MONITORING CHILD WELL-BEING: BETTER POLICY AND PRACTICE

eurochild

CONTENTS

ANNEXES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Measurement and indicators are at the heart of improving performance in policy and practice. Unless we measure an issue or problem, chances are it will be ignored and nothing will get done. **Child well-being** is notoriously difficult to measure, but there are more and more examples of where it is being done with good effect on policy development. The 6th Eurochild Annual Conference was framed within the European Union's Social Inclusion agenda which has identified the eradication of child poverty by breaking the cycle of intergenerational inheritance as one of its key objectives. To help achieve this goal, the EU monitors income poverty and material deprivation and there are plans to develop common indicators that better reflect child well-being. The objective of this conference was to feed into that debate.

The EU social inclusion agenda also aims to bring about policy change through mutual learning and exchange of practice across Member States. This conference offered the platform **to share how indicators are being used**: in policy development at national and regional level, in advocating for children's rights and well-being, in improving practice and setting standards in service delivery to families and children.

A further question of discussion was how indicators are being informed **by children and young people** themselves. In addition to workshops on this issue, representatives of young people participated in the conference and brought some of their reflections on the issue.

■ **Conference objectives:**

- Feed into the discussion on child well-being indicators at EU level
- Facilitate the exchange of good practice and know-how between key stakeholders working with and for children
- Provide orientation to Eurochild for its future work on child well-being

The following is a brief resumé of presentations. Overheads of all presentations are on Eurochild's website. The report of presentations should be read in conjunction with the background paper[1] to the Conference.

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1 http://www.eurochild.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Policy/Policy_briefing/PB05_Indicators_LAST.pdf

OPENING PLENARY SESSION:
GOOD POLICY, GOOD INDICATORS – WHY THEY MATTER

1. *Making children a policy priority – What tools have been developed to monitor child well-being and how can this influence the policy agenda?*

*by **Sotiroula Charalambous**, Minister of Labour and Social Insurance of the Republic of Cyprus*

Sotiroula Charalambous, Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, opened her speech by underlying that it is imperative to monitor and measure the conditions and factors that affect children, not only to design correct policies and practices for the healthy development of children, but also to assess the effectiveness of policies and practices being implemented.

The Cypriot government has been successful in maintaining low levels of poverty among families with children and in reducing poverty among single-parent households over time. In the last national Strategy, new measures and a quantative target for further reduction by 2010 were included. This is an example of how targets and indicators can be used to good effect and how they can influence the politicy agenda.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) makes clear that children's immediate well-being is important in its own right and not only as future citizens. A crucial issue for the development of indicators on children's well-being based on the UNCRC is the involvement of children and young people themselves. The right to be heard and to be taken seriously in decisions affecting them is at the core of child well-being. It recognizes the importance of children's own agency to influence their environment. It contributes to children's self-confidence and sense of identity. *"We must look at children as active partners in measuring their own well-being at all stages of childhood and not as objects of research"*.

In Cyprus children's rights are high on the political agenda and there is a strong shift towards children's participation in the decision-making process and towards a child-centered approach where the child is the primary unit of observation.

2. *Evidence-based policies and practices – Monitoring and measuring issues at national and EU levels*

*by **Eric Marlier**, CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute, Luxembourg*

Eric Marlier, Chair of the EU Task Force on Child Poverty and Child Well-being and International Scientific Co-ordinator at the Luxembourg-based CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute, focused on the latest policy developments at EU level in measuring poverty and social exclusion and provided an overview of the latest trends on poverty and social exclusion of children in the EU.

To coordinate their action, EU countries have adopted common objectives for the Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC). Through a collective and consensual process, they have also identified commonly agreed indicators to better monitor EU and national progress towards the EU objectives, and also to ease the comparison of good practices and improve policy learning across the Union.

Over recent years, child poverty has emerged as a top political priority at EU level. Child poverty and well-being was the first thematic priority selected for detailed analysis under the Social OMC in 2007. An EU Task-Force was set up by the EU Social Protection Committee (SPC) to prepare an in-depth report on *Child poverty and well-being in the EU*. The report was adopted by all 27 Member States and the European Commission in 2008 and is thus now part of the *EU acquis*.

Apart from an in-depth benchmarking exercise – the first ever carried out at EU level –, the Task-Force report gives a comprehensive overview of the current status and provides important recommendations for follow-up and implementation[2]:

➔ on evidence-based objectives and policies, and on targeting;

➔ in favour of developing tools for adequate policy monitoring and policy impact assessment at (sub-) national levels;

➔ for indicators to better monitor the various dimensions of child well-being at country and EU levels (covering both financial and non-financial aspects);

➔ for regular EU reporting on child poverty and well-being (by the European Commission and Member States);

➔ for adequate statistical developments at (sub-)national and EU levels;

➔ for improving governance and monitoring arrangements at all relevant policy levels.

3. Child poverty and well-being in the EU: developing an indicator system to assist evidence-based policies

*by **István György Tóth**, TARKI Social Research Institute Inc, Hungary*

Resumé: Following the work carried out in 2007 and 2008 by the European Commission and the Member States in the context of the European Strategy for Social Inclusion, notably the report prepared by the EU Task Force on Child Poverty and Child Well-Being, a new study[3] - which is expected to be finalised by the beginning of 2010 - was commissioned to contribute to the development of more coherent and integrated policies in this area. The study contributes developing tools to monitor child poverty and child well-being and aims at filling in the Social OMC "reserved slot" for child well-being indicator(s).

■ **The main aim of the report is to:**

- Identify the main determinants of child poverty and social exclusion in Europe and across the Member States;

- Provide an overview and assess the effectiveness of existing policies on income support and access to the labour market and enabling services of parents;

- Define a reduced set of indicators which best reflect the multi-dimensional nature of child well-being, suitable for monitoring policies aimed at reducing child poverty, enhancing the welfare of children and improving their life-chances.

István György Tóth's presentation focused on the third task, namely the formulation of recommendations for a limited set of indicators and breakdowns that are most relevant from a child perspective and best reflect the multidimensional nature of child poverty and well-being in the European Union".

■ **The main conclusions can be synthesised as follows:**

- In order to have a proper toolkit for monitoring child well-being various phases of childhood need to be reflected.

- Filling in the "reserved slot" for child well-being is impossible with only one well-being indicator. Therefore, a comprehensive set of child well-being indicators could be suggested to monitor child

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2 Social Protection Committee (2008), Child poverty & well-being - Current status and way forward, Report of the EU Task-Force on "Child poverty and well-being": http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/docs/social_inclusion/2008/child_poverty_en.pdf.

3 The study is being carried out by Tárki (Hungary) and Applica (Belgium) supported by a Steering Committee consisting of: Michael Förster (OECD), Hugh Frazer (National University of Ireland), Petra Hoelscher (Unicef), Eric Marlier (CEPS/Instead), Holly Sutherland (University of Essex), István György Tóth (Tárki) and Terry Ward (Applica).

well-being, which reflects most of the child well-being dimensions; incorporates the OMC indicators already having a 0-17 age breakdown; includes a few new material well-being indicators (i.e. educational deprivation and child care); includes new breakdowns for the already existing indicators; and includes a whole range of non-material indicators.

- There is a need to develop data infrastructure which includes not only data collection but also data usage and access.

- Further attempts to improve data collection are needed to capture the social situation of the most vulnerable groups of children, including children from migrant and ethnic minority families, children in public care systems and disabled children. However, a compromise has to be made between the need to have more data breakdowns and the need to keep the statistical robustness.

■ **Key points from 'Good policy, good indicators – why they matter' plenary session:**

A key objective of the 2010 European Year should be to make target setting a central and highly visible feature of the EU social commitment. All Member States should adopt national quantified objectives for the improvement of child well-being. These targets need to be based on a diagnosis of the causes of poverty and social exclusion of children in the country.

Indicators can spot areas where policy action is more needed. The implementation of evidence-based policies is crucial as policies that are evidence-based are not only more likely to deliver the expected results but also more likely to be pursued by governments. However, indicators are one monitoring tool and need to be complemented by an in-depth analysis which goes back to the causes.

Professionals have to listen and take young people's views seriously. They have to earn their trust if they want their confidence. Whilst acknowledging the importance of quantified data collection, participants stressed the need to measure the quality life of children and young people from a subjective perspective. There is a need to involve and engage with children and young people themselves in the development of indicators and in ensuring that indicators can include information on children's views and perceptions.

WORKSHOPS SESSION 1: INDICATORS IN PUBLIC POLICY

Workshop 1.1 Indicators & advocacy

Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations on development and use of child-specific indicators as an advocacy tool.

1. The Child Poverty Toolkit

*by **Rosanna Singler**, Centre for Economics & Social Inclusion, UK*

The workshop aimed to debate how indicators are or could be used at local, regional, national and international level to effect policy change as well as to raise public awareness and political attention and to inform policy. The objective was to identify good practice and recommendations on development and use of child-specific indicators as an advocacy tool.

Rosanna Singler, from the Centre for Economics & Social Inclusion (CESI), presented the child poverty toolkit[4] that has been developed by CESI and the Child Poverty Action Group[5] as a tool to help local partners to: "frame an informed debate on child poverty in relation to employment, income, education, health and social services; analyse the local child poverty story using the most reliable and comprehensive data sources; develop a local child poverty target; ensure that local policies are 'child poverty-proofed'; and design a multi-themed strategy for achieving this".

■ **The discussion focused around the following questions:**

- Difficulties in monitoring and measuring 'softer' qualitative outcomes – or long-term impact of preventative action
- How are child-specific indicators used in advocacy?
- How can we enhance the role of advocacy in sharing successful cases / good practice?
- What are the strengths and pitfalls of league tables?
- How to ensure data robustness to inform the development of the right indicators?
- How can we avoid misuse of indicators and ensure their neutrality in advocacy actions?

Good practice and lessons learned were debated and recommendations put forward for action at EU and national level, as well as by Eurochild.

Participants identified some **good practices on the development and use of child-specific indicators as an advocacy tool:**

- UK: the child poverty toolkit (see above).

- Hungary: a local county (Pest) research study[6] was conducted by NGOs to assess children's experience in a school day (time and activity before going out; transport time and means; afternoon activities, etc…). It found out that 25% of children were left without any care or supervision in the afternoon. A booklet[7] was produced with findings and handed over to local authorities. The study led to the creation of a "Family of the Year" award by the Pest County Municipality. Similar projects are

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4 www.childpovertytoolkit.org.uk

5 http://www.cpag.org.uk/

6 www.pemetecsata.hu

7 http://www.pemetecsata.hu/aktualitas.html

planned to be conducted provided funding is made available for the creation of family councils in other 18 counties.

- **Czech Republic**: an EU funded Daphne cross-national project highlighted the number of babies and small children (0-3 years old) in institutional care in 25 EU countries. The Czech Republic was the country with the highest proportion and this data has been a most important tool for NGOs advocacy[8].

■ **Good practice/ recommendation on how to improve data robustness:**

- It is important that advocacy refers to good practices found in some EU Member States. For example, to increase the participation of vulnerable groups in surveys and improve data quality, some EU Member States employ members of the minority community (the Roma in particular) among the census staff to collect census data. They play an important role in explaining the purpose of data collection and in clarifying how the data are processed (the fact that they are anonymous etc.), which contributes to members of minorities feeling more at ease and providing more accurate data. This allows for a better coverage of these groups and this contributes in turn to more appropriate policy development.

- To improve the quality of the information on ethnicity collected in surveys, a good practice consists in allowing the interviewees to provide multiple identities. That would allow for example to say 'I feel (nationality) and I feel Roma".

- It is important that data users, including NGOs, give a more systematic feed-back to data producers; this feedback is part of the data quality improvement process.

- Access to quality data should be facilitated.

■ **Main conclusions from the discussion:**

- Indicators can stimulate the interest of the public and of decision-makers and be a useful tool for advocacy. However, they cannot tell the whole story; they need to go hand-in-hand with in-depth analysis.

- Simple indicators are better understood by politicians, but only a more complex system of indicators can help interpreting the social situation in its multi-dimensionality. Composite indicators, which mix very different dimensions relating to different populations, do not allow to monitor progress made under the different dimensions or to identify areas where policy action is more specifically required. They are not very good tools for creating policy accountability; accountability is best reached through a battery of indicators which can be clearly linked to specific policy areas.

- It is important to check the correspondence between the definition assumed by the data collector and the one who is the object of the research. This is why, for instance, it is important to involve children in the design of child well-being indicators.

- There is a lack of resources for tackling child poverty and support is needed to develop indicators that better measure social outcomes. More detailed breakdowns of these social outcomes indicators could be required, including regional breakdowns. Research is needed to better understand the links between policies and outcomes.

- Utmost care needs to be taken in the way one conveys information to governments in order to get their attention – "real life" stories (e.g. short films) may provide good communication tools.

- League tables can provide an attractive advocacy tool with a great impact on media but should not be misused. Comparison of performances of different countries needs to take into account the national socio-economic context. League tables should not be based on composite indicators (see above).

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8 De-institutionalising and transforming children's services: a guide to good practice. European Commission Daphne programme, DG JHA in collaboration with WHO regional office for Europe & the university of Birmingham, UK.

- The International Human Rights protection framework, and in particular to the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice provide useful references for advocacy: this jurisprudence assists in evaluating and measuring State performance, including with regard to very specific aspects of child protection.

Finally, participants put forward some **recommendations for Member States, the European Commission and Eurochild** to develop and make use of child well-being indicators for improving policy and practice and for delivering better outcomes for children and young people:

- Allocate resources for developing and implementing evidence-based social inclusion strategies and national children's strategies, which requires *inter alia* the development of related indicators and data collection.
- Enhance mutual exchange between countries facing similar difficulties (e.g. the typology put forward by the Task-Force report on child poverty and well-being has grouped countries according to their difficulties – joblessness, in-work poverty, efficiency of social transfers…– and policies needed to overcome them).
- Give a voice to children in assessing outcomes of policies implementation.
- Eurochild and NGOs to continue advocacy at European, national, regional and local level in calling on their governments of their responsibilities in tackling child poverty and social exclusion and in using the available data to better design and monitor their policies. Call for more evidence-based policies.
- Establish partnerships and involve stakeholders in identifying which are the most appropriate indicators to develop to reflect a given question (ministries, NGOs, children themselves and academics ought to be actively involved).

Workshop 1.2 Indicators & listening to children

Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations regarding the participation of children and young people in the development of child-specific indicators.

1. How do children inform the development of indicators of child well-being?

*by **Klaus Wahl**, German Youth Institute, Germany*

This workshop focused on identifying good practices and recommendations regarding the development and assessment of child well-being indicators.

Klaus Wahl gave an overview of how children are (or not) involved in developing both subjective and objective indicators for measuring child well being. How can children actually be involved in a meaningful way? Prof. Wahl stressed the importance of including both adults' and children's views and to mix subjective and objective indicators to get a full picture. He also suggested to do more research about the age-dependent abilities of children and to test different ways of children's active participation in research.

2. Engaging children and young people in shaping their learning environments

*by **Jean Gordon** and **Daniel Kropf**, Universal Education Foundation*

Jean Gordon and Daniel Kropf focused on: "how do we encourage learning environments to be more conducive to the well-being of children and young people?" Their working definition of well-being is: *"Realizing one's unique potential, through physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and social development ... in relation to self, others, and the environment".*

The presentation reported on focus groups held with young people in 2009 in Cardiff (Wales), Ramallah (Palestine) and Chicago (US), listening to their views on how school (Wales) and ICT/media (Ramallah and Chicago) impacts on their well-being. The young people emphasized the importance of relationships with family and close friends, trust and being supported. They also emphasized communication, being listened to by adults and treated with respect. The presentation highlighted the importance of these elements for developing indicators.

■ **The workshop was asked to address the following questions:**

1. What are the outcomes from children's involvement in developing child-specific indicators, including for participating children?
2. How can NGOs push/support the participation of children in the development of indicators and data collection?
3. What are the means through which children can participate in developing indicators? What structures/resources are needed?

■ **Main conclusions from the discussion:**

- **Children and young people must be involved in a meaningful way**. In relation to their involvement of children in developing and assessing indicators, many lessons can be learned from the general debate on child and youth participation. Children want to be listened to with respect and understanding. The young people in the audience especially mentioned the importance of this in the context of school and the fact that their voice is not really heard. They feel they are not involved in making school rules and common instruments such as youth councils are not really representing them. The challenge of involving children and young people is that they become disappointed. They are heard, but nothing is communicated back to them. The adults make the decision in the end.

- Children and young people may be involved in surveys using existing indicators, e.g. filling out questionnaires or participating in focus groups. However, **they are rarely involved in developing the indicators and hardly ever in making the analyses or in the follow-up**. This should not be the case. Children can make us aware of blind spots in the indicators that are being used. Some aspects they find important to their well-being are easily overlooked by adults.

- **Children need to feel safe to express their opinions and that it cannot be used against them**. There should be no repercussions. Children have a right to disagree. They also deserve feedback on their participation.

