

***BAPN: 12 December, Brussels***

***Tackling Child Poverty with Families –***

***Our good practices!***



***EU perspective and good practices***

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## Outline

- Introducing EAPN
- EAPN's approach to poverty and child poverty
- What's happening to child poverty across the EU?
- Some good practices
- Some ways forward?

# *Introducing EAPN*



- ❑ **Independent Network of NGOs** committed to fight against poverty + social exclusion, with people in poverty.
- ❑ Started in 1990 – **key actor** in poverty programmes and development of social OMC.
- ❑ Receives **financial support** from the European Commission (PROGRESS/now EaSi)
- ❑ **31 National Networks** and **16 European NGOs** as members (10000+ organisations)
- ❑ **Participation of people** with direct experience of poverty must be part of the solution.
- ❑ **Eradicating poverty is possible – it's a political choice!**

# *EAPN's approach to poverty*



- ❑ **Poverty is a structural not an individual problem –**  
*Don't blame people facing poverty !*
  
- ❑ **Support people through an integrated, anti poverty strategy**
  - *Adequate Income through their lives - minimum income and social protection*
  - *Accessible and affordable public services*
  - *Inclusive, quality jobs*
  
- ❑ **Participation is a pre-requisite for accessing other rights**
  
- ❑ **You can't solve poverty without reducing inequality –**  
*Fairer taxes to finance universal social protection/services*

# *EAPN's approach to Child Poverty*



- Few poor children in rich families** – *ie support to the family is essential to tackle child poverty*
- Everyone only has one life** – *essential to tackle poverty now as well as support children out of poverty in the future*
- Recognize children's and parent's rights** – *children are independent right bearers, as well as part of families.*
- An integrated rights-based approach is the way forward** - *a right to a dignified life for children and their families.*
- Giving a voice to children and their families now!**

# Children and Family voices!



- My clothes are clear but old and others are laughing at me ' Kaisa-Hungary***
- If I look at my mother, how much she is working, she has 3 jobs, I never want to grow up and become an adult' it's too bad' Jerzy-Poland***
- There's no point in dreaming because things don't come true ' Dylan, UK***
- Last night I was very sad, my little sister was very sick, but mother had no money to buy medicine. There are still 3 days until my child benefit payment. ' Anu-Estonia***



# *EAPN's Definition of Child Poverty*



*Children are living in poverty if the **income and resources available for their upbringing are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is considered acceptable in the society in which they live and which is sufficient to ensure their social, emotional and physical well-being and development.***

*Because of growing up in poverty **they and their families may experience multiple disadvantages through low income, poor housing and environment, inadequate health care and barriers to education.** They are often excluded and marginalised from social, sporting, recreational and cultural activities that are the norm for other children.*

*Their **access to their fundamental rights may be restricted**, they may experience discrimination and stigmatisation and their voices may not be heard.*

*EAPN/Eurochild explainer 2012*

## ***What's the situation in the EU?***

- 119 million people facing poverty and social exclusion in EU with 1 in 4 children in poverty***
- Children face a higher risk than adults – (27.8%) compared to adults (25.4%).***
- Big differences across the EU – the worst (BG, RO, HU, LV) ie 51.5% compared to FI, DK, SE, CZ below 20%***
- Not all children face the same risk – ie single parents (48.3%) large families (27.1%), children of migrants and Roma (80%)***
- Being unemployed is a risk, but jobs not an automatic route out of poverty: 9.5% of workers in-work poverty, 55% of poor families in the UK***
- Social protection is essential to reduce poverty (26.1% to 17.2%)***
- Austerity has hit children particularly hard – cuts to income support, child benefit, cuts to services and rising costs.***



## *What's the EU approach*

### **Investing in Children:**

- **Integrated, rights based, 3 pillar approach tackling the multidimensionality of child and family poverty**

***1) Access to resources – decent work and income support***

***2) Access to quality services – early learning, family services, education, but also housing and health.***

***3) Right to participation – giving children a voice!***

**EAPN/Eurochild booklet – *Towards Children's well-being in Europe***

### **Independent Experts Assessment**

- Countries that do well:** *use an integrated approach eg Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Slovenia, invest in adequate incomes/service*
- Countries do worst: piecemeal and fail to provide for basic living standards,** *eg Bulgaria, Latvia and Romania*
- Belgium is seen as a medium risk country – with some good initiatives but some risks and coordination issues** (BE, EE, FR, MT)

# *Some Good Practices – Country level*

## **Some examples from EAPN members**

- ❑ **Malta- Green Paper on Child Poverty; Estonia: new child protection law, investment in early learning, adequacy of child benefits and minimum income.**
- ❑ **Spain: National Plan for Children with integrated approach..**
- ❑ **Poland: expanding early learning, affordable childcare, new child benefit**
- ❑ **Latvia: New Action plan to support families, increase pre-school, family card, but basic problem = inadequate income: 11euros child benefit..**

## **Main developments**

- ❑ **More integrated plans; increasing childcare and some family income support**
- ❑ **But childcare more focused in getting women into work not quality learning and not always affordable, or adjusted to working hours.**
- ❑ **Income support and child benefits still inadequate and don't compensate for rising prices**

## *Some Good Practices*



- ❑ **IQ Roma Servis: Czech Republic** – NGO works intensively with whole family, but separately with children and parents- – access to jobs, housing, early learning and childcare.
- ❑ **Case management approach** – Ireland; cross-service working for each family, tackling all the obstacles.
- ❑ **The Parent´ s House, Brest France, Association for Protecting children, young people and adults**, 10 organizations provide holistic and solidarity Support. “it takes a village to raise a child”
- ❑ **Sure Start: UK**: integrated early learning and parent support centres which work with parents/support into training and quality jobs/parenting support and innovative learning for children.
- ❑ **Cypriot children´ s parliament ‘ Cyprus . Children** directly discuss themes, elected every 2 years,with youth workers support it. Some successes, child´ s ombudsman and punishment in schools.

- Governments should invest in rights based integrated approaches** ‘adequate income, services and participation.
- Early learning initiatives and affordable quality childcare are important but also **quality jobs, social protection and services**
- Enabling Parent’s to have quality time** with their children backed by positive support and solidarity
- Give children and families a voice** , make them partners to diagnosing problems and solutions.
- Provide small grant money to enable bottom up solutions**, involving or led by families and children and their needs



***For Further Information***



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