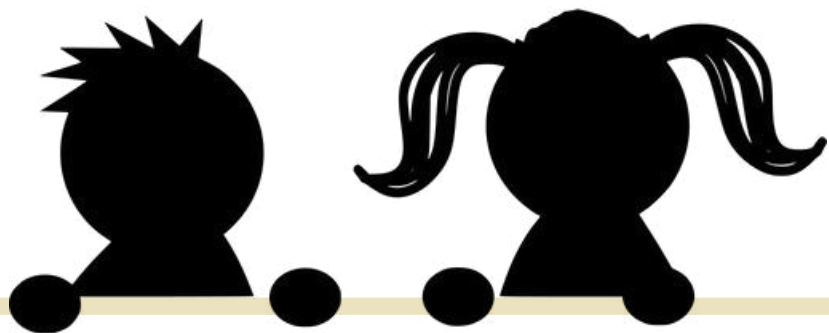


A BETTER SOCIETY FOR ALL FAMILIES

The Child Guarantee

A tool to tackle family poverty?

Berlin, 29 September 2020



BACKGROUND

COFACE wants to **shape a healthy and safe environment fit for families and their children** and has the ambition to build a Child Compass 2030 to better respect the rights of children and better respond to the needs of both children and their families. One key dimension to be examined as part of this child compass is poverty reduction and support to children living in families in vulnerable situations.

Since the publication of the Recommendation on Investing in Children, in 2013, the EU monitors family and child policies across its Member States. Family policies are being reviewed across countries, including by the European Platform for Investing in Children, to meet new challenges and needs, yet, there are considerable differences among countries in how the support is offered. Although the EU economy recovered from the last recession, it has suffered another shock as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, inequality has increased and some families face multiple challenges. Single-parent families, large families, migrant families and families where members have disabilities or long-term conditions face high risks of social exclusion and material deprivation.

COFACE and AGF welcome the fact that President von der Leyen is committed to deliver a European Child Guarantee that would help ensure that every child in Europe at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to free healthcare, education, early childhood education and care, decent housing and adequate nutrition. The Child Guarantee is a promising initiative and could offer a renewed opportunity to step up the fight against child and family poverty and boost further the implementation UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

To ensure the Child Guarantee is impactful we need to see it aligned with EU social policies for children and families, that should act towards the establishment of the conditions for a family to be autonomous, responsible, stable, active, able to independently perform its functions, and to ensure the welfare of generations. This is the basis for the development of healthy, vital and creative societies. To fulfil this task, Europe and national governments need to prioritise investing in children and families through comprehensive policies with a systematic two-generation approach and take in account the interrelated well-being of children and of their parents.

Access to services is crucial, but factors of children's social risk are related with their home environment and many elements including parents' unemployment and low material level of a family, poor housing and unfavorable living conditions, absence of one or both parents, parents' chronic diseases, disorders of internal interpersonal relations in the family, parents' pedagogical failures, not sufficiently emotional and distrust-based relationships between parents and children, and violence in the close environment. When experiencing these challenges, children face more social problems because their feeling of safety and confidence in oneself and environment are not formed: difficulties in communication, anxiety, lack of self-control, tendency to conflicts, and aggression might increase, while initiative and cognitive activity might weaken.

In 2017, the European Parliament requested that the European Commission implement a preparatory action on establishing a possible child guarantee scheme. In this context, the Commission has commissioned a [Study on the feasibility of a child guarantee for vulnerable children](#). During this seminar we want to analyse the proposals of the feasibility study, and contribute to the shaping of the Child Guarantee from a family perspective, integrating the two-generation approach to ensure that both children and families receive support. The results will feed into the European Commission [public consultation on a European Child Guarantee](#).

Objectives of the seminar:

1. Presenting the plans for the Child Guarantee;
2. Contribute to shaping the Child Guarantee from a family perspective;
3. Rethink and reframe the Child Guarantee through the lens of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath;
4. Foster cross-country exchanges on national family policies and how they reduce poverty;
5. Bring together NGO and government reps on family policies;
6. Develop a roadmap for action to implement the Child Guarantee

Practical information:

*Working languages: German and English * On invitation only * Online participation is possible*

PROGRAMME
Tuesday 29th September 2020
Berlin, Germany

08.30-9.00	Registrations & coffee
09.00-9.30	Welcome by <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Nicolas Schmit, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights- Annemie Drieskens, President of COFACE Families Europe- Daniela Jaspers, Chairwoman of AGF
9.30-11.00	Session 1: What can the Child Guarantee look like? <i>Presentations and reactions from keynotes</i> Chair: Elizabeth Gosme, Director, COFACE Families Europe Keynote presentation by Hugh Frazer, co-author of the Feasibility study on the Child Guarantee <i>Reactions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Dr. Martina Kottmann, Head of Division, International Family Policy, BMFSFJ-Katarina Ivankovic, Director C, DG Employment & Social Affairs, European Commission-Reka Tunyogi, Head of Advocacy, Eurochild-Olivier Thévenon, Social Policy Analyst, OECD-Natalie Picken, European Platform for Investing in Children
11.00-11.30	Tea break
11.30-13.00	Session 2: Shaping the Child Guarantee from a two-generation perspective <i>Discussion and reactions from all participants based on key questions</i> Chair: Sven Iversen, Director, AGF Question 1: What challenges have been magnified by the pandemic and what new challenges have emerged? (30 mins) Question 2: How to ensure a holistic approach towards the interrelated well-being of children and of their families? (30 mins) Question 3: How could the Child Guarantee positively strengthen national family policies? (30 mins)
13.00-14.00	Lunch buffet
14.00-15.00	Session 3: Family policy levers at national/local level to implement the Child Guarantee <i>Reflections from four countries</i> Chair: Sven Iversen, Director, AGF <i>Contributions :</i> Annemie Drieskens, Board member, Gezinsbond, Belgium Silvija Stanić, Director, Step by Step Parents Association, Croatia Eija Koivuranta, Director, Vaestoliitto, Finland Antonia Torrens, Director, KMOP, Greece
15.00-16.00	Closing session 4: The building blocks of a 2030 roadmap for action Chair: Elizabeth Gosme, Director, COFACE Families Europe <i>Reactions to session 3, and open discussion with other country perspectives</i> <i>Key recommendations from participants</i>



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