

2014 European Meeting of People experiencing Poverty

Funding the Fight against Poverty

Investing in the European Poverty Reduction Target

Brussels, 22-24 September 2014

An event organised by the **European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)**
with the support of the **EU Commission**



BACKGROUND

The European Meetings of People experiencing Poverty have played an important role in driving the development of the direct participation of people experiencing poverty. The European meeting is a key visible moment in this process but more importantly it acts as a catalyst for national processes and national meetings of people experiencing poverty. The European Meetings have been well documented and positively evaluated for their impact on the delegates and the guests who attend (see www.eapn.eu).

The first of these meetings was organised by the Belgian Government in 2001 as part of the EU inclusion process launched by the Lisbon European Council (March 2000). The meetings continue to contribute to key EU processes including the follow up of the poverty target of the Europe 2020 strategy and the EU Social Investment Package. The meetings have helped to keeping poverty and social exclusion visible in the European agenda. They have contributed to some key areas of policy development such as adequacy of minimum income, child poverty, housing and homelessness, indebtedness, the links between discrimination and poverty (particularly the realities for Roma community), and the impact of liberalization on public services.

The meetings help to put faces to the realities behind the numbers of people experiencing poverty, including the different realities for women and men throughout the life cycle. In addition the meetings provide a 'barometer' in relation to social and economic developments in Europe. The processes associated to this meeting assist in the journey from 'people experiencing poverty' to 'activists with direct experience of poverty' and past participants are now playing important roles in anti-poverty organisations.

WHO ARE THE MEETINGS FOR?

Invited National Delegations

- People experiencing poverty who are starting to connect to anti-poverty organisations
- Some previous delegates to help with continuity

Guests

- Rep of National and EU level Institutions (Political and Functionaries)
- Rep of NGOs, Social Partners, Academics and other relevant actors

General Public

- Some elements of the meeting are open to the General Public. The meeting can be followed on website (<http://voicesofpoverty-eu.net/>) and twitter #2014PEP

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE EUROPEAN MEETINGS

- To empower the delegates in their journey from People experiencing Poverty to Activists with direct experience of poverty engaged in their communities and organisations.
- To strengthen the participation of people experiencing poverty in Anti-Poverty NGOs and relevant policy making processes at local, national and EU levels.
- To facilitate exchange and learning and to stimulate further exchanges and joint projects.
- Reality Check: on the similarities and differences in different countries and for guests to check the reality of their approaches to fight poverty, against the experience on the ground and to adjust their policies and actions as necessary
- To strengthen the participation of people experiencing poverty in relevant EU processes

Interpretation: The plenary sessions on 22 and 24 Sept have interpretation in all the EU languages of the delegations. The workshops on the 23 Sept are in English with informal interpretation

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Monday 22 September

Venue: Charlemagne Building. Rue de la Loi 170, B-1000 Brussels (Beside Metro Schuman)

Welcoming Ceremony and Formal Opening

13.00 – 14.30 Registration of delegates and guests

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch for delegations

15.00 – 16.15 **Welcome - Presentation of the delegations and their creative messages**

“Where we find hope”

16.15 – 16.45 Tea/coffee Break

16.45 – 18.00 **Formal Opening**

Welcome and setting the context

- **Chair: Sergio Aires**, President EAPN,
- **Message from delegate of the 2013 PeP Meeting**
- **Presentation of EAPN Handbook on Participation**

Responses and presenting vision for the fight against poverty in the New Institutional Context

- **Franca Biondelli**, Undersecretary, Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- **Representative of the European Parliament** (President or one of the Vice Presidents to be invited)
- **Michel Servoz**, Director-General, EU Commission for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Responses and Questions from the delegates

