

POLICY BRIEFING

DEAR EAPN MEMBERS,

Welcome to 2014! So far it's been a difficult start - dominated by diverging visions of the realities in the EU and new challenges for EAPN as an organisation. National governments and the Commission increasingly announce that Europe is coming out of the crisis, whilst poverty and inequality continue to rise. EAPN's President underlined this unacceptable double-thinking, in his intervention at the Annual Convention of the European Platform Against Poverty in November, and in key meetings involving people experiencing poverty and the Bureau with President Barroso. EAPN will be working actively to get Europe 2020 to deliver on its promises of the poverty target this year, including through the new Structural and other EU fund allocations, linked to this target. Meanwhile EAPN has been facing challenges with the new round of funding with the Commission, as we've seen our budget severely cut, which is impacting strongly on our work. EAPN has also gained backing from the Commission to launch an important Alliance for a social and sustainable Semester, to strengthen civil society and people experiencing poverty's impact on the main European strategies, working cross-sectorally with social partners and green and other sectors.

A key priority for EAPN is preparing for the **EU Parliamentary elections** on May 25 2014 and the election of the new President of the Commission. EAPN is working with its members to build a movement for change, to try to achieve a more Social Europe. EAPN will be launching its campaign at national and EU level at the beginning of March.

Otherwise, Commission and Parliament are 'finishing' off priorities – with no expectations of new big initiatives, although the cycle of the Semester will continue, with the added element of new budget surveillance with MS presenting their national budgets for scrutiny in October, and the new proposals of contractual commitments. Key priorities, however will be the Mid-Term Review of Europe 2020 – with an expected Communication by the Commission at the end of February, followed by a public consultation and progress on the social dimension of the EMU – will the new scoreboard make a difference? We'll be following the implementation of the Social Investment Package, particularly in the areas of Child poverty, Active Inclusion and Minimum Income and Homelessness.

Following the successful campaign on the ECI Right to Water, coordinated by EPSU with EAPN support, we are keen to support the follow up with the Commission and a hearing in the Parliament on the 17 February.

Wishing you all a very positive start to the New Year.

Best regards from Sian Jones, Policy Coordinator, with the Policy Team: Amana Ferro, Vincent Caron, Fintan Farrell, Barbara and with Admin/communication support from Rebecca Lee.

NOTE: Policy Briefings/Updates give EAPN members the latest information on policy developments and EAPN Actions on each area of EAPN policy work.

All EAPN documents, reports, position papers can be accessed on the EAPN website www.eapn.eu > Publications section, and in the [EAPN Members' Room > EUIS Group](#) > Key policy reference documents for the group.

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EUROPE 2020 AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

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The policy team: (Amana Ferro and Vincent Caron), contribute to this work, through the EU Inclusion Strategies group, coordinated by Sian Jones, policy coordinator.

EU Policy Developments

Latest developments

With the launch of the Annual Growth Survey, in November, President Barroso highlighted the main changes for 2014 – the new surveillance of national budgets, where MS send their draft budgets, for Commission Review, enables new levels of EU coordination, whilst the social dimension of the EMU raises the possibility of better consideration of social obstacles in greater integration. However, the main message is the crisis is over, and growth is returning, but that the EU needs to stay with the same policy approach, despite the social costs. In recognition of this supposed progress, both Ireland and Spain, conclude their Troika Programme arrangements. With the Alert Mechanism report (in the AGS), the Commission looks for the first time at surpluses as well as deficits. In-depth reviews were prepared for 16 countries, for 3 of them for the first time: Germany, Luxembourg and Croatia. A finger was particularly pointed at Germany, for its high surplus, and whether it could do more to help the rebalancing of the EU economy. France was also singled out to reduce its excessive deficit by ‘making public spending more efficient’ and tax-system more growth-friendly – ie reduce the proposals on raising taxes on the wealthy.

Adoption of the 2014 Annual Growth Survey

The Commission’s AGS for 2014 was adopted on 13th November. It consisted of [a package](#) of: [The Communication](#), the [draft Joint Employment Report](#), a [Staff Working Document](#) on the implementation of the CSRs, amongst other documents, including the [Alert Mechanism Report](#), which charts the changes in surpluses and deficits in each country, and for the first time incorporates new social/employment indicators.

The **overriding message** was that Europe was coming out of the crisis, and back on the road to recovery and growth, due to the economic governance coordination focused on debt reduction and austerity. The same 5 priorities were confirmed, as 2012 and 2013.

- 1) Pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation
- 2) Restoring lending to the economy
- 3) Promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow.
- 4) Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis
- 5) Modernising public administration

New elements included:

- A new focus on deepening the Semester, both by strengthening surveillance, implementing the CSRs, including through the new ‘quasi-contractual arrangements’ but also by getting greater ownership at national level, “ of national parliaments, social partners, and civil society in the process in order to secure public understanding, and acceptance of necessary reform.

- In priority 4) a similar focus is given to previous years, but with less detail. Recognition is given to the social impact of the crisis and rising poverty and unemployment, but giving a focus to increasing participation in the LM, modernisation of LM, job creation, mainly through green, digital and health sectors, by reducing taxes and keeping wages down, although some attention is given to safety nets play their role.
- New attention is given to the gender gap, access to affordable care services, and the implementation of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans.
- The focus on social protection is primarily about 'better performance' and efficiencies, although integrated active inclusion is underlined, but particularly to strengthen links/one-stop shops between social assistance and activation.
- Measures to tackle poverty, including child poverty is mentioned, as part of active inclusion, but no other groups are specifically mentioned.
- However the priorities give main focus to increasing ALM, youth guarantee, 'flexibilising the LM, and improving performance of training and social protection systems, rather than active inclusion. Surprisingly there is no explicit reference to social investment.

See EAPN section for response.

Stronger role for Social Partners in the AGS but not for Civil Society.

The increasing recognition of the need for legitimacy and collaboration in the semester from key stakeholders has led to the Social Partners now being formally brought into the process, with their views annexed to the official AGS. The Social Partners have also produced a [joint statement on their role in the governance](#) of the Semester, calling for more coordination at national level, and reinforcing social dialogue at EU level. ETUC however, demanded that Trade Union views were annexed separately to Employers, highlighting the different perspectives. See [here](#), also [here](#) for the other SP views in the section on the JEP.

December European Council Conclusions back AGS priorities in the area of Economic and Social Policy:

Backing given to AGS priorities: The Council welcomed the AGS and Alert Mechanisms Report, and recognized that although recovery is still fragile, progress is being made, backing the 5 priorities of the AGS. The Council gave particular priority to: enhancing the functioning and flexibility of the single market, competitiveness, supporting job creation and fighting unemployment, particularly youth unemployment including through the full implementation of the youth guarantee, and follow up reforms on reforming/ie flexibilising labour markets. Key priorities were also reinforcing tax and other incentives for job creation, extending working lives and increasing labour market participation, keeping wages down (link to productivity gains), addressing skill mismatches and increasing labour mobility.

Implementation of the Compact for Growth and Jobs, also calling on all MS to submit their Youth Guarantee Implementation plans and Youth Employment initiative.

Call for more progress (Global and EU) on tax fraud and evasion – the Council calls for unanimous agreement on the taxation of savings income, to be adopted March 2014, and welcomes work by OECD, to develop a global standard for automatic exchange of tax information.

Push for tighter coordination on economic governance: with the follow up on deepening integration in the EMU: agreement is reached on the Single Resolution Mechanism for the

Banking Union, and calls for greater coordination of economic policies, however the Council recognizes this needs to be ‘underpinned by strong democratic legitimacy and accountability’ at all levels. A particular focus is creating ‘partnerships for growth, job and competitiveness’ – meaning the signing up of MS to ‘contractual arrangements’, which would legally bind them to a recipe of ‘growth enhancing measures’, based on the NRPs and taking into account the CSRs. In return MS could access solidarity support – ie increased funding/loans. National Parliaments, social partners and ‘other relevant stakeholders’ are meant to provide ‘ownership’ of these agreements.

Social Dimension of EMU: The Council backs the new scoreboard of employment and social indicators, attached now to the Joint Employment Report, and asks for progress on how they will be used, but limits their use to ‘allowing a broader understanding of social developments.’”

Greek Presidency Jan to 1 July 2014: more focus on cohesion?

Greece took over the Presidency at a crucial moment. 4 priorities are marked:

1. **Growth, jobs and cohesion** – supporting the further implementation of the Compact for Growth and Jobs, deepening the single market, particularly in the digital, energy, research, innovation and investment in growth and external trade.
2. **Further Deepening of Economic and Monetary Union** – creating the banking union, agreement on the single resolution mechanism with the EP before end of April, and deepening the implementation of the European Semester and economic governance, and further agreement on the implementation of the social dimension of the EMU.
3. **Migration, borders and mobility** – with measures to tackle illegal immigration, security and free movement within the Union, and enhancing legal migration and integration – a key goal is to achieve political agreement on the directive concerning entry and residence of 3rd Country nationals.
4. **Maritime Policy**

In the **Employment and social cohesion** area – the focus will be on promoting employment, and combating unemployment; strengthening the social dimension of the EMCU, with a focus on social investments and social innovation; promoting social dialogue and broader engagement. This will involve monitoring the implementation of the Youth Guarantee and Employment initiatives. The main legislative proposals will be on proposals for recommendations on ensuring good quality training, Communication on social dialogue and restructuring of enterprises, Council Decision on Social Summit.

