



European Pillar of Social Rights and the Semester
Achieving Progress on Poverty/strengthening civil dialogue

*Setting the Scene:
EAPN Assessment of the Country Reports
and European Semester 2019*

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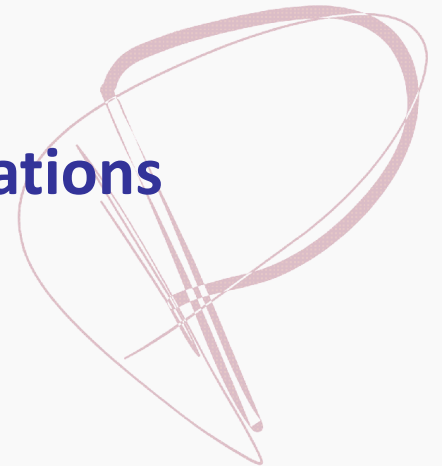


EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK
RÉSEAU EUROPÉEN DES ASSOCIATIONS
DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETÉ ET L'EXCLUSION SOCIALE



Outline of the Presentation

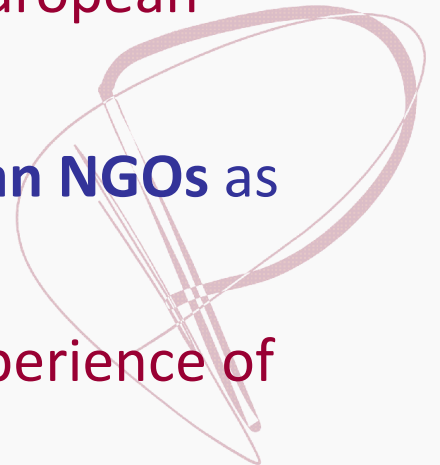
- 1. Introduction to EAPN and the Semester**
- 2. Context: Progress on Poverty + the Social Pillar**
- 3. No Time for Complacency! EAPN Assessment of 2019 Country Reports**
- 4. Key Messages and Recommendations**



What is EAPN - the European Anti Poverty Network?



- Largest independent **network of NGOs** committed to fight against poverty and social exclusion in Europe, with & for people in poverty
- Started in 1990 – **key actor** in poverty programmes and development of social Open Method of Coordination, the Lisbon Strategy, and Europe 2020 and the European Semester
- Receives **financial support** from the European Commission (EaSI programme)
- **31 National Networks** and **13 European NGOs** as members (10000+ organisations)
- **Participation of people** with direct experience of poverty must be part of the solution



EAPN and European Semester



❑ Engaging in European Semester since 2010

- At national and EU level

❑ National and EO Member engagement

- **National governments:** input to NRP/response
- **European Semester Officers:** Country Reports/Country-specific Recommendations/bilateral
- **Commission Desk Officers:** input Country Reports/Country-specific Recommendations

❑ EU Level: Joint Input/Response/Advocacy

- Input to **Country Reports:** Poverty Watch – Aug- Oct
- Assessment **AGS** and Draft JER (Nov-Jan)
- Assessment **Country Reports/Proposals CSRs**(Apr-May)
- Assessment **CSRs (June)** and **NRPs** (September)
- Input to **AGS and Draft JER** (October)

