

11th of April 2015

To: Jean-Claude JUNCKER, President of the European Commission

Dear President,

We are writing to you on behalf of EAPN, (the European Anti-Poverty Network) the largest platform of anti-poverty organizations in Europe, representing more than 6000 organisations across 31 countries, working with and for people with direct experience of poverty.

We strongly wish to express our concern about the **delay in the Mid-Term Review of the Europe 2020 strategy until the end of 2015**, and the message this sends about **the low priority of Europe 2020 and commitment to fight poverty for the new Commission**.

Why it is important:

- Europe 2020 was meant to be the Commission's key strategy to promote a smart, sustainable, inclusive recovery, ensuring the burden of the crisis was equally shared.
- The target to reduce poverty by at least 20 million by 2020 was a crucial sign of the EU's commitment to social Europe. 1 in 4 of the population now face poverty – 6 million more than before the start of the strategy. This is a reason for stronger EU action, beyond growth and jobs, not attempts to get rid of the target and poverty from the discourse.
- The timetable for approval on Europe 2020 was publicized and agreed by all parties; the postponement erodes trust in the coherence of the Commission and its commitment to the goals.
- The delay contradicts the new Commission's promise to increase participation and ownership in the Semester¹ showing a worrying disrespect to stakeholders, like EAPN, who have actively engaged their national members in the consultation process, believing it to be an EU priority and that their views could make a difference².
- The action only confirms the general invisibility of Europe 2020 and social targets in the new Commission's documents, particularly the AGS 2015 and Investment Package.

We therefore urge the new Commission to:

¹ Annual Growth Survey 2015.

² EAPN actively engaged its members in preparing our own position, which formed the basis of our consultation response and was discussed widely including in a conference with the Commission, Parliament and EESC on the 3 October.

- **Confirm the EU's commitment to the Europe 2020 strategy for inclusive and sustainable growth and the continuation of the poverty and other social targets**, in line with the main conclusions of the Assessment report³,
- **Make a commitment to 'listen more' and 'do better'** in promoting access for all to quality jobs, services and social protection developing guidelines for structured, regular stakeholder dialogue at national and EU level.
- **Mainstream Europe 2020 into the Investment Package priorities and ensure that the Europe 2020 social goals and targets are prioritized in the European Semester** particularly in the 2015 CSRs and AGS 2016.
- **Set out a firm timeline for delivery on the Mid-Term Review** including a transparent process saying how parliament and stakeholders like civil society organization will be engaged in the finalization process at the EU and national level to ensure ownership.


EAPN is ready to support the new Commission in promoting a fairer EU and an EMU for citizens. Clearly Europe 2020 and its social targets are a vital part of this picture. We urge you to take action to reassure citizens that Social Europe is safe with the new Commission.

We hope that you will take our messages on board, and would welcome any opportunity to follow up this input with a direct exchange with you regarding their concerns.

Yours sincerely,



Sérgio Aires



EAPN Director

Barbara Helfferich
EAPN President

Cc: Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Skills and Mobility.
Vice President Dombrovskis, European Commission
Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament; Thomas Händel MEP, Chair of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, European Parliament

See also:

- [EAPN's Letter to the EPSCO March 2015](#)
- [EAPN's 2015 CSR Assessment and Proposals and Country Fiches.](#)
- EAPN's Response to the [Annual Growth Survey](#) 2015
- [EAPN Input to the Mid-Term Review of the Europe 2020 strategy](#) – “Can the Strategy be made fit for purpose to deliver its promises on poverty reduction?”
- [“From Austerity to Inclusive Growth – What Progress?” EAPN Assessment of the NRP 2014](#)
- [EAPN 2014: “Giving a Voice to Citizens – Building stakeholder engagement for effective decision-making”](#) – Guidelines for Decision-makers at EU and national levels.

³ EC (March 2015) Report on the results of the consultation on the Mid-Term Review.