



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2010/11

The EU Year of Poverty generated a lot of activities in Denmark and was a success in that respect. A number of new NGO alliances were formed and managed to put poverty on the public agenda while the Government kept very low profile. All it did was to set up a website and hold a start and an end conference for 2010.

As it happens the EU Year coincided with a tendency away from solidarity towards increasing poverty and social inequality. An outcome of the year is that EAPN Denmark is invited to participate in a conference about poverty indicators. The policy outcome of the year is a measly reform programme from the Government.

Stopfattigdom.nu (Endpoverty now network) will be carried on by all involved NGOs and it seems to be needed more than ever. The Danish Reform Programme 2020 has only 2½ pages about social inclusion and the word poverty does not show. The target for 2020 is that the number of low-employment families (whatever that is?) should be reduced by 22000 – which is a tenth of what Denmark ought to contribute for the EU to reach its target.

The only positive angle to the NRP we can see is that social inclusion is elevated to a strategic level together with other policy parameters. Nevertheless we cannot be happy with a reform programme of this poor quality and it may be that National Action Plans will come back.

On January 20 2011 EAPN Denmark sent an open letter to the (then) Minister for Social Affairs, Ms. Benedikte Kjør, with our recommendations for targets, strategies, and indicators. We recommend yearly stock-taking conferences for all stakeholders and that the ministry sets up an advisory group with representatives of social NGOs and other stakeholders. The Minister thanks us kindly in her letter of February 28 and invites us into the Social Affairs Contact Group. Our experiences from the two meetings so far is that they consist mostly of one-way communication. They were called with only one week's notice without agenda and no minutes were issued. Our input to the meetings have been to press for more substantial chapters about social inclusion and poverty in the reform plans.

In the beginning of the year we also sent to the Minister the letter drafted by EAPN Brussels urging the Governments of the Member Countries to permanently fund the national Anti-Poverty networks and support the inclusion of people actually experiencing poverty in their network activities. The letter has not yet been answered by the Danish Government!

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