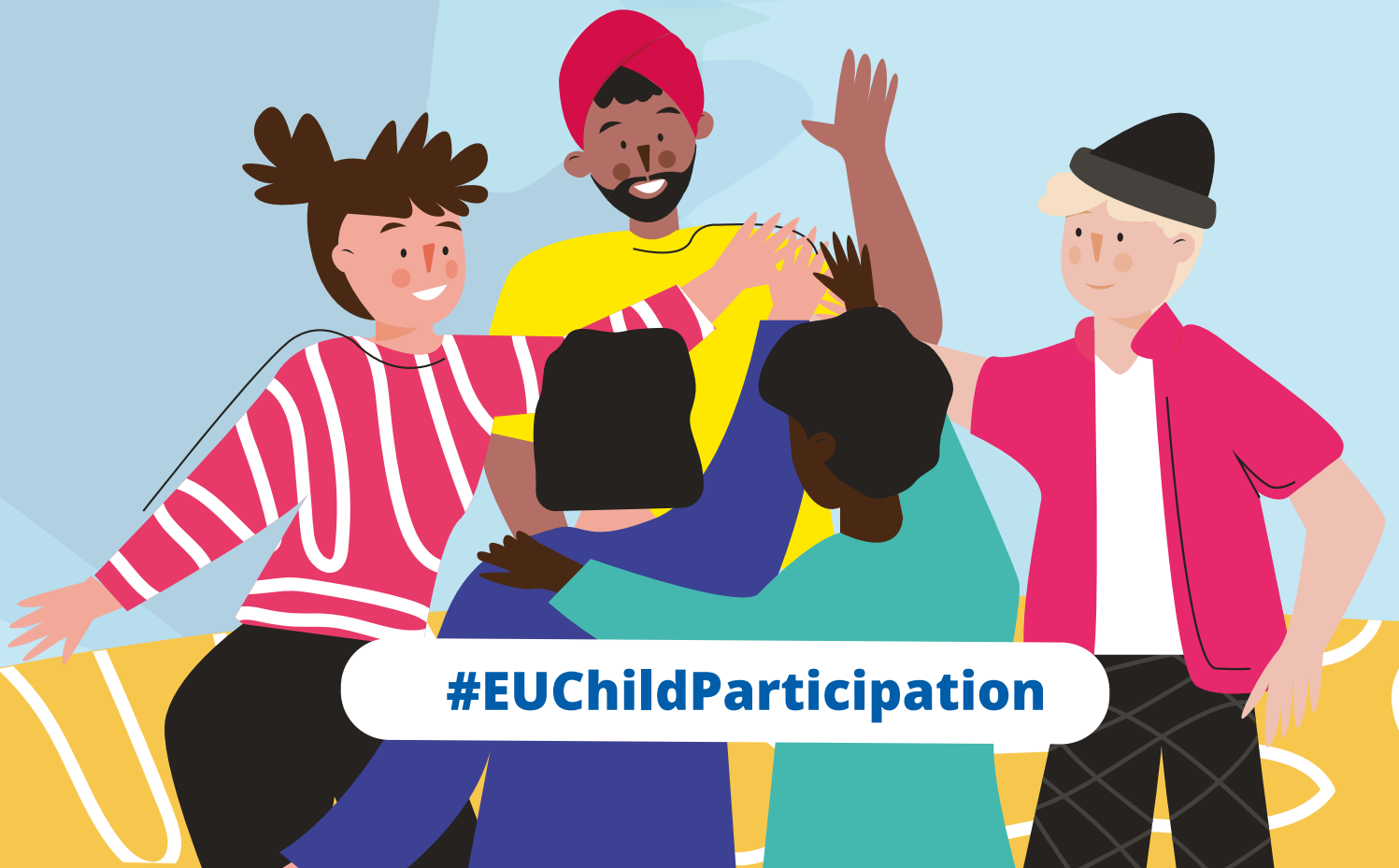




EU CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION PLATFORM

**Work Plan
2023-2024**



#EUChildParticipation



What is this about?

