toula KOULOUMOU, Director of Cyprus Social Welfare Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sotiroula CHARALAMBOUS, Cyprus Minister of Labour and Social Insurance• László ANDOR, Commissioner of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission (tbc)
10:30-11:00	<p>Key-note speech: Background Paper to the Conference, Hugh FRAZER, National University of Ireland Maynooth and Eric MARLIER, CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute</p>
11.00-11.05	Message from Children
11:05-11:30	COFFEE BREAK
11:30-13:40	<p>Session A: Combating child poverty and social exclusion and promoting children's well-being in times of austerity measures-<i>Perspectives And Stance Towards The EU's Role</i></p> <p><i>Moderator:tbc</i></p> <p>Previous and Current Presidency Trios of the Council of EU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions from stakeholders and answers by the panelists / Ministers• Questions and Answers• Summing up and main conclusions

Thursday 18 October 2012

13:40-15:10

LUNCH

15:10-17:10

Session B: Common principles for tackling child poverty and social exclusion and promoting children's well-being

Parallel workshops

Workshop 1: Access to Adequate Resources - Key Reforms and Main Challenges

Rapporteur: Julius OP DE BEKE, European Commission

Moderator: Gilda FARRELL, Council of Europe

Panos PASHARDES, University of Cyprus, Introduction to Key Issues

- Key contributions
 - a) **Paola PANZERI, COFACE, The effect of the crisis and austerity measures on the quality of life of families - how family policies can prevent poverty?**
 - b) **Heather ROY, Eurodiaconia, Household over-indebtedness in the European Union**
 - c) **Representative of EAPN, Shaping employment policies to correspond to the needs of the most vulnerable**
- Questions and Answers
- **Presentation of a Good Practice (tbc)**

Thursday 18 October 2012

Workshop 2: Access to Quality Services - Good Practices and Challenges

Rapporteur: (tbc)

*Moderator: **Hugh FRAZER**, National University of Ireland
Maynooth*

- **Rob ANDERSON**, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living & Working Conditions,
Introduction to Key Issues
- Key contributions
 - a. (tbc)
 - b. Representative of ESN Services for disadvantaged children**
 - c. (tbc)
- Questions and Answers
- **Presentation of a Good Practice (tbc)**

Workshop 3: Participation and Protection of Children-Good Practices and Challenges

Rapporteur: (tbc)

Moderator: (tbc)

Introduction to key issues (tbc)

- Key contributions
 - a) **Leda KOURSOUNBA**, Cyprus Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights-
Main challenges
 - b) Dimitra SOULELE**, FEANTSA, *Safeguarding of rights and Participation of children furthest from society such as homeless children*
 - c) (tbc)
- Questions and Answers
- **Presentation of a Good Practice -EUROCHILD's Youth in Action Programme**

PROGRAMME



Thursday 18 October 2012

17.10	Departure from Filoxenia Conference Centre to Hotels
19.00	Departure from Hotels Short visit to the traditional village of Lefkara. Dinner will follow.
22.30	Depart to Hotels

Friday 19 October 2012

8:00-8:30	Registration
8:30-9:00	Presentation of the main results from the 3parallel workshops
9:00-10:30	Session C: Key Successes in Child Poverty, Social Exclusion and Well-being: Monitoring Progress <i>Moderator: Istvan György TOTH, Tarki Research Institute</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key contributions<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) <i>Gilda FARRELL, Council of Europe, Successful tools / practices</i>b) <i>Chris DE NEUBOURG, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Successful tools / practices</i>c) <i>Anne-Catherine GUIO, CEPS / INSTEAD Research Institute, Measuring child deprivation</i>• Questions and Answers
10:30-11:00	COFFEE BREAK
11:00-12:00	Session D: Way Forward in Promoting Children's Well-being <i>Moderator: tbc</i> Future Presidency Trio of the Council of EU <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions and Answers

PROGRAMME



Friday 19 October 2012

12:00-12:40	Session E: Next Steps in Promoting Children's Well-being Emma TOLEDANO LAREDO, European Commission LaurisBEETS, Chair of the Social Protection Committee Sotiroula CHARALAMBOUS, Cyprus Minister of Labour and Social Insurance
12:40-13:10	Key Messages and Recommendations Stemming from the Conference for the Future—Briefing by the Conference rapporteur
13.30-15:00	LUNCH
13:30-14:00	Press Conference

Working Languages of the Conference
English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Greek