



Annual Convention 2016

Social Dimension of the European Semester

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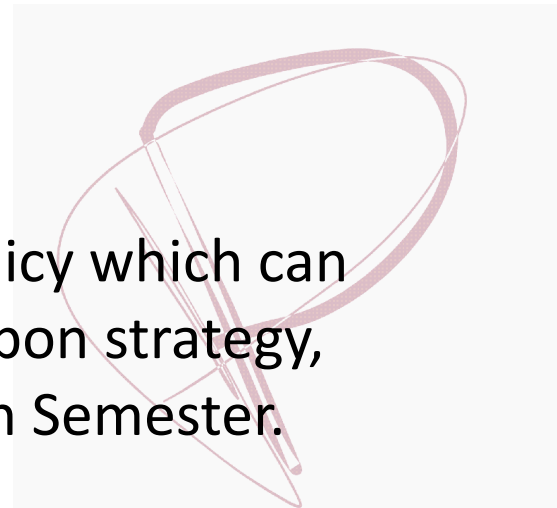
*European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland
Chair of EAPN (Europe) Inclusion Strategies Group*

EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK
RÉSEAU EUROPÉEN DES ASSOCIATIONS
DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETÉ ET L'EXCLUSION SOCIALE

European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)



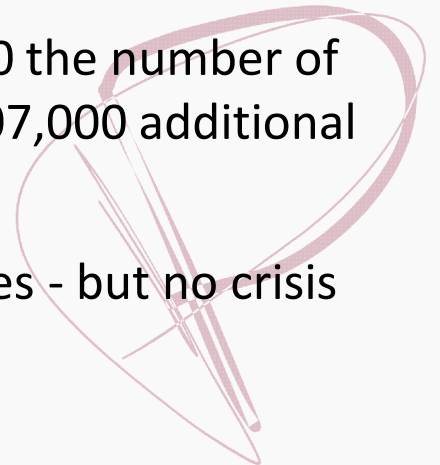
- Working since 1990 to put the fight against poverty at top of EU and member state policy agendas
- 31 National Networks and 18 European Organisations
- Working for and with people experiencing poverty and social exclusion
- EAPN Ireland
 - 250 members
 - Co-ordinates Better Europe Alliance
- Engaging in all relevant areas of policy which can help reduce poverty – including Lisbon strategy, Europe 2020 strategy and European Semester.





European Semester

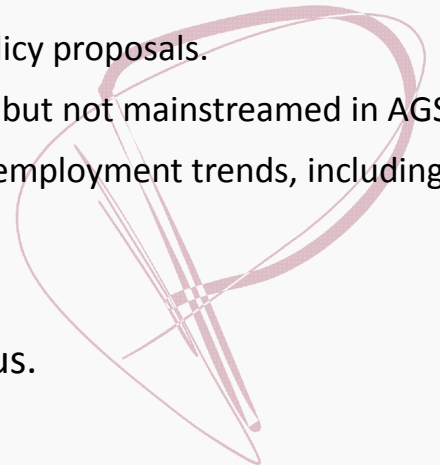
- Europe 2020 social targets, including poverty target. Optimism of addressing poverty in a balanced social, environmental and economic approach.
 - but implementation within Semester process is imbalanced - social and environmental concerns secondary and at the service of economic and fiscal goals.
- 5 million more people at-risk of poverty and social exclusion in EU 27 than in 2008 when target was set to reduce AROPE by 20 million by 2020. (122.3 million people or 24.5% of the EU 28 population).
- Irish Europe 2020 target to reduce by 200,000 the number of people in combined poverty by 2020. Now 307,000 additional people in combined poverty.
- A social crisis with real effects on people's lives - but no crisis response



European Semester - Imbalanced



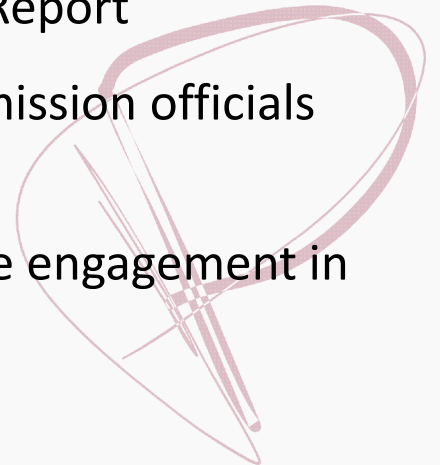
- EAPN assessment of National Reform Programmes 2015 (21 networks)
 - 65%: NRPs are primarily aimed at macroeconomic and financial management not on Europe 2020 targets
 - 76%: Austerity is still the dominant focus of NRPs and is generating more poverty and social exclusion.
 - 88%: NRPs do not have poverty as a main priority, and employment (with increased conditionality) is proposed as the only solution to fight against poverty.
 - 47%: Of anti-poverty NGOs were consulted in the development of the NRPs. But 76% replied that Anti-poverty NGOs were not taken seriously into account.
- Country Specific Recommendations 2015:
 - Only 6 with focus on poverty – can be undermined by macroeconomic CSR.
- Annual Growth Survey 2016:
 - Increased references to ‘social’ priorities, but no concrete policy proposals.
 - Europe 2020 and the Mid-Term Review within a separate box but not mainstreamed in AGS.
 - Joint Employment Report: Detailed assessment of social and employment trends, including the poverty target
- Country Reports 2016:
 - Initial assessment shows gaps but a greater social focus.





Engagement at National Level

- EAPN Ireland has ongoing engagement at national level
- Established Better Europe Alliance in 2014 with 12 civil society member organisations across social, equality, environment and trade union sectors
- Aim: Strengthen progress towards the social and environmental goals of the Europe 2020 strategy and to improve the level of debate and engagement of all stakeholders
- Response to and proposals for Country Specific Recommendations and response to Country Report
- Engagement with key Government and Commission officials and Members of Parliament (Oireachtas)
- Key role of Semester Officers in ensuring wide engagement in the Semester process.





EAPN Proposals for Semester

- Mainstream Europe 2020, the poverty target and an integrated strategy in the Semester. Clarify links to SDG goals.
- Implement transparent poverty and equality impact assessment
- Promote social investment in people, quality services and social protection not austerity.
- Create quality jobs and support all groups through integrated active inclusion, without punitive conditionality.
- Back social rights and standards and ensure an adequate income throughout the life cycle, beyond employment.
- Develop obligatory guidelines, mapping and resources to support engagement of people experiencing poverty and their civil society organisations at all stages in the Semester.
- **European Pillar of Social Rights:** must strengthen social rights in EU and make them real, not disposable or at the service of economic goals.



Thank you for your attention!

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