

12th EU Meeting of People experiencing Poverty

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF POVERTY TODAY?

Brussels, 18, 19 & 20 June 2013

Venue: Esplanade of the European Parliament, Brussels



An event organised by EAPN with the support of:

The EU Commission

The EU Parliament

The EAPN Fund

In association with the Irish Presidency of the EU



Background

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

The meetings have contributed to keeping poverty and social exclusion visible in the European agenda and they have contributed to some key areas of policy development such as adequacy of minimum income, child poverty, housing and homelessness, indebtedness, the links between discrimination and poverty (particularly the realities for Roma community), and the impact of liberalization on public services and the EU poverty reduction target. In addition the meetings provide a 'barometer' in relation to social and economic developments in Europe. The processes associated to this meeting assist in the journey from 'people experiencing poverty' to 'activists with direct experience of poverty' and past participants are now playing important roles in anti-poverty organisations.

The meetings were developed as EU Presidency events and were conceptualized as an important part of the Social OMC, responding to the agreed objective 'to ensure the direct participation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion'. However the reality in the last years is that the national stakeholder processes associated to the Social OMC have diminished and it has been difficult in most countries for people experiencing poverty and their organisations to access the processes associated to the Europe 2020 strategy. In addition fiscal consolidation and austerity approaches means that the reality for people experiencing poverty is worsening and the numbers in poverty are growing. All this has led to a growing sense that the format for the European meetings needed to change.

2013 Meeting

The 2013 meeting will be organized by EAPN with support from the European Commission, the Irish Presidency of the EU and the EAPN Fund. The meeting will be held in a temporarily constructed Conference Centre on the Esplanade directly in front of the European Parliament. Support for the use of the Esplanade has been received from the

European Parliament's Committee for Employment and Social Affairs. This year's meeting will have a less formal format and will have more elements of cultural exchange. The meeting is seen as an important event in the calendar of the 2013 European Year of the Citizen.

However the meeting remains a meeting of people experiencing poverty where they directly 'take the floor' and the desire to interact with politicians and Institutional actors remains an important part of the event. It is very important that the meetings continue to be seen as an important part of the EU Inclusion Strategy and contributes to the Social OMC and the Europe 2020 Flagship initiative 'Platform against Poverty' and the recent Commissions Communication on the Social Investment Package.

Objectives for the 2013 Meeting

- To reinforce the visibility of the fight against poverty and social exclusion in Europe.
- To recognise the courage, commitment and expertise that people experiencing poverty bring to the fight against poverty and to foster commitment to developing the participation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.
- To make visible the links between the different levels; local, national and European and the need for coherence between the different levels.

Content of the exchanges at the 2013 Meeting

The recent Commission Communication 'Towards social Investment for Growth and Jobs' which was released as part of its Social Investment package calls on members states to fully implement the Recommendation on Active Inclusion (2008) integrating its three pillars, adequate income support, inclusive labor markets and enabling services. The Communication commits the Commission to develop in 2013 a common methodology for reference budgets as part of the monitoring of adequacy of income supports.

The exchanges at the 2013 meeting will contribute to this objective by 1) exchanging on what should be part of an essential basket of goods and services to be used in reference budgets, 2) exchanging on what are the current developments for individuals and communities in terms of the three pillars of the Active Inclusion Recommendation and 3) Exchanging on practices that people experiencing poverty and their organisations are developing to fight poverty and exclusion and what is helping and hindering the implementation of these practices.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 18 June

- 14.00 – 17.00 **Arrival of delegates and setting up of stands**
- 17.00 – 19.00 **Welcoming Ceremony** - *Marquee on Esplanade in front of European Parliament.*
Open invitation for all who are interested to attend (representatives of Institutions, NGOs, Social Partners, academics, concerned citizens...).
- 17.00 – 17.30 **Official Opening**
- **Mr. Milan FURAK**, Delegate from the 2012 People Experiencing Poverty Meeting
 - Presentation of 3 delegations and their slogans (10') AUSTRIA-BELGIUM-BULGARIA
 - Official Opening by **Mr. Martin SCHULZ**, President of the EU Parliament
- 17.30 – 18.30 Visit of the Stands and meet with delegations
- 18.30 – 19.00 Presentation of 6 delegations and their slogans
CZECH REPUBLIC-DENMARK-ESTONIA-FINLAND-FRANCE-FYROM
- 20.00 – 22.00 **Dinner** (Delegations only)