Key Conferences under Greek Presidency:

- 1) A Conference on Social Economy
- 2) A Conference on Roma inclusion (with 5 DGs and Commissioners involved – 4 April)
- 3) The Commission would lead on a Conference (in May) on effective Minimum Income policies (talked about targeted universalism)
- 4) Informal EPSCO 29 April Athens
- 5) EPSCO Meetings 10 March and 9 June
- 6) The special SPC meeting in Athens will have a discussion on strengthening of social policies.

20th January – Parliament Week, in European Parliament.

Debate with President Barroso and ECON Committee, underlined the need to support greater ownership of the European Semester, including more direct engagement of national and EP parliament in the European Semester. See [here](#).

EP Report on the AGS and Economic Semester.

The Employment and Social Affairs Committee is finalizing its report on the AGS and the Semester. Rapporteur is Sergio GUTIÉRREZ PRIETO (S+D). See report and amendments [here](#). It will be adopted in plenary probably on the 25th February 2014.

Coming Up

Deepening of Europe Semester – in 2014...

- The **European Semester deepens** its hold as the main driver on EU economic and other policies. Its cycle is confirmed with only a slight adaptation. For full explanation see useful EC Memo on [economic governance](#).
- **February/March**: EP and EU ministers meet in the Council formations to discuss the AGS, and the Commission publishes in-depth reviews of MS with potential imbalances (from the Alert Mechanism Report). The spring European Council adopts the economic priorities.
- **April**: MS submit their Stability/Convergence Programmes (medium term budget plans) and their NRPs, which are supposed to be in line with the CSRs.
- **May**: Commission proposes Country-specific Recommendations based on the AGS and the review of the NRPs and Stability programmes.
- **June-July**: European Council endorses the CSRs and EU council ministers meet to discuss. The Finance ministers adopt them in July. A delay will happen this year, because of the European Elections.
- **October**: Euro area MS submit draft budget plans for the following year on the 15
- **October**, and the may have to re-draft it depending on the Commission's review.

Mid-Term Review of Europe 2020 coming up!

The Commission will review the progress on Europe 2020, and can make revisions in 2015 for the next period until 2020. The Commission have announced that a Communication will be adopted at the end of February, and will be discussed in the Spring Council in March. There is likely to be a public consultation launched after this, with proposals taken up at the end of 2014.

European Elections and New Commission

Growing tensions over the European Parliament elections and over the nominations for the Commission's President. In July, the EP adopted a resolution from Andrew Duff (LIB) called on all European Political parties to put forward candidates for the Presidency early so as to have a Europe-wide debate. Some much vaunted candidates include: Dalia Grybauskaitė, Lithuanian President (EPP), Guy Verhofstadt has gained priority over Ollie Rehn – the current Commissioner for economic and monetary affairs (LIB), Martin Schulz (current President of the EP/Socialists). The Greens are carrying out an open poll to end today, and EPP will decide their candidate in their Dublin Convention in March.

The schedule:

14-17 April – last plenary session in the current EP

22-25 May – Elections of the EP

June - formation of the political groups

26-27 June - European Council nominates the president of the European Commission

1-3 July - first plenary of new EP and election of president and chairs etc.

14-17 July - 2nd plenary of new EP and election of the President of the European Commission

July to September - New college of European Commissioners

1-11 September - Hearings of nominees in EP

October - EP confirms new Commissioners that take office from 1 November

EAPN Activities

25-26 October EUISG

EAPN members met in Palma Mallorca, see Social Inclusion section for other elements.

On Europe 2020, members reflected on the NRPs and the policy conference, and discussed how to input into the Semester in 2014, with concerns about the upcoming AGS. Member's expressed their disappointment with the continuing lack of support to engagement in the NRPs at the national level from national governments. A first discussion was had on the social dimension of the EMU. The Advocacy strategy and work programme on Europe 2020 and the Semester 2014 was adopted. See members room for full minutes.

Key Actions on the Semester/Europe 2020

4th October: EAPN sends a letter to President Barroso highlighting key messages for the AGS and calling in him to give credibility to the Semester. See [here](#)

14th November: EAPN launched a quick response Press Release to the AGS – we welcomed the stronger call for stakeholder involvement but criticised the failure to re-centre the Semester on the Europe 2020 goals, particularly the failing poverty target. Press Release: Missed opportunity to restore EU credibility. See [here](#)

9th December: EAPN letter and Press Release to EPSCO: Turn tide on rising Poverty, highlighting initial disappointment with the AGS – see [here](#)

16th December: EAPN letter and Press Release to General Affairs Council and December European Council: Economic Progress needs Social Progress – see [here](#)

EAPN Elections Campaign

In 2014, EAPN is carrying out its major campaign of the year with its members, National Networks and EOs. It will officially be launched on 04/03/2014.

The **main objectives** of the campaign are to:

- Get the support and commitment of CANDIDATES and hold MEPs accountable for their commitments
- Contribute to a better reporting on poverty/exclusion/inequalities in the European and national MEDIA
- Build/strengthen ALLIANCES with other stakeholders who share our arguments
- EAPN supports its national members' participation in the campaign

- National networks raise people's awareness at grassroots level and encourage more people to vote VOTERS

The [campaign's strategy](#) was first presented at the 2013 September Conference and again to the EXCO members in November 2013.

This strategy is for the whole network. it indicates what we'll do at the European level, and at best will be applied/transposed/adapted at national level by the national networks (and adapted, depending on your own national context) , in their own organisations for EOs.

This strategy has been updated along with a concrete [timeline](#). For members – see more info under what members can do below! For more information contact Nellie.Epinat@eapn.eu

Key Events and Meetings

17th December: EAPN Director spoke in OSE Event on the social dimension of the EMU 'is the social dimension the next big thing or a Trojan horse?' See [here](#).

EAPN met with President Barroso and President Herman Van Rompuy prior to the Annual Convention. See Social inclusion section.

29th January 2014: EAPN spoke in a breakfast seminar on: Working towards a more inclusive a balanced European Semester: a model for civil society and trade union involvement, organized by the Greens/EFA with CESI and Eurodiaconia. The seminar aimed to make progress towards joint proposals for guidelines and a better engagement of social stakeholders in the European Semester/Europe 2020.

What members can do

 **7 and 8 February, EUISG Meeting in Brussels – participate!** The meeting will have a capacity building session on the CSRs – with inputs from the Commission: Nick Costello, DG Employment, and the Parliament: Philippe Lambert, and member exchange on their review of the Commission's CSRs for their countries and the implementation, making their alternative proposals. These will be finalized shortly after the meeting. A session will also look at how members are working at national level, and how to work better in alliances, using the new draft Tool Kit.

 **Get active and ask to be involved with the new NRP at national level, and send your views on the CSRs and NRPs to your governments!** – See new draft Tool Kit, to be circulated at EUISG meeting.

 **New EAPN-coordinated Alliance on the Semester- get involved! This is the new EU Alliance for a more social, sustainable Semester:** The Commission has supported EAPN's application for funding for the existing adhoc CSR alliance which EAPN has been coordinating at EU level. This formal alliance will aim to get better stakeholder involvement in the Semester/Europe 2020 at national and EU level in order to get delivery on the social and environmental Europe 2020 targets. Members include EAPN EOs: Eurodiaconia, Caritas, Age-Platform, Eurochild, as well as other Social NGOs including Social Platform, European Women's Lobby, EASPD, and Green Organisations: EEB, Green Budget Europe and WWB, and trade unions: ETUC and EPSU. **You can participate through our common work on the Semester, but also propose yourselves for a national pilot alliance** – to work cross-sectorally on this Semester – info out soon. Contact Sian Jones for more info: sian.jones@eapn.eu

EAPN Elections Campaign – get active!

The **campaign relies greatly on National Networks' involvement**, as things are really happening at national level – meeting MEPS to get their commitment and raising awareness of people to encourage them to vote. Amongst the **campaign tools**, you will find EAPN's manifesto, postcard for meeting MEPs and get their signed commitment to take EAPN's pledge, and other tools, and also the campaign's blog <http://electingchampionsin2014.net> that members are strongly encouraged to contribute to. Everything linked to this campaign is visible on the [members' room](#).

Although the EXCO is leading on this work, at the next EUISG meeting on the 8 February, Barbara and Rebecca will give info on the campaign and hold a lunch-time discussion session, for those who are interested. Nellie will not be able to attend but you can also contact her as she's been working on all aspects of the campaign and designing its tools: nellie.epinat@eapn.eu.

OMC ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

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EAPN group in charge: EU Inclusion Strategies Group (EUISG). The Steering Group for the EUISG is made up currently of: Liz Gosme (FEANTSA), Sonja Leemkuil (NL), Paul Ginnell (IE). Elections for a new Steering Group will take place in the EUISG meeting in February 2014.

