|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| logo_ec_17_colors_300dpi | EUROPEAN COMMISSION |

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY**

***Name: European Anti-Poverty Network***

***Contact details:***

*Address: Square de Meeus 18, 1050 Brussels*

*Phone number: 0032 2 226 5850*

*E-mail:* *sian.jones@eapn.eu*

***Country of residence: Belgium***

***Language of your contribution: English***

***Type of organisation:***

*[ ]  Member State*

*[ ]  Public authority*

*x**[ ]  Registered organisation*

*[ ]  Registered company*

*[ ]  Individual citizen*

*[ ]  Non-registered organisation/company*

*[ ]  Other, please specify:*

***Main area(s) covered by your contribution:***

*x**[ ]  Economic and financial affairs*

*[ ]  Competitiveness*

*[ ]  Industry*

*[ ]  Single market*

*x**[ ]  Employment*

*[ ]  Research, development and innovation*

*[ ]  Digital economy*

*[ ]  Climate, energy and resource efficiency*

*x**[ ]  Education*

*x**[ ]  Poverty/social exclusion*

*[ ]  Other, please specify: Participation and Stakeholder Involvement*

***Register ID number (if you/your organisation is registered in the Transparency register): 3945154610-54***

***Your reply:***

*x**[ ]  can be published with your personal information*

*[ ]  can be published in an anonymous way*

*[ ]  cannot be published*

**A) Background** **for the public consultation**:

The Europe 2020 strategy was launched in [March 2010](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF) as the EU's strategy for promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It aims to achieve a knowledge-based, competitive European economy while preserving the EU's social market economy model and improving resource efficiency. It was thus conceived as a partnership between the EU and its Member States driven by the promotion of growth and jobs.

The Europe 2020 strategy is built around five [headline targets](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/targets/index_en.htm) in the areas of employment, research and development, climate and energy[[1]](#footnote-1), education and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. The strategy also set out a series of action programmes, called "[flagship initiatives](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/flagship-initiatives/index_en.htm)", in seven fields considered to be key drivers for growth, namely innovation, the digital economy, employment and youth, industrial policy, poverty and resource efficiency. The objectives of the strategy are also supported by action at EU level in areas such as the single market, the EU budget and the EU external agenda.

The Europe 2020 strategy is implemented and monitored in the context of the [European Semester](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_en.htm), the yearly cycle of coordination of economic and budgetary policies at EU level. The European Semester involves discussion among EU institutions on broad priorities, annual commitments by the Member States and country-specific recommendations prepared by the Commission and endorsed at the highest level by leaders in the European Council. These recommendations should then be taken on board in the Member States' policies and budgets. As such, together with the EU budget, the country-specific recommendations are key instruments for the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy.

After four years, the Commission has proposed, and the European Council of 20-21 March 2014 has agreed, to initiate a review of the Europe 2020 strategy. On 5 March 2014, the Commission adopted a Communication "Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" ([Communication](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking_en.pdf) and [Annexes](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking_annex_en.pdf) ). drawing preliminary lessons on the first years of implementation of the strategy. Building on these first outcomes and in a context of a gradual recovery of the European economies, it is time to reflect on the design of the strategy for the coming years.

Through these questions, we are seeking your views on the lessons learned from the early years of the Europe 2020 strategy and on the elements to be taken into account in its further development, in order to build the post-crisis growth strategy of the EU.

**B) Questions**:

**1) Taking stock: the Europe 2020 strategy over 2010-2014**

***Content and implementation***

* **For you, what does the Europe 2020 strategy mean? What are the main elements that you associate with the strategy**?

What the strategy means to EAPN is not simple, nor a static concept. How EAPN members feel about the strategy has changed through time, as the impact of the strategy has been assessed, particularly in terms of poverty reduction. Initially, the strategy meant for EAPN an important recognition that Lisbonwas on a mistaken track That the EU could not focus on growth or economic policies alone, but needed a balanced approach to growth that was inclusive and sustainable. The setting of 5 targets, with an explicit poverty reduction target, for the first time, together with the other social targets (employment and education targets) underpinned by Guidelines and supported by specific flagship initiatives, was seen as an important step forward. The process seemed to offer a commitment to involving citizens and stakeholders in taking ownership and promoting accountability to deliver National Reform Programmes to deliver on these important goals, based on Recital 16 of the Integrated Guidelines underpinning the strategy[[2]](#footnote-2). However, as Europe 2020 has failed to make an impact on poverty, with poverty increasing rather than decreasing, with the EU’s macroeconomic approach seen as being partly responsible for this increase, there has beengrowing disenchantment with the strategy– seeing Europe 2020 at best as an empty shell, and at worst as an instrument dominated by a top-down macroeconomic overly market-led model, focussed on driving austerity and reductions of the welfare state. Furthermore, this has resulted in a growing loss of trust with EU institutions, and their commitment to further improve the lives of their citizens, particularly the most vulnerable. As a result, EAPN members have struggled to maintain their optimism about the approach (see more detail below).

* **Overall, do you think that the Europe 2020 strategy has made a difference? Please explain.**

The Europe 2020 strategy was largely welcomed by EAPN in 2010, for mainstreaming social objectives into broader economic/employment policy, and for establishing for the first time a concrete poverty reduction target, combined with social targets on employment and education. However, the negative progress on the poverty target, the failure to focus on quality jobs as well as jobs at any prices, as well as the shortfalls on employment and education targets, have undermined its support amongst EAPN members, **particularly in the context where macroeconomic policies have been seen to prioritize austerity cuts to benefits and services, promoting reductions in employment and social protection rights, which are seen as generating increased poverty, exclusion and inequality.**

However, having the strategy in the first place is seen as providing an important benchmark for the aspirational objective of sustainable and inclusive growth. It has offered a potentially positive agenda, helped to keep poverty on the agenda, and has driven an expanding debate about the need to mainstream the social dimension better within economic policy. The targets have also played an important role in delivering EU funds, with the priority of 20% of ESF on social inclusion and poverty, as well as other EU funding lines (eg FP7 and PROGRESS). We believe that the basic tenets of the strategy and process still offer important ingredients that could make a difference if properly implemented.

**Key Positive Elements**

The Strategy was seen as an important agenda-setting instrument, which could keep poverty at the centre of the overarching policy debate and potentially deliver real results on poverty if combined with an effective strategy. The introduction of Guideline 10 on social inclusion and poverty to underpin the Semester and the development of NRPs, combined with the European Platform Against Poverty, seemed to offer the potential for a dynamic engagement of all actors and cross-sectoral delivery across different DGs. Clear references to the quality of jobs in Guideline 8 are also a significant step forward, further explored by the European Commission commitment, in the European Agenda for Skills and Jobs flagship initiative, to review the concept of quality work and develop a comprehensive framework of indicators. Participation and stakeholder engagement were supported by Recital 16, giving a strong requirement of stakeholders, including civil society engagement in the whole process, particularly the NRPs.

