

The European and international context

The conference will reflect on implementation of the 2013 European Commission Recommendation 'Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage' and the broader Social Investment Package. It will look at how EU structural and investment funds can be better deployed in the next programming period to stimulate reforms and develop innovative practice.

The event is also set within the context of States obligations to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which celebrates 25 years in 2014. According to Article 4, all States Parties 'shall undertake measures [to implement the UNCRC] to the maximum extent of their available resources'. The UN-CRC Committee has agreed to develop a General Comment on 'Public Spending to Realize Children's Rights' to which this conference can provide valuable input.

ORGANISERS

Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals that promote the rights and well-being of children and young people in Europe. Their work is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children's Rights and well-being, as well as child & youth participation are amongst their key priorities. www.eurochild.org



Hope and Homes for Children Romania focuses on transforming a child protection system based on institutional care, by preventing child separation from families, and developing family-based alternatives. They believe that attachment, love, individual care and stimulation are essential for every child. www.hhc.ro



PROGRAMME ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The organisers are supported by the Programme Advisory Committee who support the development of the conference content: **Hope and Homes for Children** (UK), **FONPC** (Romania), **ChildPact**, **UNESCO Chair**, **Child and Family Research Centre** (Ireland), **Universal Education Foundation** (Belgium) and **UNICEF Romania**.

REGISTRATION FEES

	Normal fee	'Early bird' fee (until 26 Sept.)
Eurochild members / contributors	220 €	180 €
Non-members	250 €	210 €
Special rate for Romanian delegates	75 €	75 €

The fee covers for lunches, Welcome reception & Conference Dinner.

REGISTRATION FORM

<http://bit.ly/registration-AC2014>

2 weeks prior the Annual Conference participants will receive an e-mail giving the opportunity to choose their workshop, focus group, poster session, study visit of preference.

MORE INFORMATION

Keep me updated <http://bit.ly/AC2014-KMU>
Conference website <http://bit.ly/Eurochild-AC2014>
Conference hashtag #EurochildConf

CONTACT

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Children First

Better Public Spending for Better Outcomes for Children & Families

Eurochild 11th Annual Conference

co-hosted by Hope and Homes
for Children Romania

Bucharest,
26-28 November
2014



Public spending must be for the public good. We believe there is no more effective way of building more cohesive and resilient communities than investing in children and families, particularly the most vulnerable. This conference will address important questions around public spending choices. What evidence is needed for good decision-making? How should evidence be used? How can we measure long-term social return on investment? How does this influence budget decisions? What is the role of the public and private sectors? How do we ensure accountability in service delivery, as well as efficiency and effectiveness? How can we meaningfully involve and empower the children and families we support?

Three cross-cutting themes

EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES

We will explore what is happening across Europe in relation to 'evidence-based' practice and explain its role in social policy. We will look at approaches to understanding evaluation evidence, the hierarchy of evidence and the role of Randomized Controlled Trials in programme evaluation. Invited experts will bring their insights and experience to the table. We aim to build the case for a more pluralist approach to evaluation, and a shift from evidence-based practice to practice-based evidence, from what works to why it works.

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT (SROI)

We will zoom in on the pressure, in times of austerity, to demonstrate returns on investment in children's rights and well-being. While there are plenty of cost-effectiveness studies calculating the economic value of return of specific interventions for children in specific contexts, there are few studies which calculate the broader social return on investing in systemic changes towards child-centred policies. The discussion will focus on how to quantify long-

term outcomes related to investment in child and family services that prevent family breakdown and separation and ensure high quality alternative care options. Invited experts will give an overview of existing SROI studies in adjacent areas, mapping current knowledge gaps, as well as demonstrate the power and added value of SROI arguments in achieving deinstitutionalization reforms.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Achieving better outcomes for children and families is a common responsibility across all sectors of society. Nonetheless the public, private and voluntary sectors have different roles to play. Clarity on the different respective roles and responsibilities and ensuring effective cooperation is key. Under this theme we will address important questions around the role of social innovation, social entrepreneurship and social enterprise and the opportunities and threats this trend poses to improving outcomes for children and families. We will address questions around the role of business and the private sector and issues around procurement and commissioning of children's services.



