



Better Europe Alliance - Ireland

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Enabling civil-society to participate in the shaping of EU policies and to contribute to progress on the Targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy concerns us all!

Better Europe Alliance – Members (EU Organisation Membership)

1. Age and Opportunity (AGE)
2. Disability Federation of Ireland (EDF and EASPD)
3. Environment Pillar (EEB)
4. European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland (EAPN)
5. Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
6. Irish Rural Link
7. National Adult Literacy Agency
8. National Association of Building Cooperatives (Housing Europe)
9. National Women’s Council of Ireland (EWL)
10. SIPTU (Services Industrial Professional and Technical Union) (ETUC)
11. Social Justice Ireland (Caritas)
12. Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Aim of the Alliance

- ▶ Influence key policies and strengthen progress towards the social and environmental goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy
- ▶ Improve the level of debate and the quality of engagement of all stakeholders in progressing the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Semester.

Activities so far

■ Submissions/Position Paper

- Analysis of 2014 CSRs
- Review of Europe 2020 Strategy

■ Engaging stakeholders

- Briefing on Europe 2020 and Semester
- European Commission (Irish Head of Representation and Semester Officer and Michel Servoz Director-General DG Empl.)
- Parliamentary (Oireachtas) Joint Committee on EU Affairs x 2
- Department of the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and their Coordinating meeting with other Departments
- National Conference (5th December): Key-note from Marian Harkin MEP.
- Magazine for Conference

■ Activities among members



Benefits and Outcomes

■ Benefits

- Greater visibility and access to decision makers
- Opportunity to deepen knowledge among members
- Opportunity to pool knowledge and engage collectively

■ Outcomes

- Increased engagement with decision makers
- Many Alliance proposals included (and some not) in Oireachtas (Parliament) Joint Committee Proposals for Review of Europe 2020
- No specific policy outcomes to date – Alliance only started in April 2014



Analysis of Europe 2020 and Semester



- European Semester and Europe 2020 dominated and undermined by narrow economic focus.
- Lack of debate and little quality engagement on Europe 2020 and Semester

Proposals for Europe 2020 and Semester



- **Balanced approach**
 - impact assessment of all relevant policies including economic policies
 - Balanced CSRs
- **Quality debate and engagement**
- **Sub-targets for specific marginalised groups and Gender Mainstreaming**
- **Poverty and Social Exclusion**
 - Need an integrated strategy coordinated from EU level with national implementation. – not limited to labour market participation
- **Employment**
 - An inclusive labour market with quality jobs
 - Active Inclusion approach for those most distant
- **Education**
 - Include an adult literacy target.
- **Climate Change**
 - Greater ambition at EU and national level and need specific CSR for Ireland