**Failure to make progress on poverty reduction**

However, as recognized by the Commission’s Europe 2020 stocktaking document[[3]](#footnote-3), instead of progress towards the target of a 20 million reduction, **poverty and social exclusion[[4]](#footnote-4) have shockingly risen to affect 1 in 4 within the EU: 124,2 million (2012), an increase of over 6.6 million since 2010.** Instead of progress towards the employment target (75% in employment), employment has also steadily declined, from 68.9% in 2009 to 68.4% in 2012 with an increase of unemployment from 7.1% in 2008 to 10.9% in 2013. Equally worryingly, employment has become an increasingly insecure route out of poverty, with an increase from 8.6% to 9.1% of households classified as working poor. Efforts to reach the numerical employment target, without complementary safeguards regarding the quality of jobs and employment, only undermine the achievement of the poverty reduction target. The situation for young people has been even worse with youth unemployment rising to 24.2% compared to adults (9.6%) and with an increase in young people not in education or training (NEETS) to 13.2%. This, while youth poverty stands at a staggering 29.7% in 2012. The impact across Europe also has not been equal. As highlighted by the new Social Scoreboard, inequality is also continuing to rise in most countries, particularly in the South and East. The same story is true for poverty. Divergences, reflecting social and macroeconomic imbalances, continue to grow across Europe with the poorest regions paying the highest price and facing the most serious social impact of the crisis (with the AROPE[[5]](#footnote-5) rates for poverty at 50% for Greece compared to 15% for the Czech Republic and the Netherlands). The countries with the highest rates are generally the same that have been under Troika arrangements or under greatest pressure to reduce public expenditure with austerity cuts.[[6]](#footnote-6)

**Economic policies seen to exacerbate social impact of the crisis**

The economic crisis has generated a social crisis, which has led to an unacceptable attack on people’s living standards and right to a dignified life. Although some of the social impact is clearly due to the crisis increasing unemployment, there is a clear impact from austerity policies, which have been supported by the EU through the Fiscal Compact, Six and Two Pack. As Commissioner Andor recently highlighted, “*recent fiscal reforms have had a regressive impact, with lower incomes hit relatively harder than others.*”[[7]](#footnote-7) The Commission’s Employment and Social Development report 2013[[8]](#footnote-8) further underlined the negative social and economic impact of priority cuts to social spending: “*From 2010, social benefits failed to support household incomes…due to increase of unemployed losing their entitlements, phasing-out of stimulus measures…. reducing levels or duration of benefits, tightening eligibility rules… excluding beneficiaries from schemes.*” The two pack is also seen as being responsible for producing downward pressure of wages and job quality. The impact has also been clearly unequal across the EU, with recent studies highlighting that fiscal consolidation concentrated in Southern and Eastern European Countries has led to unemployment, while changes to tax and benefit systems along with cuts in public sector wages have actively contributed to the decline in real household incomes (Avram et al 2013).[[9]](#footnote-9)

EAPN’s assessments drawn from the reality of people experiencing poverty corroborate this evidence. The EAPN 2013 NRP Assessment[[10]](#footnote-10) highlighted that 75% of EAPN networks considered that the austerity policies promoted in the NRPs, following the Commission’s guidelines, resulted in an unequal distribution of the burden of the crisis, and would generate more poverty and social exclusion, contributing to the growing inequality gap. This is primarily due to the priority given in deficit reductions to cuts in public expenditure, key public services and benefits which most affect the poor. In the countries under Troika arrangements, this is seen at its most extreme.[[11]](#footnote-11) For example, in Spain all social services have suffered cuts. In Portugal 4.7 billion cuts were proposed with loss of jobs for 30.000.[[12]](#footnote-12) In Ireland,[[13]](#footnote-13) cuts to jobseekers allowances have been focussed on youth, with the Budget in 2014 carrying out drastic cuts to supplementary welfare allowances for those under 26, whilst lone parents have seen their income cut by 847.60 Euros (in the period 2009-13). Indexation mechanisms on income support or pensions have also been reduced hitting the real value of benefits and pensions with a disastrous impact on the living standards of the poorest people (BE, ES, HU, NL, PT). Eligibility and coverage has also been reduced: for example in NL where the unemployment benefit has been reduced from 5 to 3 years, shifting people onto lower social assistance where full housing costs are not covered. A new law will now take into account household income, where children receive social assistance and live with their parents and the parents are pensioners, which is likely to increase hardship. In Portugal,[[14]](#footnote-14) changes in eligibility requirements in the threshold have led to decreases in the number of beneficiaries from 527,627 to 420, 665 with the levels of Social Insertion Income reduced from 189.52 (2010) to 178.15 (2013). In Hungary,[[15]](#footnote-15) unemployment and disability benefits have been decreased and social assistance replaced with food vouchers. This combined with the introduction of controls on behaviour of unemployed people (i.e. checks on cleanliness) attack the basic dignity of people as well as increasing their hardship. Recent research also confirms that countries with harsher austerity measures tend to have higher death rates as well as growing health inequalities.[[16]](#footnote-16) This is an unacceptable social price to pay. Instead of increasing signs of social investment, short-term economic goals have been prioritized over social rights and longer term social and economic returns. The EU’s macroeconomic focus on austerity delivered through the Semester is seen not only as responsible for increasing poverty but continuing to promote an unacceptable attack on human rights and to the dignity of the most vulnerable, making the poor pay for a crisis they didn’t create. Amana to add some sentences about the impact of austerity & Troika on employment, linked to increase in poverty.

**Missed opportunity to focus the Semester on Europe 2020 goals and targets**

Europe 2020 is delivered through the governance mechanism of the European Semester. However, EAPN’s view is that, **in reality, Europe 2020 has never been given a fair chance**. The overriding focus of the Semester is driven by the requirements of the Stability and Growth Pact and the Stability and Convergence Programmes primarily focussed on deficit cuts, with Europe 2020 barely visible in most of the key documents/communications (e.g. the Annual Growth Survey, the Communication on the Country-Specific Recommendations etc.). The 2 parallel strands are imbalanced and often contradictory, with the macroeconomic stability priority accompanied by sanctions, whilst Europe 2020 and particularly the social priorities have none.

Although **there has been a welcome increase in the number of ‘anti-poverty CSRs’** from 3 in 2011 to 11 and 12 in 2013 and 2014 (across 28 MS), these are often ambiguous in their impact on poverty, being overly concerned with increasing efficiency of welfare states rather than reducing poverty, and undermined by the predominance of CSRs focussed on the macroeconomic and fiscal requirements, which are currently promoting austerity policies. For example almost all MS received CSRs related to budget consolidation with cost effectiveness and cutting the visible focus in Health and/or Care Services (BE, CZ, IE, ES, FR, HR, LV, LU, MT, NL, AT, RO, PT, SI, SK, FI), which have a major impact on the living/health standards of people in poverty, without requirements on quality, coverage and affordability. **Europe 2020 needs to be the driving partner in the Semester, promoting a coherent and balanced economic and social vision, if its goals are to be delivered.[[17]](#footnote-17)**

* **Has the knowledge of what other EU countries are doing in Europe 2020 areas impacted on the approach followed in your country? Please give examples.**

EAPN is a EU-wide network, and is therefore not able to give an assessment for one country. It is also difficult for national NGO members to know how far governments have been influenced by other Member States in the development of their policies, as this is rarely acknowledged in the public arena.

