

30 January 2013

**Back EU fund to achieve the EU poverty reduction target: Support an ambitious EU Budget underpinned by minimum shares for ESF and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived**

**To: EU Prime Ministers/ Heads of State**

**Refer: European Council meeting, 7-8 February 2013**

Dear Prime Minister/Head of State,

You will meet your counterparts at the occasion of the next European Council meeting scheduled on February 7 to reach a final agreement on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020).

As you know, EAPN with 19 other social NGOs is coordinating a joint campaign [EU Money for Poverty Reduction Now!](#) The aim is to urge Member States to deliver on the EU Poverty Reduction target they agreed on in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy by supporting the minimum shares for the European Social Fund (i.e. both a minimum budget for the ESF of at least 25% of the Cohesion Policy's budget, and, at least 20% of the ESF earmarked for social inclusion and poverty reduction). Almost 13,000 people throughout the EU have already supported our [petition](#).

Given the recent rapid rise of the number of people living in poverty and social exclusion (119,6 million<sup>1</sup> in 2011 against 115 million in 2010) with devastating social consequences due to the economic crisis and austerity measures, undermining an inclusive recovery, the EU has no other choice but to make poverty a priority. This means agreeing an ambitious EU budget which will ensure concrete progress on the EU poverty reduction target.

Hence, we urge you to support the following points in view of the European Council meeting on 7 February:

- A strong Cohesion Policy's Budget at the level of the Commission's proposal (i.e. 336 € Billion): any cut would subsequently reduce funding lines for socially integrated projects fighting poverty and social exclusion funded both by ERDF (for social infrastructures) and ESF (for tailor-made and integrated services);
- Minimum shares for the ESF: as proposed by the Commission, a minimum budget for ESF (at least 25% of the Structural Funds' budget) and 20% of ESF earmarked on poverty reduction and social inclusion are vital to make sure that Member States will achieve their national poverty reduction target;

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<sup>1</sup> [Latest Eurostat figures on poverty and social exclusion in 2011](#)

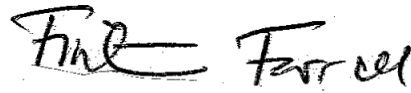
- A 2,5 Billion Euros distinct budget for the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAMD) within Structural Funds: the budget proposed by the Commission is the minimum acceptable to meet the growing need of food support and of material support towards children living in poverty and homeless. Any decrease would seriously put social cohesion under pressure in the EU.

We do hope that you will take into consideration our aforementioned points during your deliberation.

Yours faithfully,



Sergio Aires  
President



Fintan Farrell  
Director

Cc:

President Rompuy, President of the European Council  
President Schulz, President of the European Parliament  
President Barroso, President of the European Commission  
Taoiseach Enda Kenny, President of the Council of the European Union