EUROPEAN WEEK OF ACTION FOR GIRLS

VOTE for GIRLS

Commit to girls' rights everywhere

8 – 12 October 2018

What is the European Week of Action for Girls?

The European Week of Action of Girls (EWAG) is a week-long programme of events and activities, based around the International Day of the Girl Child, on 11th October. Now in its eight year EWAG asks the EU to better protect and champion the rights of girls, particularly through its external action. Organised by a coalition of civil society organisations, and supported by the European Institutions and UN Agencies, the 2018 European Week of Action for Girls takes place from 8 - 12 October.

The European Week of Action for Girls 2018 will give girls the opportunity to talk to EU decision-makers and help shape a better world for all girls. They will address EU leaders on what needs to be done to overcome the barriers they face and to ensure their rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Through a series of informative, fun and targeted policy, advocacy and campaign activities, EWAG partners and young leaders will demand the EU honours its commitments to gender equality and the protection of girls. This means doing more, investing responsibly, and recognising the active role girls play in their communities and societies.

This year, the EWAG will particularly focus on girls' right to education, to participate in decision-making, combatting violence and economic empowerment.

Why the EU?

The EU plays a vital role for girls all over the world. Its decisions and policies affect millions of girls within the EU and even more girls outside of the EU. The EU and its Member States are together the largest aid donors worldwide. They have the potential to reach millions of girls through external action.

The EU's policies directly impact girls – they have the potential to enable girls to be better protected from harmful practices such as child, forced and early marriage, to have access to quality education, to learn skills required to live independently during adulthood, and to have safe environments where they can learn and become empowered, strong and active citizens.

EWAG provides concrete, implementable recommendations to the EU on how to better protect and promote girls' rights and their empowerment through EU policies, practices and programmes so that they particularly benefit the most marginalised and hardest to reach girls.

Why now?

In the coming years we will see important changes in the European Union – a new European Parliament, a new College of Commissioners, and a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) which will determine how much priority is given to girls' rights. The EU needs to use this opportunity to ensure the new European Union scales up its commitment for girls to pursue their goals and achieve their dreams. The European Union must become a global champion for girls supporting their right to live the life they choose and thrive, creating a world in which they can actively participate

In May 2019 the European elections will put a new European Parliament in place, paving the way for a new College of Commissioners. The newly elected EU leadership will set the vision for the EU and it will be crucial that this builds on the current momentum towards greater gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. In addition, the new MFF will be thoroughly discussed before and after the European elections, creating a huge opportunity for increased and better investments for girls up to 2027.

The EU has made strong promises to girls in line with the SDGs through its policies and initiatives such as the new EU Consensus on Development, the Spotlight Initiative, and the Gender Action Plan II. Current and future EU leaders must continue putting girls at the centre of their external action and deliver on their promises!

What will happen during the week?

The 2018 European Week of Action for Girls will put girl advocates front and centre and create space for them to bring recommendations to EU policymakers on how the EU can champion girls' rights.

During the week, we will organise an advocacy seminar for the girl advocates to increase their knowledge of the EU and its processes. This will prepare them for direct engagement with EU policymakers and European Parliament election candidates.

Girl advocates will be given opportunities and tools to put their leadership skills into practice, and the EWAG will work to strengthen the abilities of this generation of strong, vocal, female advocates to make sure EU policymakers are kept accountable for the promises they made.

EWAG will help answer the questions: what should girls expect from future EU leaders and the newly elected members of the European Parliament? What place will girls have in the EU's new political dynamics?

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