We need input from members on national examples here, otherwise we will not answer the rest of the question.

* **Has there been sufficient involvement of stakeholders in the Europe 2020 strategy? Are you involved in the Europe 2020 strategy? Would you like to be more involved? If yes, how?**

EAPN members’ responses in 2013 and 2014 highlight clearly that there has been insufficient involvement of stakeholders, particularly anti-poverty and other social NGOs, in Europe 2020, despite the initial commitments of Europe 2020. Even where some engagement has been established, it’s evaluated as tokenistic and of low quality, and with uneven progress in different Member States. Our members have shown a great perseverance in trying to get engaged, despite continual setbacks. Most show great willingness to get further involved, however this commitment is conditional on 1) that the NRP itself is a meaningful document, and process which can have reflect real decisions linked to national policies, rather than just a report on already completed actions. 2) That the engagement with stakeholders is pro-active and meaningful, and has the chance to have real impact on policy. The key demand is for the establishment of an on-going structured dialogue with stakeholders at national and EU level, developed throughout the year through regular meetings and inputs, underpinned by EU guidelines where NGOs and other stakeholders are continually involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of the NRPs and policy proposals. A recognition that such engagement will need political will, financial support, capacity building and training of both stakeholders and institutional actors, as well as creative methodologies is a core concern, if people with direct experience of poverty are to be involved as key stakeholders.

**EAPN Assessment**

EAPN members have attempted to actively engage in the entire Semester process throughout the year, focussed on getting delivery on the poverty and other social targets. This has meant attempting to engage in the NRP process as stakeholders at national level – providing inputs to the NRP, responding to drafts, and attempting to be involved in the implementation and evaluation. This work has been supported by EAPN-run capacity building workshops and a yearly updated Tool Kit. (Feb) Member’s have then provided their own input to the Commission’s proposals of Country-Specific Recommendations, also assessing the implementation of the previous years’ CSRs. Together at EU level, a synthesis document of these findings has been developed and sent to the Commission in March/April. In May-July, Members have made an assessment of the NRPs together in a workshop, and based on a questionnaire produced an assessment report. Drawing key messages from this assessment, a letter is sent to the Commission and other EU institutions, highlighting key recommendations for the AGS. Following the AGS, an appraisal is carried out, before initiating the cycle again.

The Commission’s stocktaking assessment recognizes that awareness and ownership are lacking, and national stakeholder engagement and Parliament engagement needs to be improved. EAPN’s own assessment[[18]](#footnote-18) highlights 12 National Networks managing some type of engagement, but with 75% of networks assessing the engagement as weak and low quality, with little impact. There is little sign of improvement in the extent or quality of engagement, despite a continued priority given by the Commission in the AGS and internal NRP guidelines. EAPN members highlight a focus on formal consultation, with a tendency to have one-off, primarily information meetings, often without an agenda or minutes, with little opportunity to comment on drafts. When comments are possible to the draft, few members feel that adequate feedback is provided, or that any real input is achieved. Where promising examples exist (PL, FR, BE, LU, ES), limited mutual learning or exchange of good practice is being prioritized. Such encouraging examples include the establishment of working thematic groups (PL and LU), the use of the group to develop an integrated anti-poverty strategy linked to the ex-ante conditionality in Structural Funds; the establishment of a National Platform Against Poverty (BE); a compact with regular structured consultation on the NRP with a chance to make detailed inputs to the draft, many of which were taken on board in the final draft (ES); and the annexing of stakeholders views to the NRP (FR). In terms of the engagement of national parliaments, debates are rarely organized. Although examples were given in BE, IE, LU, CZ, DE and ES, in general these were seen more as a rubber-stamping exercise with little impact on content. In Ireland, the debate in the Irish Parliament did result in some changes, but the implementation is unclear nor the process for continuing engagement. This clearly underlines a growing democratic deficit, that risks undermining the legitimacy of the Semester.

See detailed Recommendations for improvement in Question 3

See EAPN Documents

EAPN Tool Kit:

EAPN Assessment of the NRPs 2013 and 2014,

EAPN Assessment and Alternative proposals for CSRs 2013 and 2014.

Letter to Commission on AGS,

Response to the AGS 2014.

***Tools***

* **Do the current targets for 2020 respond to the strategy's objectives of fostering growth and jobs? [Targets: *to have at least 75% of people aged 20-64 in employment; to invest 3% of GDP in research and development; to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%, increase the share of renewables to 20% and improve energy efficiency by 20%; to reduce school drop-out rates to below 10% and increase the share of young people with a third-level degree or diploma to at least 40%; to ensure at least 20 million fewer people are at risk of poverty or social exclusion*].**

The question, disappointingly, focusses only on the objectives of growth and jobs, rather than the broader objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This seems to undermine the added value of Europe 2020. We recall the lessons learnt from the Lisbon Strategy, when the Growth and Jobs priority was reinforced, following the Wim Kok review in 2005, but still failed to reduce poverty, with poverty remaining at 16% from 2000 to 2010, despite record increases in growth and jobs.

Targets can be useful instruments, particularly in terms of agenda-setting, and awareness-raising, but also for bringing EU funds. The 20% funding on social inclusion and poverty for ESF, which linked to delivery on the Europe 2020 targets, in the new Funding round as well as FP7 and PROGRESS funding streams are vital.. However, their usefulness depends on the development of an effective strategy for their delivery backed by well-targeted funding, as well as good reporting and monitoring mechanisms. The final judgement is whether they have impacted on policy.

EAPN’s views on the current targets are somewhat mixed. **In general, EAPN highlights that although the social targets have not been achieved, this is not a reason to abandon them**. They provide a vital litmus test of the social priorities of the European Union, and should be placed even more at the core of Europe 2020 and the European Semester. However, they need to be backed by effective strategies and delivery mechanisms if there is to be a chance of progress. The loss of a high-profile Annual Progress Report launched as a central pillar of the Annual Growth Survey monitoring transparently the progress on the targets, crucially undermines the role of the targets in the Strategy.

