EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

Brussels, 16th April 2010

Reference: Proposals to ensure that the social objective is effectively integrated in the Commission's proposals for New Integrated Guidelines for Europe 2020.

Dear President Barroso,

The Commission's proposals in Europe 2020 for a relative poverty target to reduce poverty by 25% by 2010, delivered through a flagship platform on poverty, involving a reinforced Social OMC was welcomed by EAPN. Although Member States have delayed the decision on the actual poverty target, we urgently hope that the Council will agree in June the proposed target, as a strong visible commitment of political will to make a difference on poverty, and to put people at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy.

It is therefore vital that the Integrated Guidelines effectively integrate the new social objective, to ensure the strategy delivers on the stated goal of "*social and territorial cohesion, such that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take an active part in society* "[1]. The Guidelines must also ensure that the Social OMC is given a strong, explicit place in the delivery of the Europe 2020 strategy as well as maintaining it's own autonomous process.

EAPN members have been actively involved in attempting to engage with and to monitor the existing growth and jobs strategy, at national and EU level, and are strongly aware of the benefits and shortcomings of the existing process and guidelines[2]. We therefore set out **5 key Recommendations** which we believe are essential in order to ensure an effective and strong social dimension to the new guidelines, which can enable Member States to deliver on the poverty and social exclusion target and the social objectives.

EAPN 5 Key Recommendations for strong Social Guidelines in Europe 2020

1) **A Cross-cutting social guideline and social impact mechanisms** to ensure the whole strategy delivers on social inclusion and poverty, reflecting the new social articles in the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights

2) **A specific social guideline which delivers on poverty**, **separate from the Employment Guidelines**. Employment alone cannot be a solution to poverty when large sections of the population are outside the labour market and when further actions are needed to ensure access to rights, resources and services. The Guidelines must aim to deliver the Common Objectives of the Social OMC, and give the Social OMC a key, but not exclusive role, in strengthening social protection and universal services and specific social inclusion measures to prevent/combat poverty.

3) **Economic Guidelines that contribute to social inclusion** and do not contradict the social objective. Stability, growth and jobs are tools for inclusion and building prosperity for all, not an end in themselves. Macro economic guidelines need to explicitly defend adequate financing for social protection systems as a

[1] Europe 2020: A European Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, P.4
[2] See EAPN Social Inclusion Scoreboard: EAPN response to the National Implementation Reports 2007 of the revised Lisbon Strategy.
See Strengthening the social dimension of the Lisbon Strategy: Proposals from EAPN (July 2007): www.eapn.eu.

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social investment, and encourage actions which close the inequality gap with progressive taxation measures. Micro-economic guidelines should also ensure that the expansion of the internal market is not made at the expense of social rights.

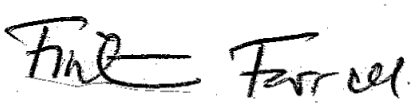
4) **Employment Guidelines that support quality, sustainable jobs and creating an inclusive labour market** for all, through integrated active inclusion approaches, and implementation of anti-discrimination measures. EAPN proposes 2 specific guidelines on **quality jobs and inclusive labour market.**

   Quality jobs should encourage investment in new services to meeting social and environmental needs which fully appreciate the role of the third sector and the social economy, but also by implementing agreed quality work principles – including living wages, lifelong learning and career development, gender equality, , stable contracts, work-life balance, diversity and non-discrimination.
   Delivering an inclusive labour market must be embedded in active inclusion approaches, which guarantee adequate minimum income, access to services and personalized pathway support into quality jobs, but also by implementing **anti-discrimination** legislation and measures to ensure access to decent jobs for all.

5) **A specific Governance and Participation Guideline** to ensure structured dialogue with all key stakeholders, including civil society and people in poverty. The Strategy calls for stronger governance to achieve "transformational change", it is also essential to get ownership and visibility amongst EU citizens. A specific guideline would encourage MS to develop structured and effective dialogue with all key actors – including civil society and people in poverty, who are crucial to the success of the strategy.

We attach a **background document** which sets out these proposals more fully, together with **proposed text for the guidelines** in question.

Yours faithfully,



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