During the General Assembly in June 2023, everyone discussed the work of the EU Children's Participation Platform.

This document tells you how the Commission, the Secretariat and the Platform Advisory Board have included the ideas from the General Assembly, and what has not yet been included.

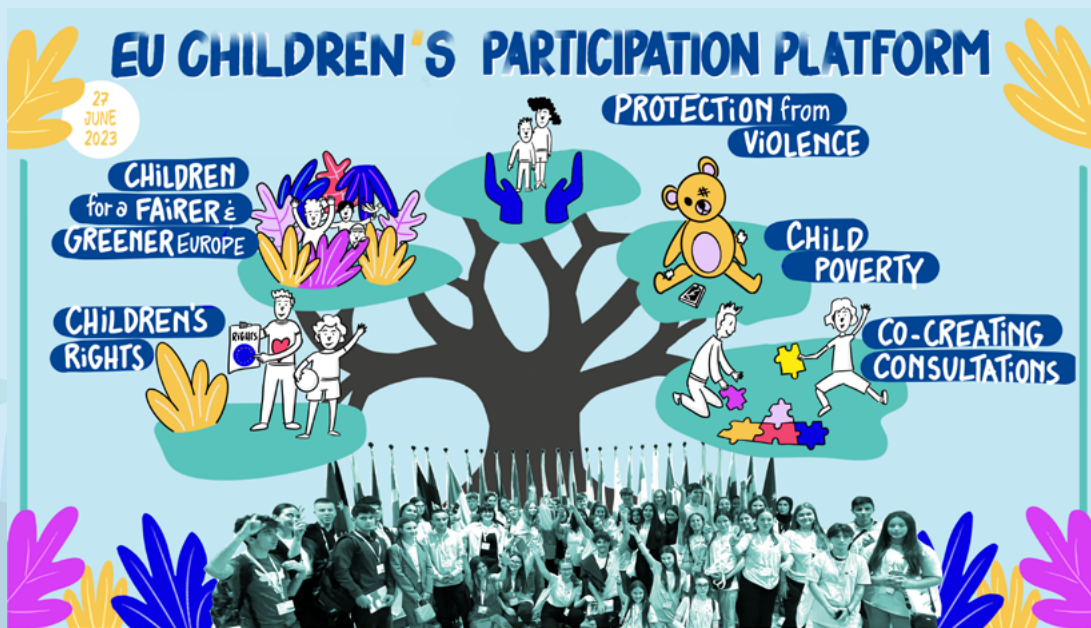
- **The General Assembly** is a meeting of children who are members of the Platform. They suggest ideas for topics and activities.
- **The Advisory Board** is a group of children and adults from across Europe. They give advice to the Commission.
- **The Children's Panel** is a group of children from across Europe. They give advice to The Secretariat about how to organise things.
- **The Secretariat** are the people who help organise everything: people from the company ICF, the child-rights organisations 'Save the Children' and 'SOS Children's Villages', the company RPA, and the experts Laura Lundy and Cath Larkins.
- **The Commission** is part of the European Union. They listen to the ideas of children involved in the Platform and try to include them in EU decisions. They pay for the activities.



What will the Platform focus on?

What topics children wanted the Platform to focus on:

- Stopping violence against children
- Children's participation in decision-making
- Child poverty
- Children's health and well-being
- Children for a fairer and greener Europe
- Protecting the right to education



It was decided that:

The first two focus areas will be included in the Work Plan for 2023-2024. We will also spend time in this first year evaluating the Platform and creating the website. The other focus areas can be in the next Work Plan (2025-2026).

We will try to create opportunities to discuss the other focus areas within Topic 1 and 2 (read later in this document). The topics and actions for the years 2025 and 2026, will be discussed by children in 2024 and 2025, at the next advisory board and general assembly meetings, in case they would like to change anything.