18.00 – 19.00 **Continuation of Presentation of delegations and their messages**

19.30 – 20.30 Evening Meal for delegations

Tuesday 23 September

Venue: Auto World Brussels. Parc du Cinquantaire 11, 1000 Brussels

- 9.00 – 9.30 **Morning Energiser / Registration of Guests**
- 9.30 – 13.00 **5 Parallel Workshops on the theme of ‘Funding the fight against Poverty – Use of EU Structural Funds** (see next page for details)
- 13.00 – 14.30 Lunch
- 14.00 – 14.30 **Registration of Guests for workshops**
- 14.30 - 17.00 **5 Thematic Workshops** (see next page for details)
- Minimum Income for a decent life
 - Homeless not hopeless (building participation)
 - Youth, Poverty
 - Combating Poverty and fostering the Inclusion of Migrants
 - Wealth and Inequality and the fight against poverty
- 17.15 – 18.30 **Market Place - time for informal exchange between delegates and guests**
- Opening of the Market Place: László Andor**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- 20.00 – 22.00 **Conference Dinner**

Wednesday 24 September

Venue: Charlemagne Building. Rue de la Loi 170, B-1000 Brussels (Beside Metro Schuman)

- 9.00 – 9.30 **Morning Energiser**
- 9.30 – 11.30 **Report back from Workshops and Panel Discussion**
- Chair: Heather Roy** President Social Platform, Secretary General Eurodiaconia
- Panel:**
- **Zoltán Kazatsay**, Deputy Director-General, EU Commission for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, responsible for the ESF
 - **Thomas Handel**, President Employment and Social Affairs Committee, European Parliament (tbc)
 - **Thomas Dominique**, President EU Social Protection Committee
 - **NGO Representative with experience on the use of Structural Funds** (*two national NGO reps with experience of Structural Funds to be identified*)
- 11.30 – 12.00 Tea/coffee Break
- 12.00 -12.30 **Closing of the 2014 Meeting**

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch

13.30 **Delegates start to journey home**

INFORMATION ON THE WORKSHOPS

Funding the Fight against Poverty (including the use of EU Structural Funds): This topic has been chosen because there is now a new and potentially more favorable context both at national and EU level. EU Structural Funds should now deliver on the Europe 2020 poverty reduction target (i.e. to lift at least 20 Millions of people out of poverty by 2020) and 20% of the ESF will be dedicated to the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the period 2014-2020. Member States should include in their National Programmes, as a pre-condition, the existence of a national anti-poverty strategy that Structural Funds programmes will support financially. The new **Fund for European aid to the most deprived (FEAD)** also offers new opportunities to support social inclusion work. The workshop will try to build on this positive momentum.

It is not intended to have a theoretical discussion but rather to have a discussion on the basis of reflections from the delegates on existing social inclusion projects supported by Structural Fund and the types of projects that people experiencing poverty would like to see supported. Examples of other types of funding used to support the fight against poverty and social exclusion will also be discussed.

On this basis it is hoped to have an exchange between the delegates and representatives of Institutions and other relevant actors engaged in the design and delivery of structural Funds programmes. There will be delegations from 5 countries in each workshop who will present the preparation work they have done on this theme, followed by an open dialogue with representatives of Institutions and other key actors.

Thematic Workshops: The topics chosen for the workshop are topics which have been discussed and key messages and recommendations made at previous PeP meetings. The topics are also chosen because they are seen as particularly relevant at this time because of realities on the ground or developments in EU policies and debates. It is hoped that the workshops can show how the discussions and practices in relation to the topic have developed and if possible to show how recommendations from previous meetings have contributed to developments in the particular area.

- ⇒ **Minimum Income for a decent life** led by EAPN, the EMIN and the **European Reference Budget Network**
- ⇒ **Homeless not hopeless, building participation** led by FEANTSA
- ⇒ **Combating Poverty and Fostering the Inclusion of Migrants** led by PICUM and ENAR
- ⇒ **Youth and poverty** led by the **European Youth Forum**
- ⇒ **Wealth and Inequality and the fight against poverty** led by **Belgium Anti-Poverty Network**

