



**European Seminar
LET'S NOT LEAVE THEM BEHIND!
Early school leaving, poverty,
social exclusion**

DRAFT

EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

Cilap eapn Italia

PRESENTATION

Established more than 20 years ago, Collegamento italiano di lotta alla povertà, CILAP EAPN Italia, the Italian branch of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), has a membership of approximately 35 NGOs, networks of NGOs, social cooperatives and social research centres.

We are committed to:

Disseminating information on European social policies and fighting to make those policies reflect the needs of all the people living in the EU

Lobbying the Italian government and all the other interested institutions so that they meet the anti-poverty targets established by the Heads of State and Government in the “Europe 2020” Strategy

Giving “voice to the voiceless” by organizing structured meetings between social workers and operators, people experiencing poverty, administrators and decision-makers, in order to find a correct match between needs and the supply of services. The results of these meetings inform the documents presented by the Italian delegation to the European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty, held annually in Brussels.

Working with regional and provincial administrations to elaborate, monitor and assess their Plans against Poverty and Social Exclusion

Lobbying to ensure that a significant portion of the European Structural Funds, and the Social Fund in particular, is used to fight poverty and social exclusion

Promoting the creation of a National Scheme for an Adequate Minimum Income

Our website: www.cilap.eu

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Welcome to all!

CILAP EAPN ITALIA

FRAMEWORK

Today's meeting is part of a reflection on the **links between early school leaving, poverty and social exclusion** that our network started in 2014, led by our working group on "poverty and participation" alongside several member organizations, such as the associations Maestri di Strada and Don Tonino Bello, the social cooperative ERMES. We held a number of meetings and seminars that were attended by teachers and school administrators, non-teaching staff, parents, students of every level, from primary school to university, and people in poverty.

The document the Italian delegation presented to the 13th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, held in Brussels in September 2014, represents the first result of that reflection and a basis for moving forward to enable all of society to work together to **break the vicious circle between early school leaving, inter-generational transmission of poverty and high-risk forms of behavior among young people.**

Today we will discuss these themes with some of EAPN National Networks because we believe it is important to exchange good practices but, above all, because EAPN strongly believes that enduring results can be achieved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion only through a great joint effort, only through a European Strategy that is not a mere "wish list" but a real strategy with **common objectives, clear indications on how to reach them and binding commitments.**

Europe 2020 is half-way through. Two of its targets for 2020 are of interest here today: reducing the school dropout rate to 10% or less and lifting 20 million people out of poverty by the same date. At what point are we with these two targets?

As acknowledged by the Commission document "Taking stock of the Europe 2020 Strategy" (COM(2014) 130 final/2), the fight against poverty has suffered a heavy setback. In 2012 (latest available data) 124.2 million people living in the EU were at **risk of poverty and social exclusion**, an increase of 6,6 million from 2010. Between 2010-2012, the number of unemployed, working poor, young people out of work, NEET rose significantly. Inequalities have increased (See: new EC Social Scoreboard), especially in the Southern and Eastern EU countries. The highest price of the crisis is paid by the poorer countries (AROEPE 2012¹ = 50% in Greece, as against 15% in the Netherlands and the Czech Republic) and by those under Troika's agreements. In 2012, in the EU-28 the AROPE rate among minors was 28.1%, up from 27.3% in 2011; in Italy, it was 33.8%, up from 32.2% in 2011 and 29.1% in 2008. The National figure is therefore 5.7 percentage points higher than the EU average.

¹ AROPE: at risk of poverty and social exclusion aggregating 3 indicators: risk of poverty, severe material deprivation and, low-work intensity.

The risk of poverty among minors increases if at least one parent is foreign but decreases with the parents' increasing levels of education, a fact to be kept in mind when addressing the issue of the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

And how do things stand with the Europe 2020 target of a school dropout rate of less than 10% by 2020?

The news from Europe is good. The rate of early school leavers has fell from 15.7% to 12.7% in 2012; half of the member states have already reached or are about to achieve the goal. Experts consider this positive trend structural.

The news from Italy is somewhat less so. The Statistical Yearbook by the National Institute of Statistics reports that in 2011/12 Italy lost 7,800 students, extending this negative trend to four years. There are positive signs as well: in 12 months the school enrolment rate rose from 90 to 93%. But the European Commission brings us back to our hard reality: Italy is among the worst five in Europe (out of 28): 16.6% of students leave school too early, compared with an EU average of 12.7%.

Experience tells us that NGOs and voluntary associations, when working closely with the school system, can do a lot to help children and their families, especially the most disadvantaged, to overcome their poverty (both material and not), to help children complete their schooling, **strengthening their self-esteem and their ability to “be in the world”**.

This is what we will talk about today. With teachers and professors, with educators and parents, with those working every day with/for disadvantaged young people and their families and with people in poverty. With people who work in the same sectors as us but who come from other parts of Europe and have different experiences.