EU Policy Developments

Overview

In the **Social Inclusion** area – confusion continues to reign over the different areas impacting on social inclusion, in the EU policy context- particularly the relationship between the Social Investment Package (SIP), the European Platform Against Poverty (EPAP) and the Social OMC (Open Method of Coordination). The main policy developments has been the publishing of the SIP Road Map in November. This package dominated the focus of the Annual Convention of the European Platform Against Poverty held on the 26 and 27 November in Brussels, involving 500 people including over 30 EAPN members and the launching of the Social Investment Road Map, but with progress on the poverty target kept to a workshop. An important Peer Review in January was hosted by Belgium on the promising practice Belgian Platform Against Poverty, where EAPN presented as expert network as well as BAPN. Progress on Minimum Income is being channelled through the Commission's work on reference budgets, and helped by the EMIN project coordinated by EAPN, which is making good progress, and held its first external seminar on first findings in Paris on the 9th December, whilst The Parliament has also adopted a new resolution to support an EU strategy on homeless, based on the work by FEANTSA. The SPC, has been making increasingly critical inputs to the Annual Growth Survey and the social Dimension of the EMU, and the EPSCO Council, and pressing for a strong role for social ministries and social

concerns, but raises the question of how much time is left to do the detailed work to progress the detail of the Social Policy Agenda. In 2014, the National Social Reports will be developed by MS with a Guidance note being prepared, to coincide with the NRP, but with very little profile. The EPSCO Council Conclusions

EUROPEAN PLATFORM AGAINST POVERTY

24th January EU Stakeholder Meeting of the EPAP

The 8th EU Stakeholder meeting was held in Brussels. This half day meeting, provided information from the Commission, reviewing progress on the EPAP and the SIP, and a short exchange with NGOs and other stakeholders. The main discussion was on the progress on the European Semester/Europe 2020 in terms of delivery on the poverty target, and an update on the SIP Roadmap, as well as how far the SIP and EPAP concerns are being mainstreamed effectively into the Semester. Information was given on the Mid-Term Review, which will be led by Secretariat General, with a Communication at the end of February. DG Employment contribute a stocktaking and to the part related to the poverty target. The review of the Annual Convention was given, highlighting that 80% of respondents felt the Convention met their expectations. The major concern was the need to have more policy impact, to link more closely to the Semester/NRP process and with the national level. Lieve Fransen, the head of Europe 2020 social policy, underlined the need to improve the stakeholder dialogue meetings, to achieve more effective co-working. For more information contact EAPN secretariat: sian.jones@eapn.eu.

27/ 27 November: Annual Convention of the European Platform Against Poverty (EPAP)

The 4th Annual Convention was held in Brussels on 26 and 27th November in Brussels. Over 30 EAPN members attended out of 700 delegates, invited through national delegations, or through direct invites, including People experiencing poverty. The Convention was a day and half event, involving around 700 participants following a similar format to previous years, with keynote addresses by President Barroso and President Van Rompuy, Key note speeches, workshops on key areas, including progress on the poverty target; speed dating on innovative projects and side events organized by stakeholders. The main focus was the implementation of the SIP package, and discussions over priority to social investment and the modernisation of the welfare state, with strong concerns about the failure to deliver on the poverty target expressed by EAPN and other actors. Stress was put on the need for collaborative partnership between all actors to get results. EAPN's involvement included: President Sergio Aires speaking in the plenary, EAPN Director speaking in the workshop on poverty target, and the organization of a side-event on in-work poverty. See EAPN section for links to EAPN activities and reaction. [Read the memo with the conclusions and results](#) and [Visit the event page for more details, including pictures and presentations](#)

SOCIAL INVESTMENT PACKAGE (SIP)

November 2013: SIP Roadmap published

On the 27 November, the SIP Roadmap was published. This document is also an on-line tool, updating progress on the activities related to the Social Investment Package. See [here](#). On the same page you can access a citizen's summary of the SIP and key facts and figures. See below for a short summary and link to EAPN's briefing and position.

The three priority areas are: 1) Strengthening social investment through the Semester, 2) Using EU funds, and 3) Strengthening Governance and Reporting. The roadmap is a catalogue of different actions, across different DGs and units, which aim to contribute to the objectives of the SIP, although the evaluation on results and impact on poverty is not clear. The relationship between the SIP and the EPAP continues to be unclear, and the link with the Social OMC. The SIP Roadmap appears to have taken over many of the key actions designated in the EPAP Road Map- see July, with one notable exception – the proposal to develop guidelines for stakeholder engagement in the EPAP and Semester, which was originally part of the EC Communication of the EPAP, and has been successively postponed, and now under the SIP Road Map, is completely absent.

Key activities in the SIP Road Map

- **Development of a methodology on efficiency and effectiveness of social spending**, and promoting social investment, based on a report of an SPC Adhoc group, will be launched in June 2014. The Italian Presidency will have a meeting on this, particularly the link to SF. EAPN concerns will be that this doesn't give priority to activation policies, to the detriment of adequate income support and comprehensive social protection.
- The tender has now been awarded to progress on a **common methodology for reference budgets** to establish an adequate minimum income. In December it will be applied to 18 Member States, before a final conference/report in 2015.
- The Commission's proposal for a web-based platform for exchange and learning – **knowledge bank**, will be launched early in 2014. EPIC – or the platform for Investing Children, to which EAPN is a partner, is an early model for this venture.
- Portraits of individuals who have weak labour market attachment is being developed with the World Bank – for June 2014
- A Tender will be coming out in June for a study to support MS in the **design of cost effective social protection systems**.
- A Study will be launched to assess the **effectiveness of conditional cash transfers** supporting child development, under EaSI, Spring 2014.
- A Study is planned on **effective policies to reduce homelessness and housing** exclusion for the end of 2015.
- The Award of Technical Assistance for support services to **support actors engaged in social experimentation** – 2014.
- A new study on the **financial, economic and social benefits of different forms of social investment** – January 2014.
- **New Work on indicators:** on financial distress, gender pension gap, material deprivation of children, affordable childcare, child health etc to support the implementation and monitoring of the Investing in Children, introducing health indicators into the Joint Assessment Frame to be used as the basis for the Semester etc.

For more information see SIP Road Map above, or contact Commission contacts.

What is the SIP?

The SIP is the long-awaited Commission's Social Investment Package that was finally adopted by the Commission in February. It consists of a main communication: Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion, including implementing the European Social Fund: 2014-2020, the Commission's Recommendation on Child Poverty: Investing in Children –

breaking the cycle of disadvantage, and 8 Staff Working Documents (SWD), including the Implementation report on follow up to the Active Inclusion Recommendation. The main message of the SIP is that social policy should be seen as social investment, using budgets more efficiently to get employment/economic returns. The focus is primarily on strengthening people's capacity to enter the labour market and society, through a life cycle approach. Although much of the language picks up EAPN demands, the good intentions are undermined by a predominant message about efficiency in times of austerity, providing recommendations to refocus social budgets towards 'more activating and enabling' services, and away from 'passive social protection', including more targeting, temporary payments and conditionality. EAPN members monitoring the implementation of the SIP found little signs of take up in the current austerity context (See EAPN section).

See [EAPN's SIP Briefing](#) on the Member's Room.

MINIMUM INCOME

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EAPN Working Groups concerned: EU Inclusion Strategies Group / Active Inclusion Subgroup

EU Policy Developments

10 Dec 2013: Important EESC Opinion on minimum income and poverty indicators adopted – backing a framework directive!

The EESC opinion on minimum income and poverty indicators, an own initiative report (SOC/482) promoted by Mr Dassis (Workers Group II/Greece) with co-rapporteur Mr Boland (Various interests – GR III/Ireland) was approved in the plenary session. EAPN has been actively involved in providing input to the opinion, in two hearings and by written input, with EAPN Ireland providing specific input to the co-rapporteur. The opinion was presented by the EESC in the EMIN event in Paris on 09/10. The opinion includes a call for *"a European framework directive that would extend minimum income schemes to all Member States, improve the adequacy of existing schemes, taking into account national contexts'.. the proposed directive should ' set common standards and indicators' and to examine the funding possibilities for a European Minimum Income in particular setting up an appropriate European Fund"*. It builds on the demand made by Committee of the Regions opinion on the European Platform Against Poverty, based on input from EAPN Ireland and EAPN secretariat (OJ C 1666, 7.6.2011 p.18). The new opinion can be accessed in MS languages [here](#). For more information contact Sian Jones: sian.jones@eapn.eu

17 Nov 2013: SIP Road Map – Methodology on Reference Budgets

As well as supporting the EAPN EMIN project (see below) The Commission is supporting progress on adequate minimum income through a work line on developing a common

methodology on reference budgets. The tender has now been awarded to a Consortium headed by Bea Cantillon and the University of Antwerp, who will develop the methodology. In December it will be applied to 18 Member States, before a final conference/report in 2015. (See above section)

26-27 November – Annual Convention workshop on Reference Budgets

The Annual Convention held a workshop on this theme, in which participated EAPN, as part of the EMIN project. See [here](#) for programme and report from the workshop.

EAPN Activities

9 – 10 Dec 2013 EMIN Seminar Paris: The first seminar of the EMIN project was held in Paris on 9 December and was followed the next day with a workshop to lay the foundations for the involvement of the partners in the 26 countries who will join the project in 2014. The seminar was a chance to review the initial outcomes from the work in the 5 pilot countries (Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Ireland and Hungary) and to begin discussions on an EU road map for progressing the right to adequate Minimum Income schemes. The report of the seminar and the draft EU road map will be available on the emin-eu.net blog in the coming days.

3-4th Oct 2013 EMIN Peer Review

A Peer Review was held between the 5 partner countries on the findings of their national reports on minimum income and a first discussion on recommendations for EU policy.

See all details here on the EMIN website: <http://emin-eu.net/>

January 2014: European Minimum Income Network Project (EMIN)

The EMIN network project coordinated by EAPN finally kicked off In January 2013. The European Minimum Income Network (EMIN) is a two year project (2013-2014) funded by the European Commission, that has the aim of building consensus to take the necessary steps towards progress on adequate and accessible minimum income schemes in EU Member States, in line with the European Commission's Active Inclusion Recommendation of 2008, the Europe 2020 strategy and in the context of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion. 5 initial partners are: Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Denmark and Ireland in 2014 a further 26 countries will join the project. AGE Platform and FEANTSA are two thematic partners in the project. To follow the work of the project sign up to emin-eu.net

Contacts:

- EAPN: Fintan Farrell: fintan.farrell@eapn.eu
- EMIN project policy coordinator: Anne Van Lancker: vanlanckeranne@gmail.com

Coming Up

8 Jan 2014: The EAPN EU Inclusion Strategies Group (EUISG) will have a discussion on the work of the EMIN project.

Between June and Sept 2014: Each National EMIN Network will hold a seminar on Minimum Income in their country.