**Inconsistencies and areas for improvement in the EU targets**

* The poverty target is not designed on an equal basis with the other targets - ie it is the only target which is not a percentage figure. This tends to undermine the equality between the target and its translation into national targets. The poverty target is the only one where 3 indicators are used and aggregated – making it difficult to communicate and to use, or to be comparable with the other targets. Ideally the poverty target should be set as a % figure, even within the aggregate of the 3 indicators (at risk of poverty, severe material deprivation and low work intensity).
* All social targets should be disaggregated according to gender/age/group break down and next step would be sub-targets for key groups – eg children, youth, older people, but also women, homeless, ethnic minorities like Roma, people with disabilities, to name just a few.
* The employment target only captures whether people have worked for 1 hour in the week of reference and does not account for the quality or sustainability of the employment. Consideration should be given to complementing the numerical employment targets with binding criteria on quality.
* Some refinements could also be considered. The education target is currently only focused on formal education. The EU should commit to an adult literacy target.
* A strong argument can also be made for an additional target on reducing inequality, but this should not replace the poverty target. The growth of inequality in income and wealth is widely acknowledged as one of the major challenges facing the EU (OECD, IMF, World Economic Forum 2013 and 2014), as well as by the Commission in its yearly review (Employment and Social Development Outlook 2014), both in terms of increasing the widening gap between rich and poor, undermining social cohesion and well-functioning and performing societies, but also as a major barrier to sustainable growth (IMF 2014).
* Finally targets can be useful, but alone are not enough. They must be backed by effective integrated strategies and adequate funding, ensuring delivery involving the grass-root NGOs organisations and providors, otherwise they encourage MS to engage in numbers games, which have little impact on the policy objectives.
* **Among current targets, do you consider that some are more important than others? Please explain**.

We consider all the targets to be important, andunderline the need for them to be treated equally. As we have highlighted above, the poverty target is treated differently, by the avoidance of a % figure. It also gets less priority in key monitoring documents, eg the Annual Growth Survey, underlining the lack of a consistent approach to monitoring the progress and developments for each target in the Semester process.

For EAPN, we have particular concern for the 3 Social Targets, particularly the poverty target, but also employment and education, to guarantee that any growth policy ensures more equal distribution of the benefits of growth that can result in social progress – less poverty, more and better employment, services and social protextion, and inclusive education. However, we would underline the need for a coherent approach across the targets, rather than considering them separately and in a disconnected way.

For example, there are clear synergies between the employment and poverty target. Employment needs to contribute to the delivery of the poverty target and visa versa. The current indicator only measures an extremely precarious form of employment[[19]](#footnote-19), without any consideration of the quality or sustainability of the job, with a very limited indicator in terms of contractual time worked. As in-work poverty is on the rise from 8.6% to 9.1% in 2012, and where over a 1/3 of the poor are in work, and a much higher percentage in many countries, employment has become an increasingly insecure route out of poverty. Efforts to reach the employment target without complementary safeguards regarding quality of jobs and employment are only likely to increase rather than reduce poverty.

Equally the poverty target can contribute to the employment target, as supporting people of working age towards quality and sustainable jobs will reduce poverty and unemployment at the same time. EAPN however warns against the narrow approach which sees any kind of employment as the only route out of poverty for people of all ages, as such an approach will only result in forcibly activating those unable to work, or push people into low quality jobs, thus only worsening poverty and hardship, for them and for their families..

* **Do you find it useful that EU-level targets are broken down into national targets? If so, what is, in your view, the best way to set national targets? So far, have the national targets been set appropriately/too ambitiously/not ambitiously enough**?

If the EU level targets are to be delivered, then it is essential that they are broken down into national targets. However, apart from some of the difficulties regarding the EU target itself (highlighted above), the major difficulty arises with the **lack of ambition in setting and in the implementation of the national targets by Member States.** In our recent assessment, 80% of members felt that the EU should be more prescriptive around the setting of the national targets **– ie by proposing a common basis for designing the targets.**

**Key challenges for the poverty target**

* From the beginning, the **poverty target has been undermined by a lack of commitment to its delivery by Member States**, with an 8 million shortfall on national targets set by national governments. Although the target based on the 3 indicators is complex to communicate, compared to the other Europe 2020 targets with only one common indicator, the 3 different indicators[[20]](#footnote-20) go some way to capture the multidimensionality of poverty – each indicator reflecting a different aspect, e.g. relative and more absolute forms of poverty, which are crucial to charting progress. During the crisis, median incomes fell, so at-risk-of-poverty indicators were not accurate in capturing the real impact of loss of income of people, whereas material deprivation did this better. However, relative poverty indicators are fundamental for capturing how far people are able to participate on an equal basis in a specific country.
* **Currently, Member States are able to select which indicator they wish to use**. This has meant that too many Member States are guilty of gaming, having cherry-picked the indicator which can show off their best performance, (e.g. Bulgaria which focuses on at risk of poverty with falling disposable incomes disguising a real rise in material deprivation) or ignoring the EU indicators entirely (e.g. Germany, Sweden who focus their poverty targets only on unemployment) or the UK that doesn’t set an employment or poverty target), or settling for very unambitious national targets (e.g. Poland aiming for the same level as 2008 or Belgium aiming for a reduction of 380.000 although poverty has increased by 77.000 by 2008), without clear explanations of how they arrive at their figures. This undermines the credibility of the indicators, the target, and the support to achieve them. Nearly all EAPN networks feel the EU should be more prescriptive in the setting of national targets (BE, BG, CZ, CY, DE, DK, ES, IT, NL, PL, PT, SE, UK).
* **Further issues are the lack of timeliness and scope of the indicators used**. Social data based on EU-SILC is currently only available for 2012, compared to economic and employment data that is available now for this year. This undermines the potential for the social impact to be seriously considered when taking economic decisions, and has been particularly damaging during the crisis. Moreover, the data collected still exclude key groups facing poverty e.g. homeless people and migrants which mean that current data is not capturing the reality of poverty. However, even good targets and indicators can only make a difference if backed by the right policies.

**Way Forward for the poverty target**

**How**

* Give new priority to the poverty target based on the 3 indicators, but require a percentage decrease overall for each indicator by all Member States, as with the other targets.
* Require Member States to use all 3 EU indicators to establish ambitious national targets towards reducing poverty, by the agreed percentage, rather than cherry-picking the indicator which allows them to appear to perform best.
* Review and establish new targets for MS who claim to have met the poverty target already.
* Reformulate the Eurostat definition underpinning the employment target, and complement it with indicators which measure also the quality and sustainability of the employment, and consider the introduction of sub-targets for key groups.
* Require Member States to make medium to long-term projection planning in the NRPs and NSRs showing how the targets will be reached, over what period and by what policies, requiring them to provide yearly updates explaining the trends and shortfall and setting out the plans for adjustment of policy to achieve the targets.
* In the Annual Progress Report and Annual Growth Survey, provide comparable information on the progress reached and the reasons for this, including the shortfalls.
* Establish sub-targets for key priorities – e.g. children, youth, homeless, migrants, Roma, long-term unemployed, single parents.
* Invest in more timely social data and the development of new indicators/data collection mechanism that can capture the most vulnerable groups – e.g. homeless and migrants.
* Explicitly monitor and report on the broader dashboard of social indicators, e.g. those established in the employment and social protection performance monitor, and ensure coherence within the overall Joint Assessment Framework.
* Establish a new target for reducing inequality, based on the indicator used in the social scoreboard (20/80% quintile).
* Consider a target for Adult lifelong learning and adult literacy.
* **What has been the added value of the seven action programmes for growth? Do you have concrete examples of the impact of such programmes? [*"Flagship initiatives": "Digital agenda for Europe", "Innovation Union", "Youth on the move", "Resource efficient Europe", "An industrial policy for the globalisation era", "Ag A confusing European social infrastructure***