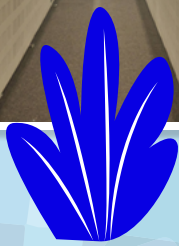
The reasons for this decision are:

The Platform can only work on four topics at a time.

By focusing on the first topics now, the Platform will work on issues at the same time as the Commission. This will help make sure children's ideas have more influence.



What activities will the Platform offer?



The activities will be:

- meetings online and in person, with games, role plays, voting.
- meetings with experts, representatives of governments and the EU institutions, and youth activists.
- online questionnaires and discussions in groups.
- rewriting documents in a simpler language and format.

Who will organise the activities?

The activities will be organised by the Platform's Secretariat.

The Children's Panel will discuss and propose how to organise the activities.

The European Commission will make sure that everything runs well, provide comments and suggestions to the Work Plan and how it will be put into practice.



What is the Work Plan?

The Work Plan is:



Topic 1

Feeling safe



Topic 2

Democracy and voting



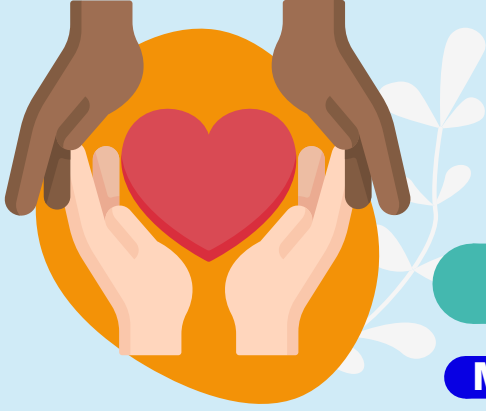
Topic 3

EU Children's Participation Platform website



Topic 4

What worked, what didn't and what we want to do next?



Topic 1

Feeling safe

May 2023 – June 2024

WHAT and WHY:

This topic is linked with the Commission's work on how to improve the protection of children across the EU. The results will help the Commission write a policy document that is called 'Commission Recommendation on Integrated Child Protection Systems'. This document will explain how different experts and services can work together better so that children are safe.

The Commission also asked adults to send their comments on the same topic and has talked to colleagues inside the Commission and to EU governments. The document will be adopted by the Commission in the first three months of 2024.

HOW:

1. **A child-friendly online survey, focus groups and interviews** (June – October 2023)
2. **An online meeting** for children – members of the Platform (January - February 2024) to talk about the activity and its results, to answer children's questions and zoom in at topics that matter to children most, e.g. well-being or/and mental health. This will include experts who can answer questions or discuss topics that children would like to learn more about.
3. **A child friendly version** of the Commission Recommendation on Integrated Child Protection Systems (April – May 2024) in all EU languages.

ACTIONS:

- Children will have a say on what they need to feel safe and will have a possibility to talk about this with experts.
- The Commission will use opinions and voices of children to write the recommendations and will tell children how they did it.
- The recommendations will advise governments in the EU how to better protect children.



Democracy and voting

November 2023 - June 2024

WHAT and WHY:

During the General Assembly, children said that it was important to discuss democracy and the age they are allowed to vote. Another reason to talk about democracy is because in June 2024 European citizens will choose the people who will represent them in the European Parliament. We will also look at what different ways of participating in democracy are (e.g. children and youth councils) and how through these, children can make a change and impact.

The right to vote is a very important part of democracy and a way to be an active citizen. In some countries young people as of 16 years old can vote. We will see how it works in practice and we will give a space to children to share their views about this.

As children also wanted to start exploring the other topics foreseen for the next Work Plan of the Platform 2025-2026 as soon as possible, Topic 2 will focus on how we can protect ourselves from fake news and misinformation, especially regarding topics such as climate change, environmental issues and mental health.