11-12 Sept 2014: Second Peer Review under the EMIN project will take place

6 Nov 2014: The Final Conference of the EMIN project will take place in Brussels. This is an open event.

What members can do

 **Register to follow the work of the EMIN project** on emin-eu.net. Encourage others to do the same.

 **Support the work of the EMIN project in your country** (check who is responsible with your Network.)

CHILD POVERTY AND WELL-BEING

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EAPN Working Groups concerned: EU Inclusion Strategies Group

EU Policy Developments

Towards implementation on Investing in Children Recommendation

The main developments are being carried out through the SIP Roadmap:

- Study on the effectiveness of conditional cash transfers for enhancing child-wellbeing - some concerns have been raised about the approach, which should also evaluate the risks of such approaches
- [Social experimentation projects](#)
- Large scale longitudinal studies on children (FP7)
- In-depth review in the SPC on child poverty and social exclusion
- Report of the Independent Experts.

Annual Convention Workshop – Early Learning

In the Annual Convention, a workshop was co-organized by the Commission with input from Eurochild, Coface and ESN, on promoting effective investment on early learning. See presentations and report from the workshop 1 [here](#).

A side event was also organized on the implementation of the Investing in Children Recommendation by the Adhoc Alliance on child poverty, of which EAPN is a member.

See the presentations and the key messages from all the side events [here](#).

See here: [Commission Recommendation: Investing in Children – breaking the cycle of disadvantage \(2013\) and EAPN Briefing](#)

EU Alliance: Investing in Children gets Commission funding

Eurochild has been successful in getting Commission backing for this new alliance, building on the existing adhoc group. It will aim to consolidate action on the EC communication, promote learning and exchange, as well as advocacy at EU level. It will also support 2

national pilot alliances initially in Spain and UK to support implementation of this comprehensive strategy for promoting child well-being and fighting child poverty. EAPN is one of the partners to the Alliance. Contact Jana Hainsworth at Eurochild, for more information (Jana.Hainsworth@eurochild.org) or Sian Jones at EAPN (sian.jones@eapn.eu).

SOCIAL OMC (INCLUDING PEER REVIEWS AND INDEPENDENT EXPERTS)

All the below activities take place under the auspices of the Social Open Method of Coordination. Further information can be found on the [Europa Site for the SPC](#).

15 October 2013: SPC Report: Social Policy reforms for growth and cohesion

An SPC review of recent structural reforms 2013. This key report was approved by the SPC on the 18 September and endorsed by the EPSCO on the 15th October. The report reviews the impact of social protection reforms in the Troika countries, as well as a more general assessment across the EU on reforms in social inclusion, poverty reduction and Roma inclusion. The main messages were that while the economic and financial crisis continues to put strong pressure on social protection systems, the priorities must move from the social consequences of the crisis to “building modern, resilient, effective and flexible social protection systems relying on solid structures, sound governance arrangements, adequate benefits, sustainable financing and the right investment choices”. It recognizes that the Semester continues to be dominated by ‘macro-economic and fiscal considerations’ and needs to pay more attention to long-term social priorities, and that the main role of social protection is ‘to provide adequate safeguards to citizens across the lifecycle against economic risks of loss of employment, income health deterioration or invalidity, as well as effective support in their transitions from education to work and between jobs. The function of social protection must not be reduced only to safety nets.

See [here](#).

Peer Reviews

The Peer Reviews carried out under the Social OMC, are nearing the end of their 2013 year programme. No information is available about the new PRs for 2014. The Commission has underlined their intention to further tie the Peer Reviews to the European Semester/Europe 2020 themes and delivery. EAPN was only asked to participate at EU level, in 1 PR this year. The Belgian Platform Against Poverty. See below.

14-15 January: Peer Review: Belgian Platform Against Poverty

The PR was hosted by Belgium and show-cased the Belgian Platform Against Poverty, involving the following countries: Austria - Bulgaria - Czech Republic - Finland - France - Greece - Ireland – Malta. The Belgian Govt highlighted their good practice experience of the Platform, bringing together a large number of different stakeholders (in particular policy-makers, social partners, academics, social services and people experiencing poverty), to be part of structured dialogue that feeds into Belgium’s antipoverty strategy, the NRPs and NSRs. BAPN presented their own assessment with people experiencing poverty, and as a result much of the debate focussed on how to effectively involve people experiencing poverty. Hugh Frazer presented the comment paper and made the conclusions/learning points. Paul Ginnell, represented EAPN, as the expert stakeholder, providing the overview of NGO involvement currently with People in poverty in the NRPs/Europe 2020 as well as in national policy mechanisms. See here for EAPN’s paper. Some of the main conclusions were

the need for concrete guidelines from the Commission, to provide political backing and leadership, as there was a wealth of experience and learning to be built on, but political leadership was missing. All presentations will soon be on the [Peer Review site here](#).

See here for the presentations and reports from the 2013 Peer Reviews, in the [overview of the 2013 Peer Reviews](#).

[Two outstanding Peer Reviews still to take place in 2014](#) are hosted by Spain, Galicia on the 25 and 26 March 2014: Harnessing ICT for social action – [see here](#).

INDEPENDENT EXPERTS ON SOCIAL INCLUSION

The most recent reports published by the Experts include:

- 08/03/2013 - [Assessment of the implementation of the European Commission Recommendation on active inclusion - A study of national policies](#)
- 19/12/2012 - [Assessment of progress towards the Europe 2020 social inclusion objectives](#)
- 31/01/2012 - [2011 assessment of social inclusion policy developments in the EU](#)
- 22/12/2011 - [Promoting the social inclusion of Roma](#)

9 and 10 December EPSCO Council

The EPSCO Council met for their first discussion on the Semester including the AGS, Draft Employment Report and Alert Mechanisms, with the SPC chair presenting an opinion on the impact of economic governance ex-ante coordination on social reforms. The SPC is devising a draft code of conduct, with guiding principles, which will be trialled as a feasibility study with some MS in January. Youth employment and guarantee was also discussed and the implementation plan supported, however concerns were raised about the 'compatibility of the budget effort demanded on youth guarantee with the fulfilment of the objectives of deficit reduction'. The Council adopted the Council Recommendation on enhancing effectiveness of integration of Roma. This is the first legal action, where MS commit to take targeted action to close the gaps between Roma and the rest of the community. See PR [here](#) and text of the Council Recommendation [here](#).

Key Reports

[Employment and Social Developments – Annual Review 2014](#)

This yearly review of the latest social and employment data and developments, gives priority this year to in-work poverty, as one of the most tangible negative consequences of the crisis. (See employment section). The review also looks at the positive impact of social benefits, particularly in relation to getting back into work, ie that contrary to common myths, people receiving unemployment benefits are more likely to get a job than those not receiving benefits. It also highlights the consequences of persistent gender imbalances and the social dimension of the EMU, with growing social and employment divergence between Member States, threatening economic convergence. The ESDE 2014 Review will be presented to an invitations-only event on the 18th February, to which EAPN is invited.

See report [here](#).

EAPN Activities

[EAPN EU Inclusion Strategies Meeting/Child Poverty Event in Palma, Mallorca: 25 and 26 October](#). EAPN Majorca/Spain organized a major conference on child poverty with the local and regional administration, with participation of UNICEF, and EAPN network/social dimension of the EMU.

The EUISG meeting discussed progress on Europe 2020 and agreed strategy for 2014, as well as exchange on the social dimension of the EMU (see previous section). The meeting had initial exchange on youth inclusion, debated the implementation of Structural Funds, and the end of the 20% campaign, as well as follow up on the EU's Social Investment Package and the EPAP annual convention. Follow up on active inclusion, employment and Structural Funds was carried out in the sub-groups. The New Task Forces on stakeholder engagement, migration and the crisis and living wage campaign made initial reports.

[26-7 November: Annual Convention of European Platform Against Poverty](#)

Over 30 EAPN members participated, as well as speaking turns in the plenary for EAPN President, Sergio Aires, and in the workshop on Poverty Target with Barbara Helfferich, EAPN Director. EAPN co-organized a side event on in-work poverty and participated in the side event on Investing in Children as part of the Adhoc Alliance on child poverty.

EAPN developed key messages and a Press Release for the day: Ending Poverty is a political choice. For PR See [here](#) and Key Messages see [here](#).

3 main messages were:

- 1) Propose concrete steps towards Social Europe and social dimension of EMU.
- 2) Launch EU Integrated Strategy to fight poverty and social exclusion, using social investment, not replaced by it.
- 3) Support an Annual Hearing in the European Parliament between people experiencing poverty and EU institutions, reviewing progress.

Prior meetings were held between EAPN Bureau and President Barroso and President Van Rompuy, where the key messages and concerns were put across, strengthened by the presence of delegates with direct experience of poverty.

[EESC on Minimum Income opinion](#) – see section above on Minimum Income

EAPN Ireland and EAPN secretariat has been working closely with the rapporteurs of the above report, which has been adopted in plenary in December. See section above.

For EAPN actions related to Europe 2020 and the Semester see section 1.

[Key Events/Meetings in which EAPN has participated/spoken](#)

4-5 November - Council of Europe = Responsive project, mobilizing citizens at local level to combat poverty – Contact Maria Jeliaskova: EAPN Bulgaria.

6 November – Belgian Ministry Seminar: EU work and social policy – Employment and Social Protection Monitor – EAPN secretariat.

