

# Decent Work, Quality Jobs and Poverty: The Missing Link in Europe 2020

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**The way forward: How to integrate  
quality of work and employment in  
Europe 2020?**

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EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

RESEAU EUROPEEN DES ASSOCIATIONS

DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETE

ET L'EXCLUSION SOCIALE

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## Outline of the Presentation

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- What is EAPN?
- EAPN's position on quality of work
- The Europe 2020 Mid-Term Review – What Opportunities?
- Recommendations for the European level



## What is the European Anti Poverty Network - EAPN?

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- Independent **Network of NGOs** committed to fight against poverty and social exclusion, with and for people in poverty
- Started in 1990 – **key actor** in poverty programmes and development of social OMC.
- Receives **financial support** from the European Commission (PROGRESS / EaSI)
- 31 **National Networks** and 18 **European NGOs** as members (6000+ organisations)
- **Participation of people** with direct experience of poverty must be part of the solution

# EAPN's position on quality work

## *What we are doing*



- Monitoring of the **European Employment Strategy** since 1997; dedicated Working Group 1997-2011, and Subgroup from 2012
- Ongoing monitoring of the **employment target and related processes under Europe 2020** – dedicated chapters in EAPN's NRP reports (2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 – upcoming)
- Dedicated publications, including an **Explainer on Quality of Work and Employment** and a position paper on **In-Work Poverty**
- Support for **inclusive labour markets** (as part of integrated Active Inclusion approaches)
- **Video documentary** on positive and negative activation practices;
- Task Force on a **Living Wage Campaign** (on the UK model)

*All information, tools and publications on EAPN's work on employment can be accessed [here](#).*

# EAPN's position on quality work

## *What we care about*



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### ■ Main issues of interest for EAPN:

- Employment is **one route out of poverty**, but not the only one (integrated Active Inclusion approaches)
- **Access to employment** (supported pathways & inclusive labour markets)
- **Job creation** (accessible to key groups and regions)
- **Quality of work and employment** (of jobs, and of the labour market)
- **In-work poverty** (almost a third of poor people are currently in work)
- Support for **social economy**, particularly work integration social enterprises (**WISEs**)

# EAPN's position on quality work

## *European challenges*



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- The **employment target of Europe 2020** is at odds with the poverty reduction target – numbers' game, no attention paid to quality
  - The **Eurostat measuring of the employment target** is wrong – “one hour worked in the week of reference” – where is the quality aspect?
  - The **employment guidelines** ( particularly 7 and 8) are not properly taken into account (if at all) by the European Semester processes
  - Existing **indicators on quality work** and in-work poverty are not applied when assessing NRPs and when issuing CSRs
  - Announced **revision of the quality work concept** – stuck in the Employment Committee forever, technical exercise
  - **Austerity policies, particularly in Troika countries** have significantly downgraded quality of work and employment
  - **Incoherent EU policies** – contradictory CSRs.
  - **Overall macroeconomic governance** (Fiscal Compact, 2-Pack, 6-Pack) undermining quality employment



# The Europe 2020 Mid-Term Review: What Opportunities?

- EAPN's assessment of the Commission's Stock-Taking Communication (2014) – employment elements:
  - **No progress on the employment target:** decline from 68.9% in 2009 to 68.4% in 2012;
  - **Employment is an increasingly insecure route out of poverty** - increase from 8.6% to 9.1% of households classified as working poor;
  - **Youth unemployment rising** to 24.2% compared to adults (9.6%)
  - **Austerity policies** resulted more poverty and social exclusion, contributing to the growing inequality gap: reductions in unemployment benefits (IE, NL, HU).
  - **Less priority given to quality job creation** and ensuring access of those most excluded, and more to 'employability' and to supply side measures, through activation;
  - **No inclusive labour markets** - further exclusion of some groups, such as people with disabilities, lone-parents, ethnic minorities, older workers etc.



# The Europe 2020 Mid-Term Review: What is needed\*

- Complement the purely numerical employment targets with **binding criteria on quality**, most of which are already present in the Social Scoreboard and the Joint Assessment Framework
- Introduce **sub-targets focusing on particular groups** at risk are also needed: youth, homeless, migrants, Roma, long-term unemployed, single parents.
- **Implement the quality dimension** which is explicitly mentioned in Guideline 8 – formulate quality frameworks and incorporating them in the CSRs;
- Shift the focus from supply to demand: **back public investment in quality and sustainable jobs**, including in the green, white, and ICT sectors;
- **End negative activation** – stop penalising people by withdrawing benefits for failing to accept low-quality employment.
- **Curb in-work poverty**, by putting forward an EU strategy with roadmap
- **Support transitions** from school to work, between jobs, and from work to retirement, ensuring adequate social protection levels.

\* *These proposals on employment are part of a broader, integrated approach, outlined in EAPN's overall Mid-Term Review paper – employment is only one instrument.*



# Recommendations for the European level



- 1. Set common standards on employment rights**, through the renewed concept and indicators for quality of work and employment.
- 2. Implement the framework**, apply and mainstream these common standards in the processes of the European Semester, including the NRPs, CSRs, AGS, and JER.
- 3. Adequately define the employment target**, using the opportunity of the upcoming mid-term review of Europe 2020.
- 4. Pursue coherence in policy-making**, by supporting a strong social dimension of the European and Monetary Union on equal footing.
- 5. Don't leave bail-out states behind**, include them in the Semester!
- 6. Promote decent wages**, reverse the trend of decoupling wages from inflation.
- 7. Fight in-work poverty**, by producing a Green Paper for combating In-Work Poverty.
- 8. Back quality research and exchanges**, as a key theme of multilateral surveillance.
- 9. Promote inclusive governance and democracy**, by meaningfully associating stakeholders beyond the social partners, including people experiencing poverty.
- 10. Promote a targeted approach of Structural Funds** (especially the European Social Fund) to support the quality employment and work agenda.



**Thank you for your attention!**

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***For more information, please consult***

**[www.eapn.eu](http://www.eapn.eu)**

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