■ **Recommendations for Member States, the European Commission and Eurochild:**

- We need to look at the whole picture.
- When involving children and young people in developing and assessing indicators, children must be listened to with respect and understanding and their views taken seriously. We must also take into account their evolving physical, emotional, mental and social capacities.
- There is a need to include both subjective as well as objective indicators. Parents and children's views need to be sought.
- Last but not least, indicators for child wellbeing are not an end in itself. They are tools for monitoring and improving the situation of children and young people in which they are actors as well.

Workshop 1.3 Indicators & evaluating outcomes for children

Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations regarding monitoring outcomes for children and how these can be used to evaluate government policy and programmes.

Indicators and evaluating outcomes for children

*by **Richard Thurston**, Welsh Assembly Government, UK*

The workshop aimed to identify good practice and recommendations regarding monitoring outcomes for children and how these can be used to evaluate government policy and programmes.

Starting with the image of a carrot, an ice-cube and a bored civil servant, Richard Thurston explained how, to mainstream evaluation into the policy making process, both carrot and stick are required: the stick to push Governments to realise the value and necessity of monitoring and evaluation and to start doing it. The carrot to demonstrate the rewards associated with undertaking evaluation: it leads to better policy, which in turn means better outcomes for children.

Richard's presentation looked at what evidence-based policy means: the vision and the reality, and how to embed its use in organisations and institutions. He finished with a case study of the Children and Young People's Monitor in Wales as an example of good practice.

First, Richard outlined why we need evidence: to identify and anticipate issues and trends, to inform policy and delivery options, to evaluate whether programmes are effective or not, and to ensure that stakeholders and citizens have a voice in policy making and evaluation. Yet Governments do not always want to base policy on evidence, or to gather evidence about the impact of existing policies, often because evidence does not tell them what they want to hear. This is a barrier that must be overcome. In Wales, governments are supportive of evidence-based policy and have developed their work in this area significantly in recent years.

Second, Richard explained the difference between monitoring indicators and evaluating policy impact. Monitoring indicators of wellbeing provides a national benchmark, highlights key trends, provides a balanced picture across children's lives, raises awareness about key issues and prompts action. Meanwhile, evaluating policy impact does something different but connected. It demonstrates efficacy and value for money, captures impact linked to policy, increases evidence about how to effect change, and provides evidence for accountability. Richard explained how, evaluation, despite its value, is underutilised by Governments. There are a number of reasons for this, including: a lack of ownership, a perceived threat, bad timing, poor communication, resource constraints and Government's own view of evaluation. By building knowledge of what effective evaluation is and how it contributes to good policy our workshop aimed to equip delegates with the knowledge and information to go back to their own countries to be able to make a stronger case for evaluation both in their organisations and to Government.

Third, Richard explained the elements of effective evaluation, emphasising that evaluation processes should be embedded in policy from the start. For some at the workshop this was seen as wishful thinking, but not for all: one delegate explained how the Department of Work and Pensions in the UK includes an analyst on their policy-making teams, to ensure that principles and processes of evaluation are built into policy from the outset. Communication of evaluation findings was seen as key, particularly if the public, politicians and policy makers are to understand and buy into evaluation as a basic requirement of all policy. To get to that point incentives were seen to play a necessary role, and linking evaluation to budgetary processes was suggested.

Some in the group were concerned that spending money on evaluation meant taking money away from local programmes and projects, or meaning that less people would benefit from a particular policy. This point was acknowledged but refuted – it is only by evaluating policy as it is implemented that we can know whether it is effective in meeting its aims and objectives. Common sense policies – for example skills programmes for the unemployed – seem like the right solution, but evidence from the UK shows that they do not always work. Without evaluation it would not have been possible to identify that this approach was ineffective and why.

The group concluded that in fact, it is too costly not to evaluate policy, as it would mean policies that don't work would not be caught and altered to better to meet their objectives, and thus benefit those groups that they were designed to support.

Richard described the situation in Wales for children and young people and highlighted the multi-dimensional approach the Welsh Government is taking. The Children and Young People Monitor for Wales provides an analysis of children and young people's wellbeing in relation to the Welsh Government's seven core aims, it is based on the UNCRC and provides reliable and up to date information on child wellbeing, while also identifying evidence gaps.

■ **Main conclusions from the discussion:**

- How to demonstrate that monitoring and evaluation are <u>valuable</u> and a good investment. To start, data collected must be relevant to the problem that we are trying to solve and meaningful to the people affected. Communicating evaluation findings is critical, it should be simple, concise, and where possible, demonstrate a cost/benefit analysis. This helps get public and political buy-in, e.g. investing in early years.
- Policy that seems like **common sense does not always work**. We need to know that what is intuitive is not always right, e.g. skills development for the unemployed. This is why using evidence to make policy is key.
- **Timing** - analysts (focused on evaluation) should be embedded in policy teams and work closely with policy staff from the early stages of policy development and design. Building these elements into policy is critical to getting it right. It is too late to evaluate a programme after it has been implemented.
- **Participation of children** – it is the responsibility of researchers and policy makers to work with young people so that they can contribute to the policy making process. They are not indicator or policy experts, but children are 'experts in their own lives' and should be included as such.
- **Linking practical experiences of individual families and children to high level goals**. This link is not clear to those working on the ground. Where is it? The group discussed how to make individual organisational work link to goals at national or EU level in a meaningful way, though we did not come up with the answer!

■ **Recommendations for Member States, the European Commission and Eurochild:**

- Member States should include monitoring and evaluation as a basic requirement of all policy.
- Member States should effectively communicate the findings of evaluation and monitoring of policy, so that it becomes an expected and accepted norm among the public.
- Member States should also communicate failure – when policy does not work. Evaluation is not only about showing what works but also about learning from what does not.
- Member States should embed analysts in policy making teams across Government departments.
- Member States should consult children as 'experts in their own lives'.
- The European Commission should encourage member states to monitor and evaluate programmes and projects that it is funding, as a pre-requisite of receiving funding.
- The European Commission should help find ways to communicate in a meaningful way, how the work it is doing at institutional level connects with the work of individuals and organisations on the ground in EU countries. It must find a way to link its high level goals with citizens' realities.
- Eurochild should play a role in bridging the gap between high level EU policies and individual organisations across EU countries.

KEY NOTE SPEECH

No data, no problem, little action

by **Paul Kershaw,** *Social Care and Social Citizenship Research Network, Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), University of British Columbia, Canada*

Resumé: Early child development – including the physical, social/emotional and language/cognitive domains – has a determining influence on subsequent life chances and health through skills development, education and occupational opportunities. It is well documented by the literature that early years are a very sensitive and crucial period in early brain development and that serious problems related to early life may occur during the life course, including school failure, teen pregnancy, interaction with the criminal justice services, obesity, high blood pressure, depression, coronary heart, disease, diabetes, and at old ages premature aging and memory loss. Yet data for early childhood are either thin or non-existent both at national level and certainly at cross-nationally, whereas the available data that exist are somewhat strong for children at the older end of childhood. This gap in data raises the fundamental question about how to collect data about early age period not just for a random sample but for a broader if not the entire population in our society? How to monitor early development for the population and its change over time? The Early Development Instrument (EDI) aims at filling this data gap and provides a tool to better covering all relevant domains of child well-being identified by the UNCRC. It is a population based measure where all kindergarten children are included. Through this tool data on social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills, physical health and well-being are captured in all provinces of British Columbia and other provinces in Canada.

The EDI taps into the key domains of development, and shows geography and gradients of early child development. It is able to give a summary measure of vulnerability for children in a particular neighbourhood or region, is sensitive to change in community socio-economic context or developmental opportunities, and predicts school success. It highlights that while vulnerabilities at school entry are more prevalent in poorer communities, they are present across all communities. Mapping EDI data and other information help to identify communities that are more vulnerable and those that seem to be resilient. It is possible to distinguish socio-economic status (SES) influences from other influences and to inform strategic planning.

Researchers and communities in British Columbia have used EDI and socio-economic data to examine early child development trends across neighbourhoods, school districts and provincial geographies. The compelling visuals of EDI data and other information offered by maps can capture wide audiences at community, provincial and federal levels. Hopefully, even though the assault on child poverty and the SES problem may require longer-term solutions, much can be done at the community level to mitigate and strengthen communities.

Mapping will also allow physicians and community partners to identify local needs and to decide on interventions that will help parents and communities create healthy, nurturing environments for young children, so that by six years of age, children are physically, socially and emotionally ready to succeed in school.

For some time, HELP has been conducting research which shows that:

- Reducing early vulnerability is good for children, minimizes future inequality.
- Promoting Women's Equality is smart.
- Reducing early vulnerability will promote health, rather than wait to treat illness.
- Prevention is better than cure.

The above research findings have not motivated policy change over last decade. So the Business Council of British Columbia, with the financial support from the United Way and the Vancouver Foundation, asked HELP to consider the research from an economic perspective. It has been shown that decreased

vulnerability is associated to increased human capital - reduced early vulnerability increases GDP by 20%. What promotes strong economies over time is therefore the promotion of smart family policies, giving children an equal start in life and promoting gender equality.

■ **Key points:**

The discussion made clear the need for a comprehensive investment programme in preventative services for children and young people that would both save spending on dealing with the impact of problems later, and deliver wider benefits to society.

Child care is most often seen almost exclusively as an 'enabling service for parental employment'. Little reference is made to the importance of early years' services to early child development. Monitoring levels of provision is wholly inadequate. The quality of children's early childhood experience can have profound influence over later outcomes. Investment during this period should be given priority. Invest in universal provisions for the early years is essential to help set all children on a pathway of positive social, psychological and material well-being from a young age, and to provide a basis for more equal outcomes over the longer term.

We should find better ways to monitor countries´ policies on early years than simply quantitative data on the number of childcare places. The Early Development Instrument - which is one way to capture the early development - provides some useful inspiration in this regard. A shift in language from 'child care' to 'early years' education and care' would be a symbolic but nonetheless important recognition of the importance of early years' services to child development.

WORKSHOP SESSION 2:
INDICATORS IN SERVICE DEVELOPMENT & DELIVERY

Workshop 2.1 Indicators in service & delivery: early years education & care

Objective: Identify good practice in policies and services in delivering best outcomes for children in early years' services, and how monitoring and measurement can inform the development of early years care and education services.

1. *The education of young children as a community project*

BY **Aldo Fortunati**, *Early Childhood Research and Documentation Centre, Italy*

2. *Diversity and Equity: making sense of good practice – An action research project*

BY **Anastasia Houndoumadi**, *Centre for Artistic and Pedagogical Training, Greece*

The focus of the workshop was on services concerned with providing care and education, although it was recognised that the monitoring of childrens' experience of other aspects of their early childhood – for example the time they spend with their parents or the nature of the environments in which they live and play – is also essential.

The workshop heard from Aldo Fortunati, a psychologist and Director of La Bottega di Geppetto, in San Miniato, who has been instrumental in guiding the development of services for children under the age of three in the small Italian town of San Miniato over the last quarter of a century. San Miniato is impressive for the commitment shown by a small commune (local authority) in developing services for 40% of children under the age of three (45% including 2 year olds who start nursery school prior to three), far exceeding the EC Barcelona target for this age group and alongside an educational system which provides full time kindergarten places for 100% of 3-5 year olds.

■ **Key perspectives in the San Miniato approach include:**

- An optimistic vision of the child as a rich and competent human being: the protagonist of their own learning and requiring a corresponding transformation in the role of those who work with them.

- The family as collaborators. Nurseries, which place a high value on strong relationships with families, are complemented by more informal services where parents or carers attend with the child.

- Open and collaborative learning. Very little is programmed or organised according to any set programme. The child uses experience to construct his or her own view of reality: a constructivist approach to learning.

- Documentation is used to enable collaborative approach to evaluation encompassing the family and supporting personalised learning.

- Opportunity before outcomes. The aim is to develop motivated and accomplished learners rather than the acquisition of skills, and to offer an environment rich in possibilities. The emphasis is on how, not what, children learn.

- Making good use of space. The organisation of space and design of furnishing are seen as crucial and reflect new understandings of children's immense capacity for self-directed learning. There is also a strong emphasis on space for adults – workers, families and community – as well as children.

The second presentation was from Anastasia Houndoumadi, from the Centre for Artistic and Pedagogical Training (Greece) and member of DECET network (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training). Her

presentation described the framework developed by the DECET network to make sense of good practice in issues relating to diversity and equity in early years services. The research took place in six countries and examined how parents children and professionals make sense of what is considered as good practice in terms of respect for diversity and equity'. The research demonstrated that there is a varying level of knowledge and understanding across the countries which formed part of the study: within local communities and service providers, professionals, adults and children. The research offers a needs analysis and points to some areas of tensions between parents and professionals, e.g. in respect of additional language learning and beliefs about how services should approach questions of religion, culture, identity and citizenship.

The DECET report *Making Sense of Good Practice* (2007) proposes six principles for services:

- everyone feels that she/he belongs: ensuring that everyone feels welcome;
- everyone can learn from each other across cultural and other boundaries;
- everyone can participate as active citizens: contributing to the dynamics of the community and using the community as a resource;
- everyone actively addresses bias through open communication and a willingness to grow;
- everyone works together to challenge institutional forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- everyone is empowered to develop the diverse aspects of her/his identity

Both presentations highlighted the significance of the image and perception of the child. The underpinning value in San Miniato is the perception of the child as a rich and competent human being and Anastasia Houndoumadi emphasised the importance of this in developing good practice in respect of diversity and equity.

In discussion, Aldo Fortunati expanded on the relationship of the San Miniato services with parents and families. He emphasised that parents are not only extensively involved in the management of services but have a close relationship with the services which by enabling them to observe their child with other adults and children, help them "to construct their identities as mothers and fathers".

The implications for the workforce in working in an increasingly diverse society as well as in keeping with the values and approach developed in San Miniato were discussed. It was agreed that the benefits were great but also required a greater investment in staff – both in terms of initial education but also ongoing professional development. The principle of open and collaborative learning requires an approach which takes advantages of the opportunities which can be offered as they present rather than providing activities to produce pre -determined outcomes. Such an approach suggests the need for indicators which measure opportunities rather than the child or the outcomes.

The connection between the quality of services and the valuing of children as having their own identity and as citizens now – not future citizens – was remarked on. The commitment of a small Italian *commune* to developing services for such a high proportion of children under three reflects the strong value placed on the young child as a citizen, entitled to a place in services.

Discussion also focused on the culture gap between some services and some ethnic groups. How services are presented and the contact they have with families can affect their willingness to make use of services and this was raised as an issue that is being examined in respect of some inner London services. Anastasia Houndoumadi noted that this is one of the areas on which DECET is working. Issues such as whether services are universally available or seen as being associated with disadvantage, their visibility in the community and their collaboration with the community are also seen as key issues. The extent to which the workforce reflects diversity in the community – in terms not only of ethnicity but also other aspects of diversity – and gender are all indicators. It was also noted that the UNCRC has a specific clause on the recognition of cultural identity and agreed that consideration needs to be given to how this might be captured in an indicator.

The principle of supporting the child as a protagonist of their own learning is a powerful means of enabling even young children to contribute to their services: not so much a matter of consultation but more a shaping of their activities by children themselves. But it was also noted that other means do exist – the use of very

simple questionnaires with pictures and a variety of methods which have been used with children with significantly impaired communication skills.

- ■ **Further key points were highlighted in the discussion:**

    - **Monitoring, measurement and indicators for early years education and childcare services**: There is a substantial body of evidence demonstrating the significant contribution which high quality and appropriate early years services can make to early childhood on a basis which supports the health, happiness and educational and employment prospects over the lifetime. We found no dissent from the view that a universal system of services which meet the quality indicators proposed by the EC Childcare Network would go a considerable way to ensuring access to services of the level and quality to which, in the view of the working group, of youngest citizens should be entitled irrespective of the employment status or income of their families.

    - Alongside this there is a **need for ongoing research** on which all Member States can draw as a resource to inform the development of services and to understand better how particular models may contribute to better outcomes. The European Union contains within it a diversity of models and services which offer a rich resource for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers. **The European Commission has an important role to play in enabling policy-makers and practitioners within Member States to make more effective use of this resource as well as in funding research within and across Member States**.

    - There would appear to be no country now in which early childhood services are not seen as a priority. There is a very strong case for **ensuring that access to these services with all the measurable opportunities they can offer our youngest children should be seen as a key indicator for both the rights of the child and their fundamental well-being**. The tools, methodology and indicators exist now for us to measure the inputs, the process and specific outputs which could be supported by a comparative research programme to supplement national research on outcomes. These measurable indicators can contribute to both the proposed indicator on education, citizenship and cultural activities and also be used, when absent, as an indicator of material deprivation.

Workshop 2.2 Indicators in service & delivery: parenting & family support

Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations regarding the development and use of indicators to improve policy and practice in the field of family and parenting support.

The workshop was treated to two very different presentations (details on the website), both excellent examples of contrasting approaches to this challenging topic:

1. Pinocchio: a Swedish national project

By **Eva Westerling** (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions) and **Ylva Söderlind** (Children's Welfare Foundation), Sweden

2. Backing the future: why investing in children is good for us all

By **Kate Mulley**, Action for Children, UK

These provoked a well informed and wide ranging debate around the subject amongst the members of the workshop.

Both presentations, the first detailing the Pinocchio programme from Sweden, and the second the UK Action for Children research into Family and Parenting Support (FPS) programmes, stressed the use of good quality assessment tools as the starting point for their work.