6 November – Eurochild EP conference – on human inner design to support child well-being.

13-15 November - Eurochild Annual Conference with side event on implementation of the Child Poverty recommendation – contact EAPN Italy.

18 November - Meeting with Commissioner Andor – President of the EAPN Bureau with Director.

19-20 November - Lithuanian Presidency Health Forum – fighting inequalities – EAPN Policy Coordinator speaker.

26-27 November - Annual Convention of the EPAP, Brussels – see separate items.

5 December: Expert Meeting of German Ministry of Social Affairs on new German strategy to fight poverty - EAPN Director spoke.

6 December - Making the case for Green/Social Europe – Green European Foundation- EAPN Speaker - EAPN Director spoke.

3rd January - Meeting with the Greek Permanent representation.

14 and 15 January - Participation in Belgian Peer Review – EAPN IE, BAPN and EAPN policy coordinator.

23 January - Equity Action Final Conference tackling health inequalities, organized by the Commission.

For more information contact the EAPN secretariat: sian.jones@eapn.eu

What members can do

 **EUISG Meeting: 7 and 8 February.** The EUISG meeting will progress our work on youth inclusion, follow up sub-group work on active inclusion, structural funds and employment, exchange on new developments in the SIP and EPAP – with a particular focus on tackling homelessness. The first drafts of the handbook for stakeholder engagement in Europe 2020 and report on migration and the crisis will be discussed as well as the initial proposals from the Living wage campaign TF. The impact of the budget cuts on EAPN's work programme will also be discussed, together with the Election campaign. A hot spot lunchtime session will allow members to focus on areas of interest in a relaxed atmosphere.

 **Take action to press your governments for an integrated antipoverty strategy and to follow up on the EAPN manifesto and actions on the Election campaign. Follow up at national level with the new developments of the SIP and see how they can be used at national level. See section above on Europe 2020/action**

 **Get involved in the new Alliance on Investing in Children.** Eurochild has presented a proposal for a new Alliance building on the current adhoc group. The aim will be to see how national members can be engaged and developed a joint partnership approach at national level with 2 pilots in UK and ES. Contact sian.jones@eapn.eu for more info.

ACTIVE INCLUSION

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EAPN Working Groups concerned: EU Inclusion Strategies Group / Active Inclusion Subgroup

EU Policy Developments

13 November, Annual Growth Survey/Draft Joint Employment Report: The AGS reconfirms the importance of Active Inclusion, but as part of ‘better performing social protection. Priority 4 (p.12) underlining that Active Inclusion strategies should be developed, ‘encompassing efficient and adequate income support, activation measures as well as measures to tackle poverty, including child poverty, and broad access to affordable and high quality services, such as social and health services, childcare, housing and energy supply’. However, an emphasis is given to strengthening the links between social assistance and activation through ‘more personalized services (one-stop shops), and to simplify and better target benefits will improve the take up of measures by vulnerable groups and their effectiveness’. However, in the main priorities – the mention is only made of ‘stepping up active labour market measures, not Active Inclusion and with an emphasis on the Youth Guarantee.

In the **Draft Joint Employment Report**, no explicit mention is made to Active Inclusion, although all the individual pillars are dealt with, and the integrated concept referred to at the end. eg- highlighting the drop in household disposable income, the loss of the stabilising effect of social spending after 2010, the additional strain put on low –income households because of regressive impacts of fiscal consolidation. Access to health care is given more focus than other services, particularly unmet health need. Active labour market measures are given a high profile (p.19 and p.28), and the links between activation and social assistance, but without reference to the AI frame. Key information is given about developments on minimum income (p.29), and the statement of “much remains to be done at MS level to reach the right mix of adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to services” is made but without referring to AI.

For more on the AGS see Section 1: See documents [here](#).

17 Nov - SIP Road MAP

See the section above under EPAP and Social OMC for full presentation

The main reference to Active Inclusion is to the implementation through the European Semester and Europe 2020. Specific activities are mainly focussed on different pillars – particularly adequate minimum income – through the work on Reference Budgets, with the development of a common methodology to establish reference budgets to ensure adequate minimum income.

2 October: The European Commission released the communication entitled **Social Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union**, which is fully referenced in the section above. The document contains a unique mention of Active Inclusion, in page 8: “The economic crisis has increased inequalities and the risk of long-term exclusion while placing severe constraints on public spending. As a result, the Member States face the challenge of setting priorities for social investment and modernising welfare services. This means improving their active inclusion strategies and making more efficient and more effective use of social budgets.”

Read the full communication [here](#).

EUROCITIES – NLAO project: The 9-city partnership and pilot project has come to an end. On 25 September, a high-level Brussels event, summarizing the partnership’s key findings and the policy recommendations, has taken place in the Committee of the Regions.

Find out more about the partnership and the project [here](#), and consult the agenda and the presentations of the final event [here](#).

ADEQUATE MINIMUM INCOME

See the Social OMC and Minimum Income sections above for the latest information, including on the EAPN-coordinated project European Minimum Income Network (EMIN_

ACCESS TO SERVICES

See Services section below.

INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKETS

See Employment section below.

USING STRUCTURAL FUNDS FOR ACTIVE INCLUSION

See Structural Fund section below.

EAPN Activities

26-27 November Annual Convention

There was no workshop on Active Inclusion this year, but the focus was given to the Commission’s focus on adequacy of minimum income, and EAPN was involved in the organization of the workshop on Reference budgets in the Annual Convention, with inputs from EMIN project. See section on MI above.

26 October – EAPN’s EU Inclusion Strategies Group (EUISG) held its meeting in Brussels, which included the third meeting of the **Active Inclusion subgroup**. The work is focussed on the letter to Governments, now finalised, which will be adopted and circulated for use to members at the February meeting and on the Leaflet with 12 Arguments for Active Inclusion, which is being revised. There was information update on the developments at EU level and exchange on national developments, with a focus on making progress on Minimum Income and the follow up to the Commission’s work on reference budgets. It was decided currently to focus the work of the group on integrated Active Inclusion and minimum income to drop the specific work on Services, due to budget constraints and staff cuts. EuroDiaconia, however, will provide some information based on their work in the field. You can follow the activity of this group on its page on the [Members’ Room](#) (username: eapn; password: 1515).

26 October – The three SubGroups of the EUISG have decided to undertake a joint project, by producing a paper on the Active Inclusion of Young People. An initial exchange took place at the last meeting of the Group, with members discussing in buzz groups about the realities in their countries. A scoping note was proposed, discussed and agreed, and a first draft, by Vito Telesca from EAPN Italy, was submitted. Information will be collected from members between now and the next meeting with the use of a template fiche, to be developed by the

Secretariat. A more in-depth, thematic discussion will take place at the February 2014 meeting. You can consult the [Scoping Note](#) and the [proposed draft by Vito Telesca](#).

What Members can do

 **Contribute to the discussion in the EUISG meeting in February, and use the letter and leaflet when adopted.**

 **Contribute, through your EUISG member, to the paper on Active Inclusion of Young People, to be developed by the three SubGroups of the EUISG, with Secretariat support, between October 2013 and May 2014.**

 **Contribute to the work of the EMIN Project and EAPN's follow up work on fighting for progress on an Adequate Minimum Income. See EAPN's campaign page – www.adequateincome.eu**

 **Follow up with your own Governments the implementation at the national level of the Active Inclusion Recommendation, including through the NRPs and NSRs, proposals for CSRs and make inputs to your SPC and EMCO representatives, as well as feeding back to the Secretariat. See work developed with the sub-group above.**

EAPN has been actively lobbying on the need for full implementation of the Active Inclusion Recommendation. This includes specific proposals on a Framework Directive on Minimum Income, reinforced EU framework guaranteeing access to affordable quality Services of General Interest, and supporting pathway approaches into decent employment, as part of its campaign on Europe 2020.

EMPLOYMENT

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EU Policy Developments

Unemployment continues to be the main driver of employment policy in the European Union. The Joint Employment Report points out that it has not gone down, but, rather, it has reached “unprecedented levels” in the EU. The Greek Presidency has announced that fighting unemployment is a priority, through the stepped up implementation of the Compact for Growth and Jobs. This means that efforts continue to be focused on achieving employment, with little care for the type of jobs proposed, or the type of activation enforced. Enforced part-time and temporary contracts are on the rise, with women and young people hit the hardest, and long-term unemployment continuing to grow ever since the recession started. There are good news for young people, as most Member States are prioritizing this group. 17 Member States have already submitted Implementation Plans of the Youth Guarantee / Youth Employment Initiative already. However, great concerns remain about the quality of the jobs and education opportunities proposed, and it remains to be seen how these plans will be assessed – presumably, in the same framework of the NRPs. Quality is an important topic for EAPN, and we have recently published our Explainer on Quality of Work and Employment, as well as a position paper on in-work poverty, launched in the framework of the Annual Convention. In-work poverty has also been picked up by the SPC as an important trend to watch, as well as highlighted as a concern by the Employment and Social Development in Europe report, published by the European Commission last week. The struggle to ensure that achieving the employment target without endangering the poverty reduction target of Europe 2020 is now more relevant than ever.

April 2013 – The European Commission put forward a roadmap for combatting undeclared work, which details a number of policy options available. No final decision has been made, and no concrete follow-up enacted to date. You can consult the roadmap [here](#).

6-8 November 2013 – The European Parliament organised a Citizens’ Agora on Youth Unemployment. 56 young people from all Member States discussed the current challenges in Europe’s employment market, with the assistance of experts on a number of specific topics related to youth unemployment. Find more details [here](#).

