



European Forum on Street Children



Street children as a challenge to social policies and the renewed Lisbon Strategy:
The role of the civil society as a catalyst for the social inclusion process for
children at high risk and street children

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Lisbon, Assembleia da Republica (Auditorium)
Praça de São Bento
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Joint declaration
To make civil society and inclusion of street children a
priority issue of the European Year to Combat Poverty and Social
Exclusion 2010

Street children are among the most marginalised groups of children in our societies, not only in developing countries but also in Europe. Extreme exclusion with poverty and vulnerability to physical, sexual and psychological violence and neglect mark their living situation in a vicious circle requiring urgent action. The mere existence of the phenomenon of children living and/or working in the streets in the EU Member States is a shame to and a serious hindrance to the realisation of a social Europe.

The active involvement of all actors of civil society and other relevant parties in terms of volunteers, either as experts or as practitioners, is an inalienable element of any successful inclusion strategy for street children. It is crucial that the role played by the civil society in the social inclusion of street children is recognised and supported by the relevant policies and governmental bodies at the European, national regional and local level.

Given the crucial role that volunteers play in the social inclusion and re-integration process of street children, notably in the carrying out of concrete support measures at the local level, the EU should take fully into account the voluntary work as a core part of the actions foreseen for the European Year to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010. It provides a unique opportunity for raising awareness of the role played by the civil society for the improvement of the living situation this extremely marginalised group of children.

The Year furthermore provides the ideal framework for Member States and the European Union to restate a strong political commitment towards realising the appeal set out in the EP Resolution “Towards an EU Strategy for the Rights of the Child”, **to end the phenomenon of street children in the EU by 2015.**

Therefore, we recommend:

- **That EU Member States through their National Implementing bodies adequately resource the activities carried out by civil society organisations in order to raise awareness on the living situation of street children in the framework of the Year;**
- **That Member States through their National Implementing Bodies advertise the EP appeal to end the phenomenon of street children in the EU by 2015 in all awareness-raising communications regarding the Year taking;**
- **That Member States and the relevant Ministries ensure a concrete follow-up to the activities of the Year by actively sustaining civil society organisations in the achievement of the EP commitment to end the phenomenon of street children in the EU by 2015;**
- **That the European Parliament in the framework of the European Year 2010 takes active steps towards making the commitment to end the phenomenon of street children in the EU by 2015 a reality, in particular by establishing an EP Intergroup on Street Children, adopting a joint opinion on the situation of street children in Europe and launching a budget line on street children aiming at sustaining the activities of civil society organisations working with them;**
- **That the European Commission takes the European Year 2010 as an opportunity to showing its will to making the EP commitment for 2015 a reality, by supporting awareness raising and joint actions of civil society organisations working for the improvement of the living situation of street children in Europe such as EFSC and its member organisations. .**
- **That the European wide actions foreseen within the European Year 2010 should be linked in a close and complementary way with those of the Member States ensuring thus a maximum of sustainability and synergy in all relevant areas, in particular regarding child inclusion and the fight against child poverty.**



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