From the resulting discussions a number of key themes emerged. These not only represented examples of good practice but, it was felt, would lend themselves to providing appropriate topic areas in the selection of the type of indicators required to improve policy and practice in the field.

The first set of practice recommendations all came under the general heading of recognizing diversity. They included, FPS for the families of children with disability, FPS for parents with drug and alcohol problems and those with mental health issues, recognition of gender roles within the family especially the inclusion of fathers in FPS, and finally identification and acknowledgement of the cultural differences that often exist within the service users of FPS programmes.

The group then went on to discuss the assessment, and understanding, of need at the local level. This was felt to be key to the success of FPS programmes. Furthermore, despite the fact that there is a huge pool of expertise within the FPS workforce, this needs to be supported with good quality supervision, and backed up by ongoing training being made available.

The discussion then moved on to consider the implications that the current financial situation, prevalent across many of the member states, is likely to have on FPS services. There was a very real fear expressed amongst members that preventative services (many of which relate to FPS) would be the first to be cut in declining budgets. The use of appropriate indicators is key to demonstrating the relevance of programmes and to justify a continuing commitment to FPS services, and to demonstrate that such services offer value for money. The cost benefits of these services are often only visible over the longer term, something which is complicated by the fact that the individual body bearing the cost of service provision is not necessarily the same as that which is the ultimate beneficiary.

This in turn led to a more general discussion around the relationship between Universal and Targeted services. There was unanimous agreement that FPS services should be seen as a universal entitlement and therefore be embedded at the core of all policy relating to both children and young people in particular, and social care in general. This would offer the benefit of ensuring sustainability of service provision and a foundation on which other more tailored services could be developed. In this way universal services would become the "home" for targeted services.

Unfortunately time constraints precluded a more detailed discussion around formulating a model of how use of appropriate, good quality indicators, could inform policy. Nevertheless a number of general points did emerge.

Firstly, the use of appropriate assessment and evaluation, mentioned earlier, provides good quality data which in turn informs the identification and development of the relevant indicators. Furthermore, the discussion around diversity serves to emphasize the point that FPS requires a whole range of indicators for policy makers if they are to be designed and developed in a way that is responsive to needs at a local level. Just as the 'one size fits all' model does not work with FPS at the point of delivery, so a 'one size fits all' model will also not apply to the use of indicators however good that indicator itself may or may not be.

These findings will hopefully provide policy makers with a clear context within which they should consider the design and implementation of FPS services across the member states.

Workshop 2.3 Indicators in service & delivery: children's participation

Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations regarding how we monitor child participation in the family, in education, in communities and in public life and how can this help promote participation more widely.

A survey on children's participation in French-speaking Belgium

*by **Michel Vandekeere**, Observatory for childhood, youth and youth care, Belgium*

Michel Vandekeere from Belgium gave his account on a survey conducted in French speaking Belgium regarding participation, in line with Article 12 of the CRC.

The study showed that children's opinion is taken in the family situation at 80% of the cases but only a 40% has an impact on family decisions, while in schools only 45% of the cases expressed an opinion on issues and only a 20% was listened to. Actually, in the school situation almost 50% of the opinions taken were not at all listened to and had no impact. Outside the home and schools the situation is even worse, as children do not organise and very few are members of clubs or organisations where they can give an opinion and measure the impact on decisions taken. Yet, the ones that are organised reported that their opinion was always taken and that it had an impact in 80% of the cases. The fact is that children's opinions are taken on minor issues – on major decisions the prevailing mentality is that "the older, the better!". Out of the total number of children who took part in the study, 26.6% are not at all involved in clubs or organisations, 30.6% are involved in more than one, 31.2% are involved only in a sports club and 11.7% are involved in a club other than sports.

As far as citizenship is concerned, 76% of children are never elected in any post, 65-89% never expressed an opinion and there seem to be very low opportunities and experience in citizenship and the art of living together (adults and children in the same society). 38% of the children reported that they had no experience at all, 29% said that they once had a chance to be involved in politics and less than 12% reported that they had three or more chances to do so.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is an essential tool and children should not only know about it but know what it is about. Knowledge on the CRC was another aspect of the survey. It was revealed that 28.1% of children knew nothing about it, 46.4% had heard about it but did not know what it was about and only 21% knew about it and its content. On the question: How did you know about the CRC, 78% of children heard about the CRC from the TV and 22% in schools.

■ What was learnt from the study?

- The situation at home seems to be rather good in asking children's opinion and taking it into account.
- In schools the situation is still bad – children do not participate in decision-making and their opinion is not really taken into account.
- Some children have no experience at all of any democratic process.
- Only a minority of children are aware of the CRC and its content.

■ How can we make progress?

- Increase participation in the school system and establish democratic processes.
- Give children the chance to gain democratic experience.
- Make the CRC widely known to children – not only by name, but by content.

■ How will the survey be followed-up?

- A child-friendly version will be published.
- An inventory will be carried out in schools to measure participation in the system.
- A qualitative research is being formulated that will address "what do children mean by well-being". Adults assume well-being is the ability to control your life and make your own decisions – we have to ask children what it means to them.

- A new survey will be carried out among children aged 12-15 to measure well-being, social life and citizenship.

■ **The following key points were raised in the discussion:**

- Participation is about sharing power and this is difficult because of the culture and the mentality prevailing today regarding what children are and what they can actually understand and do.
- Children in the daily life are consulted for minor things such as what to eat, what to wear etc, but they are not consulted for important decisions such as where and with whom they want to live. Participation was found to be neither adequate nor guaranteed because of staff's attitudes, anachronistic rules etc. Children have the right to file a complaint but they are not aware of it, or when they are, they do not know the procedure and they are usually discouraged to do so.
- Legislative text should include rules for participation in all settings. This would be a good starting point.
- Surveys should be direct, involving children of all ages in order to make sure that they convey what happens in reality.
- There should be a cultural shift – we must learn to share our power and to share the decision-making processes. Politicians are sensitive to family issues but not to children themselves, and families are not willing to share their power with the children.
- It is important to have children evaluating services – how satisfied they are from these services. It is one way of improving services to the benefit of children.
- It is not enough to ask children to give their opinion. We should let them ask their own questions and participate in the process in a meaningful way. They have local support groups – youth led groups – to monitor projects and do the evaluation. At first, this process was difficult for adults to accept. But in time, things got better and children were accepted as evaluators. Participation is not about attending an event – it is involvement in the process and having a say.
- Not only "youth" but also "children" must be included in the discussion on participation. Young people, above the age of 18, have recognized rights and the right to vote. Children below the age of 18 have no civil rights and their voice is not heard. The CRC clearly concerns people from 0 to 18. Problems are not the same and we cannot face them in the same way. We diminish the importance of children's rights if we keep mixing them with youth rights.
- Participation is a process, not a project.
- There should be ongoing work on the local, regional, national and EU level.
- Consulting children and young people on the national level is imperative.

Children and young people's representatives pointed out that the extent children are listened to and the extent their opinion is taken into account could be an indicator for children's participation. They also said that bullying constitutes a major problem nowadays and that the extent bullying is evident in schools and in society could also be an indicator for measuring children's well-being. School is a second home to young people and as such it should be a place where they could express their views and their feelings and decisions should be taken together with teachers and co-students. They called for creative ways of teaching that would allow all students to learn, for cooperation between schools for mutual exchange, for clubs run by the schools that would give students the "extra", non academic knowledge which is essential to their development and for making schools accessible to all children, including children with special needs. Better integration of vulnerable groups, more activities with their parents, more harmony in the family, quality relationships within the family, with mutual respect and understanding are all crucial aspects. Voluntary work should be encouraged as by this, young people learn social responsibility and gain experiences in democracy, citizenship, communication and mutual respect. They also learn how to handle situations and make decisions.

■ **Children and young people's representatives finally presented what they want:**

➔ A Hot Line where councillors will help them to solve their problems and get essential information on their rights. The Hot Line to be widely advertised on TV and Radio and also in schools and clubs.

- → Eurochild and member organisations in the different EU Member-States to make questionnaires asking children which they think are suitable indicators to measure the "well-being" and then take their views to the Commission or where necessary.
- → To monitor children's participation in society.
- → To monitor children's participation in foster care and in institutions.

Workshop 2.4 Indicators in service & delivery: children without parental care

Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations regarding data collection and development of indicators that are able to capture the situation of children in, at risk of, or leaving, alternative care; and equip policy makers and practitioners to better address their specific needs.

Children without parental care: policy indicators and practice indicators

Kersti Kukk (Estonia), Hava Ryustem (Bulgaria) and Jean Anne Kennedy (Ireland), Power4Youth

This workshop aimed at exploring what indicators exist to 'monitor the situation' of children without parental care; how effective are they as a measurement tool; identify the challenges and gaps in identifying more indicators and asks the question: how can indicators specific to children without parental care be developed? The objective was to establish a link between child protection statistics and poverty & social exclusion as well as to highlight governance and policies at all levels (international, European and national) in an effort to identify 'best practice' towards protection and well-being of children and young people without parental care. Implicit in this attempt was the inclusion of the UN CRC and other policies concerning young people and children's involvement and consultation towards protection and well-being.

The three Power4Youth representatives - from Estonia, Bulgaria and Ireland - reflected on their own experiences of the alternative care system in order to give personal context of how indicators, policy and practice impacts on young people. 'Children without parental care' are a particularly vulnerable group within the EU with regards to, risk of, and indeed suffering from, poverty and social exclusion. In an effort to properly determine, identify and change this situation throughout Europe, it is necessary to address the inconsistent measurement, indicators and specific research in this area. The emphasis of policy development and indicators should always be two-pronged: towards protection and towards well-being.

In the context of EU policy, it is necessary to develop indicators in service development and delivery that are able to: capture the situation of children in, at risk of, or leaving, alternative care; and equip policy makers and practitioners to better address their specific needs.

20 representatives from 15 countries and organisations shared insights into how these social indicators would inform their interventions for 'Children without parental care', and how they would inform government, NGOs, agencies, policy-makers so that their actions are accountable and measurable in order to ensure that they are always working in the best interest of the child.

Too often the data available are not transparent and indicators can be manipulated to suit the political agenda. To have European standards and social indicators would promote transparency and accountability to all stakeholders to identify constructive interventions towards the causes of children coming into alternative care as well as the issues and effect of being in care and leaving care.

All workshop participants acknowledged the need for common definitions and social indicators. An example was shared as to how the UN CRC had been mistranslated into Russian & Ukrainian leading to gaps in policy initiatives. It was also noted that current EU indicators on child poverty and child well-being did not include reference to gender, ethnicity, family size or children in public care.

The Better Care Network's and UNICEF's *Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care*[9] aims at assisting countries in strengthening their information system around formal care. The manual introduces a set of 15 global indicators for children in formal care, explains why this information is valuable, and offers practical guidance on data collection for governments and non-governmental counterparts. The indicators should be used as a common measurement approach to better monitor childcare practices, inform the development of policy and programmes and facilitate comparison within and between countries. However, this was described by the presenters "as a start" which could be improved upon to produce comparable data on 'Children without parental care' in Europe (for example they do not show the number of placements that a child has had). All stakeholders should be involved in the preparation of similar indicators for Europe – especially young people with care experience.

The Power4Youth representatives identified and explained constructive examples of social indicators but also facilitated discussion on possible shortcomings of these social indicators based on their personal experience of alternative care. The viewpoint of these young people added to the positive discussion by the group and represented the youth voice that is often lost in such discussions.

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9 http://www.crin.org/docs/Formal%20Care%20Guide%20FINAL.pdf.

ROUND TABLE DEBATE: LINKING POLICY & PRACTICE AT EU LEVEL

Isabelle Engsted-Maquet, Secretariat of the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, recalled the importance of measurement and monitoring to understand problems but also emphasised the need to remind that different indicators are needed for different purposes and that not all can be quantified. Indicators are not an end in itself; they are just one tool that can be employed to help shape policies and services and ultimately improve people's quality of life and well-being. She highlighted the need to invest in research and empirical evidence, and make the link between science, work on the ground and policies. Isabelle felt that the way forward is to increase common understanding across the EU, strengthen the statistical capacity and close the evidence gap. National statistic offices, she stressed, are often not the best equipped to reach the invisible part of the population. With regards to homelessness, for example, no data collection would be good enough if people working with this group are not involved. Statisticians work with administrative data. Partnerships are therefore crucial.

Isabelle gave a brief update on on-going work at EU level in the field of indicators and children. The 2009 EU-SILC[10] module on material deprivation includes now 20 specific child-related data, which has been broadly welcomed by the research community. With regards to EU-SILC, Isabelle noted that official statistics are not always the best place for taking a child-centered approach. EU-SILC is working through proxy responses, and children are not interviewed. The compromise with the new module on children was to ask parents about their children. The main effort should therefore be put in building evidence and strengthening the statistical capacity.

The Indicators Sub-group of the SPC has agreed to develop child well-being indicators. This work is being developed in cooperation with OECD and UNICEF. The study on child poverty and well-being led by Tárki and Applica will also feed into the indicators work.

The 2008 European Commission Communication on a reinforced OMC already suggests setting targets, arguing that quantified objectives based on evidence-based diagnosis might be a way to progress. In 2010 the European Commission will adopt a staff working paper on child poverty which will recommend national targets on poverty reduction.

2010 is the European year against poverty and social exclusion. Child poverty is clearly a priority issue. The SPC will particularly focus on migration and the situation of immigrant children should be addressed in this framework – an illustration of the Commission's efforts to mainstream children's well-being into other policy areas. Children in institution are at the top of Commission's interest as well.

María Amor Martín Estébanez, Programme Manager of Legal Research at the Department of Equality and Citizen's Rights of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, highlighted the importance of collecting comparable data at EU level but also – and most importantly – the need to frame them in the national, regional and local settings.

With regards to current shortcomings, María Amor highlighted the need to have common concepts, common definitions and common terminology at EU level. A shift towards a child-rights perspective which recognizes children as stakeholders in policy-making and evaluation is also needed. To this respect, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) is providing extensive evidence that rights awareness is one of the weaknesses of the current fundamental rights situation in Europe. More resources need to be invested in awareness raising programmes and in the work of equality bodies and other mechanisms.

Following the 2006 EC Communication *Towards a Strategy on the Rights of the Child*, the European Commission asked FRA to develop indicators to measure how children's rights are implemented, protected,

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10 Community Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

respected and promoted across the EU. FRA has developed a series of indicators for the protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in the EU on the basis of EU competence in this area[11]. In its first attempts, the Agency has proposed indicators in the following key areas, which are in line with existing EU provisions of direct relevance to children: family environment and alternative care; protection from exploitation and violence; education, citizenship and cultural activities; and adequate standard of living.

The protection of unaccompanied and separated children, and in particular those who are outside their country of origin, is critical given the high risks to which they are exposed. The 1997 Council Resolution on Unaccompanied Minors who are nationals of third countries, for instance, has no built-in mechanism to give a primary consideration to the best interests of the child when deciding on admission of undocumented unaccompanied children. Gaps in the enjoyment of rights laid down in the CRC are currently being identified through the Agency's research. The European Union should promote the principles and rights of the CRC across the board of its policies. In order to facilitate the implementation of the civil, economic, social and cultural rights of children, indicators such as those developed by FRA can facilitate the application of the rights laid down in the CRC in practice and assist in evaluating the impact of EU law and policy on children.

The Agency is committed to follow further implementation in the area of indicators in 2010. Co-operation and dialogue with civil society will be key to identify important areas to be covered and fill the gaps in data collection. María Amor finally recalled the need to strengthen children's participation.

Representatives from the group of children and young people concluded the debate with their reflections on what is the best way to monitor the well-being of children and young people and why participation is so important.

Quality communication within the family - based on mutual respect and equality of roles - emerged as a key aspect for monitoring and increasing the well-being of the child. Children and young people need to feel safe to express their opinions and that it cannot be used against them. There should be no repercussions. Children have a right to disagree. Children and young people also need to be educated on how to use their own rights and how to get their voice heard. They need support from adults to fully understand to which extent their contribution and involvement can be meaningful.

"We should never underestimate the power of listening to children if one allows them to learn how to use this power".

Participation is building citizenship, it means awareness, and awareness means implementation of rights, which ultimately contributes to improve children and young people's well-being and quality of life. Participation is crucial because it gives the chance to children to express their own views and to feel a complete person who is taken seriously. Children and young people are expert in their own lives and it is the responsibility of researchers and policy-makers to work with them using innovative and age-appropriate strategies which take into account their evolving physical, emotional, mental and social capacities, so that they can contribute to the policy-making process. Participation should embed all policies and mechanisms need to ensure that all groups of children are engaged – including the most vulnerable, such as those in public care, children with migrant background, ROMA children, etc..

The young people's representatives felt that the concept of "participation poverty" should be explored. Indicators to monitor participation in leisure, civic, sporting and cultural activities as well as peer and family relations should be further developed and used.

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11 FRA (2009), Developing indicators for the protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in the European Union: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/products/publications_reports/pub-rightsofchild-summary_en.htm.