11 November 2014 – Conference of the European Public Employment Services (EURES), organised under the auspices of the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU. See more details [here](#).

14 November – Conference “Tackling youth unemployment in Europe: building a better future for young people”, organized in Vilnius by the Lithuanian Presidency. See more details [here](#) and [here](#).

22 November – The European Commission put forward a Roadmap for the Implementation of the Social Investment Package (SIP). In terms of employment initiatives, the roadmap foresees the publication of a collection of “Portraits of individuals with no or limited labour market attachment” in 6 countries”, as a joint project with the World Bank. You can access the full Roadmap [here](#).

25 November– The Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) of the Employment OMC held its sole peer review of 2013 in the Netherlands, on the topic of Youth Unemployment – how to prevent it and tackle it. You can find more information about the event [here](#).

29 November – High Level Conference on Employment, Pensions and Posting of Workers in the European Union, organised in Vilnius, under the auspices of the Lithuanian Presidency. You can find more information [here](#).

4 December – DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion put forward a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships. You can read the proposal and find out more details [here](#).

9-10 December– Meeting of the Council for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO), in Brussels, dealing, among others, with youth employment, the European Semester, Roma integration, and public employment services. See more [here](#).

6 January 2014 – The European Commission unveiled its Work Programme for 2014, which can be access [here](#) in its text form. The [Annex](#) lists two new employment-related initiatives, namely a Labour Mobility Package (aimed at facilitating the free movement of persons within the EU by means of a better coordinating of social security schemes) and a Communication on Job Creation in the 'green economy'.

15 January 2014 – The Commission reports that 17 Member States have already submitted their Youth Guarantee Implementation plans, while the other 11 Member States are still preparing them. Unfortunately, these plans were not made available to the public. You can read the Memo of the European Commission, detailing what was received and next steps, [here](#).

16-17 January 2014 – European Commission conference on social entrepreneurship, called “Have your say”, and held in Strasbourg. Access all information [here](#).

21 January 2014 – The European Commission released the Employment and Social Developments Annual Review. The report highlights particularly the issue of growing in-work poverty, prompting Commissioner Andor to make a plea for quality jobs. The text equally looks into the coverage of unemployment benefits, and shows that people who receive them are much more likely to return to the labour market. You can access the full report [here](#).

[Greek Presidency of the European Union](#)

For a full list of the Greek Presidency events, as well as additional information, please consult the Presidency website [here](#).

Coming up

10-11 February – Peer review, in the framework of the Mutual Learning Programme, held in France and dedicated to the “Emploi de l’Avenir / Jobs for the Future scheme”. You can read more about this scheme and what it proposes [here](#) and [here](#).

26 February – The European Parliament will vote in plenary the report prepared by Pervenche Berès (S&D, France, Chair of the EMPL Committee of the European Parliament) on Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States in 2014. You can read the report, which was already approved in the Committee, [here](#).

28 February – The European Parliament is hosting a joint event, co-organised by Eurofound and the European Youth Forum, on the topic of “Youth Disengagement – what costs and what remedies?”. You can find more information about it [here](#).

10 March – The Meeting of the Council for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) under the Greek Presidency will take place in Brussels. See [here](#) for a complete list of items to be debated (page 39).

7-8 April – Peer review, in the framework of the Mutual Learning Programme, held in the United Kingdom, and dedicated to the “Minimum Wage”.

14-15 April – Informal meeting of the Employment Committee, organised under the Greek Presidency in Thessaloniki. No other information available as of yet.

30 April – The Meeting of the Council for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) under the Greek Presidency will take place in Athens.

EAPN Activities

26 October – EAPN’s EU Inclusion Strategies Group held its third annual meeting in Palma de Mallorca, and the Employment Subgroup also met on the occasion. A discussion was held about the Quality Work Explainer, which is now finalised. A 4-page summary will be prepared by the Secretariat for the next meeting, so that networks can translate it in their languages. Also, opportunities to use this document will be discussed at the next meeting. The SubGroup also discussed recent developments on the Youth Guarantee, and updates on the In-Work Poverty event at the Annual Convention, the Decent Work Task Force, and other employment work. See more information on the Subgroup’s page on the [Members’ Room](#).

6 November – EAPN attended an event organised by the Belgian Government about the Employment Performance Monitor (EPM) and the Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM), which form part of the Joint Assessment Framework (JAF), used to evaluate the NRPs and to issue Country Specific Recommendations. You can find more information [here](#) (in French and Dutch only).

6 November – EAPN attended an event organised by the European Trade Union Institute, entitled “Getting Europe back to Work: Alternatives to Austerity”. You can find more information, including agenda, background documents, and all presentations, [here](#).

12 November – The Social Platform Employment Working Party met for the last time. The Social Platform has decided to abolish Working Groups starting with 2014, and to work on a more flexible model of task forces instead. You can consult the minutes of this last meeting [here](#) (username: eapn; password: platform10). Regarding the Social Platform’s planned position paper on employment, to which EAPN has contributed significantly, it has been finalised and will be discussed and adopted by the Steering Group of the Social Platform in the near future.

12 November – EAPN met with representatives of DG EAC to discuss how their work on youth articulates with that carried out by DG Employment (particularly, the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative). DG EAC is the main implementer of the [EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018](#), while DG Employment leads on the Youth Guarantee. DG EAC’s involvement in the Youth Guarantee and implementation is very limited, but they think it is a good thing that monitoring is through the CSRs (as it gives it more weight). They share concerns about the potential absence of the quality dimension, and the risk that overarching macroeconomic concerns will undermine inclusive implementation. They also feel that the Youth Guarantee is essentially partnerships between schools and employers, whereas much more is needed. The [EU Youth Report](#) covers all areas of the Strategy (see here:). They believe in evidence-based youth policy, and have developed [indicators](#). It is also DG EAC who carries out structured dialogue with young people and their organisations, in the framework of the Strategy. They inform DG Employment of the results of this dialogue on areas of their competence (employment, inclusion), but this provides DG Employment with an excuse not to conduct stakeholder dialogue directly. DG Employment only started picking up on youth issues in recent years, since the crisis and the explosion in youth unemployment. DG EAC shares the view that the employment-only approach is too narrow. They are firm believers in quality youth work, especially for vulnerable youth – that means personalized approaches, starting from the individual and involving him/her, tailored pathways, and social inclusion before employability. They are particularly concerned with the hard to reach NEETs, and are in favour of comprehensive approaches to youth inclusion, that go beyond the labour market. Equally, they are very interested in social economy and the insertion possibilities offered by social enterprises, particularly for youth facing multiple obstacles.

17 November – The Annual Growth Survey was released, including its traditional Annex, the Draft Joint Employment Report. For a more detailed analysis, please see the section above on Europe 2020. Regarding employment, EAPN welcomes the support given to increasing participation in work, boosting ‘sources of jobs, maintaining employability, including the long-term unemployed ‘including through active support and training of the unemployed, making sure that social safety nets fully play their role’, implementing Youth Guarantee Plans, as well as the recognition of the worrying and increased segmentation of the labour market, which means insecure employment, particularly for young people, and pay gaps, particularly for women. EAPN laments that public investment in job creation is not highlighted, neither is the case made for quality jobs and strategies to tackle rising in-work

poverty, it represents a missed opportunity to reduce poverty, strengthen disposable incomes, close income distribution gaps and foster sustainable growth. Moreover, the AGS continues to identify ‘rigid labour markets’ as an obstacle to competitiveness, thus de facto calling for their further liberalisation. Solutions to “adult poverty” continue to be regarded as employment only. EAPN is currently preparing a response to the package. You can access the AGd documents [here](#).

26 November – In the framework of the Annual Convention of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, EAPN organised a side-event dedicated to in-work poverty, in collaboration with two other Brussels-based NGOs, namely the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), and the European Network of Social Integration Enterprises (ENSIE). The event was the perfect opportunity for EAPN to launch its [position paper on in-work poverty](#), and to debate, together with other organisations and policy-makers, the state of play of in-work poverty in Europe 2020 and connected processes. You can access all information about the event, as well as related materials, [here](#).

28 November – EAPN attended the first ever Dissemination Seminar of the Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) of the Employment OM. The seminar provided an opportunity to share real lessons and good practice in relation to European employment, inspired by all of the MLP activities that have taken place during 2013. More information, as well as the programme and all presentations, can be found [here](#), while the Synthesis Report for the MLP activities in 2013 can be consulted [here](#).

11 December – The EAPN Task Force on Decent Work held its first meeting in Brussels. Participating members include EAPN IE (proposer), EAPN UK/Scotland, EAPN IT, EAPN RO, EAPN PT, EAPN EE, and PICUM. The Task Force will be studying the Living Wage Campaign, as it was implemented in Scotland, and assess which of its elements could be adapted for an EAPN-wide campaign on Living Wage, and how would such a campaign look like. For this purpose, a questionnaire has been dispatched to EAPN networks on February 6th. The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for the 28th of February. You can read more on the [Members’ Room](#).

Regarding EAPN’s work on the European Employment Strategy and the NRP process, please consult the Europe 2020 section of this Policy Brief.

What members can do

 **Please activate / initiate contact with your national representative(s) in the EMCO.** The role of the EMCO has increased exponentially in the assessment of the NRPs. Both for acquiring information as well as for inputting in the process, contacts with the EMCO are crucial. Please consult the latest [List of EMCO Members - October 2013](#).

 **Please contribute to the campaign questionnaire of the Decent Work Task Force,** to aid it in its work to prepare a feasibility and Scoping Note for an EAPN-wide Living Wage Campaign. The Questionnaire has been dispatched to you by email on February 6th.