In this response, we make particular reference to the **European Platform Against Poverty.** EAPN welcomed the initial launching of the EPAP, and felt that it brought a clear added value if it was to operate as a genuine platform and framework for action to deliver on the poverty target. However, three major difficulties are seen:

1. The confusion over the social infrastructure between the EPAP and other instruments, including the Social Investment Package, the Social OMC, the Social Dimension of the EMU.
2. The delivery of the EPAP itself, with its main added value in terms of agenda-setting but failure to connect with stakeholders at the national level
3. The missing reference of the need to propose an EU integrated strategy to fight poverty and achieve the target.
4. The EPAP is meant to be a ‘platform for horizontal cooperation, providing a dynamic framework for action.’[[21]](#footnote-21) However, t**he current social infrastructure is not clear**. EAPN finds confusion between the roles of the **European Platform Against Poverty (EPAP), the Social OMC,** and now **the Social Investment Package**, as well as the role of the Social Scoreboards in the **Social Dimension of the EMU**.

The **Social Investment Package** provides an important basis for seeing social policy as an investment, not a cost, and includes guidelines and some interesting strategies for specific groups and themes (Investing in Children, Combatting Homelessness and implementing Active Inclusion). However, little progress has been made to encourage and support Member States to deliver on these priorities. Care has to be taken to ensure that a social investment approach does not undermine support for social protection systems, which are fundamental to preventing, as well as tackling, poverty.

The **Social Dimension of the EMU**[[22]](#footnote-22) Social Scoreboards offer key indicators to measure growing social imbalances within and between Member States. At the moment these are two separate scoreboards. The first set are part of the Alert Mechanism[[23]](#footnote-23) whilst the second set with different indicators is the new social and employment scoreboard covering unemployment, NEETS, disposable income, at-risk-of-poverty and inequalities (S80/S20). However the relationship between the two is not clear, nor how this relates to the overarching set of social indicators, (i.e. Social Protection Performance Monitor) or how it will be made effective to prevent negative social impact of macroeconomic and other policies.

The **Social OMC** has provided an essential framework for shared social knowledge built on partnership, working towards Common Objectives, with national reporting involving stakeholders, based on access to rights, resources and services. This is currently being put at risk. However, the Social OMC is largely invisible. National Social Reports are no longer obligatory, with limited stakeholder engagement and without a clear feed into the National Reform Programmes, with few NSR’s being produced in time for the NRPs (only 8 this year), whilst Peer Reviews have restricted engagement with civil society and have unclear policy follow up in the Commision’s and SPC work programme. This represents a grave loss of this important social space and social agenda to underpin the detail of Europe 2020 partnership working and to support cross-national policy and practice development.

**A clear clarification must be made on how all these instruments are to work together to strengthen the social dimension of Europe 2020.**

1. **Implementation of the EPAP.** The major added value from the EPAP has been agenda-setting and a more developed process of inter-institutional working (delivering action across the policy spectrum) between different DGs on specific initiatives – clear examples of this are seen in the work on the poverty target and the ESF and General Regulation, providing guidelines for the follow up on the 20% ring-fencing of ESF on poverty. However it has been difficult to see concrete results of the EPAP at national level, with weak implementation at national level and lack of mainstreaming into the dominant European Semester. The weak link to the national stakeholders, reduced to a one-off yearly event (the Annual Convention) which fails to make a consistent link to national stakeholder engagement in Europe 2020 and the European Semester, and the irregular and limited exchange meetings with the Commission at EU level, also undermines the supposed commitment to a ‘dynamic’ partnership approach.
2. **No substitute for an overarching strategy to fight poverty**. The major weakness of the EPAP, is that it did not set out to build consensus for an integrated strategy to fight poverty and social exclusion. This strategy needed to be built on the principles and common objectives of the Social OMC, focussed on access to rights, resources and services. (see proposal for integrated strategy to fight poverty in EAPN’s Mid-Term Review Position Paper).
* Such an Integrated Strategy should:
1. ***Aim to eradicate poverty and promote social inclusion for all groups****, ensuring access to rights, resources and services and implementing the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the horizontal social clauses (Art 9 and 10, TFEU).*
2. ***Reduce inequality*** *by promoting fairer income distribution, and redistribution through promoting tax justice and access to services****.***
3. ***Support a Social Investment approach****, which invests in people through essential universal social protection/minimum income as well as enabling services with the explicit objective to reduce poverty and inequality.*
4. ***Progress the development of EU wide social standards****, starting with a Framework Directive on minimum income under TFEU Art175 to ensure decent living standards to keep people close to the labour market and ensure a dignified life.*
5. ***Promote Integrated Active Inclusion****: Adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services for people in working age, insisting on rights to income support and services for all across the life-cycle regardless of their employment situation.*
6. ***Invest in durable quality of work and employment****: Support people, and especially key groups facing multiple obstacles, into good and sustainable jobs, pro-actively tackling in-work poverty and supporting transitions from school to work, between jobs, and from work to retirement.*
7. ***Ensure access to quality services****: particularly universal access to benefits and services: education and training and lifelong learning, employment support and counselling, affordable health and long-term care, affordable housing and quality social services, essential public services including energy and transport services.*
8. ***Promote empowerment and participation*** *as an essential pre-requisite for social inclusion and active citizenship in the management of the services as well as in the overarching policy development.*
9. ***Pro-actively tackle discrimination and establish and implement sub-strategies*** *for key target groups and themes as endorsed by the Social investment Package: e.g. Investing in children, combating homelessness, Roma inclusion strategies, but also for older people and migrants (including undocumented).*
10. ***Promote social innovation that prioritizes ‘more effective services and methods****’ without undermining existing effective public services, and that gives priority to supporting local initiatives that respond to community needs.*

**2) Adapting the Europe 2020 strategy: the growth strategy for a post-crisis Europe**

***Content and implementation***

* **Does the EU need a comprehensive and overarching medium-term strategy for growth and jobs for the coming years?**

Our starting point is a rejection of the ‘old’ growth and jobs model, that failed to deliver on poverty during Lisbon. The questions for this consultation should **instead be asking if the EU needs a comprehensive and overarching medium and long-term strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The answer is yes**.

It is essential that Europe 2020 refocuses on restoring balance to economic and social objectives, which can deliver shared prosperity and a sustainable future for the EU. Growth alone will not ensure a reduction in poverty, quality jobs, nor sustainable livelihoods (nor delivery on climate change and resource efficiency). In reality, this requires a shift towards a more sustainable development model which puts the economy at the service of an inclusive and sustainable society. Will the EU take on this long-term challenge? A dialogue space is urgently needed to articulate how such a model could be developed.

