

**ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE EUROPEAN PLATFORM AGAINST POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

***Side Event: In Work Poverty
The Contribution of Employment to Poverty Reduction and Inclusion***

26 November 2013, Aquarium Room, The Egg, Brussels

Welcome and opening remarks by the Chair

Welcome to this event, and thank you to the triple-E organisations (EAPN, EASPD, ENSIE) for organizing this. It is called a “side-event”, but there is nothing “side” about it, as this is a key topic, which deserves much attention.

Why are we doing this event? Because some people in the European Union, although they are working, are still experiencing poverty. This is unacceptable. The Europe 2020 Strategy is losing ground in the European Semester, and the macroeconomic dimension takes priority over the social one. The poverty target hasn’t seemed to be taken very seriously, it is not high on the policy agenda, while work, and work, and work, and more work seems to be much more important. And yet there is some policy space to discuss today’s topic: in-work poverty is mentioned in some key EU documents, such as the “Flagship” Initiative called the European Platform Against Poverty, the Social Investment Package, the Scoreboard for the Social Dimension of the EMU; and it has been identified as a “Trend to Watch” by the Social Protection Committee, which just recently organized a peer review on this (23 October 2013).

We will try to see today how we can ensure that employment is a real route out of poverty. There is a quote that I picked up from the EAPN position paper on in-work poverty, which is being launched today – the person said *We are decent people, we want to work for decent wages, and have a decent life*. This summarises well, I think, what this is all about.

Tonight, we will begin with presentations from the three organisations around the table, who will set the scene for the discussion, followed by a short Q & A, then we will have discussants, the European Commission, and the European Trade Union Confederation, who will react to what they heard, and present the point of view of their organization. Finally, we will have a debate with the participants, with the aim of identifying key messages. Every one of you is allowed to a “high fiver” in case you feel the need for an immediate, short intervention.