 **Members of the EAPN EU ISG: Disseminate EAPN's more recent papers:** the position paper on In-Work Poverty, and the EAPN Explainer for Quality of Work and Employment. For the latter, you can also make use of the brief summary prepared by the Secretariat, which you are especially encouraged to translate in your national languages.

 **Members of the EAPN EUISG Employment SubGroup: Please contribute to the upcoming paper on Youth Inclusion,** to be developed jointly by the three SubGroups of the EU ISG. A second discussion, based on input collected from members through fiches, will take place at the meeting in Brussels on 8 February.

STRUCTURAL FUNDS

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EAPN group in charge: EU Inclusion Strategies Group / Structural Funds Subgroup.

EU Policy Developments

20 January 2014 – Latest update on the SF programming for 2014-2020

The Partnership agreements are being submitted to the Commission by EU Member States. They have 4 months from the entry into force of the Regulation (i.e. till the 18 April 2014). Then, the Commission shall make observations within 3 months of the submission date and shall adopt the Agreement no later than 4 months from its submission. But in any case, PAs should be adopted by end of August at the latest.

Operational Programmes shall be submitted by Member States at the latest 3 months following the submission of the PA. The Commission shall make observations within 3 months of the date of submission of the OP and adopt the OP no later than 6 months from the submission date. In any case, OPs should be adopted by end of January 2015 at the latest.

For more information, please click [here](#).

15 January 2014 - 17 Member States have submitted Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans

The YEI funding will comprise €3 billion from a specific new EU budget line dedicated to youth employment matched by at least €3 billion from the European Social Fund national allocations. This will amplify the support provided by the European Social Fund for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee by funding activities to directly help young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) such as job provision, traineeships and apprenticeships, business start-up support, etc. The YEI will be programmed as part of the ESF 2014-20. This has been clearly mentioned in the Annual Growth Survey 2014.

The Commission has proposed to frontload the €6 billion under the YEI so that all this money is committed in 2014 and 2015 rather than over the seven year period of the MFF. To ensure a quick start, Member States can exceptionally start implementing YEI-related measures

already as of **1 September 2013** to be reimbursed ‘retroactively’ when the relevant operational programmes are submitted to the Commission and approved.

Together with their Implementation Plans, Member States are preparing their operational programmes setting out the planned use of their European Social Fund (ESF) allocations in 2014-20 as well as of additional funding under the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI).

For more information, please click [here](#).

[7 January 2014 – Adoption of the European Code of conduct on the partnership principle](#)

The Commission has adopted the European Code of Code on the partnership principle which sets out a common set of standards to improve consultation, participation and dialogue with partners (i.e. regional, local, urban and other public authorities, trade unions, employers, non-governmental organisations or bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination) during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

The Code of Conduct, which takes the form of a legally binding Commission Regulation, sets out objectives and criteria to ensure that Member States implement the partnership principle. This means that Member States are required to:

- ensure transparency in the selection of partners representing regional, local and other public authorities, social and economic partners and bodies representing the civil society, to be appointed as full members in the monitoring committees of the programmes.
- provide partners with adequate information and sufficient time as a prerequisite for a proper consultation process
- ensure that partners must be effectively involved in all phases of the process, i.e. from the preparation and throughout the implementation, including monitoring and evaluation, of all programmes
- support the capacity building of the partners for improving their competences and skills in view of their active involvement in the process and
- create platforms for mutual learning and exchange of good practice and innovative approaches.

The Regulation establishes the principles Member States must apply but leaves ample flexibility to Member States to organise the precise practical details for involving relevant partners in the different stages of the programming.

For more information, please click [here](#).

[18 December 2013 – entry into force of the SF Regulations](#)

The new rules and legislation governing the next programming period of Structural Funds have been formally endorsed by the Council of the European Union and entered into force on the 18th of December.

The [Official Journal L 347](#) contains the new Regulations.

EAPN Activities

27 November 2013 – EAPN participated to the Word Café on Structural Funds organized during the Annual Convention of the European Platform against Poverty in the table on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

First half of December 2013 – EAPN published and disseminated the EAPN Structural Funds Mapping Document. This document provides an assessment drawing from the contribution of 10 EAPN National Networks on how far the partnership principle as well as the poverty reduction target have been integrated into the SF programming documents (i.e. Partnership agreements and OPs) for 2014-2020.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat

Second half of December 2013 – EAPN Sent the briefing note to EU ISG Members on the ex-ante conditionality on Poverty Reduction/ Social Inclusion to press their Governments to use Structural Funds to back financially national anti-poverty strategies.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

First half of February 2014 – EAPN sent to EU ISG Members the template letter to encourage Managing Authorities to include CLLD on social inclusion/ poverty reduction in their OPs.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

Coming up

6-7 February 2014 – ESF Launch Conference for the programming period 2014-2020 organised by DG EMPL. EAPN will attend this event.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

End of February 2014 – Plenary voting on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD).

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

End of February 2014 - Finalization of the EAPN leaflet on good practices on social inclusion of SF-funded projects.

What Members can do

National Networks are invited to:

- To contribute to the finalization of the leaflet on Social Inclusion and Structural Funds by making comments.
- To contribute to the scoping of the work on the EAPN SF Handbook to help social NGOs to access SF 2014-2020
- To get in touch with their national authorities/Managing Authorities and their ESF or ERDF Desk Officer to make sure that the ex-ante conditionality on poverty reduction is well-reflected in the partnership agreements and Operational Programmes.

- To get in touch with their national authorities/Managing Authorities and their ESF or ERDF Desk Officer to make sure that Community-led local development on social inclusion are being made possible in Operational Programmes.

NEW PROGRAMME FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION (EaSI)

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EAPN group in charge: Exco and EU Inclusion Strategies Group.

EU Developments

In June 2013 the European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on the **EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)** with a proposed budget of €815 million for the 2014-20 period. You can access the programme [here](#). This programme replaces the previous PROGRESS programme and has three axis: the Progress axis, EURES axis and European Microfinance Facility axis. The EP Rapporteur had proposed a fourth axis fighting youth unemployment which was rejected by the Council. EaSI has transversal objectives. EaSI is presented as the fourth pillar of the EU Initiative for Social Inclusion. The other three being the European Social Fund, the Fund for the European Aid for the most Deprived and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.

EaSI total budget for 2014-2020 will be €815 million, less than the €958.19 million originally proposed by the Commission. The allocation between the three axes is as follows:

- Progress (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity) – 61%
- EURES (European Employment Services) – 18%
- European Progress Microfinance Facility – 21%.

This also means that the current Progress allocation is about €76,5 million short of the initially proposed amount. Finally, social inclusion is no longer visible in the name of the programme and the Social Innovation goal which was added as the new element means that about 1/5 of the Progress funding will go to social experimentation projects targeting primarily public authorities as project promoters and implementers. This also means that the new programme has drastically reduced opportunities for anti-poverty networks to get projects on awareness-raising, advocacy or participation of people experiencing poverty and NGOs in the EU anti-poverty policy-making processes.

July 2013: A call for four year partnership agreements with European Social Inclusion Networks was launched (in part under the old PROGRES programme and part under the new

EASI programme). EAPN applied under the call and has now signed a four year partnership agreement and is currently negotiating the work programme and budget for its 2014 work programme. However the decision of the European Commission, to cap the funding to any one European Network has had a drastic impact on EAPN's core budget and has led to having to let three members of staff go, reduce the number and range of our activities and reduce translation and interpretation costs.

Finally, the EP Rapporteur had proposed a fourth axis fighting youth unemployment which was rejected by the Council.

EAPN Activities

EAPN worked to influence the shape of the new programme with colleagues in the Social Platform in particular by providing input to the European Parliament for their report on the new programme.

In this period EAPN has been busy responding to the call for 4 year partnership agreements with European Social Inclusion Networks. This call also included the possibility for a Joint action with other actors which EAPN responded to, for an action on the Country Specific Recommendations as part of the Europe 2020 process (see above).

Future Activities

In the coming period EAPN will try to get an overview on all the spending available under the EASI programme and to lobby for activities that would suit the work of anti-poverty NGOs.

Calls under the EASI Programme:

The Commission will fund **social policy experimentation** aimed at measuring the impact of a social policy intervention in line with the Social Investment Package. **Call launched September 2013, Projects selected will run till 2016-2017.**

Support MS in the design of **reform strategies for more cost-effective social protection systems** (based in particular on cooperation with international organisations and other Member States) **To be launched June 2014 Results 2015**

Assessment of the effectiveness of conditional cash transfers for improving children's outcomes. Launch Spring 2014 Results 2015

Study on effective policies to reduce homelessness and housing exclusion: Publication and launch seminar end-2015.

What Members can do



EAPN will seek to keep members informed of potential calls that may be of interest to members under the EASI programme.

SERVICES OF GENERAL INTEREST

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EAPN group in charge: EU Inclusion Strategies Group.

EU Policy developments

15 January 2014 – Adoption in Plenary by EP of the Directive on public procurement

This Directive contains some positive achievements like the possibility for contracting authorities to introduce social considerations throughout the procurement process. But Member States have a big marge for manoeuvre while transposing the directive in national law. NGOs have a role to place together with Member States and regional and local authorities in ensuring the correct implementation of the directive.

For more information, please click [here](#).

12 December 2013 – Adoption in Plenary by the EP of the directive on basic bank accounts

This Directive gives the right to open a bank account to all people who are legally resident in the EU. All payment service providers must be required to offer a basic payment account.

For more information, please click [here](#).

