

Joint Statement in Support of a European Commitment to Child Well-being

ATD Quart Monde, Caritas Europa, COFACE, Eurochild, Eurodiaconia, European Anti-Poverty Network, European Social Network and PICUM welcome the **EPSCO Council Conclusions** on **Preventing and Tackling Child Poverty and Promoting Children's Well-being** adopted on **4 October 2012**.

The Council acknowledges the alarming rise in the number of children living in poverty and social exclusion aggravated by the economic crisis. It states its support for comprehensive anti-poverty measures, including monitoring mechanisms, collection of data and cross-policy synergies.

We specifically welcome the Council's call to focus on promoting children's well-being, alongside actions to reduce child poverty.

Addressing income poverty through employment activation measures alone is insufficient and may be counter-productive. Europe's long-term economic growth and social cohesion requires that children grow up happy, healthy and confident. **The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** provides a guiding framework for **EU Member States** to enable all children to realise their full potential based on the principle of non-discrimination. This includes the provision of additional support and protection to children in disadvantaged situations and to their families. Only by ensuring that all children can make their voices heard and are able to fully enjoy their right to high quality education, family support, healthcare, housing, social services and leisure, can we break the vicious cycle of deprivation and exclusion. A European commitment to child well-being is also at the heart of the social dimension of Europe 2020 and the reinvigorated **Social OMC**.

Unfortunately, in response to the financial crisis governments across the EU are taking measures that compromise child rights and child well-being and put Europe's long-term future at risk.

The concept of an integrated, multi-dimensional approach to child well-being is not new: it has been endorsed by **the Council, the Commission, the European Parliament and the Social Protection Committee**. The time has come now to apply this principle in practice. The forthcoming **European Commission Recommendation** presents a unique opportunity for EU member states to embrace a comprehensive approach to child poverty and child wellbeing and endorse practical mechanisms through which its implementation can be monitored across the EU.