HOW:

1. **Online workshops for children – members of the Platform with experts** to discuss what democracy is about in a country, in a city, at school and how to fact-check information. We will use the topic of climate change as an example of an area where we need to be able to tell if information is true or false. The workshop will share information on best practices in fighting fake news and explore democratic processes through which children can make a change.
2. **Consultations with children – members of the Platform:** online survey and focus groups about taking part in democratic processes, in elections, including voting for those 15+ in specific countries, how it works, what makes children and young people want to be active/to vote. Interviews may be with young people who already voted and young activists.
3. **A child friendly document with guidelines** on how to access accurate information online, what e-voting is, how to register for elections, how to get involved in democratic processes other than voting.

ACTIONS:

- Children will get hands-on training and information on how to access accurate information online and what democracy means in practice.
- The results of the consultations will be presented and discussed with EU Member States.
- The Commission/European Parliament will get ideas on how to run electoral campaigns for young people in the future.



EU Children's participation website

September 2023 - May 2024

WHAT and WHY:

In the General Assembly meeting, children said they want more information about child participation.

It is important that this information is easy and interesting for children and teens to interact with, so that more children can learn about it and get involved.

To help us do this, we will work with children to create the website and the information that is on the website.

HOW:

1. **Child-friendly online survey**, focus groups and interviews with children to get opinions and preferences.
2. **Online interactive games and experiments** for children to help us see if the website is organised nicely and if it is easy to understand and use.
3. **Discussions with children** on how they could be involved in the future development of the Platform website.

ACTIONS:

- The Commission website team, together with the Secretariat, will create a child-friendly website, taking into account the views of children.
- Everything that we learn from children will be shared in a meeting with EU child participation organisations, with a learning pack for adults to help them with their websites.
- The Platform will involve children in the creation of online communication and information.



Topic 4

What worked, what didn't and what we want to do next?

June – December 2024

WHAT and WHY:

This is the last and a very important part of this Work Plan. We will look at what the Platform worked on in 2023 and 2024 and discuss what we would like to keep, what we would like to change. We may look into how to better reach children in different countries and how to share information about the Platform. Discussions will involve suggestions about communication and outreach from the October Advisory Board meeting.

We will also talk about how to better promote the rights of children at EU and national level. Based on these we will prepare the next Work Plan.

HOW:

1. **Consultations:** there will be an online survey and focus groups and interviews
2. **In person/hybrid meeting:** In different workshops and activities that will link with all previous activities organised in 2023 and 2024, children will explore and discuss the topics of:
 - **Feeling safe:** presentation of the Commission Recommendation on Integrated Child Protection Systems, feedback and discussion/meeting with experts and representatives of governments. (Topic 1)
 - **Democracy and elections:** meeting with young activists/Member State authorities to discuss the feedback from the survey. (Topic 2)
 - **Website:** reflection on the co-creation process, how to continue that and sharing good practices. (Topic 3)
 - **Who the Platform is and how adults and children can work together better:** discuss the best ways of collaboration and the work of the Platform, including what has been done so far and planning the upcoming period.

ACTIONS:

- Children will give and receive feedback from all consultations that they participated in.
- Children will give their input to the next Work Plan.
- Member States authorities will be invited for a discussion with children on a selected topic.
- The Commission will get an insight into how the Platform has worked so far, what to keep, what to change.



How the Platform works with and for children?



Children in Member Associations

51 member associations from 21 European Union countries

The Advisory Board

A group of 15 **children & adults** who **advise** the Commission on **what** the Platform should do.

The Children's Panel

A group of 16 **children** who **advise** the **Secretariat** on **how** the Platform should do their activities.

General Assembly

Big meeting where **children & adults** **discuss** about **what** the Platform should do and **how**.

Work Plan

Written plan that **explains what activities** the Platform will do for 2 years.

The Commission

Adults who try to **include children's ideas** from the Platform activities in **EU decisions**. They fund the Platform and run the website with the Secretariat.

The Secretariat

Adults who **run the Platform** and work with everyone to **organise activities** (plans, surveys, consultations, documents, meetings etc.).