22 October 2013 – Presentation of the EC Work Programme for 2014

A report on the state of implementation of the internal energy market and Action Plan to implement the internal energy market at retail level is announced for 2014.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

EAPN Activities

Coming up

25 February 2014 – EAPN will speak at the stakeholder consultation organized for the CoR's opinion on "Affordable Energy for all" drafted by Mr Christian ILLEDITS (AT/PES – ENVE).

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

5 March 2014 – EAPN will speak at the EU Conference "Fighting energy poverty: Towards a European political framework as new driver for action?" organized in the framework of the "ACHIEVE" project at the EESC.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENS 2013

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EAPN group in charge: EXCO.

EU Policy developments

Evaluation of the 2013 European Year of Citizens

The European Year of Citizens 2013 is being evaluated by an external team of independent evaluators belonging to a consortium led by the Public Policy and Management Institute (PPMI) located in Vilnius.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

12 - 13 December 2013 – 2013 European Year of Citizens Closing Conference “How to make every year a year for Citizens!”

On 12 and 13 December 2013, the Closing Conference of the European Year of Citizens 2013 took place at the Lithuanian Parliament “Seimas” in Vilnius. The event has been organised by the European Commission (through its European Year of Citizens 2013 Taskforce) in close cooperation with the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA) and the Lithuanian Presidency (through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs-MFA and the Lithuanian EYCA member: Non-Governmental Organisation Information and Support Centre – NISC, to which the MFA has delegated the conference organisation). This event gathered together around 360 participants, including:

- Representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs), both from EU and national level (with a higher proportion of Lithuanian CSOs, as Lithuania is the host country)
- The European Year of Citizens National Contact Points
- Representatives of the EU and other international institutions:
 - European Commission
 - European Parliament
 - European Ombudsman
 - European Economic and Social Committee
 - EU Fundamental Rights Agency
 - EU Institute for Gender Equality
 - The Council of Europe

EYCA’s Chairman handed over a shorter and more focused set of EYCA Policy Recommendations to Vice-President Viviane Reding of the European Commission on the morning of 13 December, just after the Official Opening of the Closing Conference.

The Conference included a mix of plenary sessions (4) and parallel working sessions (6) over one-and-a-half days; it is structured in three blocks around the following topics:

1. The Role of Civil Society in European democracy
2. EU Citizenship in action – How citizens can influence policy-making
3. Participative and representative democracy: Two sides of a same coin

The report of the Conference will be made available soon both on www.eu2013.lt and <http://ey2013-alliance.eu>.

For more information, please click [here](#).

[27 November 2013 – Cancellation of the EYCA joint event with the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz](#)

This meeting will be rescheduled in the coming weeks. For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

[21 October 2013 – Endorsement of the EYCA Policy Recommendations](#)

During the EYC 2013 Alliance Plenary meeting of the 21st of October, The EYCA Members endorsed their key proposals for the reinforcement and enhancement of active citizenship in Europe. These proposals are organised following a precise reasoning starting from our vision for Europe which is that of a Union based upon solidarity, equality and participation (Chapter 1 – Active European Citizenship as a Project of Society). However this vision for Europe implies to ensure that vulnerable, marginalised and excluded citizens are equally involved and included in society, notably in terms of participation (Chapter 2 – An Open and Inclusive European Democracy) and to strengthen the three democratic pillars that are (a) education and information, (b) open and responsive institutions and (c) strong and independent civil society (Chapter 3 – One European Democracy, Three Democratic Pillars). The EYCA Policy recommendations are available in 18 EU languages (BG/ HR/ CZ/ NL/ EN/ FR/ DE/ EL/ HU/ IT/ LV/ LT/ PO/ PT/ RO/ SK/ FI/ ES).

For more information, please click [here](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE FOR A EUROPEAN CONVENTION

17 January 2014 – Setting up of the European Steering Committee

This European Steering Committee is made up of 9 people coming from EAPN, European Student Network, Democracy International, ECAS, EUCIS-LLL, European Alternatives, European Civic Forum, JEF. It will coordinate the Alliance, guide the steps and set the priorities of the Coalition.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

18 November 2013 – Inaugural meeting of the Civil Society Alliance for a European Convention

September 2013 – Launch of the “Civil Society Alliance for a European Convention”.

In view of the EP elections, the European Mouvement International (EMI) Members adopted a resolution asking for the establishment of a trans-national “Civil Society Alliance for a European Convention” in order to re-launch the debate on the future of the EU. The idea is to gather together organizations and civil society actors who share EMI’s beliefs: that we need to further democratize the EU; that we need a European Convention to draft a new Treaty; and that civil society has to be taken into account in this important debate.

This Alliance, coordinated by EMI, brings together:

- EMI National councils (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Spain, UK, Serbia, Turkey)
- EMI international organisations (Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l’Europe (AEGEE), Association of European Journalists (AEJ), Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA), Confédération Européenne des Syndicats Indépendants (CESI), European League for Economic Cooperation (ELEC), Erasmus Student Network (ESN), Forum Permanent de la société civile, SOLIDAR, Union of European Federalists (UEF), Young European Federalists (JEF)
- External International organisations : Democracy International (DI), Eurochild, European Alternatives, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), European Civic Forum, European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL), European Disability Forum (EDF), European Network Against Racism (ENAR), European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), European Volunteer Centre (CEV), European Women’s Lobby (EWL), European Youth Forum (YFJ)

EAPN Activities

17 January 2014 – EAPN Director, Barbara Helfferich, was elected Member of the Steering Group of the Civil Society Alliance for a European Convention.

12-13 December 2013 – The President of EAPN, Sergio Aires, spoke during the EYC 2013 Closing Conference in the panel “Towards the 2014 European Elections.

Mid October 2013 – EAPN gave input to the draft EYCA Policy Recommendations.

Coming up

End of February 2014 – Evaluation of the EYC 2013

At the end of February 2014, all participants of the 2013 EYC Closing Conference will be contacted by the organizers of this Conference, and provided with a link to a short follow up evaluation questionnaire of this event.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

20 February 2014 – EYC Alliance plenary meeting in the European Economic and Social Committee.

During this meeting, the dissemination and follow up of the EYCA policy recommendations as well as the review of the EYC 2013 and perspectives for the future of the Alliance will be discussed.

For more information, please ask the Secretariat.

For more information about European Year of Citizens 2013 and the Civil Society Alliance for a European Convention, please contact vincent.caron@eapn.eu (till end February) tanya.basarab@eapn.eu (from the 10th of March).

PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

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Latest EU Developments

26-27 November: Annual Convention of the EPAP

The Commission supported the involvement of over 20 people experiencing poverty to the Convention coordinated by EAPN, however there was no speaking slot in plenary given for a report back from the 2013 PeP meeting. However Honoratte Muhanzi Kashale was invited to give a feedback in the workshop on Reference Budgets which linked to the topics of the 2013 meeting. See input of Honoratte here.

EAPN's President made a strong reference to the key role for PeP, and the need to support the annual EU meeting, and achieved a meeting with President Barroso and President Van

Rompuy, in which people with direct experience of poverty participated. (See above section on the EPAP)

EAPN Activities

[31 Jan 2014: Meeting of the National Coordinators](#) to plan the 2014 European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty took place In Brussels.

[17 December 2013: EAPN TASK FORCE MEETING: Handbook and common principles on stakeholder engagement involving people experiencing poverty.](#)

The new EAPN TF held its 2nd meeting, where it discussed a first draft of a handbook and common principles, aimed at decision makers involved in the Europe 2020 process at EU, national and sub-national levels. The TF is led by EAPN Belgium, and involves EAPN Sweden, Spain, Estonia and Macedonia, with Eurochild and AGE-Platform. The aim is to try to use the Handbook to press for guidelines and an action plan to embed meaningful stakeholder engagement in the Europe 2020 strategy – eg in developing the NRPs and NSRs. The 2nd draft will be discussed in the EUISG meeting on the 8th February, and then finalized, to be launched in March. It is hoped to hold a workshop also on the theme in the EU meeting of People Experiencing Poverty. Contact Sian Jones, for more details and see the member's room.

[1 October 2013 – EAPN Policy Conference](#) – a presentation on the outcomes of the 2013 European Meeting of people experienciong poverty was made by Honoratte Muhanzi Kashale from EAPN Norway. You can access the presentation [here](#).

[18-20 June 2013, The 12th EU Meeting of People experiencing Poverty](#) took place on the Esplanade in front of the EU Parliament in Brussels.

Reports of the 2013 EU Meeting of people experiencing Poverty are now available in the EAPN website. You can access them [here](#).

[22-25 May 2013 EAPN Learning Forum](#) - The EAPN Learning forum hosted by the Estonian Network was a chance to build the participation of people experiencing poverty in the work of EAPN and to exchange on the work of EAPN National Networks and its members. There was also the chance to exchange with representative of BGOs and Movements from outside Europe. The report of the meeting (written and video) plus presentations made at the meeting will shortly be on the EAPN website.

EAPN [Membership Assessment and Support System \(MASS\)](#) EAPN had developed a membership assessment and support system which is presently been tested by EAPN Iceland. Participation of people experiencign poverty is one of the four pillars of the MASS approach. In future the annual reports from the National Networks will also take account of the four pillars of the MASS document.

Coming Up

13th European meeting of people Experiencing Poverty is **provisionally fixed for July or September. Planning has begun and the date will be confirmed shortly.**

What Members can do



Support the preparation of your delegation for the 2014 People Experiencing Poverty Meeting.



Read the reports from the 2013 PeP meeting and integrate messages, images, slogans from the meeting in your inputs on behalf of EAPN.



Familiarise yourself with the EAPN MASS document and integrate this into the evaluation and planning work of your Network.