CLOSING PLENARY SESSION: LOOKING FORWARD

1. Monitoring children well-being: make the link between policy and practice

*By **Francisco Javier Asensio García**, Ministry of Health and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Policy, Families and Children, Spain*

Francisco Javier Asensio García, Head of Unit responsible for childhood in the Ministry of Health and Social Policy in Spain said that there is no excuse not to undertake investments in children.

"No matter if economies grow or are in the middle of a recession, children should be granted sufficient resources to enable their physical and mental development".

It is in early childhood that we find the seed for future exclusion and poverty. If we really want to give every European child the possibility to reach his or her full potential, we need to invest in early child development. Lack of opportunities during childhood all too often will have long-term consequences for the individuals concerned and for society as a whole. Swift action will instead pay off now as well as bear fruit in the years to come by breaking the vicious cycle of the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

National, regional and local integrated strategies to tackle child poverty as well as partnership between administrative authorities and social agents should be established. It means that measures are taken in a coherent and mutually reinforcing way.

So far poverty has mainly been understood and recorded as income poverty and the dimensions of social exclusion, social segregation as well as the child's well-being not taken into due consideration. We do not need to re-invent the wheel as the UNCRC provides an overarching normative framework for policy development which ensures a child-centered, multidimensional approach. All EU Member States need to measure the progress that they are making in implementing the UNCRC. This is particularly important as we approach the 2010 European Year to combat poverty and social exclusion.

2. Fighting child poverty: a moral duty and an economic necessity

*By **Philippe Courard**, Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health, Belgium*

Philippe Courard, Belgian Secretary of State for Social Integration and the Fight against Poverty (Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health), stated political leaders do not have to be afraid of indicators. They should support their development, and more particularly, use them as an instrument to help making a decision.

He went on wondering why it is so hard for the EU to set clear targets on child poverty reduction:

"The promises are there, the studies are made, the strategies are clear. Why don't we deliver? The time of studies and reflections is over, it is time for action now. How come that in Europe we have no problem to set a quantified target on the level of employment that should be reached by each Member State but apparently we fear to say that we want to reduce the number of poor children in Europe by 50% by 2015?".

It is unacceptable that children experience poverty. Knowing that poverty levels among children are higher than among the whole population, action is absolutely needed and children must be a political priority. Any Euro spent on children must be considered as a long term investment in human capital as well as a moral and humanitarian obligation.

Spanish and Belgian EU presidencies will cooperate to develop an EU recommendation on child well-being in 2010 to prove that this time we really mean it and we are willing to commit.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ABELA Sandra	Foundation for Social Welfare Services	Malta
ALTIERI Maria	Fundacion Montessori sin Fronteras	Spain
ANGMAN Ingmar	Orebro Regional Development Council	Sweden
AZEMARD Caroline	Croix-Rouge Française	France
BENINCASA Caterina	Ferrara City Council - Comune di Ferrara	Italy
BROUGH-WILLIAMS Ian	Interpreter	France
BUGEJA Victoria	Children's Homes Central Office	Malta
BURGARD Esther	SOS Kinderdorf International	Austria
CARTER Richard	Independent Consultant	United Kingdom
CESARES OLSSON Marie	Orebro Regional Development Council	Sweden
CHARALAMBIDOU Eirini	Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation	Cyprus
CHARALAMBOUS Sotiroula	Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance	Cyprus
CHRISTOFIAS Dimitris	President of the Republic of Cyprus	Cyprus
COHEN Bronwen	Children in Scotland	United Kingdom
CONFORTI Sara	Ferrara City Council - Comune di Ferrara	Italy
COOPER Sharon	Department for Work and Pension	United Kingdom
COURARD Philippe	Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health	Belgium
COX Antoon	Dyslexia International asbl	Belgium
DANAU Dominique	SAGO Research	The Netherlands
DRAB Daria	Nobody's Children Foundation	Poland
DRUSANY Deniza	Union of Societies "Our Children" Croatia	Croatia
DUARTE Carmen	Aide et Action	France
DYBAYLO Vasylyna	EveryChild Ukraine	Ukraine
ENGSTED MAQUET Isabelle	DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities	Belgium
ESTEBANEZ Maria Amor	EU Agency for Fundamental Rights	Belgium
FONSECA Olga	CEBI Foundation	Portugal
FORTUNATI Aldo	La Bottega di Geppetto	Italy
GALLAGHER Niamh	Children's Rights Alliance	Ireland
GARDINER Christopher	VZD.cz	Czech Republic
GARDINER Tereza	IFCO and/or VZD.cz	Czech Republic
GORDON Jean	Universal Education Foundation	France
GRANDVALET Florence	ISS UK	United Kingdom
GUSTAFSSON Marie	Orebro Regional Development Council	Sweden
HERCZOG Maria	Family, Child, Youth Association	Hungary
HOHLE Sven	St. Johannis GmbH Germany	Germany
HOUNDOUMADI Anastasia	DECET network	Greece
IFKO Judit Melinda	National Association of Large Families	Hungary
IVENS Tony	Children in Wales	United Kingdom
JALHAY Jean Marc	Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health	Belgium

JORGENSEN Geert	Joint Council for Child Issues	Denmark
KAZANTZIS Ninetta	PCCPWC	Cyprus
KENNEDY Jean	IFCO	UK
KERSHAW Paul	University of British Columbia	Canada
KIENAN Karen	One Family	Ireland
KLIMACKOVA Anna	National Centre for Equal Opportunities	Slovakia
KONDRUK Valeriy	EveryChild Ukraine	Ukraine
KONI Annita	Social Welfare services of the Ministry of labour & social	Cyprus
KORMOSNE Zsuzsanna	National Association of Large Families	Hungary
KOURSOUMBA Leda	Cypriot Commissioner for Children	Cyprus
KOVACS Peter	National Association of Large Families	Hungary
KROPF Daniel	Universal Education Foundation	France
KUKK Kersti	Power4Youth	Estonia
KUZMINSKYI Volodymyr	EveryChild Ukraine	Ukraine
KVAS Suzi	DRUŠTVO REGIONALNA VARNA HIŠA	Slovenia
LLOYD Eva	Cass School of Education University of East London	United Kingdom
MACLEOD Marion	Children in Scotland	United Kingdom
MARLIER Eric	CEPSINSTEAD Research Institute	Luxembourg
MARTIN TARRAGA Manel	Fedaia	Spain
MARTINEZ MARTINEZ Conxi	Fedaia	Spain
MATO Juan Carlos		Spain
MCKENDRICK John	Scottish Poverty Information Unit	UK
MEIJER Ellen	Netherlands Youth Institute	The Netherlands
MOOREN Kathleen	DECET vzw	Belgium
MULLEY Kate	Action for Children	United Kingdom
NEANDER Kerstin	Psychiatric Research Centre, Orebro County Council	Sweden
NEGRO Alessandro	Amici dei Bambini	Italy
NELSON Claus	VELUX Foundation	Denmark
O'NEILL Sean	Children in Wales	United Kingdom
PAGNI Barbara	La Bottega di Geppetto	Italy
PANEVA Radostina	SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria	Bulgaria
PAVANI Alessandra	Fondazione l'Albero della Vita	Italy
PETROVA-DIMITROVA Nelli	SAPI	Bulgaria
ROINE Mira	A-Clinic Foundation	Finland
ROXELL Sara	Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions	Sweden
RYUSTEM Hava	Power4Youth	Bulgaria
SAURO Seppo	Central Union for Child Welfare	Finland
SCAMMELL Geoff	Department for Work and Pension	UK
SCHAEFERS Stefan	Fondation Roi Baudoin	Belgium
SHALAPATOVA Ivanka	For Our Children Foundation	Bulgaria
SIELAND Patrick	St. Johannis GmbH Germany	Germany

SINGLER Rosanna	Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion	United Kingdom
SJOGERUD Jan	Church of Sweden	Sweden
SMETS Martine	Kind and Gezin	Belgium
SNITSELAAR Andrew	Association Samuel Vincent	France
SODERLIND Ylva	Stiftelsen Allmänna Barnhuset	Sweden
STEFANOV Mihail	National Network for Children	Bulgaria
STROCKA Cordula	Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme	Germany
STUTTARD Anna	Home Start International	United Kingdom
THURSTON Richard	Welsh Assembly Government	United Kingdom
TOTH Istvan Gyorgy	Tarki Social Research Institute	Hungary
TUNA Aija	ISSA	Hungary
VANDEKEERE Michel	Observatoire de l'Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l'Aide a la jeunesse	Belgium
VATOVCI Gzim	Handicapped and Disabled People of Kosova	Kosovo
VELKOSKA Violeta	SOS Kinderdorf International	R.Macedonia
VINK Caroline	Netherlands Youth Institute	The Netherlands
WAHL Klaus	German Youth Institute	Germany
WESTERLING Eva	Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions	Sweden
WILLIAMS Anne	Williams Consulting	France
WILLIAMS Catriona	Children in Wales	United Kingdom
ZOI Ninetta	Ministry of Health and Social Security	Greece
BAKONYI Zsofia	Eurochild	Hungary
BECKER Björn	Eurochild	Belgium
D'ADDATO Agata	Eurochild	Belgium
DUBIT Marie	Eurochild	Belgium
HAINSWORTH Jana	Eurochild	Belgium
LEAL Mafalda	Eurochild	Belgium
MOLINARI Maurizio	Eurochild	Belgium
VELENYI Reka	Eurochild	Belgium

ANNEX 2: PROGRAMME

Wednesday 11 November

18.00 – 19.15 OPENING CEREMONY

Chair: Catriona Williams, Eurochild President

Dimitris Christofias, President of the Republic of Cyprus

Vladimír Špidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission (video address)

19.30 COCKTAIL RECEPTION, hosted by the Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights, Cyprus, **Leda Koursoumba**

Thursday 12 November

9.00 – 10.45 PLENARY: GOOD POLICY, GOOD INDICATORS – WHY THEY MATTER

Chair: Mária Herczog, Family, Child & Youth Association, Hungary, Member of the UNCRC Committee, Eurochild Board Member

Making children a policy priority – what tools have been developed to monitor child well-being and how can this influence the policy agenda? - **Sotiroula Charalambous**, Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, Cyprus

Evidence-based policies and practices – monitoring and measuring issues at national and EU levels - **Eric Marlier**, International Scientific Coordinator, CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute, Luxembourg

Child poverty and child well being in the EU: developing an indicator system to assist evidence-based policies - **István György Tóth**, Director, TARKI Social Research Institute Inc

10.45 – 11.15 COFFEE BREAK

11.15 – 13.00 WORKSHOP SESSIONS 1: INDICATORS IN PUBLIC POLICY

This session focuses on sharing good practice on how indicators are developed and used at national or regional level to promote children's rights within public policy.

WORKSHOP 1.1 Indicators & advocacy

WORKSHOP 1.2 Indicators & listening to children

WORKSHOP 1.3 Indicators & evaluating outcomes for children

13.00 – 15.00 LUNCH

15.00-16.00 KEY NOTE SPEECH: NO DATA, NO PROBLEM, NO ACTION

Chair: Catriona Williams, Eurochild President

Speaker: Paul Kershaw, Director of the Social Care and Social Citizenship Research Network, Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), British Columbia, Canada

16.00 – 16.30 COFFEE BREAK

16.30-18.00 WORKSHOP SESSIONS 2: INDICATORS IN SERVICE DEVELOPMENT & DELIVERY

The workshops focus on four thematic priorities considered as crucial for the delivery of children's rights. Each workshop will share good practice on how indicators are developed and used to help monitor and improve the delivery of services to children and families. They focus on the areas covered by the Eurochild thematic working groups.

WORKSHOP 2.1 Early years education & care

WORKSHOP 2.2 Parenting & family support

WORKSHOP 2.3 Children's participation

WORKSHOP 2.4 Children without parental care

Friday 13 November

FIELD VISITS & CONTINUATION OF WORKSHOP SESSION 2

8.30-12.00 GOOD PRACTICE WORKSHOPS: INDICATORS IN PRACTICE

Participants will visit local projects to frame discussions – started in the previous days workshops - in the reality of organisations and individuals working in the field in Cyprus. After (or during) the visit participants will discuss recommendations for (1) their organisation; (2) Eurochild, and (3) national and EU policy makers working in the field of social inclusion and social protection.

Early years education & care - First child care centre for working mothers - Limassol

Parenting & family support - Family support group - Limassol

Participation - Cyprus Youth Board "Polythematic" Centre - Limassol

Children without parental care - Visit to Limassol Children's Home

12.00 – 14.00 LUNCH

14.00 – 14.30 WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

Chair: Eric Marlier, International Scientific Coordinator, CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute, Luxembourg

Short feedback from the 4 thematic workshops: *Early years education & care*, **Bronwen Cohen**, Children in Scotland. *Parenting & family support*, **Tony Ivens**, Children in Wales. *Participation of children & young people*, **Ninetta Kazantzis**, PCCPWC. *Children without parental care*, **Chris Gardiner**, IFCO President

14.30 – 16.00 ROUND TABLE DEBATE – LINKING POLICY & PRACTICE AT EU LEVEL

Chair: Eirini Charalambidou, Psychologist & Journalist, CyBC (Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation)

What have we learnt from these two days that can help to increase leadership and commitment at the highest political level – at EU, national and regional level – to eradicating child poverty and promoting well-being?

Isabelle Engsted-Maquet, Secretariat of the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Maria Amor Martin Estebanez, Child Rights Team, Department for Equality & Citizen's Rights, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

Representatives from the group of children and young people

16.00 -16.30 COFFEE BREAK

16.30-17.30 CLOSING PLENARY – LOOKING FORWARD

Chair: Catriona Williams, Eurochild President

Juan Carlos Mato, Ministry of Health and Social Policy, General Directorate of Social Policy, Families and Children, Spain

Philippe Courard, Secretary of State for Social Integration and the Fight against Poverty, Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Health, Belgium

Ninetta Kazantzis, President of PCCPWC, Cyprus

Side events: Eurochild Thematic Working Group meetings (members only)

Friday, 13 November

18.00-19.30   EARLY YEARS EDUCATION AND CARE

PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Saturday, 14 November

9.30-11.00   FAMILY AND PARENTING SUPPORT

CHILDREN WITHOUT PARENTAL CARE

WORKSHOP 1.1 - Indicators & Advocacy

How are indicators used at local, regional and national level to effect policy change? How can they be used to raise public awareness and political attention and to inform policy?

Thursday 12 - 11.15 – 13.00

■ **Objective:** Identify good practice and recommendations on development and use of child-specific indicators as an advocacy tool

■ **Context for the discussion:**

Policy making and implementation is determined by political priorities. But policy development is not always driven by accurate information, either because data is not robust or simply because it does not exist. This might lead to implementation of measures which are ineffective as regard the situation they intend to address.

Whilst the common refrain '*what counts gets done'* is widely accepted, it is equally true that *'not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that is counted counts'*. Therefore, it should be remembered that indicators are one among several tools available to support policy making.

Nonetheless, the use of indicators, backed by robust data collection, can be instrumental in taking effective action. Indicators furthermore help to monitor progress, which is also a means of holding decision makers accountable. The choice of indicators is however crucial. Choosing the wrong indicators can in fact have perverse outcomes.

Despite wide recognition of the need to develop child-specific indicators, there is some reluctance among policy makers to support such efforts. Research showing indicators provide the grounds for measurement and progress appraisal is being increasingly used by child rights advocates to make the case.

UNICEF's reports card 7 and 8 (on child well-being in rich countries and on early childhood education and care) have made use of league tables – combining a set of indicators into domains – which have helped to raise awareness and governments attention while ordering states according to the fulfilment of the chosen domains.

In the EU social inclusion process common indicators have been developed, which now include a set of indicators on children's material deprivation and soon one (or a set of) child-well-being indicator(s). Other important areas for developing child specific indicators are health and access to housing and education.

■ **Questions to address:**

– Difficulties in monitoring and measuring 'softer' qualitative outcomes – or long-term impact of preventative action
– How are child-specific indicators used in advocacy?
– How can we enhance the role of advocacy in sharing successful cases / good practice?
– What are the strengths and pitfalls of league tables?
– How to ensure data robustness to inform the development of the right indicators?
– How can we avoid misuse of indicators and ensure their neutrality in advocacy actions?

■ **Abstract of presentation:**

The presentation will set out the support offered to local authorities to tackle child poverty by the Child Poverty Toolkit. This was developed by Inclusion and the Child Poverty Action Group to help authorities and their partners:

– frame local discussions on child poverty in relation to employment, income, education, health and social services;
– analyse the local child poverty story using the most reliable and comprehensive data sources;
– develop a local child poverty target;
– ensure that local policies are 'child poverty-proofed';
– design a multi-themed strategy for achieving this.

The toolkit includes:

– practical tools such as pre-formatted spreadsheets, policy briefs and check-lists to help build local strategies;
– a range of good practice examples from throughout England;
– a monthly round up of the latest news relating to child poverty.

This presentation will explain how the toolkit was created and demonstrate how it can be used.

■ **Speaker:**

Rosanna Singler, Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion, UK - www.childpovertytoolkit.org.uk

Rosanna is Policy Officer at Inclusion, a not-for-profit research organisation dedicated to tackling disadvantage and promoting social justice. She has considerable knowledge of the UK child poverty agenda, and has worked with central and local government to help develop effective child poverty strategies, including the recent delivery of a project for central government to increase quality part-time working opportunities for parents in London.

