

Declaration

Mayors against Child poverty

Concerned by the fact that 23 % of children across the European Union are at risk of poverty, a figure that is still increasing;

Considering that poverty during childhood has dangerous consequences later in life, such as early school leaving, unemployment, physical and emotional health problems, street delinquency...;

Considering that each child in poverty is a child living in a family in poverty, so strategies to reduce child poverty are indeed strategies to tackle poverty as a whole;

Given the fact that poverty is highly concentrated in cities, mostly clustered in deprived neighbourhoods;

Noting that many cities already actively combat poverty with concrete initiatives;

Given the Europe 2020 Strategy for 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth', and its target to reduce poverty and social exclusion by 20 million people by 2020 and to step up efforts to address early school leaving;

Given the recommendation of the European Commission (2013) "Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage" that pointed out a series of recommendations to tackle child poverty through integrated strategies;

Taking note of the decision of the EU-meeting of Directors-General, competent for urban policy, in Vilnius (November 2013) to start an Urban Agenda for sustainable and integrated urban development;

Considering that in the context of this Urban Agenda, the Greek EU-presidency has chosen "urban poverty" as their priority;

The signing mayors engage themselves to contribute to tackling child poverty by :

Improving access to adequate resources :

- Support parents' participation into society and specifically, the labour market, with special attention given to single parents and gender equality;
- Ensure that all families, including those in vulnerable situations and living in disadvantaged areas, have access to affordable and quality early childhood education and care.

Providing affordable quality services :

- Create high-quality, inclusive early childhood education and childcare, ensure its affordability and adapt provision to the needs of families;
- Take policy measures to reduce school segregation and early school leaving;
- Recognize and address spatial disparities in the availability of educational provisions, foster desegregation policies that strengthen comprehensive schooling;
- Improve health information and prevention systems for disadvantaged children as well as for pregnant women in poverty;
- Address the obstacles in accessing healthcare faced by children and families in vulnerable situations, including cultural and linguistic barriers and lack of information;
- Make it possible to provide children and their families with safe, adequate housing and a child-friendly living environment that supports their development.

Fostering children’s right to participate :

- Lift barriers as to costs, accessibility and cultural differences to ensure that children can participate in play, recreation, sport and cultural activities;
- Encourage schools and community actors to create better and affordable after-school activities and facilities for children;
- Support the involvement of children with disadvantaged backgrounds in existing participation structures.

In this perspective the signing mayors are also willing to conclude horizontal and vertical partnerships between different policy areas and levels of government. They call on the European, national and regional authorities to develop targeted and cross-cutting policies to combat child poverty and to support the local authorities in their initiatives.

Mayor of (city/municipality)

Name

Signature :