

ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work in order to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to make available any relevant information that they may have.

TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	Delivering for children: an EU strategy on the rights of the child
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	DG Justice and Consumers, Unit C2- Fundamental rights policy
LIKELY TYPE OF INITIATIVE	Communication
INDICATIVE PLANNING	Q1 2021
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child_en

This Roadmap is provided for information purposes only and its content might change. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the Roadmap, including its timing, are subject to change.

A. Context, Problem definition and Subsidiarity Check

Context

President von der Leyen invited Vice-President Šuica in her [mission letter](#) to prepare a comprehensive Strategy on the rights of the child. Building upon the 2006 Communication: “[Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child](#)” and the [2011 EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child](#), the new Strategy will provide a comprehensive policy framework for children’s rights, bringing all existing and future EU actions and policies on children’s rights under one single umbrella. The strategy will contribute to mainstreaming children’s rights across all relevant EU areas of work, and throughout all six Commission political priorities as presented by President von der Leyen in her political guidelines¹.

Problem the initiative aims to tackle

Representing almost 20% of the EU population, around 90.000.000 million people in the EU are children (0 – 18 years old). This particular group of the population is entitled to a specific set of rights as per the [United Nations Convention on the rights of the child](#), to which all EU Member States are legally bound. Children’s rights are affected by legislation and policies in many areas of EU action. The strategy will provide a comprehensive framework for all EU actions contributing to enhance the protection of children’s rights. By adopting a new comprehensive strategy, the Commission intends to highlight persisting and emerging challenges to the protection of children’s rights, which were not addressed in the previous Agenda, or which need further targeted action at EU level.

Since 2011, Commission efforts have focused on implementation of the actions in the 2011 EU Agenda on the rights of the child, as well as on mainstreaming children’s rights in all EU actions, and on ensuring the respect of these rights by the Member States when they are implementing EU law. This work has been carried out mainly through: (i) embedding a child-rights approach in relevant Commission’s initiatives²; (ii) the informal expert group on the rights of the child with Member States delegates; (iii) the annual European Forum on the rights of the child; (iv) funding (including through the Rights Equality and Citizenship fund, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, and the European Social Fund).

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024_en

² Some examples : the 2012 [European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children](#); the 2013 Commission Recommendation [Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage](#); the 2017 Communication on the [Protection of Children in Migration](#), amongst others.

As indicated in the mission letter of Vice-President Šuica, the new comprehensive strategy should include in particular actions to protect vulnerable children, protect their rights online, foster child-friendly justice, and prevent and fight violence. It will also include, in line with current priorities, actions to strengthen the protection of children in migration, and the participation of children in the EU political and democratic life. The strategy will encompass actions relating to both the internal and external dimension of EU policies.

Basis for EU intervention (legal basis and subsidiarity check)

The Article 3(3) and (5) of the Treaty on European Union establishes the objective for the EU to promote the protection of the rights of the child, both in internal and external policies. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights³ guarantees, in its article 24, the protection of the rights of the child. From the Charter's scope of application, EU policies that have an impact on children must be designed in line with the best interests of the child.

EU Member States have to respect the rights of the child as enshrined in the Charter when they are implementing EU law. In addition, all EU Member States ratified the United Nation Convention on the rights of the child and are therefore bound by its provisions.

B. What does the initiative aim to achieve and how

The strategy aims to strengthen promotion and protection of the rights of the child in the EU, and to achieve mainstreaming of children's rights in all relevant EU policy areas. It will also include a list of concrete actions for the Commission to implement in the course of the current mandate (until 2024), which will be complemented by recommendations for action from other EU institutions, Member States and relevant stakeholders. The strategy will build synergies with other new policy initiatives proposed by the current Commission.

The strategy will draw on legislation, policies, tools and programmes available at EU level and will look at how EU action can complement national measures to strengthen the protection of children's rights in the EU.

The strategy will encompass, inter alia, the following areas: child participation to the democratic and political life in the EU; violence and protection; children's rights in the digital world; welfare and social inclusion; education, leisure and culture; child-friendly justice; mainstreaming and coordination.

C. Better regulation

Consultation of citizens and stakeholders

A broad consultation process will inform the strategy. The Commission will, through a public consultation as well as dedicated meetings, gather input from the following stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): national authorities; child rights organisations (including local, national and umbrella organisations); professionals and experts in relevant fields (e.g. education, health care, child poverty, child exploitation and abuse, migration, children rights); representatives of research and academic institutions; young people and youth ambassadors and activists. The 13th European Forum on the Rights of the Child (29 September - 1 October 2020) will be the opportunity to discuss in depth certain aspects to be covered in the strategy, with a very broad range of stakeholders from all the EU Member States.

Children both in and outside the EU will also be consulted, through existing child participation mechanisms (both off and online) set up by international and non-governmental child rights organisations.

Evidence base and data collection

No impact assessment will be carried out for this policy initiative, which will be informed, inter alia, by available Eurostat data (for instance on child poverty, education, migration and asylum), existing and ongoing research by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, and theme-specific available evidence.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT&from=EN>

