

ACT FOR GIRLS

DELIVER ON GIRLS' RIGHTS

EUROPEAN WEEK OF
ACTION FOR
GIRLS
BRUSSELS | 8-11 OCT 2019



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 Friday 11th October. Now in its seventh year, at the start of a new EU legislature, EWAG asks the newly elected EU representatives to better protect and champion the rights of girls, particularly through external action. Organised by a coalition of civil society organisations, and supported by the European Institutions and UN Agencies, the 2019 European Week of Action for Girls takes place from 7 - 11 October.

After the 2018 edition shaping the Manifesto "Vote for Girls" and engaging with candidates to the EU elections, the **European Week of Action for Girls 2019 will aim at taking the opportunity of the start of a new EU cycle to ensure girls rights are high on the EU agenda for the next five years. It will give girls the opportunity to talk to newly elected EU decision makers around 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 as well as a public event, EWAG partners and young leaders will demand the EU honour 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.

Along the lines of the Manifesto produced in 2018, the EWAG will particularly focus on girls' right to education, combating violence, economic empowered and to participate in decision-making.

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, 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 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 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.

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. 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 2019 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 newly elected members of the European Parliament, including a youth-led public event titled "Girls Speak Out in the European Parliament".

Girl advocates will be given opportunities and tools to put their leadership skills into practice, and the week 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? For more information contact Chiara Cosentino (ccosentino@endfgm.eu) or Ischi Graus (ischi.graus@plan-international.org).

More on www.europeanweekofactionforgirls.org.

