



**Press Release**  
Luxembourg, 18 June 2019

## Auditors assess EU efforts to combat child poverty

**The European Court of Auditors is conducting an audit to assess whether EU action helps reduce child poverty in Member States. In particular, the auditors will analyse the effectiveness of EU policy and funding in supporting Member States' efforts to alleviate child poverty.**

According to the latest Eurostat data, almost 24 million children aged under 18 in the EU are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This means that they are living in households suffering from at least one of the following three conditions: risk of income poverty, severe material deprivation or very low work intensity. The fight against poverty and social exclusion has been at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy. Moreover, the specific issue of child poverty is high on the EU political agenda following the European Parliament's proposal for a Child Guarantee in 2021-2027.

The auditors have today published an Audit Preview on the EU's response to child poverty. Audit Previews provide information on an ongoing audit task. They are designed as a source of information for those interested in the policy or programmes being audited.

*"Poverty is a reality for almost one in every four children in the EU. Relatively low-cost investment during childhood can yield a lifetime of gains, not only for those individuals, but also for society and the economy as a whole", said Tony Murphy, the member of the European Court of Auditors responsible for the audit. "Our audit conclusions and recommendations will assess the adequacy of how EU initiatives and funding support Member States to combat child poverty."*

Tackling child poverty is the responsibility of the Member States, but the European Commission has a role to play by complementing and supporting national child poverty actions. EU initiatives and policy instruments include the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Semester, as well as the recommendation on "Investing in Children". In addition, EU funding to fight child poverty is available, mainly from the European Social Fund.

*The purpose of this press release is to convey the main messages of the European Court of Auditors' audit preview. The full preview is available at [eca.europa.eu](http://eca.europa.eu) in English.*

## ECA Press

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The audit will assess how child poverty has been dealt with by the Commission during 2014-2020. To this end, the auditors will examine the relevance and effectiveness of:

- o the Commission's support for reducing child poverty in the EU through the available mechanisms;
- o the Commission's contributions to Member States' efforts to tackle child poverty using EU funding.

**Note to Editors**

The audit report is expected to be published in 2020.