



Belgium – Biennial Progress Report on the European Child Guarantee

Progress, Structural Challenges and Governance
Perspectives



Introduction

- Belgium remains committed to the objectives of the European Child Guarantee and the EU 2030 child poverty target.
- Around 20% of children in Belgium remain at risk of poverty or social exclusion.
 - vulnerable groups:
 - children in single parent household's children with disabilities,
 - children with a migration background,
 - children facing housing instability.



How the biennial report 2026 was prepared ?

- Contributions were collected from:
 - the federal level,
 - Regions
 - Communities
 - various stakeholders
 - Discussions held during roundtables organised in the context of the preparation of the future addendum to the National Action Plan. these exchanges also helped feed some of the reflections included in the report

→ The preparation process itself reflected one of the central elements highlighted throughout the report: Belgium's governance structure is both a richness and a challenge..



Positive developments since the previous report

- **Stronger governance and coordination** : *“Implementation of the Child Guarantee in Belgium requires coordination between 13 ministers across 6 governments.”*
 - Activation of an Interministerial Conference on Poverty and Social Inclusion. The Interministerial Conference on Poverty and Social Inclusion brings together all competent ministers.
 - Activation of a specific working group on child poverty. Report describes this as: “a positive evolution towards more structured coordination.”
- **Policy developments**
 - Reinforced anti poverty and homelessness strategies
 - Measures supporting vulnerable families and single parent households



Positive developments since the previous report

- **Early childhood education and care**

- Report highlights: “progress regarding the reduction of financial barriers.”

- Measures:

- childcare affordability reforms,
- expansion of childcare places,
- inclusive childcare initiatives.

- **Inclusive education**

- Reinforcement of:

- territorial support structures,
- inclusive classes,
- support for newly arrived children,
- support for children with special needs.



Structural challenges

- **Main remaining challenges**
- Lack of common indicators and monitoring tools.
- Difficulties with data comparability between entities.
- Persistent inequalities linked to:
 - housing,
 - education,
 - digital access,
 - nutrition.

The challenge is often not the absence of initiatives, but coordination and coherence



Addendum to the National Action Plan

- Why an addendum ?
 - Belgium is currently preparing an addendum to the National Action Plan for the European Child Guarantee.
 - This work partly follows the recommendations and observations made during the European evaluation process.
- The objective is not simply to add new measures, but rather:
 - to move beyond a simple inventory of existing initiatives,
 - to identify clearer priorities,
 - to reinforce the transversal dimension of the Child Guarantee,
 - and to strengthen coordination and monitoring mechanisms.

The addendum should help transform the national action plan from a collection of parallel initiatives into a more strategic and coordinated framework.



Addendum to the National Action Plan

- Strengthening governance and political coordination
 - One important evolution since the previous report is the establishment of an Interministerial Conference on Poverty and Social Inclusion.
 - Within this framework, a specific working group on child poverty was created. step towards a more institutionalized and structured coordination process between:
 - the federal level
 - regions, and communities

This also helps bring child poverty and children's rights more visibly onto the political agenda.



Conclusion

- **Important progress has been made.**
- **Governance and coordination mechanisms have improved.**
- **Structural challenges remain regarding:**
 - coordination,
 - monitoring,
 - data collection,
 - policy coherence.

The Child Guarantee can act as a lever for stronger cooperation and a more coherent approach to children's rights in Belgium.



PPS Social Integration, anti-Poverty Policy, Social Economy and Federal Urban Policy

Administrative Center Botanique
Finance Tower
Boulevard du Jardin Botanique 50 boîte 165
1000 Brussels

POD MAATSCHAPPELIJKE INTEGRATIE
BETER SAMEN LEVEN
SPP INTÉGRATION SOCIALE
MIEUX VIVRE ENSEMBLE



Contact us

Monday to Thursday from 8:30am to 12:30pm and 1pm to 4:30pm (Friday until 4pm)

+32 2 508 85 86

question@mi-is.be

www.mi-is.be

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