Rosanna also authors a monthly e-bulletin for the Trades Union Congress (TUC), covering all stories on work life balance and the organisation of working time, including flexible working. She has also recently co-authored a report analysing the two main UK opposition parties' policies to tackle poverty.

■ **Facilitator:**

Eric Marlier, International Scientific Coordinator of the CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute, Luxemburg.

Eric's main personal research activities include comparative social indicators, social monitoring, international socio-economic analysis, the EU cooperation in the area of social protection and social inclusion, and the implementation of international surveys and attitudinal surveys. For more than 20 years he has been in charge of many international dossiers in these fields – for the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the United Nations, national governments, the research community and the private sector. He has also organised several international conferences in these areas on behalf of the European Commission and various EU presidencies. He has written two reference books together with Sir AB Atkinson, Bea Cantillon and Brian Nolan: "Social Indicators: the EU and Social Inclusion" (OUP, 2002) and "The EU and social inclusion: Facing the challenges" (The Policy Press, 2007). Eric was chair of the EU task force on child poverty and well-being resulting in the report adopted in January 2008 by EU member states and the EC.

■ **Rapporteur:**

Mafalda Leal, Policy Officer, Eurochild

Mafalda started working for Eurochild early 2008 after returning from New York where she took part in the negotiations led by the EU Portuguese Presidency of human rights resolutions during the UN General Assembly. She has previously worked in Brussels for UNICEF and UNHCR and conducted research in the UK on unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. For two years she was project manager in a consultancy company dealing with the evaluation of European Commission humanitarian aid projects. Mafalda has a legal background having worked as a lawyer in Portugal.

WORKSHOP 1.2 - Indicators & listening to children

How are indicators being informed by children and young people themselves?

Thursday 12, 11.15 – 13.00

■ **Objective:** Identify good practice and recommendations regarding the participation of children's and young people in the development of child-specific indicators.

■ **Context for the discussion:**

Eurochild has repeatedly called for well-being indicators that are informed by children's own perception of need. One of our key messages in our 2009 synthesis report is that '*children must be recognised as key stakeholders' reinforcing the need to listen to the views and experiences of children themselves and to empower children through participation*'[12] .

Still children and young people seldom contribute to the development of child specific indicators. We argue that we cannot fully understand what is important for child well-being without asking children themselves.

Children can contribute both to the design and to the validation and assessment of indicators. Children's opinions are particularly important in developing well-being indicators as their perceptions of well-being are different from those of adults. There is a clear added-value in having children's views insofar as they contribute to design indicators that translate children's own concerns.

Children and families have been consulted through some Flash Eurobarometer[13] surveys and in the Kidscreen[14] project . However children are not directly involved in the development of indicators.

■ **Questions to address:**

What are the outcomes from children's involvement in developing child-specific indicators, including for participating children?

How can NGOs push/support the participation of children in the development of indicators and data collection?

What are the means through which children can participate in developing indicators? What structures/resources are needed?

■ **Abstract of presentation by Klaus Wahl: How do children inform the development of indicators of child well-being?**

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12 Ending child poverty within the EU? A review of the 2008-2010 national strategy reports on social protection and social inclusion, Synthesis Report
13 The rights of the child: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_235_en.pdf; Parents' views on the mental health of their child:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/docs/eb_246_en.pdf
14 See also Kidscreen project: http://kidscreen.diehauptstadt.de/kidscreen/master/project/index.html

In recent years a new understanding of childhood is reaching the world of politics, law and science: Children are not only seen as human beings with their own rights, but *subjects* with their own views, ideas, preferences, wishes etc.

Child well-being has become an objective of many local, regional, national and international efforts. To promote the realisation of child well-being, there are several initiatives to establish catalogues of indicators to achieve this goal. Most comprise *objective* indicators like health, nutrition, and education. However, *subjective* indicators are increasingly proposed and applied as well, such as children's feelings of happiness or their experiences in their families or at school.

The newest demand for the *participation of children* in the research process for designing and measuring indicators for child well-being is easily made, but difficult to realize. It evokes sociological, psychological, and neurological questions about the origins of children's feelings, thinking and wishes and about the scientific methods to collect them. The presentation will summarise some of the international political and scientific efforts already made in the implementation of indicators for child well-being and some results of research on objective and subjective indicators. A special focus is on studies in Germany.

It will also present some of the experiences, chances and difficulties in attempts to include young children not only as *objects* but as *subjects* and *active participators* in research about child well-being. The participation of teenagers in these processes is easier and more frequent. The degree of children's passive and active participation in scientific research is depending on *personal* variables (e.g. age, maturity of children), *structural* variables (e.g. goals, methods, setting of the studies; approval of parents) and on *political support* (from NGOs, local, regional, national governments, international organisations).

■ **Abstract of presentation by Jean Gordon and Daniel Kropf: Engaging young people in shaping their learning environments**

The focus of this presentation will be on why the Universal Education Foundation (UEF) believes that listening to children and young people, and attending to what they say, is central to their well-being. It will present examples from pilot work in the Middle East, Europe and North America.

■ **Speakers:**

Professor Klaus Wahl, German Youth Institute, Munich, Germany

Klaus is head of the central scientific service unit and a social scientist at the German Youth Institute (DJI). He has been professor at the University of Munich, at the Venice International University and a fellow of the Hanse Institute for Advanced Study, Delmenhorst.

At present he is studying violent behaviour among young people in an interdisciplinary empirical research project at the University of Bremen, including neurological, psychological, and sociological approaches. He is also analyzing data from a longitudinal study of developmental paths of children (DJI-Kinderpanel). In the nineties he led several empirical studies about the development of social emotions, aggression, xenophobia and youth violence against migrants (in cooperation with a Max-Planck- Institute and some universities).

Klaus is interested in the integration of sociological, psychological and biological perspectives to improve the understanding of the social behavior of children, adolescents, and adults. His theoretical work was on bio-psycho-sociology, depth sociology, critique of sociological action theories, on emotions, aggression and xenophobia.

Jean Gordon, Universal Education Foundation

Jean is the Director of the European Institute of Education and Social Policy (Paris). She has wide experience in the comparison & analysis of education policies & systems and in contributing to lifelong learning opportunities & personal development through improving access to learning & its recognition, individualising pathways & increasing transparency of learning & qualifications in Europe. She is Joint Editor

of the European Journal of Education and has designed and/or coordinated issues on the futures of learning, education & well-being, intercultural dialogue, equal opportunities, access to lifelong learning, etc. She has carried out many Europe-wide studies, most recently on cross-curricular key competences and undertakes formative, qualitative evaluation. Jean has worked in the EU Member States, the Western Balkans, the Middle East/ North Africa and Central Asia.

She coordinates European Operations for Universal Education Foundation and the Secretariat for the Consortium of foundations, 'Education by All for the Well-being of Children, Europe'. She is currently working on indicators of subjective well-being.

Daniel Kropf, Universal Education Foundation

Daniel is the Executive Director and was the Founding Chair of Universal Education Foundation (www.uef-eba.org) which works in partnership with other organizations in the development of a global advocacy movement: Education by All for the Well-Being of Children.

As a healthcare entrepreneur, Daniel has always pursued a deeper understanding of human dynamics through diverse approaches encompassing tools and methodologies from the western and eastern cultures. He has established, chaired or directed several healthcare businesses including Healthcare Technologies Ltd, Gamida for Life, Ultramind plc. (for bio feedback and cognitive behavioral therapy tools), Gamida Gen for genetic diagnostics, Gamida Cell for cell therapy, and Glyco Data (today Procognia) for glycol-protein mapping, finger printing and sequencing.

He is a member of the Board of the Evens Foundation and is Secretary-General of CEJI which supports the vision of an inclusive and democratic Europe where people fulfill their potential in all their diversities (www.ceji.org).

■ **Facilitator:**

Dr. Cordula Strocka, Programme Officer, Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP), Berlin, Germany

Cordula is a social psychologist and holds a PhD in Development Studies from the University of Oxford. She has lived for several years in Bolivia and Peru, researching youth gangs, youth violence, street children and child labour. In 2005, she conducted a participatory study for UNICEF on the situation of youth in post-conflict areas of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Dr Strocka's current work as YEPP Programme Officer focuses on the participatory monitoring and evaluation of projects aimed at youth and community empowerment in 19 YEPP programme sites in eight European countries.

■ **Rapporteur:**

Caroline Vink, Senior Advisor, Netherlands Youth Institute, ChildonEurope member

Caroline is a senior advisor on international children & youth policy at the Netherlands Youth Institute. Her work is to monitor trends and (international) developments that are relevant for the policy and practice of children & youth policy in the Netherlands. A large part of her work is focused on policy developments in the field of youth of international bodies such as the European Union, Council of Europe and the United Nations. Her work has covered a wide range of topics, reaching from youth participation & children rights to child abuse.

WORKSHOP 1.3 - Indicators & evaluating outcomes for children

How far can indicators of well-being be relied upon to indicate that government programmes have improved outcomes for children? How to pick the right indicators? How can indicators be used along with other methods to evaluate the impact of programmes and policies on children and young people? How can children and young people be involved in evaluating programmes?

Thursday 12, 11.15 – 13.00

■ **Objective:** Identify good practice and recommendations regarding monitoring outcomes for children and how these can be used to evaluate government policy and programmes.

■ **Context for the discussion:**

The development of specific indicators on children is crucial to guide policies and assess whether and how they are impacting on children's lives.

Over the last years, there have been many efforts to improve the availability and quality of data on child well-being across the European countries and there is a political commitment to further explore this area. However, we have been making less progress on finding out what works and how indicators go beyond simply building knowledge towards monitoring impact of policy and programmes.

The collection of high-quality, reliable and standardised information on child well-being must be buttressed by regular reporting on child outcomes to ensure that quality services make real changes for children, including the most vulnerable. Having the big picture about the important outcomes helps to make wise choices about what to do and the most valuable information to collect nationally and locally.

There is also a need to monitor over time the effectiveness of policy interventions, especially on the most vulnerable children, through longitudinal/panel data.

It is essential to take the next step towards a better understanding of the interrelations between indicators, child policies and outcomes, not as a goal in itself but as a step in the long road to improving children's well-being.

In the UK, the Welsh Assembly Government developed the Children and Young People's Well-being Monitor for Wales and carried out work on evaluating the effectiveness of programmes intended to tackle child poverty. This exercise offers an example of the attempt to link together the high level monitoring of indicators related to children's well-being with policy and programme evaluation to embed it within policy making.

■ **Questions to address:**

How far can indicators of well-being be relied upon to indicate that government programmes have improved outcomes for children? Which criteria should we apply to choose the indicators and how can we make sure that they are the most appropriate? How can indicators be used along with other methods to evaluate the impact of programmes and policies on children and young people? How can children and young people be involved in evaluating programmes?

■ **Abstract of the presentation by Richard Thurston: Children and young people's well-being monitor for Wales and evaluation of the effectiveness of programmes intended to tackle child poverty**

In the presentation the speaker will share his recent experience related to developing the Children and Young People's Well-being Monitor for Wales and will discuss the work done to evaluate the effectiveness of

programmes intended to tackle child poverty. Which criteria should be applied to pick the right indicators and how to link together the high level monitoring of indicators related to children's well-being with policy and programme evaluation to embed it within policy making will be debated as well.

■ **Speaker:**

Richard Thurston, Senior Principal Research Officer, Welsh Assembly Government, UK

Richard is a Senior Principal Research Officer and head of the Children, Education and Life-long learning branch of the Social Research Division in the Welsh Assembly Government. Richard is currently overseeing the development of the Children and Young People's Well-being Monitor for Wales (2010) and is a member of the Welsh Assembly Government Child Poverty Expert team. Between 2006 and 2008 Richard was the president of the UKES. He has also conducted an evaluation of all government expenditure in Wales as part of the Welsh Assembly's Spending Review. Prior to this, Richard was a Research and Evaluation Manager in the Probation Service where he undertook evaluations of criminal justice interventions and policies. He has also held a number of university based research posts and has been involved in research and evaluation training over many years.

■ **Facilitator:**

Annita Koni, Chief Welfare Officer, Social Welfare Services, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, Republic of Cyprus

Annita holds a BA in Social Work from the Lebanese American University and a Masters Degree in Social Work from Boston University. She practiced social work for many years specialising in at –risk children and families. She is the head of the family and child services section of the social welfare services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. She has also been appointed by the Council of Ministers as the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee for preventing and combating family violence. She is active in the NGO Child Support aiming at providing services to vulnerable children. Annita represents the Cyprus Government in the European Network of National Observatories of Childhood (ChildONEurope) and the Intergovernmental Group L'Europe de l' Enfance.

■ **Rapporteur:**

Niamh Gallagher, Research and Policy Analyst, Children's Rights Alliance, Ireland

Niamh is Research and Policy Analyst at the Children's Rights Alliance in Dublin. As part of her work she represents the Alliance at Social Partnership, on the End Child Poverty Coalition, and at Eurochild, where she is Chair of the Policy Working Group. Before joining the Alliance Niamh was a researcher at Demos, one of the UK's leading think tanks. There her research focused specifically on public services, looking at issues of disability, youth services, education and family. She co-authored a series of Demos reports, including 'Making it Personal' looking at the future of Social Care in the UK with Charles Leadbeater. Niamh also worked closely with UK local authorities supporting them to co-design new local education services with local people. Niamh holds a Masters Degree in Politics from the London School of Economics and a BA in European Studies from Trinity College Dublin.

WORKSHOP 2.1 – Indicators in service development & delivery. Early Years Education & Care

How are indicators that monitor outcomes for children informing the development of early years' care and education services?

Thursday 12, 16.15 – 18.00

■ **Objective: Identify good practice in policies and services in delivering best outcomes for children in early years' services, and how monitoring and measurement can inform the development of early years care and education services.**

■ **Context for the discussion:**

A 1992 Council Recommendation on child care highlights that by developing child care services Member States would promote the well-being of children and families, ensuring their various needs would be met.

In 2002, Member States agreed on the 'Barcelona targets', according to which by 2010 childcare should be provided to 'at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age'. However, these targets were a response to labour market needs and women's employment but disregarded quality criteria in service provision.

More recently, the conclusions of a European Commission Symposium[15] acknowledge that improving access without quality is of little merit and challenge Member States to commit to invest in high quality, accessible early childhood education and care. This should be monitored through indicators that respect diversity in service delivery and take into account quality criteria might change according to the context under which services are provided, which can vary widely from and within countries.

Much work has been carried out by the European Commission Childcare Network[16] who proposed specific objectives, conditions and 40 indicators for the development of services for young children. These provide a comprehensive framework to assess quality in early years care and education.

It is widely recognised the first years of a child are paramount for his/her mental, physical and emotional well-being and development of their social identity. The environments where children grow have a major role to play in this regard; services should therefore be developed to fit children's needs.

There are many examples where successful outcomes for children have been achieved – the project presented by la Bottega di Geppetto is one. How have such outcomes been assessed and how could indicators build upon them to monitor the delivery of better services for children?

■ **Questions to address:**

What do we measure when assessing quality of early years care and education services?
How can indicators draw on experiences with proven high-quality outcomes for children?
How can values as diversity and equity best be translated into indicators?
Why and how should early years' staff contribute to the development of indicators?
What about the participation of very young children themselves in the development of well-being indicators?

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15 Early Matters- European Symposium on improving early childhood education and care, October 2008

http://www.eurochild.org/fileadmin/user_upload/files/thematic_priorities/Yearly_years/ECEC_Symposium_Conclusions_14_Oct_2008.pdf

16 The network was set up under the community programme on equal opportunities, looking at, i.a., establishing safe and secure care for children while parents are at work – it operated for 10 years.

■ **Abstract of presentation by Aldo Fortunati:**

A 15 minute video will present the ongoing experience in the educational services for early childhood in the San Miniato municipality (Tuscany-Italy). The video will offer the possibility to discuss the implications of San Miniato's approach to the education of children as a contribution to an updated and constructive discussion about infant pedagogy's orientations and about policies for the development of educational services for young children and families.

It will present San Miniato's services for early childhood, an experience in which the recognition of children's identity and protagonism together with a strong assumption of public responsibility based on a project design focused on the organisation of opportunities' contexts for possible experiences, has created an experience strongly shared and deep-seated in the community.

Following the video implications of this experience on pedagogy and policy's orientations will be drawn, namely:

- the recognition of children protagonism leading to a reflection on the theme of a curriculum in a different/ opposite way compared to main current reflections on this issue. The term curriculum, as it is applied to early childhood services throughout the world, implies that predetermined actions are carried out to achieve predetermined outcomes. In San Miniato's approach this is understood as organising contexts and opportunities for children to learn. Adults main commitment should be taking on the responsibility to make contextualised choices, experiments, discuss, reflect and change, focussing on the organisation of opportunities rather than following laid down procedures.
- services should not be represented as a solution for the needs of working parents, but as a complementary environment full of opportunities for children and families. Educational services for early childhood do not remove responsibilities from parents but rather strengthen them in their role and deepen their understanding of their own and their child's identity and educational potential. For these reasons, services should reach as many children and families in the community as possible, be universally available, and conceptualised as a public responsibility that attests to the virtuous relationship that should be established among public policy, civil society and young children, at a time in which policies persist in taking directions predominantly different from those of the children.