This event is supported under the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013). This programme is managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities of the European Commission. The views expressed by Eurochild do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.

WEDNESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 15:00 – 18:30

1 INSPIRING

Following the welcome, our **keynote speakers** will share their formidable political and/or academic leadership in field of investment in children. Our focus is on inspiring participants through sharing their knowledge and vision for children and young people in their country, in Europe and in the world.

WELCOME

- **Jana Hainsworth**, *Eurochild Secretary General*
- **Stefan Darabus**, *Director of Hope and Homes for Children Romania*

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

- **Prof. Frank Vandebroucke**, *Former Minister of Social Affairs Belgium, Professor at Leuven and Amsterdam*
- **Jorge Cardona Llorens**, *Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and Rapporteur for the upcoming General Comment on Best Use of Resources*
- **Norah Gibbons**, *Chairperson, Child and Family Agency, Ireland*

THURSDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 09:00 – 13:00

2 DEEPENING

On Day 2, our 3 'resource persons' will start the day by **introducing the three cross-cutting themes** of the conference: evaluation methodologies, social return on investment (SROI) and public-private partnership. Each is an expert in his/her own right and will guide the conversation in the following **mini-plenaries**. The speakers are selected to help deepening participants understanding of each theme.

RESOURCE PERSONS

- **Pat Dolan**, *UNESCO Chair and Director Child and Family Research Centre School of Political Science and Sociology NUI Galway, Ireland*
- **Jingqing Chai**, *Senior Economist and Chief, Public Finance and Local Governance, Social Inclusion, Policy and Budgeting section Policy and Strategy, UNICEF New York*
- **Gordan Hahn**, *(tbc) Director of Serus, a company specialised in the Social Economy, Expert to the European Economic & Social Committee on Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise*

THURSDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 14:00 – 16:00

3 DEBATING

The expert speakers are invited to guide **focus group discussions** with participants who want to know more about what they heard in the mini-plenaries. We encourage debating around the key issues and questions arising.

THURSDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 14:00 – 16:00

4 LEARNING

In parallel to the focus group discussions, we offer more learning opportunities for participants through participation in the **poster sessions** and **study visits**. A 'children's corner' will evoke the presence of children and young people by sharing audio-visual and published material offering an insight into the views and perspectives of children.

THURSDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 16:30 – 18:00

5 EXCHANGING

The parallel **workshop session** focuses on four main priority areas of Eurochild's work: **early childhood education and care; family and parenting support; children in alternative care; and child and youth participation**. These workshops will be led by members who are active in Eurochild's respective thematic working groups and its reference group on child participation. The focus is on exchanging experience and knowledge.

FRIDAY, 28 NOVEMBER, 09:00 – 11:00

6 BUILDING

Day 3 starts with a **panel debate** bringing together child rights activists, civil society network leaders, funders and government representatives. Our focus is on building more effective advocacy for children's rights to influence and monitor public spending. We will address questions around the added-value of child rights networks, the role of civil dialogue, if and how public money should support networks, and how to evaluate their work and impact.

PANELLISTS

- **Tanya Ward**, *Children's Rights Alliance*
- **George Bogdanov**, *Bulgarian National Network for Children*
- **Mirela Oprea**, *Child Pact*
- **Valeriu Nicolae**, *Child Rights and Roma activist*
- **Joost Van Haelst**, *Children's Rights Coordinator of the Flemish government*
- **Representative from the Norwegian Funds** (tbc)

FRIDAY, 28 NOVEMBER, 11:30 – 13:00

7 VISIONING

Our **final session** is dedicated to visioning. From what we've learnt, what can we do together to ensure public spending improves outcomes for children and families in Europe? What are the opportunities and threats offered through the European Union or the United Nations that will help or hinder the changes we want to see? From our three cross-cutting themes, what is the direction of travel we want to see and how can we influence that?

SPEAKERS

- Three 'resource persons' on the cross-cutting themes – SROI, evaluation methodologies, public-private partnership
- **Mark Waddington**, *CEO Hope and Homes for Children*
 - **Lieve Franssen** (tbc), *Director Social Policies, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission*
 - **Mária Herczog**, *Eurochild President, Member of the UN Committee of the Rights of the Child*

The conference journey