**In the short and medium term**, **the European Semester must be made the instrument to deliver a rejuvenated Europe 2020,** focused on delivering its objectives and targets, rather than primarily a tool to deliver the Stability and Growth Pact, delivered through Stability or Convergence Programmes. Currently, even many of the stated means of achieving the social dimension are determined by other economic goals e.g. the over-emphasis on compulsion and cost-cutting in public services and benefits, as well as through a narrow employment-only focus as the only solution for addressing poverty and social exclusion, rather than supportive, integrated active inclusion approaches based on universal access to social protection and public services. All parts of the Strategy and Semester mechanisms should then reflect this rebalancing including the Annual Growth Survey (AGS), the Commission’s Guidance for NRPs, and the CSRs. The Commission’s proposals on reducing income taxes to make them more ‘growth friendly’, whilst important for their focus on tackling tax evasion and avoidance, are also liable to have a negative impact which overly strong focuses on ‘consumption’ and indirect taxes which disproportionately fall on those on the lowest incomes.

For this reason, EAPN sees the need for both a **move forward towards a Social as well as an Economic Union** as a key priority for the EU. But it will be necessary to have a distinct social strategy and agenda – a Social OMC, to work out the detail of how the social dimension of the EU can be delivered. This should include more specific social objectives, but must feed into Europe 2020 at the highest level, or it risks being side-lined. **Key to this approach is the need to take the poverty guidelines out of the employment guidelines and Joint Employment Report, with its own guidelines and report – to allow an integrated approach on social protection and social inclusion to provide a balanced focus with employment policies**.

The Lisbon Treaty social clause (Article 9) must be operationalized and applied to all areas of policy, including Structural Funds, EMU etc, to ensure delivery on these commitments as the Treaty requires. Social Impact Assessment must be converted into an operational tool to ensure that social goals are mainstreamed across the whole Europe 2020 and Semester process at all stages (ex-ante to ex-post). The EU could lead the way in demonstrating that it could be done effectively. For the Eurozone, ensuring that the new Scoreboards promoting the social dimension of the EMU influence policy is essential. If this is not done then the social, and particularly the poverty reduction commitments will continue to be undermined by the regressive impact of the current macro-economic goals.

* **What are the most important and relevant areas to be addressed in order to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth?**

***We set out below concrete proposals to make progress on a balanced social and economic agenda to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*.**

* Make progress towards a Social as well as an Economic and Banking Union as part of the post 2015 road map.
* Start the debate on how the EU can deliver social progress beyond GDP, supporting an inclusive and sustainable development model ensuring shared prosperity and well-being.
* Prepare a Communication which sets out guidelines for coherent smart, sustainable and inclusive growth which can deliver on the goals and targets of Europe 2020 and confirms the macroeconomic objectives as the servant to a more inclusive and sustainable EU. Make the Semester the key instrument of Europe 2020.
* Introduce a new Golden Rule, which operationalizes the horizontal clause and ex-ante social impact assessment methodology, by requiring economic and other policies to prove their contribution to social goals and the targets and not to undermine them.
* Give priority to reducing inequality through redistribution and resourcing a more equal society – particularly a focus on more progressive taxation and tax justice.
* Develop separate social protection/social inclusion guidelines for the poverty target, outside the employment guidelines and require the development of a separate Joint Social Protection/Inclusion Report on an equal footing with the Joint Employment Report developed by the SPC with the Commission.
* Encourage a more equal role for employment and social/equality actors to monitor the social impact of economic priorities and to support the development of an integrated inclusive growth approach within the Commission and within Council formations, i.e. between EPC, EMCO and SPC.
* Effectively mainstream the social and employment scoreboards into the Alert Mechanism on the same basis as other economic indicators, and ensure that they act as triggers to policy change when the imbalances increase beyond an agreed level.
* Make the Annual Progress Report on Europe 2020 goals and targets the central document to drive the European Semester and/or rename/refocus the Annual Growth Survey to mainstream the core objectives of Europe 2020, aligning the Stability and Growth goals to not compromise these.
* Organize all instruments in the Semester systematically, to reflect the main objectives and targets and the necessary policies to achieve them, i.e. separate sections on all objectives and targets, with an assessment of how the total package contributes to their achievement.
* Restore balance to economic and social CSRs. Country Specific Recommendations should be addressed to all MS who are not making progress on the poverty target, and the other social targets.
* Support the development of a Social OMC promoting a detailed EU Social Agenda and mechanism, to feed into Europe 2020 in order to ensure detailed development of effective policies and the strengthening of the social area within Europe 2020. National Social Reports should be obligatory and be timed to feed into the NRPs, documenting Member States’ plans to implement on integrated strategies to fight poverty, including on access to an adequate minimum income. These should then underpin the reporting on the poverty-reduction and other social targets in the NRP.
* **What new challenges should be taken into account in the future?**

The major new challenge, as highlighted above, is how to ensure a coherent and balanced economic and social agenda, where the economy delivers on social (and environmental objectives), rather than as a goal in itself.

A key new challenge that must be confronted is growing inequality and social divergences. As highlighted by the new social scoreboard, inequality continues to rise in most countries, particularly in the South and East of the EU.

Inequality, not only widens the gap between rich and poor, undermining social cohesion and increasing social polarisation and antagonism, but specifically undermines economic stability and growth, as highlighted by the Social Dimension of the EMU.

Discrimination and Gender Equality must be more convincingly mainstreamed to ensure that all needs are faced and equal opportunities and outcomes promoted.

Increasing meaningful participation and democratic legitimacy, as outlined above, must be a core priority.

* **How could the strategy best be linked to other EU policies?**

EAPN supports the development of Europe 2020 as an overarching framework, if significant steps are taken to transform Europe 2020 into an ambitious strategy, which is focussed on people in Europe, protecting as well as enabling them, and ensuring that economic goals deliver on social objectives. However, the strategy and Semester process will not be able to deal with the detail of the necessary policies. It will be crucial to support the detailed development of the specific policy areas and to enable the space for adequate exchange, and mutual learning, which can then inform and feed into the Europe 2020 reports and process. For example in the area of poverty and social exclusion, the deepening of the Social OMC is crucial, covering the 3 pillars (social inclusion, pensions, health and long-term care) in order to systematically engage with the the broad areas of social inclusion and social protection, with the development of detailed national social reports. These should be timed to feed into the Europe 2020 and Semester ie to the NRPs, and include systematic mutual exchange processes, that include national governments and national and EU stakeholders through Peer Reviews.

* **What would improve stakeholder involvement in a post-crisis growth strategy for Europe? What could be done to increase awareness, support and better implementation of this strategy in your country?**

EAPN members, reject that the EU is in a post-crisis situation. The social crisis is not over, as EU poverty and exclusion, as well as inequality levels continue to increase in and between most countries. The EU must focus on inclusive and sustainable growth, as well as stopping and reversing the social impact of the crisis through short-term emergency investment plans. Taking concrete and visible actions are a pre-requisite to restoring confidence in the strategy. Without this, it will be difficult to animate stakeholders to get involved in a process which does not seem to be safeguarding their interests.