■ **Abstract of presentation by Anastasia Houndoumadi: Diversity and Equity - Making Sense of Good Practice**

A working group of the DECET network has worked together with the key stakeholders of Early Childhood Education and Care services across Europe. Six partners, France, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Scotland and England used the 6 principles/goals of DECET to develop a framework with guiding criteria for making sense of good practice in early childhood education. The presentation will focus on the description of the core method used to co-construct along with the key service users (children, parents, educators, policy makers and students) a document to be shown at the presentation. Our research question was "How are parents, children and professionals making sense of what is considered as good practice in terms of `respect for diversity and equity'?"

Key findings highlight that there is a diverse level of knowledge and understanding across all six countries; within local communities, local service providers, professionals, adults and children. Based on our findings we can conceptualise that the participatory research has provided a kind of needs' analysis that points to the areas of tensions between parents and professionals, e.g. additional language learning, and beliefs about how ECEC programmes should approach questions of religion, culture, identity and citizenship.

■ **Speakers:**

Aldo Fortunati, La Bottega di Geppetto, President, Early Childhood Research and Documentation Centre, Italy

Aldo Fortunati is vice-president of the Gruppo Nazional Nidi-Infanzia and Director of the Documentation, Research and Training Area at the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence. He is a developmental psychologist and early childhood education specialist having completed his professional education at the Institute of Psychology of the C.N.R. in Rome. Interested in issues related to young children's social, communicative, linguistic development, as well as in the strategies of observation and assessment of young children's behaviour, he has conducted or directed several training and research initiatives in Italy and abroad. He is consultant to several projects developing experimental and innovative services for young children and families, and has recently extended his interest to the issue of quality in educational services, service management and quality evaluation having coordinated on behalf of the Italian government research projects for the development of national policies. Sensitive to educational context design, he has helped design a furniture line for early childhood services (www.spazioarredo.com).

Author of several publications, his volume L'educazione dei bambini come progetto della comunità (Edizioni Junior, 2006) about San Miniato's approach to children's education, has been translated into several languages including English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Anastasia Houndoumadi, SCHEDIA – Centre for Artistic and Pedagogical Training, Athens, Greece, member of DECET network– Diversity in Early Childhood Edcuation and Training

Anastasia Houndoumadi received her M.A. in psychology from Portland State University in 1974 and her Ph.D. in educational/developmental psychology from the University of Oregon in 1977. She is currently professor of psychology at the American College of Greece where she teaches courses in the areas of developmental and educational psychology both at the undergraduate and graduate program. Her teaching and research interests are in early childhood development and education, and the psychology of motherhood across the life span, with an emphasis on intercultural issues and related social intervention programs.

She has been working with "Schedia" since 1992 and has been involved in the development and evaluation of all the social intervention programmes undertaken by Schedia since 1998.

◼ **Facilitator:**

Eva Lloyd, Reader in Early Childhood, Cass School of Education, University of East London

Eva Lloyd is reader in Early Childhood at the University of East London. With Prof Helen Penn she established the International Centre for the Study of the Mixed Economy of Childcare – ICMEC in 2007. ICMEC aims to generate greater knowledge about Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision in countries which employ mixed economies of welfare and education services. Prior to this they collaborated on the Early Years group of the EPPI-Centre systematic review initiative, having produced three early years systematic reviews.

Prior to 2007 Eva worked for four years in the School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol as director of the BSc in Early Childhood Studies where she collaborated on several multi-disciplinary poverty studies. While her work focuses primarily on UK early years policies and their interface with child poverty strategies, she also has a strong interest in comparative policy research.

Eva is also familiar with a range of different perspectives on early childhood policy making gained during a fifteen year period working for children's NGOs. Between 1989 and 2003 she worked in policy and research for Save the Children UK and Barnardo's UK and as Chief Executive of the National Early Years Network, an umbrella association for childcare practitioners.

◼ **Rapporteur:**

Bronwen Cohen, Chief Executive, Children in Scotland, UK

Bronwen is Chief Executive of Children in Scotland. She is a member of the editorial board of Children in Europe (a magazine published in 15 languages across Europe), chairs the Early Years thematic working

group of Eurochild and is Programme Director of the EC Project: Working for inclusion: the role of the early years workforce in addressing poverty and promoting social inclusion. She is the author/editor/contributor to numerous publications. Recent publications include:(with K. Bloomer) (2008) Young children in charge: a small Italian community with big ideas for children, Children in Scotland, Edinburgh. (2008) Introducing the 'Scottish Pedagogue' in Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce, Children in Scotland, Edinburgh with support from the Scottish Government, pp19-23. (2007) (with R. Milne) Northern Lights: Building better childhoods in Norway, Children in Scotland, Edinburgh.

■ **Study visit: First child care centre for working mothers – Limassol - Friday 13, 8.30 – 12.00**

This project is situated close to the first Industrial Area outside the town of Limassol and is run and funded by the government under the supervision of the Welfare Office. It started as a service to working mothers when the women's lobby was strongly demanding adequate services to enable mothers of newborns and very young children to return to work. Today, it still serves the original purpose but it has also developed into a pre-school educational centre serving babies and children of families living in the vicinity.

After the workshop session we will visit the Kolossi Castle and lunch at a nearby restaurant before returning to the hotel for the afternoon conference sessions.

WORKSHOP 2.2 – Indicators in service development & delivery. Family & parenting support

How are indicators that monitor outcomes for children and their families informing the development of early intervention and prevention services for families in difficulty? How can children's right to live in a positive parenting environment be best translated into indicators?

Thursday 12, 16.15 – 18.00

■ **Objective: Identify good practice and recommendations regarding the development and use of indicators to improve policy and practice in the field of family and parenting support.**

■ **Context for the discussion:**

Parents play a critical nurturing and education role towards their children and are the principal advocates of their children's rights, particularly in the early childhood period.

In 2006 the Council of Europe adopted a Recommendation on Positive Parenting, which recognises the importance for children of growing up in a positive family environment[17]. It emphasises the responsibility of the state in providing the right conditions by ensuring parents have access to the appropriate material, psychological, social and cultural resources. Thus there must be a greater recognition of the need to support families and parents, especially those in vulnerable situations, who lack access to the resources necessary to enable the child to grow up in a positive family environment. The state holds the responsibility to act as final guarantor. Inclusive early childhood education and care services, coupled with support and education for parents, and employment policies that reconcile work and family life, are the best way to ensure that all children can develop their full potential. This support should be monitored through indicators that respect diversity in service delivery and assess the implementation of family policies at all levels of governance.

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17 Council of Europe Recommendation 19 [2006] December 2006.

The Pinocchio project and Happiness Counts offer two examples where successful outcomes for children have been achieved. How have such outcomes been assessed and how could indicators build upon them to shape better policies and monitor the delivery of better services for children and families?

■ **Questions to address:**

How are indicators that monitor outcomes for children and their families informing the development of early intervention and prevention services for families? How can indicators capture the most vulnerable families, including immigrant families, and monitor that they are given specific support to ensure that their children do not become socially and economically excluded? How can children's right to live in a positive parenting environment be best translated into indicators?

■ **Abstract of presentation by Eva Westerling & Ylva Söderlind: The Pinocchio project**

The overall goal of the project was to identify and take action to improve the working process around children under age 12 who risk developing permanent antisocial behaviour or conduct disorders. Behaviours that in different ways break against existing norms and rules in the child's context, including school, family, friends and leisure time. The Pinocchio programme was initiated in 2007 by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and the Institute for Evidence-Based Social Work Practice (IMS). Several significant challenges were identified: the prevalence of children with problem behaviours had been a growing concern in Sweden; cooperation between the different organisations involved in care delivery was poor; and the availability and use of evidence-based methods in the field was quite limited. The Pinocchio programme included 30 teams across Sweden. Each team consisted of participants from at least two out of three organisations, namely schools, social care and child psychiatry. The Pinocchio programme was finished in May 2009, and all 30 teams have written a final report.

The presentation will focus on risk and protective factors. The teams have proved that it is possible to change the development of risk and protect factors in children's life, even if the follow-up of the interventions has been relatively brief. They have learned to measure over time, follow-up and present their results through continuous measuring, using a structured assessment tool. All teams have used a structured assessment tool to identify evidence-based risks and protections, and used evidence-based intervention/help. They have tried new ways of working together with different organisations and also worked more successfully with parents. Therefore, it seems that a breakthrough collaborative approach can be successfully applied to improve the care for children with problem behaviours.

■ **Abstract of presentation by Kate Mulley: Happiness Counts project**

There has been a long standing consensus among fellow charities, partners in local authorities and national governments across the UK that prevention is intuitively better than cure. Yet a significant shift in investment from picking up the pieces to early intervention and prevention has not occurred; halted by barriers including a lack of economic modelling, and an understanding of how to commission and provide services specifically to promote well-being. Action for Children is determined to remove these barriers, which is why we commissioned a major piece of research carried out over the last 18 months. The research was called Happiness Counts. The Happiness Counts project aimed to: capture the benefits of universal and targeted services that promote positive feelings and capabilities for children and young people; calculate the longer term cost savings of more preventative and early intervention approaches; provide national and local governments with recommendations to take substantive action in this area.

The research report - Backing the future - continues Action for Children's drive to support a change in emphasis from spending on acute services to prioritising early intervention. The impact of deprivation can scar families' lives over generations. Yet as this research demonstrates, judicious targeted intervention is cost effective and helps release families from the trap of cyclical deprivation. The report sets out the financial and social case for early intervention. Action for Children is seeking cross-party commitment in the UK to invest in essential services to build the foundations of a society that is better and fairer for our families and communities, and where children can live happy and fulfilled lives.

■ **Speakers:**

Eva Westerling, Project Director, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), Sweden

Eva is a social scientist and work as a project director at the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). She has been leading a number of Breakthrough Collaboratives on different topics. She is experienced in improvement knowledge. In this programme she has been one of the initiators and also one of the two project directors.

Ylva Söderlind, Project Director, Children's welfare foundation, Sweden

Ylva is today working on a national board with developing methods and support research for children´s welfare and protection.

Kate Mulley, Policy and Research Manager, Action for Children, UK

Kate joined Action for Children in November 2006 as Policy and Research Manager. Previously she was employed by the Local Government Association (LGA) leading their three-year domestic violence project to develop policy in this area, commission research, identify and promote good practice with a focus on effective partnership working and the interface between children's and adult services. Before joining the LGA, Kate was Policy Manager at Victim Support. She is an expert in public policy relating to crime victims and witnesses.

■ **Facilitator:**

Lamprini-Ninetta D. Zoi, Social Perception and Social Solidarity Division of the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity, Greece

Lamprini-Ninetta is currently working at the Social Perception and Social Solidarity Division of the Hellenic Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity. She has served from April 2004-October 2009 as Scientific Advisor to the Deputy Ministers of Health and Social Solidarity in Greece. From 1977-2008 she was an employee of the Hellenic Institute of Social Protection and Social Solidarity, since 1992 Head of different Departments at the Project Development Innovative Initiatives and Research Section. She is a Social Worker and has also studied Business Administration and Languages; she has an MA on "Intercultural Social Work and Conflict Management" and is an accredited Adult Trainer. She has worked with children/young people, co-ordinated several projects, and edited books and written articles on family care, refugees' integration and children's rights. She represents the Hellenic Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity at the Hellenic Network aiming to end corporal punishment of children, ChildONEurope, and L Europe de l'Enfance.

■ **Rapporteur:**

Tony Ivens, Fatherhood Development Officer, Children in Wales, UK

Tony is part of the team at Children in Wales responsible for Family and Parenting Support at a strategic level in Wales. Tony has worked in Family and Parenting Support for over 10 years, specialising predominantly on Fathers. For 3 years he chaired the Government Working Group responsible for Parenting in Wales. He has written extensively on the subject including co-publishing a report in September 2009 entitled 'Growing up with Dad: Fathers and their impact on substance use'. Tony has lectured widely and presented papers at conferences across Europe.

■ **Study visit: Family support group in Limassol - Friday 13, 8.30 – 12.00**

There are two family support centers in Limassol, the one run by the Church and the other by the Germasogeia Community Welfare Council. Family support groups have not been a tradition in Cyprus and the ones existing are mostly running for short periods of time as they rely on EU project funding. The attempt for a Family Support Group run by the government failed and was taken up by the Church, not reaching the

standards we would have liked. Yet, you will get the real picture of the situation in Cyprus and help make things better by providing your insight and suggestions.

After our workshop session we will visit the Germasogeia area with the dam and lunch at a local taverna.

WORKSHOP 2.3 - Indicators in service development & delivery. Children's participation

How can we monitor children's participation in the family, in society, in schools and in public life? How can this help to improve services for children?

Thursday 12, 16.15 – 18.00

- ◼ **Objective:** identify good practice and recommendations regarding how we monitor child participation in the family, in education, in communities and in public life and how can this help promote participation more widely.

- ◼ **Context for the discussion:**

In its General Comment on the right of the child to be heard[18], the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child stresses the importance to foster children's participation in different settings, including in the family, in alternative care, in health care, in education and school, and in leisure activities.

In reality we have very few examples of where information is systematically collected on levels of children's participation in the different settings. Eurochild believes where indicators of child poverty and well-being are developed they should be informed by what children and young people themselves say is important to them and their own perceptions of need. To this end, children should be empowered to be involved and express their opinions.

In this workshop we will hear from a study in Belgium which has monitored levels of children's participation in French-speaking Belgium and explore what lessons can be learnt for future studies of this kind. We will also explore how such monitoring approaches can be used to promote a stronger participatory approach in children's services, in schools and in the home.

- ◼ **Questions to address:**
  - What can be learnt from the Belgian survey? Could such a survey be replicated across the EU?
  - What is important to monitor if we want to measure children's participation? What is most important to children and young people themselves?
  - How can we monitor this on an on-going basis?
  - How can the results of monitoring be used to promote a stronger participation approach in children's services, schools and in the home?
  - How has children's participation lead to improvements in policies and practice?
  - How can we develop more cultural sensitive indicators regarding children's participation in different settings?
  - Is it possible to gather quantitative, objective and comparable data in order to have a more comprehensive set of indicators on children's participation?

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18 http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC-C-GC-12.doc

- How can we follow a bottom-up approach in the on-going process of developing appropriate indicators rather than a top-down one?

■ **Abstract of presentation by Michel Vandekeere: Study on how children participate in society in French-speaking Belgium**

A representative sample of 1144 children aged 10-18 have been surveyed in 2007 about their own experience of participation in different contexts: family, school, youth organisations, interaction with adults, community.

The main results lead to three questions: what are the opportunities of participation at school? What are the opportunities of learning citizenship and the "art" of living together? What do children know about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)?

What we learned can be summarised in three observations:

- Whereas most children seem to be heard and listened to in their family, only a small fraction of them have some opportunity to be active participants in the school context. The opportunity to participate in the school context is also at odds with the opportunities found in the activities outside school (youth organisation, sport club, …).
- A strong minority of children stay away from any kind of social affiliation outside family or school and have no experience at all of any kind of concrete experience of a democratic process.
- Only a minority of children is well informed about the content of the CRC.

■ **Speaker:**

Michel Vandekeere, Research Director, Observatory for childhood, youth and youth care, Belgium

Michel holds a master in social psychology and is currently Research director at the Observatory for childhood, youth and youth care of the French Ministry in Belgium, where he works since 2001.

He was previously researcher at a university survey centre (1987-2001) and research assistant at the University of Liège, Belgium (1978-1986).

■ **Facilitator:**

Leda Koursoumba, Commissioner for Children, Cyprus

Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights of Cyprus, since 29.8.2007.
Law Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus, since 1.11.2002.
President of the National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights (2003-2008).
Head of the Ad Hoc Technical Committee on the Laws within the framework of the Good Offices of the UN Secretary General for the Solution of the Cyprus Problem (2002-2004).
Member of the Negotiating Team for the Accession of Cyprus to the European Union (1998-2004).

Leda was born in Nicosia. Studied law in England. Barrister at Law. Registered advocate in Cyprus. Member of the European Group of Public Law. Specialized in the field of Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights Law, in particular Children's Rights Law. Represented Cyprus before international courts, organizations and Committees of the United Nations. Participated in the drafting of the "Manual on the Basic Principles of Administrative Law", edited by the Committee of Experts on Administrative Law of the Council of Europe. Co-author of the "Systematic Commentary of the Treaty of Accession of the Central and Eastern European Countries, Cyprus and Malta to the E.U.", published by the University of Hagen (wrote the chapter on Cyprus).

■ **Rapporteur:**

Ninetta Kazantzis, President, Pancyprian Coordinating Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children (PCCPWC)

Ninetta is an Educational Psychologist working as a school councilor for the past 9 years, after a long time working in the private sector. She is married and has three children.

Founding member and currently President of the Limassol District Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children she is involved in children's issues since 1980. In 1982 she was a founding member of PCCPWC and was elected President in 2007. One of the two persons to have insisted and worked towards the founding of the Cyprus Children's Parliament (established in 2000), she is now the General Coordinator and the liaison between the District Parliamentary Committees of children, as well as the facilitator to all their meetings.

