

Children's realities in Europe: Progress & gaps ^[1]

Eurochild 2024 report on children in need across Europe

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AVAILABILITY

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Summary

This report compiles information from 57 Eurochild members in 31 countries across Europe and provides an overview of children's realities in these countries. The report aims to identify good and promising practices, working solutions, and country-specific recommendations for EU decision-makers and national governments to draw from when addressing children's needs.

Eurostat reports that in 2023, 24.8% of children in the European Union faced the risk of poverty or social exclusion. This troubling figure highlights the persistence of high child poverty levels in one of the world's wealthiest regions. Child poverty rates rose in 16 EU countries, while 9 saw decreases. Romania recorded the highest proportion of children at risk (39%), followed by Spain (34.5%) and Bulgaria (33.9%).

Several countries have made significant strides in their commitment to children's rights, but many still need to intensify their efforts to address the pressing challenges faced by children today. Gaps in addressing issues like climate change, mental health and digital safety persist, requiring urgent attention from the new EU and national political leadership. Children and young people face mental health challenges and financial barriers to education, with inadequate support services and a lack of trained staff, particularly for disadvantaged, migrant, and LGBTQ+ children.

Our Policy Recommendations:

- Uphold the rights of all children
- Combat poverty and social exclusion
- Strengthen child protection systems
- Guarantee children's right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment
- Support children's mental health
- Support children's rights in the digital sphere
- Strengthen the European Child Guarantee
- Leverage the European Semester Process

Overall, our report highlights concerning setbacks. While policies often exist, they are rarely implemented effectively or supported with adequate funding.

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