In terms of specific actions to increase stakeholder involvement, the first step is to gain explicit expressions of political will and recognition of the added value that such engagement can bring for better policy solutions.

A new commitment then must be made to developing guidelines for transparent and effective dialogue structures at the national and EU level – where citizens can feel that their voice is heard and their views are taken on board. This should be matched by engagement with national and EU Parliaments.

The strategy needs to be effectively monitored, through Europe 2020, with explicit responsibility at the highest level for the success of the engagement.

Finally, the strategy needs high visibility and ownership. This means public awareness–raising, but not just by EU or government-organized communication campaigns which are unlikely to have much impact on a highly sceptical public. Independent grass-roots stakeholders, particularly civil society who have a higher level of credibility[[24]](#footnote-24) with the public, could become key partners to help build capacity but also promote wider debate and discussion through a wide range of different tools.

**How**

* Develop together with MS and stakeholders obligatory transparent EU guidelines for engagement of stakeholders at all stages of Semester and in the design, delivery and evaluation of policy (i.e. NRPs, CSRs and feed into the AGS) with an implementation handbook providing inspiring practices and tips on effective methodologies.[[25]](#footnote-25) Mainstream these into the Guidance note on the NRPs, ensuring systematic monitoring in the NRPs.
* Invest in participation and democratic accountability, and take the time to rethink methods of operating, evaluating the benefits and costs of failure to engage people in the Semester.
* Ensure that people with direct experience of poverty, together with the NGOs that support them, are explicitly involved in the dialogue process at EU, national and sub-national level.
* Require the involvement of national parliaments through all stages of the Semester, with the organization of a national debate on the progress on the strategy, including on the poverty target, and in the approval of the NRP.
* Support the call for of an inter-institutional agreement regarding the Semester between the European Parliament, Council and Commission as called for by the EP.[[26]](#footnote-26)
* In the AGS and Annual Progress Report, make a specific analysis of the state of play on the extent and quality of democratic and stakeholder engagement, developing common indicators and reporting process, including stakeholder satisfaction surveys.
* Transform the European Semester Officers into comprehensive promoters for stakeholder engagement with a specific task to engage all stakeholders, including civil society and people experiencing poverty in the Semester, with a budget to support capacity building, awareness-raising and mobilisation activities around Europe 2020/the Semester and its impact.
* Include stakeholders in the bi-lateral meetings between Government and Commission on planning and review of policies and funding to deliver on the targets.

***Tools***

* **What type of instruments do you think would be more appropriate to use to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth?**

The Europe 2020 strategy operates as a soft method of coordination, focusing on establishing together shared objectives, common indicators, common national reporting and evaluation mechanisms on a yearly cycle. It is crucial however, that ownership is taken at national level. Primary to this would be to ensure that National Reform Programmes – become action plans, consensualized with parliaments and stakeholders and developed together across economic and social strands.

The added value of such instruments is both agenda-setting, andhelping to build consensus about common problems and common solutions. However, without citizen engagement, they became inter-governmental reporting mechanisms with little chance of ownership or accountability. Without Member State agreements, implementation remains a key challenge. Regular and effective monitoring is therefore crucial.

The limitations of ‘soft methods’ in areas of strong MS subsidiarity is clear.

**EAPN would underline the need for new instruments: 1) New investment plans and 2) Instruments to more explicitly harness EU funds for poverty and 3) Progress towards promoting EU-wide legal instruments to promote core social standards**.

1. **An urgent Marshall-type investment plan** is needed which can put into practice the Europe 2020 goals. This is particularly important, to deal with the urgency of rising poverty, particularly in Southern and Eastern Member States. In the short-term public investment is needed to develop an integrated plan to create quality jobs, invest in public services and defend universal social protection..
2. **New priority to the make effective use of EU Structural and Investment funds**. Explicit monitoring of compliance by Governments and Managing Authorities of the ring-fencing of 20% of ESF, is crucial in the coming period involving the review of stakeholders through the partnership principle. Member States should be required to report in details on the use of Structural and investment funds to achieve the poverty target, including delivery on the ex-ante conditionality on the antipoverty strategy, also as part of the NRPs. This should be reviewed in detail in the Annual Progress Report, linked to the Annual Growth Survey. Most importantly, the EU needs to find a way of connecting again to supporting grass-root initiatives not only funding large-scale, top-down government programmes, often already in motion. The EU should invest in a new poverty programme to support bottom-up innovatrion – a well-resourced local action programme to fight poverty which could support new models of social delivery and cross-national learning.
3. **Some explicit progress needs to be made on EU-wide instruments to promote social standards**.. The EU strategy needs to be seen to be defending the European Social Model, based on access to universal services for all, protecting people against all risks across the life-cycle. Targeting without a universal right to services, embeds’ poor services for the poor’ and fails to promote equality or prevent or alleviate poverty. There is a key need tor the EU to move forward on defining common principles for social standards, ensuring a level playing field. For EAPN the starting point should be investigation into a Framework Directive on minimum income[[27]](#footnote-27), under TFEU Art 175, to ensure minimum decent living standards across the EU, to keep people close to the labour market and to ensure a dignified life.
* **What would best be done at EU level to ensure that the strategy delivers results? What would best be done at Member State level?**

As highlighted above, EAPN believes in a strong EU role, as long as a Social and Inclusive Europe is being promoted, with a balanced economic and social agenda, where economic policy contributes to social objectives rather than an end in itself. The EU role is to set common objectives and targets, agree indicators, establish common guidelines and principles, build consensus on a common strategy, promote mutual learning and monitor the impact and results. We strongly believe that the EU must insist on guidelines for effective engagement with parliament, but also national and EU stakeholders.

Currently the argument about subsidiarity in the social area, is being strongly devalued, when in reality the EU is intervening directly in national budgets through the six and two pack, , requiring cuts in social expenditure, particularly within the Euro zone. The EU needs to provide a common vision, and inspiration of common EU framework and standards, if people are to believe that the EU is there for them

At the MS level, Member states should decide how they deliver on the shared strategies, but according to EU-wide common standards. It is up to MS to decide on the detail of the policies, to engage stakeholders and national parliaments in the delivery, according to EU guidlines and to feedback to the EU level and to other MS, the reality, the shortfalls, and the dangers of current policies as well as the successes.

A new relationship between MS and the EU needs to be forged on the basis of a transparent and consistent relationship across all spheres.

* **How can the strategy encourage Member States to put a stronger policy focus on growth?**

A short answer – by not insisting on further austerity, and by encouraging/requiring MS followed by CSRs to invest in inclusive growth, based on investment in quality jobs, social protection and public services, and redistributive tax policies. Making EU funds available for investment is therefore crucial, including the funds of the EIB.

However, it must not be growth at any price, but inclusive and sustainable growth.