She is also Eurochild's Treasurer and Member of the Executive Committee of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) since 2005, she is also President to the Cyprus Network since 2008.

■ **Study visit: Youth Board "Polythematic" Centre in Limassol - Friday 13, 8.30 – 12.00**

Visit to the Cyprus Youth Board "Polythematic" Centre - a new project in the heart of the town, it is open to children and young people on a daily basis. It provides information on many issues concerning children and youngsters and it will – by next March – also house a preventive anti-drug facility. We will meet with representatives from the Children's Parliament and other young people attending the conference.

After our workshop session we will have the opportunity to visit the old Limassol town, the Venetian castle and the old harbor and lunch at a small taverna.

WORKSHOP 2.4 - Indicators in service development & delivery. Children without parental care

What indicators are available to monitor the situation of children without parental care? What are the main challenges? How are indicators informed by the views and experience of children in care?[19]

Thursday 12, 16.15 – 18.00

■ **Objective:**

Identify good practice and recommendations regarding data collection and development of indicators that are able to capture the situation of children in, at risk of, or leaving, alternative care; and equip policy makers and practitioners to better address their specific needs.

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19 In June 2009 the Eurochild Members' Exchange Seminar focused on how the voices of children and young people are captured in developing and implementing standards. The annual conference will further develop the theme.

■ **Context for the discussion:**

Between March-June 2009 Eurochild carried out a survey of the situation of children without parental care in the EU-27 through its member organisations. By June 2009 surveys from 19 countries have been collected and published in a first edition[20]. A second edition will be published in January 2009, where data will be verified and missing countries included. It is clear from the surveys that data is not collected in a consistent way across Member States. There are different definitions of type of care. Residential settings may for example include boarding schools, 'special schools', infant homes, homes for mentally or physically disabled, homes for children with behavioral problems, institutions for young offenders, after-care homes. There is no common understanding of what constitutes family or community-based care. The system of data collection varies by country.

Furthermore, there is very little consistent data about why children are taken into care and what happens after children leave the public care system[21].

This lack of information and consistent data collection hampers our understanding of the situation, the needs of the children and young people, and therefore improvements to policy and practice.

Work on monitoring of child poverty and well-being should promote collection of data on children deprived of their family environment. Policies aimed at preventing the separation of children from their families must be based on quality data to ensure needs are understood and interventions are effective.

This workshop will explore these issues and look at examples of where data is collected to come up with recommendations to national, regional and EU government on data collection and indicators. It will in particular focus on how the views and experiences of children and young people themselves can both influence the development of indicators and the on-going monitoring of policies and practice in this field.

■ **Questions to address:**

What indicators are available to monitor the situation of children without parental care? What are the main challenges? How can the gap in the existing data be filled? How can indicators able to capture the specific situation of children without parental care be developed? How are indicators informed by the views and experience of children in care? To which extent is the link between child protection statistics and poverty & social exclusion made?

■ **Abstract of the presentation by Jean Kennedy, Kersti Kukk and Hava Ryustem: Children without Parental Care – good practice for improving the protection and well-being of children**

'Children without parental care' are a particularly vulnerable group within the EU with regards to, risk of, and indeed suffering from, poverty and social exclusion. In an effort to properly determine, identify and change this situation throughout Europe, it is necessary to address the inconsistent measurement, indicators and specific research in this area. The emphasis of policy development and indicators should always be two-pronged; towards protection and towards well-being.

In the context of EU policy, it is necessary to develop indicators in service development and delivery that are able to: capture the situation of children in, at risk of, or leaving, alternative care; and equip policy makers and practitioners to better address their specific needs.

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20 Eurochild (2009), Children without parental care. Members survey, 1st edition.

21 European Commission (2009), Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care, Report of the Ad-hoc expert group.

This workshop will explore what indicators exist to 'monitor the situation' of children without parental care; how effective are they as a measurement tool; identify the challenges and gaps in identifying more indicators and asks the question: how can indicators specific to children without parental care be developed? In doing so, it will establish a link between child protection statistics and poverty & social exclusion. Governance and policies at all levels, international, European and national will be highlighted in an effort to identify 'best practice' towards protection and well-being of children and young people without parental care. Implicit in these is the inclusion of the UNCRC and other policies concerning young people and children's involvement and consultation towards protection and well-being.

Suggestions will be proffered as to the benefits of a wider application of these positive practices. How can we then turn policy into practice? The three presenters, from Estonia, Bulgaria and Ireland will reflect on their own experiences of the alternative care system in order to give personal context of how indicators, policy and practice impacts on young people.

■ **Speakers:**

Jean Anne Kennedy, IFCO Youth Committee Chairperson, Power4Youth Board Member

Jean Anne is a Power4Youth Board Member, a Board Member of IFCO and IFCO Youth Committee Chairperson. She currently works as a researcher in the Centre for Social and Family Research in Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland. Jean is currently on the Quality4Children Co-ordination Team representing IFCO.

Kersti Kukk, Power4Youth Board Member

Kersti is a Power4Youth Board Member. Her enthusiasm and support of the Quality4Children Standards process saw her involved and participating in Quality4Children events since their origin. Kersti is currently studying Political Science.

Hava Ryustem, Power4Youth Founding Member

Hava is currently working her first job in the social sphere as Youth Coordinator of the first Bulgarian social network between children in foster care. Meanwhile she is studying German and is preparing for applying to university.

■ **Facilitator:**

Richard Carter, Independent Consultant

Although originally trained as a chemist with a PhD in organic chemistry, Richard Carter has 40 years' experience of carrying out analytical and policy studies in health and social services in the public sector in both the UK and abroad. Whilst at the Department of Health, he worked on a wide variety of issues at national level concerned with the policy and management of health and personal social services. He also edited a book on primary health care and co-authored another on the organisation and management of social work, and has presented papers at many conferences. After leaving the Department of Health in January 1999 he worked in international development on children's issues for the European Children's Trust (subsequently EveryChild) and is now an independent consultant, specialising in the reform of institutional care for children in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

■ **Rapporteur:**

Chris Gardiner, President of the International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO)

Chris is from the UK and was a foster parent for seventeen years, after which he decided to devote himself to childcare in Central and Eastern Europe. He is now based in the Czech Republic where he is also President of the International Foster Care Organisation. He is part-time trainer / lecturer / consultant on

several child care reform projects mainly in Central & Eastern Europe and was a Steering Group member for the Quality4Children European Project and also the NGO Group for the UN CRC´s Guidelines Working Group for Children in Alternative Care.

■ **Study visit: Visit to one local small group residential care centre in Limassol - Friday 13, 8.30 – 12.00**

The "Children's Home" is run by the Welfare Office and houses children aged 5-14. It has a capacity of 25 children at a time and is purpose-built in the center of the new town. The Home exists for many years and is the only residential care facility currently running in Limassol. Two small group foster homes run by NGOs (one for boys aged 14-18 and one for girls aged 12-18) closed mostly because of the lack of funds. Moreover, NGOs apply strong pressure to the Welfare Office to place children in foster homes and not in institutions. You will have the chance to talk to the people in charge – not the children themselves as they are going to be in school during our visit.

After out workshop session you shall have the chance to visit the Limassol archaeological museum or stroll alongside the beach before having lunch at a small local restaurant.

Plenary and Round Table speakers' biographies

■ **Maria Herczog, Family, Child & Youth Association, Hungary, Member of the UNCRC Committee, Eurochild board member**

Maria is Member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child since February 2007. She is also civil society representative at the European Economic and Social Committee and member of the Eurochild management board. She is a researcher and lecturer in the field of child welfare and child protection and editor in chief of Family, Child, Youth professional journals. Over the past 15 years she has been temporary expert and advisor on several related issues for UNICEF, WHO, Council of Europe, one of the authors of the Alternative NGO Report on Hungary on the implementation of CRC in 2005 on behalf of the Family, Child, Youth association; participant in several international research projects in EU framework -AGIS, Daphne etc.. She is an economist by training, and carried out a doctoral thesis on institutional care of children under the age of 3 at Karl Marx University of Economics, Budapest and a Ph.D. thesis on the dilemmas of the child protection system in Hungary, at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest.

■ **Sotiroula Charalambous, Minister of Labour and Social Insurance**

Sotiroula was appointed Minister of Labour and Social Insurance on 29 February 2008.

She was born in occupied Ayios Memnonas in the Famagusta District, in 1963. She studied Political and Social Science at the Sofia Academy of Social Science and Social Administration from which she graduated in 1986. After returning to Cyprus she worked with the Pancyprian Federation of Labour (PEO), which she has served from several posts. In January 2006 she was elected Central Organizing Secretary of PEO. She was elected to the House of Representatives in the May 2001 elections and was re-elected in May 2006. She has served as Chairwoman of the House Standing Committee of Labour and Social Insurance, Chairwoman of the House Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women and as member of the House Standing Committee of Financial and Budgetary Affairs. She is a member of the Central Committee of AKEL Party and a member of the Pancyprian Federation of Women's Organizations (POGO).

■ **Eric Marlier, International Scientific Coordinator, CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute, Luxemburg**

Eric is the International Scientific Coordinator of the CEPS/INSTEAD Research Institute. His main personal research activities include comparative social indicators, social monitoring, international socio-economic analysis, the EU cooperation in the area of social protection and social inclusion, and the implementation of international surveys and attitudinal surveys. For more than 20 years he has been in charge of many

international dossiers in these fields – for the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the United Nations, national governments, the research community and the private sector. He has also organised several international conferences in these areas on behalf of the European Commission and various EU presidencies. He has written two reference books together with Sir AB Atkinson, Bea Cantillon and Brian Nolan: "Social Indicators: the EU and Social Inclusion" (OUP, 2002) and "The EU and social inclusion: Facing the challenges" (The Policy Press, 2007). Eric was chair of the EU task force on child poverty and well-being resulting in the report adopted in January 2008 by EU member states and the EC.

■ **István György Tóth, Director, TARKI Social Research Institute Inc**

István is PhD in Sociology, director of the Budapest based Tárki Social Research Institute and Privatdozent at the Budapest Corvinus University. He participated and/or directed various projects on Hungarian and European income distribution and social policies. He has been a consultant to various international organisations such as the OECD and the World Bank, and he served as a Steering Committee Member of the "Taking forward social inclusion" project organised by the Luxembourg presidency of the EU. He is also an Advisory Board Member of the Luxembourg Income Study. In addition, he has been asked to comment on European survey projects, e.g. Eurobarometer and EU-SILC. He has authored a number of reports for various EU projects and currently co-directs the "Study on child poverty and child well-being" commissioned by DG Employment of the European Commission. He has edited and co-edited over fifteen books, and published articles in Hungarian and English (including in journals such as Economics of Transition and the Journal of European Social Policy). He is author of the book Income Distribution: From the Systemic Change to the Joining of the European Union (in Hungarian), co-editor of the bi-annual Hungarian Social Report series since 1998, and editor of the TARKI European Social Reports. His most recent publication is Ward, T, O.Lelkes, H. Sutherland, I.G. Tóth (eds): European inequalities Budapest: Tárki 2009.

■ **Paul Kershaw, Assistant Professor at the University of British Columbia in the College of Interdisciplinary Studies**

Paul is the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) Scholar in Social Care, Citizenship and the Determinants of Health where he serves as the Director of the Social Care and Social Citizenship Research Network and Co-Director of the Early Learning and Child Care Research Unit. In these roles, he is also a Faculty Associate with the UBC Department of Political Science and in the UBC Centre for Research on Women Studies and Gender Relations. He lives at Homecoming Farm, Pitt Meadows, BC.

■ **Eirini Charaambidou, journalist with the Public Radio and Television Station the CyBC**

Eirini is is responsible for the research and presentation of the weekly political television program "Let us Discuss it" which is highly popular and rated, according to AGB, first among the other political shows on all TV channels. She studied Journalism and Psychology. She is married and has two sons. She started her carrier as a journalist at the daily newspapers "Agon", "Eleftherotypia" and "Kirikas" while she cooperated with the TV channels of "ANT1" and "LOGOS". In December 2007 she published her first book entitled "What we have Discussed" presented by the President of the Cyprus Republic Mr Christofias.

■ **Isabelle Maquet, Secretary to the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee**

Isabelle is Policy Analyst in the European Commission, Unit E2 for Inclusion, Social Policy Aspects of Migration, Streamlining of Social Policies. She is secretary to the indicators sub-group of the Social Protection Committee.

■ **María Amor Martín Estébanez, Programme Manager of Legal Research at the Department of Equality and Citizen's Rights of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)**

María Amor is a Programme Manager of Legal Research at the Department of Equality and Citizen's Rights of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) since March 2009. She manages the projects on the rights

of the child at the FRA.

Before she was a legal officer at the Legal Services, Office of the Secretary General of the OSCE. She obtained a M. Phil degree in International Relations (University of Amsterdam) and a D.Phil in Law from the University of Oxford, where she lectured at the Foreign Service Masters' Programme. She worked as a consultant for the CoE, the HCNM of the OSCE and several NGOs (MRG International, ECMI, IDEA). She also worked a researcher and project manager at the Institute for Human Rights/Department of Law of the Åbo Akademi University (Finland). She is the author of several publications on human rights protection in Europe, as well as on the legal status of the OSCE.

ANNEX 3: EUROCHILD POLICY BRIEFING

Indicators: an important tool for advancing child well-being[22]

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1. What are the latest policy developments at EU level?

2. Why is it important for the rights and welfare of children & young people at national, regional and local level?

3. What are we advocating for?

4. What actions can be taken by members?

5. Further reading

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1. What are the latest policy developments at EU level?

a) Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC)

Action at EU level in the field of social protection and social inclusion polices takes place within the framework of the Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC), with legal competences remaining with European Union (EU) Member States.

To coordinate their action, EU countries have adopted common objectives for the Social OMC. Through a collective and consensual process, they have also identified commonly agreed indicators to better monitor EU and national progress towards the EU objectives, and also to ease the comparison of practices and outcomes and improve policy learning across the Union.

Indicators are increasingly valued as a means to interpret and present statistical data, monitor policy implementation, and provide the ground for evidence-based policies and increased accountability.

Following the launch of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000 and Member States' subsequent agreement on common objectives for the Social OMC, the Indicators Sub-Group (ISG) of the Social Protection Committee (SPC) was set up. It gathers representatives of all EU countries. A first set of 18 EU indicators to measure poverty and social exclusion – the so-called Laeken indicators – was approved by the European Council in 2001.

In 2006 the Social OMC was 'streamlined', bringing together its three strands - social inclusion, pensions, and healthcare and long-term care - within an overarching framework. The accompanying EU analytical and monitoring framework consists of 4 "portfolios" of indicators: one for the overarching objectives and one to address the objectives of each of the three strands[23]. These indicators cover the main dimensions of the defined objectives, namely income poverty, health, education, employment and housing.

The aim of the social inclusion strand is to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion. Its specific objectives are:

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22 Eurochild policy briefings are prepared by the Eurochild secretariat to support the advocacy work of its members. They provide an outline of key policy developments at EU level and their relevance to national and regional action aimed at promoting the rights and welfare of children and young people. They suggest specific follow-up actions to be taken by member organisations. This policy briefing was prepared by Agata D'Addato (Policy Officer) as a supporting document to Eurochild's 6th Annual Conference: Monitoring child well-being: better policy & practice , Cyprus, 11-13th November 2009. The author wishes to express her thanks to Eric Marlier for his insightful comments to the previous drafts.

23 The definitions of indicators are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/common_indicators_en.htm.

(a) "access for all to the resources, rights and services needed for participation in society, preventing and addressing exclusion, and fighting all forms of discrimination leading to exclusion";

(b) "the active social inclusion of all, both by promoting participation in the labour market and by fighting poverty and exclusion"; and

(c) the need for social inclusion policies to be "well-coordinated and involve all levels of government and relevant actors, including people experiencing poverty, (and to be) efficient and effective and mainstreamed into all relevant public policies, including economic, budgetary, education and training policies and structural funds (notably ESF) programmes".

The EU social inclusion indicators portfolio focuses on the first two objectives. It was significantly enriched in 2009 and now includes 11 lead ('primary') indicators, 6 supporting ('secondary') indicators and 13 'context information' statistics.

PRIMARY INDICATORS

OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION PORTFOLIO:

1. at-risk-of poverty rate and national poverty thresholds;

2. persistent at-risk-of-poverty rate (3 out of 4 years in poverty);

3. relative median poverty risk gap;

4. long-term unemployment rate;

5. population living in jobless households;

6. early school leavers;

7. employment gap of immigrants;

8. material deprivation (adopted in 2009);

9. *housing (to be developed)*[24];

10. self-reported unmet need for medical care;

11. *child well-being (to be developed)*.

Data are mostly gathered from EU-SILC (Community Statistics on Income and Living Conditions; an annual household based survey with a four year rotational panel component) and from LFS (Labour Force Survey). These surveys are coordinated by EUROSTAT, the Statistical Office of the European Communities.

Data collected through EU-SILC and LFS focuses on the adult population (16 years and above for EU-SILC and 15 years and over for LFS) so child-specific indicators are virtually non-existent[25]. Furthermore, as these surveys only cover people living in private households, they miss an important part of the children particularly at risk of poverty and social exclusion (e.g. those living in institutions).

