

# 'Taking children seriously': A new report on the EU childhood education for sustainable development

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This is a picture of kids. Credit: University of Gothenburg

Small children are capable of engaging in issues concerning sustainable development. Their interests and rights must be better safeguarded in rules and policy decisions that concern the education of the youngest groups of children within the EU.

This is emphasised in the report "Taking children seriously – How the

EU can invest in early childhood education for a sustainable future", which was presented at a seminar in Brussels on Friday 17 December.

The body behind the report is the European Panel on Sustainable Development (EPSD), an independent research-based network between the University of Gothenburg, Chalmers and Lund University.

The report's authors include several researchers from Chalmers and the University of Gothenburg, as well as from other Universities in Sweden and Europe.

One of the report's authors is Professor Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson of the University of Gothenburg and, among other things, world president of the OMEP organisation. She is, in addition, speaking at the seminar in Brussels under the heading "Early childhood education and sustainable development".

## **Capable children**

Small children are more capable of acting, thinking, reasoning and understanding than is generally believed. This is the contention of the report, which provides an overview of current scientific findings concerning children's interest in and capacity to understand issues surrounding the social, economic and ecological dimensions of sustainable development.

"We want to emphasise the issue of early childhood education for sustainable development and the importance of the EU attending to children's interests and rights within this area to a greater degree than is currently the case. It is also hoped that the research in the area is strengthened, as small [children](#) are an important element in sustainable development," says Bo Samuelsson, chairman of EPSD.

## Recommendations to the EU

EPSD makes a number of recommendations to the EU in the report. These include recommending that education within both sustainable development and early childhood education should be an integrated and essential part of programmes for both education and in-service training of preschool teachers.

Another recommendation is that the EU should increase or modify existing framework programmes in order to stimulate innovation through integrating [education](#) for sustainable development and preschooling.

**More information:** Read more about EPSDЖ  
[www.chalmers.se/gmv/EN/projects/epsd](http://www.chalmers.se/gmv/EN/projects/epsd)

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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