Wednesday 19 June

- 9.00 – 9.45 **Morning Plenary** - *Marquee on Esplanade in front of European Parliament*
Presentation of 6 delegations and their slogans
GERMANY – GREECE – HUNGARY- ICELAND – IRELAND - ITALY
Messages of support:
- **Ms. Sylvie GOULARD**, MEP, President of the EU Parliament Intergroup 'Extreme poverty and human rights, 4th World Committee'
 - **Mr. Pierre BAUSSAND**, Director Social Platform
- 9.45 – 13.00 **Exchange Between National Delegations (3 delegations in one National Tent)**
The temporary Conference Centre on the Esplanade will have a tent (meeting room) for each country delegation. Delegations from three countries will gather together in one tent to have an exchange based on the national preparation work they did for this year's meetings.
- 13.00 – 14.30 **Lunch** (for delegates only)
- 14.30 – 14.45 **Mr. László ANDOR**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- 14.45 – 17.00 **National Dialogue Meetings** - Exchange between Delegations and Representatives of Institutions from their country (each delegation in its National Tent).
In each national tent, the National delegation (in its own language) will present the outcome of its National Preparation to the Guests: MEPs, Reps from Social Ministries and reps from Permanent Representations, Commission Officials, and Reps from NGOs, Social Partners and Academics. This will be followed by exchanges and discussion.

17.00 – 17.30 **Evening Plenary** (*Marquee*)

Presentation of 7 delegations and their slogans

LITHUANIA-LUXEMBURG-MALTA-NETHERLANDS-NORWAY-POLAND-PORTUGAL

Messages of support:

- **Mr. Jerry VAN DEN BERGE**, Coordinator of the European Citizens' Initiative "Water is a human right!"
- Representative from the **Alter Summit** held in Greece on 7-9 June

18.00 – 19.00 **Reflections in country delegations**

The delegation from each country will meet in their country tent to reflect on the exchanges had during the day and to develop 2/3 key messages based on these exchanges. The messages from each delegation will be combined and presented as part of the Closing Plenary.

19.00 – 19.15 Picture of all the delegations (stairs of the EU Parliament)

20.00 – 22.00 **Dinner** (Delegates and invited guests)

Thursday 20 June

9.30 – 11.15 **Closing Plenary -Marquee**

Open Invitation to attend.

Chair: Mr.Sergio AIRES, President of EAPN

- **Mr.Fintan FARRELL**, Director of EAPN Presentation of a synthesis of key messages from Delegations
- Representatives of 2 delegations will present their slogans, reflections and messages from this year's meeting SLOVAKIA - SPAIN
- Short inputs on the follow up of the key messages from the 2012 Meeting and on the key messages presented in this session
 - EU Parliament, Representative of the Committee for Employment and Social Affairs (invited)
 - **Mr.Zoltán KAZATSAY**, Deputy Director-General EU Commission, Commissioner Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
 - **Mr.John BOHAN**, Department of Social Protection, Ireland and IE member of Social Protection Committee
- Representatives of 2 delegations will present their slogans, reflections and messages from this year's meeting SWEDEN – UNITED KINGDOM

11.15 – 11.45 Break

11.45 – 12.15 **Symbolic Action "Time to move forward!"**

The Symbolic Action will begin on the Esplanade at the commemorative stone for the victims of Poverty, and will be followed by a symbolic action Place du Luxembourg.

12.15 – 13.30 **Lunch** (Delegates)

14.00 **Delegates start to journey home**