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24 Two secondary indicators of housing were adopted in 2009. The adoption of a primary indicator of housing remains on the EU agenda but will apparently require further data and methodological work.

25 An important breakthrough ought to be mentioned in this respect: the 2009 wave of EU-SILC includes a specific module on material deprivation which includes 20 child-specific material deprivation items.

Over recent years, child poverty has emerged as a top political priority at EU level. In March 2005 the European Council stated that "*social inclusion policy should be pursued by the Union and by Member States, with its multifaceted approach, focusing on target groups such as children in poverty*". Also in 2005, the EU Luxembourg Presidency organised a major conference on "Taking forward the EU Social Inclusion Process"; the independent academic report prepared for supporting this conference called explicitly for *children mainstreaming* and for the adoption of at least one child well-being indicator at EU level[26].

In the 2006 Spring Summit, EU Heads of state and government concluded that EU Member States should take measures to "*rapidly and significantly reduce child poverty*". The 2007 Spring Summit stressed "*the need to fight poverty, especially child poverty*".

Child poverty and well-being was the first thematic priority selected for detailed analysis under the Social OMC in 2007. An EU Task-Force was set up to prepare an in-depth report on *Child poverty and well-being in the EU*. This report gives a comprehensive overview of the current status and provides important recommendations for follow-up and implementation[27]. It was adopted by Member States and the European Commission (EC) in 2008 and is thus now part of the *EU acquis*. On behalf of the EC, an international study is being carried out to follow-up the Task-Force report. The study, which is expected to be finalised by the beginning of 2010, will *inter alia* identify a set of comparative social indicators that best reflect the multi-dimensional nature of child well-being and that are available in all (or at least most) EU countries. This important input will feed into the work of the ISG with a double objective: a) fill in the "child well-being" slot in the EU social inclusion portfolio (see above) with a limited number of indicators; and b) agree a larger set of indicators which the EC and Member States will be able to use for in-depth national or EU reporting on the situation of children.

An expert consultation co-organised by the EC, UNICEF and OECD held in May 2009 resulted in recommendations for the development of indicators on child well-being. These will be summarised in a report which will come out soon with an associated research agenda.

b) Children's rights

Following the 2006 EC Communication *Towards a Strategy on the Rights of the Child*, the Commission asked the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) to develop indicators to measure how children's rights are implemented, protected, respected and promoted across the EU. FRA has developed a series of indicators for the protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in the EU on the basis of EU competence in this area[28]. Indicators are proposed by the Agency in the following key areas, which are in line with existing EU provisions of direct relevance to children: family environment and alternative care; protection from exploitation and violence; education, citizenship and cultural activities; and adequate standard of living.

c) Lisbon strategy and beyond GDP

A recent EC Communication highlighted the need to develop robust direct measures of the quality of life and well-being of citizens – including children – that go beyond the standard measurement of GDP, and also the importance of evaluating progress towards socially sustainable development[29].

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26 In 2007, a fully updated and revised version of the conference report appeared in Marlier, E., A.B. Atkinson, B. Cantillon and B. Nolan (2007), The EU and social inclusion: Facing the challenges, The Policy Press. The book takes "investment in children" as the recurring case study and strongly argues in favour of children mainstreaming which they explain as follows: "We have used the word mainstreaming advisedly, rather than the words target groups (…). Our purpose is not to single out a particular priority group; poverty and social exclusion are unacceptable for all groups in society. Rather, our aim is to suggest, as with gender mainstreaming, a perspective to approaching the general problem of poverty and social exclusion. For us children mainstreaming involves viewing social inclusion from a child's perspective and implies integrating a concern with the well-being and social inclusion of children into all areas of policy making."

27 Social Protection Committee (2008), Child poverty & well-being - Current status and way forward, Report of the EU Task-Force on "Child poverty and well-being": http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/docs/social_inclusion/2008/child_poverty_en.pdf.

28 FRA (2009), Developing indicators for the protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in the European Union: http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/products/publications_reports/pub-rightsofchild-summary_en.htm.

29 COM(2009), 433 final, GDP and beyond. Measuring progress in a changing world: http://www.beyond-gdp.eu/EUroadmap.html.

The latest report of the SPC[30] investigates the extent to which past growth and employment achievements since the launch of the Lisbon Strategy in March 2000 have had an impact on the social adequacy and social inclusion, and vice versa. It also tries to draw lessons from the previous evaluation of the social impact of the crisis.

d) Other cross-country analyses

Recent years have brought new and growing attention to the importance of measuring and monitoring children's well-being and important work has been done by researchers and organisations[31]. This is in part due to a gradual shift towards more evidence-based public policy, which requires reliable information on and accurate measures of the conditions of children.

UNICEF Innocenti Centre commissioned a research to develop an index of child well-being covering OECD countries[32]. Report Card 7 drew upon existing datasets that reflect child well-being in a broader perspective including family relationships, relationships with peers as well as subjective measures of well-being.

However, there is still a lack of indicators covering some domains important to child well-being, such as what children think about their housing and neighbourhoods, or their access to transport, play space, recreation and other services.

Children and/or families have been consulted directly through some Flash Eurobarometer[33] surveys and in the context of Kidscreen project[34]. However, the contribution of children and young people to the development of child-specific indicators remains largely insufficient. How can children be involved in a more systematic way, particularly in the development of the forthcoming EU child well-being indicator(s), is still an open question. Some have claimed that the emergence and rapid development of the child indicators movement might lead to the creation of a new role for children in measuring and monitoring their own well-being and that including children and their own perspectives would be a natural evolution[35]. Indeed, incorporating children's subjective perceptions is both a prerequisite and a consequence of the changing field of measuring and monitoring child well-being. This in turn will lead to children becoming more "active participants" in efforts to measure and monitor their own well-being rather than simply "objects" of these efforts.

The development of indicators - and of child well-being indicators in particular - poses many challenges, including:

- quality, accessibility and timeliness of data (time gap between data collection and analysis);
- lack of adequate comparable data across the EU and over time - there are indicators at national level which cannot be used for international comparisons because they are not sufficiently homogeneous;
- presentation of data – e.g. the policy risks associated to aggregating data into composite indices (even though such indices can be appealing, as they seek to summarise performance in various

30 Social Protection Committee (2009), Growth, jobs and social progress in the EU. A contribution to the evaluation of the social dimension of the Lisbon Strategy.

31 See for example: Ben-Arieh, A., Kaufman, H.N., Andrews, B.A., Goerge, R., Lee, B.J. and Aber, J.L. (2001), Measuring and monitoring children's well-being, Kluwer Academic; Land, K., Lamb, V. and Kahler Mustillo, S. (2001), Child and youth well-being in the United States, 1975-1998. Some findings from a new index, Social Indicators Research, 56(3); Bradshaw, J., Hoelscher, P. and Richardson, D. (2007), An index of child well-being in the European Union, Social Indicators Research, 80(1); Lippman, L. (2007), Indicators and indices of child well-being: A brief American history, Social Indicators Research, 83(1); UNICEF (2007), Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries, Innocenti Report Card 7; Ben-Arieh, A. (2008), Indicators and Indices of Children's Well-being: towards a more policy-oriented perspective, European Journal of Education, 43(1); Lohmann, H., Frauke H.P., Rostgaard, T. and Spiess, C.K. (2009), Towards a Framework for Assessing Family Policies in the EU, OECD Social Employment and Migration Working Papers, 88; OECD (2009), Doing Better for Children.

32 UNICEF (2007), Child poverty in perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries, Innocenti Report Card 7.

33 European Commission (2008), The rights of the child, Flash Eurobarometer 235, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_235_en.pdf; European Commission (2009), Parents' views on the mental health of their child, Eurobarometer Flash 246, http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/docs/eb_246_en.pdf.

34 See Kidscreen project: http://kidscreen.diehauptstadt.de/kidscreen/master/project/index.html.

35 Ben-Arieh, A. (2008), The Child Indicators Movement: Past, Present, and Future, Child indicators research, 1.

dimensions with a single measure, policy is however much better served with a portfolio of indicators that is balanced across the different dimensions of concern[36]);

- measurements of outcomes as opposed to policy inputs/outputs, meaning measurements of social results actually achieved rather than policy efforts;

- gaps in the existing data which do not allow to cover satisfactorily all relevant domains of child well-being identified by the UNCRC;

- problems for general sample surveys to represent the circumstances of children in minority groups (ethnic, refugees/asylum seekers), disabled children, children living in institutions, homeless children, young carers, etc.;

- strong focus on education outcomes at the older end of childhood in the currently available internationally comparable data (namely PISA and HBSC surveys)[37]. Regularly available and internationally comparable well-being data for early childhood and the early parts of middle childhood are too limited;

- difficulties in capturing the views and experiences of children themselves.

Despite these constraints, progress has been made in describing child poverty and social exclusion in Europe and in relating it to child well-being outcomes. There is a considerable body of good quality and comparable data on child well-being covering European countries and political commitment to further explore this area. However, insufficient progress has been made regarding an important role for indicators: indicators should also be employed to help shape policies and services, which requires that they are devised and used in ways that would extend their impact beyond simply building knowledge. Indicators of children's well-being should be used in a way that contributes to improving the lives of children throughout the EU.

2. Why is it important for the rights and welfare of children & young people at national, regional and local level?

To improve something you first need to measure it. Over the long term, child well-being indicators can help in redefining, monitoring and evaluating policy. Developing specific indicators on children's well-being will provide the much needed information for the making of policy by helping to keep efforts on track towards goals, encouraging sustained attention, giving early warning of failure or success, fuelling advocacy, sharpening accountability, helping to allocate resources more effectively, and shaping services that respond to children's needs, thereby reinforcing their rights.

International comparisons are important and can boost changes in Member States but the parallel development of indicators at national, regional and local level is fundamental if the specific needs and circumstances of children living in specific geographical areas are to be assessed, as well as taking into account cultural traditions. A vertical coordination between different governance levels is needed for a better monitoring of children's well-being.

Indicators on children's development should be informed by data from a national data collection system and coordinated by appropriate government agencies to ensure proper aggregation. Active participation of and collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on child welfare, childcare agencies both private and public, and any other groups participating in the formal care system is critical to the design of an information system as well as its implementation. However,

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36 For a discussion of the technical and political issues raised by composite indicators, see Marlier et al., 2007, pages 182-5.

37 The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a system of international assessments that focus on 15-year-olds' capabilities in reading literacy, mathematics literacy, and science literacy. PISA also includes measures of general or cross-curricular competencies such as learning strategies. With regards to the WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey, it is a cross-national research survey which aims to gain new insight into, and increase the understanding of young people's health and well-being, their health behaviours, and their social context.

the indicators and measurement approaches can be used at the sub-national and municipal level even where national information systems are not yet in place[38].

A crucial issue for the development of indicators on children's well-being based on the UNCRC is the involvement of children. A participatory dimension needs therefore to be taken into account, as signalled by some researchers: "*the development of effective child poverty indicators must include poor children's experiences*"[39].

3.   What are we advocating for?

■ More child-centred indicators and subjective measures of well-being

Despite progress, child-specific data are still limited and the little information available is not used to the full and is too often not sufficiently (if at all) accessible to potential data users. It is essential that the portfolio of indicators used for monitoring the Social OMC includes a whole range of non-material indicators covering the various aspects of child well-being. More child-centred indicators (for which the child is the primary unit of observation) and more analysis of child-specific data are needed to give a more holistic picture of children's rights and the realities that shape their lives.

Eurochild also advocates to involve and engage with children and young people themselves in the development of indicators and in ensuring that indicators can include information on children's views and perception. The "*potential interest of interviewing directly children on their own experience and perceptions of poverty and well-being*" was already highlighted in Recommendation 13 of the report prepared by the EU Task-Force on child poverty and well-being; the Task-Force called for more exchange of good practice and know-how in this field.

Furthermore, well-being data for early childhood and pre-school age as well as data on the transition to adolescence are either thin or non-existent at the moment. All stages of child development need to be covered.

■ Evidence-based targets

Identifying quantified objectives and setting targets help to define concrete goals against a clear timeline for their achievement. This view is fully supported by Recommendation 1 of the Task-Force report.

Governments need to be held accountable to their commitment to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion in general, and child poverty and social exclusion in particular. Targets can serve to embed child well-being into the policy process, since politicians and public servants can be held to account for their success or failure in meeting them. To be useful, child poverty targets must be systematically linked to well-being indicators of a good quality. The framing of targets also needs to be carefully thought through and requires that the most in need are taken into account. To work, targets need to be clearly stated and well-being outcomes regularly and transparently measured. Ill-thought out targets may arguably create less than appropriate policy responses. A target is enhanced when all levels of government participate. A poverty target – at EU, national or local level – can be an important tool in shaping a shared vision and leading to policies and programs that can make progress toward achieving the goal. A target can be a key tool for catalyzing action.

An EU target on reducing child poverty and social exclusion would provide the framework for the development of national targets in each Member State. National overall targets on the reduction of child poverty and social exclusion should be accompanied by sub-targets for the poverty gap, in-work poverty,

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38 UNICEF Better Care Network (2009), Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care.

39 Ben-Arieh, A. and Goerge, R. /eds./ (2006), Indicators of Children's Well-Being: Understanding Their Role, Usage, and Policy Influence, Springer.

children in jobless households as well as regional targets to ensure that child poverty is reduced across the EU.

■ Annual publicised scoreboard on child poverty and well-being

Eurochild supports the development of an annual scoreboard on child poverty and well-being to give greater visibility to the indicators, to keep track of developments, to help assess progress and to provide comparative analysis. This is aligned with Recommendations 3-5 of the Task-Force report. It would provide an overview of the concrete policies and measures put in place by Member States, the achievement of targets, as well as identifying the role and responsibility of the actors involved. Links with the UNCRC reporting process should be made whenever possible. The scoreboard should be regularly reviewed in order to reflect progress and determine future action both at EU and national level.

■ Regular monitoring and reporting on child well-being

Developing a stronger framework for EU-level monitoring and evaluation regarding child poverty and social exclusion would help benchmarking and mutual learning.

Of crucial importance in making better policy to support child well-being is the co-ordination and collection of internationally comparable data on child well-being as well as their accessibility. These data need to be collected at all stages of the child's life cycle and across all dimensions of well-being. As stated in the Task-Force report (Recommendation 10), there is a particular need to collect data and monitor the situation of the most vulnerable children who, due to their circumstances (living in institutions, separated from parents, leaving care, caring for sick or disabled parents) or characteristics (children with disabilities, children from migrant and ethnic minority families), are most at risk of falling into poverty.

The collection of high-quality data on child well-being must be buttressed by regular reporting on child outcomes. In order to improve data quality and also to allow for in-depth independent analysis of the data, it is important to ensure a wide data access to core international micro-datasets covering the material and/or non-material aspects of child well-being.

■ Applying more extensive social inclusion indicators for the structural funds

Structural funds should be instrumental in meeting the EU's social inclusion objectives: applying more extensive social inclusion indicators would serve this scope.

It means moving from quantitative indicators to qualitative indicators which put less emphasis on numbers (inputs, outputs and outcomes) and more on the quality of the intervention. It also means changes in methods. Indicators to date tend to rely on counting numbers and ticking boxes, but here, more sophistication will be required. Participation indicators suggest methodologies including the use of interviews and survey work.

Social inclusion indicators are most commonly found in European Social Fund (ESF) and labour market measures, but they should be found in a wider range of measures across the structural funds, such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Structural funds are the most important tool for promoting cohesion in Europe. As the Lisbon strategy has been set on "growth and jobs" the Structural Funds have mainly covered economic objectives. In order to move towards an EU strategy which delivers more on the social pillar and environmental sustainability, we must make sure that broader objectives are integrated in the Structural Funds.

■ **Setting new strategic goals for the post-2010 Lisbon architecture**

The reflections on indicators should contribute to setting new strategic goals for the post-2010 Lisbon strategy and shifting the focus from "growth and jobs" to "sustainable and social" priorities. It is well established that economic growth does not automatically lead to reduce social exclusion and poverty.

4. What actions can be taken by members?

It is crucial that those working in the field with children and their families understand and exploit the interrelations between measures, indicators, and child policy – not as a goal in itself but as a step towards improving children's well-being. Child well-being indicators have the potential to improve the lives of children, but they need to be the right set of indicators, they need to be effectively communicated and used in policy monitoring and evaluation.

Members of Eurochild have an important role in:

- **supporting the adoption of a set of child well-being indicators as part of the EU social inclusion portfolio**. The National Strategic Reports on Social Inclusion and Social Protection are an important reporting process within the OMC framework. Reporting could, however, be improved with the provision of more detailed information on specific measures, namely through the scoreboard previously mentioned, which would allow a systematic follow-up of the progress achieved;
- **strengthening the links between the Social OMC and the monitoring and reporting process linked to the UNCRC**. Action to fight poverty should be integrated into national strategies for children that Member States are called on to produce as a key requirement of the UNCRC implementation;
- putting pressure on policy-makers **to improve data collection** – particularly by highlighting gaps in information related to the most vulnerable children such as those in care, Roma, children with disabilities, young carers, etc.;
- translating indicators into **language, formats and media that convey clear messages to policy-makers and the general public**. To be effective, policy makers should be held accountable on the basis of indicators. Civil society has a crucial role to play here.

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