



Eurochild

Putting children at
the heart of Europe



Engaging Children as Stakeholders

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Eurochild
20 years

Who we are

Eurochild: Europe's largest network for children's rights.

Our members: Over 200 organisations and individuals across 42 European countries, reaching **approximately 5,000 organisations and individuals working with and for children.**

Our vision: A society where every child grows up happy, healthy, confident, and respected as individuals with their own rights.

Foundation: Our work is grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



How does Eurochild engage with children?

Children have the right to participate in all decisions affecting them.

- **Eurochild involves children** in advocacy, projects, and governance through the [Eurochild Children's Council \(ECC\)](#), the [National Eurochild Forums](#) and children living in vulnerable circumstances via the [Reaching-In project](#) where children discussed areas important to them including **free access to education, health care, nutrition and housing** - how their participation could be strengthened.



What is needed to involve children in decision-making?

- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- **Nine Principles for meaningful, safe and inclusive children's participation:**
 - ✧ Transparent and Informative
 - ✧ Voluntary
 - ✧ Respectful
 - ✧ Relevant
 - ✧ Child friendly
 - ✧ Inclusive
 - ✧ Supported by training
 - ✧ Safe
 - ✧ Accountable – keep your promises



What structured child participation mechanisms exist?

- Children's Councils and Parliaments; Children's Advisory Boards;
Children's involvement with Children's Ombudspersons; School councils



What are the benefits of engaging with children?

- ❖ **Think out of the box: reflect on what implications any of your decisions can have on children**
- **Decisions with an impact on children's lives will improve** when you involve children in them
- Child Participation will **empower children** – to be more active citizens and confident to speak up
- Children will **acquire new skills, knowledge, competences** – also about the work of businesses
- Child Participation can assist in **building accountability** – more **open and transparent decision-making, also for businesses**



Example 1: Involving children's voices in EU decision-making

Key Initiatives:

- Children contributed to the **EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child** and the **EU Child Guarantee** (over 10,000 children participated).
 - [#EuropeKidsWant](#) survey and report for the **2024 EU Elections**.
- **What children say:** They want their rights to be respected **without discrimination, be safe in the digital and non-digital world, education that is more relevant** to the world they live in. They want to enjoy their **right to a safe, clean and sustainable environment. They want child and youth participation to be strengthened.**



Example 2 - Involve children in everyday decision-making

Naples Case study - DAY (Democratic Activation of Youth)

How 2,000 children and young people from nine schools in three districts of Naples with poor social and economic indicators got together to ask for changes in their Municipalities

Trailer: Changing the City

<https://youtu.be/iEOFFmP7FG0>



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Engaging Children as Stakeholders

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS – AM Session PARTICIPATION/ ENGAGEMENT

What are advantages for involving children and what are the challenges?



Engaging Children as Stakeholders

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS – PM Session – RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- How to engage with children in a rights-based and meaningful way?
- What can companies do to involve children as stakeholders?
- How to address the Challenges and Gaps identified earlier?