* **Are targets useful? Please explain.**

This is already explained in the Question 1 above. For EAPN the targets are useful, as agenda-setting instruments, raising visibility of the impact of policy on r poverty and inequality for example and to drive policy change, including through attracting EU Funds. But they are only useful if the targets are credible, ambitious enough and progress made. This will only happen if they are linked to effective strategies. See previous section.

* **Would you recommend adding or removing certain targets, or the targets in general? Please explain.**

See answers to this section in Question 1:

* We would defend the poverty target, but require the use of all three indicators consistently.
* Support the development of sub-targets for key groups – eg child poverty.
* An employment target linked to quality indicators.
* An education target that looks beyond formal education.
* A specific target on inequality (20%/80%).
* **What are the most fruitful areas for joint EU-Member State action? What would be the added value?**

We find this a very strange question and are not clear what they are looking for, and would ask for input from members.

1. **Do you have any other comment or suggestion on the Europe 2020 strategy that you would like to share?**

We would highlight EAPN’s comprehensive input – on how to make the Strategy deliver on poverty,

Our demands are for a transformative EU agenda

1. Building a coherent economic/social strategy and governance model
2. Establishing credible poverty reduction and social targets
3. Prioritising an EU integrated Strategy to fight poverty and an urgent Marshall-type investment plan
4. Establishing democratic and accountable governance
5. Using EU money for poverty.

SEE EAPN Position on the Mid-Term Review with link – we may add more detail from this part in the position paper.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please send your contribution, along with any other documents, to SG-EUROPE2020-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu.

Please see EAPN’ Input to the Mid-Term Review: Can the strategy be made fit for purpose to deliver its promises on poverty reduction?

1. In January 2014 the Commission launched a [framework](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2014:0015:FIN:EN:PDF) for energy and climate policies up to 2030. A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 40% below the 1990 level, an EU-wide binding target for renewable energy of at least 27% and renewed ambitions for energy efficiency policies are among the main objectives of the new framework. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. REFERENCE [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. EC (5.3.2014) Communication: [Taking Stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/europe2020stocktaking_en.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Measured by 3 indicators: AROPE (at risk of poverty and/or exclusion): at risk of poverty, severely materially deprived and people in households with very low work intensity [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. AROPE: At risk of poverty and social exclusion, calculated as an aggregate of 3 indicators: at risk of poverty, severe material deprivation and low work intensity [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. EAPN (Dec 2013) [Lifeboat or Life Sentence?:](http://www.eapn.eu/en/news-and-publications/publications/eapn-position-papers-and-reports/new-eapn-report-on-troika-programmes-and-impact-lifeboat-or-life-sentence) The Troika and emergency assistance programmes and their impact on poverty and social exclusion [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. EC Press Release (31.03.2014): [The Europe 2020 strategy beyond the crisis](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-263_en.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. EC (Dec 2013): [Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2013](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?pager.offset=0&catId=738&langId=en&furtherPubs=no&pager.offset=10&catId=738&langId=en&furtherPubs=no&catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7684); p.22 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Avram et al, 2013 ‘[The distributional effects of fiscal consolidation in 9 countries’](https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/publications/working-papers/euromod/em2-13.pdf). Euromod Working Paper no EM 2/13 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. EAPN (2013): [Widening the Gap](http://www.eapn.eu/en/news-and-publications/publications/eapn-position-papers-and-reports/eapn-publishes-widening-the-gap-2013-marked-the-3rd-round-of-national-reform-programmes-since-the-launch-of-europe-2020-in-2010-eapn-has-engaged-in-this-process-every-year-): 2013 NRP Assessment [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. EAPN (2013): [Life boat or Life sentence?](http://www.eapn.eu/en/news-and-publications/publications/eapn-position-papers-and-reports/new-eapn-report-on-troika-programmes-and-impact-lifeboat-or-life-sentence) Troika and Emergency Assistance Programmes and impact on poverty and social exclusion [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. EAPN (2013): [Widening the Gap](http://www.eapn.eu/en/news-and-publications/publications/eapn-position-papers-and-reports/eapn-publishes-widening-the-gap-2013-marked-the-3rd-round-of-national-reform-programmes-since-the-launch-of-europe-2020-in-2010-eapn-has-engaged-in-this-process-every-year-): EAPN 2013 NRP Assessment [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. EMIN project (2014): [Analysis of Minimum Income Schemes – Ireland](http://eminnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/emin-ireland-year-1-report-final.pdf): Robin Hanan and Audrey Deane [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. EMIN Project (2014): Analysis of Minimum Income Schemes – Portugal: Elizabeth Santos, Helder Ferreira, Liliana Pinto, Paula Cruz [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. EMIN project (2014): “The Progressive Realization of Adequate Minimum Income Schemes - Hungary”; Dr. Krisztina Jász, coordinator of the leader body of HAPN, in cooperation with Johanna László, Katalin Juhos, Ágnes Néray [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. D Stuckler and S Basu: ‘[The Body Economic, why austerity kills’](http://thebodyeconomic.com/) (2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. EAPN (March 2014): [Getting progress on poverty and participation: EAPN assessment and proposals for Country-Specific Recommendations 2014](http://www.eapn.eu/en/news-and-publications/publications/eapn-position-papers-and-reports/eapn-launches-its-proposals-for-country-specific-recommendations-csrs-for-2014) and [Letter to June Council](http://www.eapn.eu/images/stories/docs/letters/2014-EAPN-letter-to-June-European-Council-240614.pdf) with Flash Assessment of 2014 CSRs. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. EAPN (2013) [Widening the GAP: EAPN 2013 Assessment of the NRPs](http://www.eapn.eu/images/stories/docs/NRPs/2013-EAPN-NRP-Report.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. One hour worked in the week of reference (Eurostat definition underpinning the employment target). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The 3 AROPE indicators: at risk of poverty (60% median household disposable income), severe material deprivation, low work intensity. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. 1) Delivering Action to fight poverty and social exclusion across the policy spectrum; 2) Making EU funding deliver on social inclusion and social cohesion objectives; 3) Developing an evidence-based approach to social innovation and reforms; promoting a partnership approach and the social economy; stepping up policy coordination among MS, 4) Building on the legacy of the European Year against poverty and social exclusion. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. EC Communication (2.10.2013) ‘Strengthening the Social Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union’ [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. MIP Indicators: participation rate, long-term unemployment, youth unemployment complimented with NEETs, at risk of poverty and social exclusion (AROPE) [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See [Flash Eurobarometer 373](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_373_en.pdf) (March 2013) which highlights 59% of people support that NGOs share their values and interests and trust them to act in the right way to influence policy [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. See EAPN Handbook for stakeholder engagement: Give a voice to citizens *(coming out Aug 2014)* [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. EP [Report on European Semester for economic coordination - the AGS](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2014-0091+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN). Feb 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. See EAPN Working Document on a Framework Directive on Minimum Income (Sept 2010) [↑](#footnote-ref-27)