



WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY
20 November 2017



Press release:

European Parliament marks World Children's Day by launching dialogue with children

"The Europe We Want" at centre of today's debate between children and young people, MEPs, European Commissioner and other high-level representatives*

Brussels, 20 November, 2017: Children and young people from across Europe will today join members of the European Parliament under the auspices of its President, Mr. Antonio Tajani for a debate on the theme of "the Europe We Want."

The event – in which the President of Malta, HE Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca and other senior officials will participate – is organised by the Parliament's Intergroup on Children's Rights with support from Eurochild and UNICEF.

Marking the 28th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the event has been prepared and will be run with the direct involvement of a delegation of children from Eurochild and UNICEF.

The debate is part of a day of global action marking World Children's Day, with children "taking over" key roles in media, politics, business, sport and entertainment to speak up against discrimination and injustice, and to voice support for children who are unschooled, unprotected and uprooted.

"The European Parliament is firmly committed to the promotion of children's rights," said Mr Tajani. "Next year, and on each World Children's Day thereafter we will assess the progress made and what still needs to be done."

Children and young people are a key constituency in the European Union: many 15-24 year olds (who make up 11% of the EU population) will be able to vote for the first time in the 2019 European elections. Children aged 0-15 years make up nearly 16 per cent of the EU population.

"Europe needs to strive to get closer to children," said 13-year-old Sharon from Malta, one of 18 children and young people taking part in today's debate. "It needs to find new ways to get in touch with the reality of children coming from diverse backgrounds. No child is voiceless- it's just a matter of whether that child is given the chance to use that voice."

“On World Children’s Day, the European Parliament reaches out to children across Europe, to involve them in an open and meaningful dialogue on our shared values,” said Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Co-Chair of the EP Intergroup on Children’s Rights.

“Children should be given a chance to be informed on the role of the EU and children’s rights. We want to empower children to have a say with decision-makers on the Europe they want. The Intergroup of Children Rights is committed to make their voice heard.”

***Members of the media are welcome to attend the debate which will take place today, 20 November 2017, from 16:30 – 18:30 at the Yehudi Menuhin Space, European Parliament.**

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