



EAPN CONFERENCE

15 June 2017 | 1.30 pm - 5.30 pm



Learning from the past to

Beyond 2020



**What EU strategy to fight
poverty, exclusion &
inequality?**

ITUC, 5 Bld Roi Albert II, 1210 Brussels

Introduction: The current Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth set a target to reduce the number of those in poverty by at least 20 million by 2020, to be delivered through the coordination cycle of the European Semester. There has been little progress on the target however, and although poverty is now gradually reducing, nearly 119 million people are still at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion. Within the process, civil society's role has been marginalized, crucially.

The EU is now debating the future of Europe and a strategy for beyond 2020. The European Pillar of Social Rights seems to present an opportunity, although its impact on poverty reduction is unclear. The need to deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the EU, committing to end poverty, also seems to offer hope, as long as it supports upwards social convergence. However, in a context of increasing anti-EU feeling, the EU is tending to stick to narrow internal market priorities, with social priorities sidelined.

EAPN's view is different. Unless the EU can recover a 'social heart & brain' and ensure an effective participation of people experiencing poverty and their organisations, it will be increasingly difficult to get support from people on the ground for the EU. We must develop a **positive vision of Social Europe**, with concrete proposals and an **effective rights-based strategy to fight poverty**.

Objectives: The conference will be an opportunity to exchange together on the following questions:

- **What integrated strategy should the EU propose to effectively fight poverty?** What can we learn from the past? What do people in poverty want and expect from the EU? How does this connect to the European Pillar of Social Rights?
- **How should this strategy be mainstreamed into a post 2020 strategy?** Can the Sustainable Development Goals offer a better and more operational framework to take over from Europe 2020? Should this be through a re-vamped European Semester? Or another process?
- **How should we mobilize for this in the context of the Future of Europe?**

Aims:

- Present ideas & messages from EAPN, coming from an internal session of members, including input from people experiencing poverty;
- Get feedback & debate with the European Commission & Council;
- Get responses from other Civil Society Organisations & partners;
- Give special attention to the SDG agenda; the follow up on the European Pillar of Social Rights, and the implications of the Future of Europe proposals, in trying to move forward for a transformative social and sustainable framework for beyond 2020.



This conference is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020).

For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>. The views contained in this document do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission

Photo: Rebecca Lee, for EAPN

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Learning from the past to beyond 2020 - What EU strategy to fight poverty, exclusion & inequality?

15 June 2017

ITUC, Boulevard Roi Albert II, 5, 1210 Brussels

13.30 Registration

14.00 Panel 1: What strategy is needed to fight poverty, exclusion and inequality? What can we learn from the past? What are people experiencing poverty's expectations?

Chair: Leo Williams, EAPN Director

- Welcome and Introduction: *Sérgio Aires, EAPN President*
- EU delivery on poverty, exclusion and inequality: *Hugh Frazer, Coordinator ESPN and Professor, Maynooth University, Ireland*
- What strategy to fight poverty? - EAPN proposals: *Sérgio Aires, EAPN President*
- Reality check: *Javier Salgado, person with direct experience of poverty, EAPN Spain*
- Response from EU Institutions:
 - *Ruth Paserman, Commissioner Thyssen's Cabinet*
 - *Alexis Rinckenbach, Vice-Chair, Social Protection Committee*
- Debate with audience

15.30 Tea/Coffee break

16.00 Panel 2: What post Europe 2020 framework/governance process do we need and how do we get there? Can the SDGs provide an answer?

Chair: Leo Williams, EAPN Director

- Getting the right framework - Presenting EAPN proposals: *Paul Ginnell, Co-Chair EAPN EU Inclusion Strategies Group*
- Reality check: *Michael Mackey, person with direct experience of poverty, EAPN Ireland*
- Could the SDGs offer an answer? *Leida Rijnhout, Programme Coordinator, Friends of the Earth Europe and Steering Committee member, SDG Watch Europe*
- Short response from social stakeholders:
 - *Jana Hainsworth, Secretary General, Eurochild and President, Social Platform*
 - *Heather Roy, Secretary General, Eurodiaconia*
 - *Richard Pond, Policy Staff, EPSU*
- Response from the European Commission: *Sonia Vila-Nuñez, Secretariat-General*
- Debate with audience
- Conclusions and final remarks

17.30 Close of conference