

Child poverty: statistics

Child poverty rates are indicated by three different measures in Flanders:

- ⊕ **Ten percent of all Flemish children** live in a family with an income below the European poverty line (see fact sheet 4);
- ⊕ **Eight percent of all Flemish children** live in a deprived family that cannot afford more than two (out of seventeen) necessities that are essential for every child;
- ⊕ **Almost fourteen percent of all Flemish births** occur in a family deprived in more than two areas of life. These figures are taken from the poverty index of Child and Family. They are available up to the local level on provincies.incijfers.be.

Children's rights and poverty

Children's rights and human rights are a cornerstone in addressing child poverty.

Tackling child poverty is done by combating poverty on the family level, for example by improving incomes or housing conditions. However, it is important to focus specifically on children all the while respecting their parents' autonomy. For example, poverty policies need to pay attention to the position of children: do they have sufficient opportunities to grow up in appropriate conditions?

The basic principles of a human rights approach to poverty are **participation and empowerment of people living in poverty, non-discrimination and a government that is responsible and approachable**. This translates, for example, into criteria for gaining access to local social benefits. These criteria have to be fair and transparent. All families living below or just above the poverty line need to be able to rely on certain measures, so that the poverty line is adjusted to the family composition and also takes into account the

necessary expenditure for children and their parents (see also fact sheet 5).

Instruments

Local authorities have many instruments to combat child poverty. In their additional financial support, they can take into consideration the family composition and the necessary costs for children. Furthermore, they can support families to fully benefit from their rights.

High quality and accessible basic necessities such as childcare, schools, public transport or leisure activities have a major impact on the fight against poverty / in combating poverty. Since the local authorities are responsible for these necessities, they can play a crucial role as initiators or as organisers. In addition, it is important that the organisation is easily accessible and that mediators or meeting places work in a demand-oriented way, that they are tailored to and that they correspond with the pace of the family and that there is a relationship of trust. By investing in this, the authorities ensure that people living in poverty find their way to services that can help them move forward.

A good anti-poverty policy reckons with the diversity of people living in poverty. Children in single parent families and vulnerable groups, such as young people leaving youth care, caravan dwellers, people fleeing and homeless families require special attention.



This fact sheet was written in association with the Flemish Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner.



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