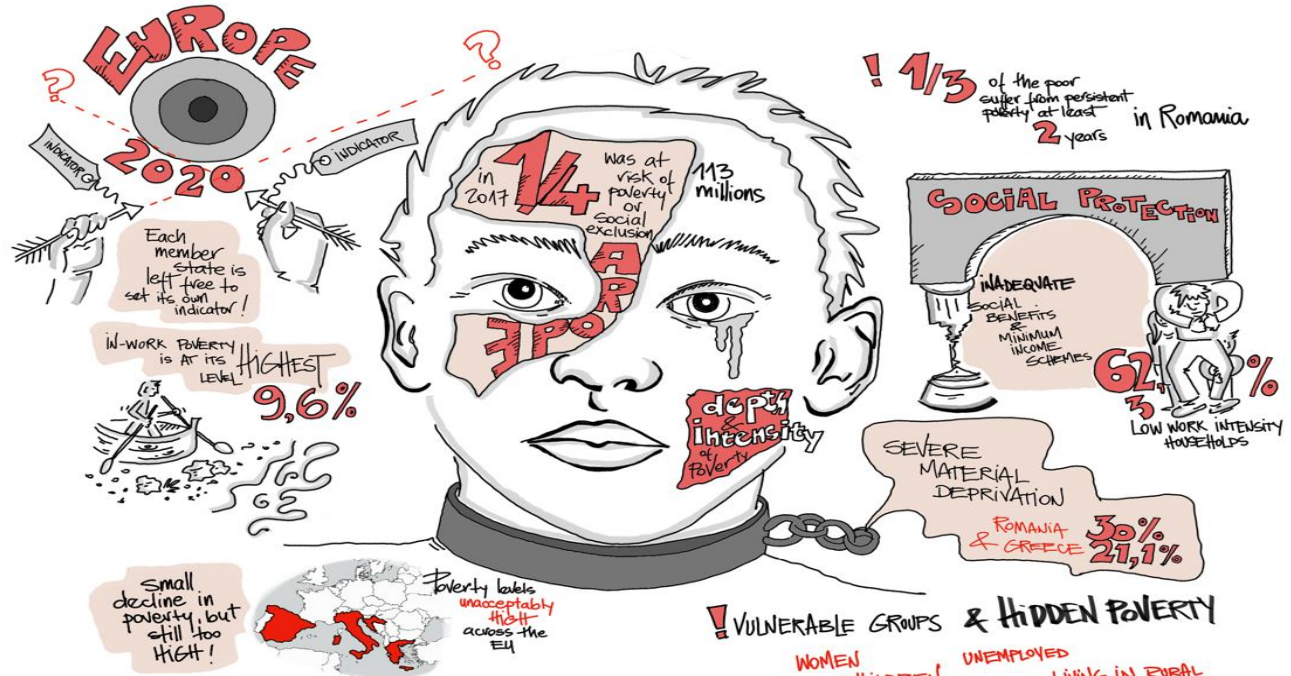


What Progress on the Social Pillar in the Semester?

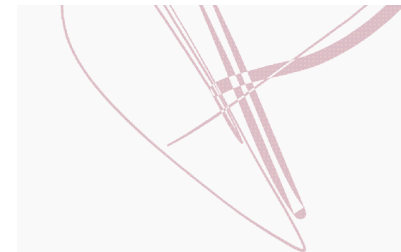
- ❑ Stronger rhetoric in key EU documents, but lacks mainstreaming of all principles in Semester
- ❑ Stronger focus eg minimum income/social protection but weak on eg housing, homeless, social services.
- ❑ Positive scoreboard focus on poverty/ inequality/ but insufficient impact.
- ❑ Stability and Growth remains dominant approach - undermining investment in social rights/ infrastructure
- ❑ Low profile for CSO engagement but Employment Guidelines give new legal base/AGS: *“key partner to improve ownership, legitimacy and get better socio-economic outcomes”*

What progress on Poverty?

113 million people at risk of poverty



WHAT IS HAPPENING TO POVERTY?



EAPN Assessment of Country Reports 2019: No Time for Complacency!



❑ Inputs

- 26 Members in-depth exchange in Riga (21-23 March)
- National (AT, BE, HR, DK, DE, EE, FI, FR, IE, LT, LV, LU, MT, NL, PL, RO, ES, SE, SK, UK, + RS, MK, NO, IC);
- European Organization members: Salvation Army and Age Platform Europe.

❑ Content

- Overall Assessment and What is missing?
- Progress on Poverty Target, Implementation of Social Pillar, Implementation of CSRs 2018
- Engagement of EAPN members,
- Common Messages on Country Reports and Common Recommendations on CSRs
- EAPN Members Proposals for CSRs 2019





No Time for Complacency!

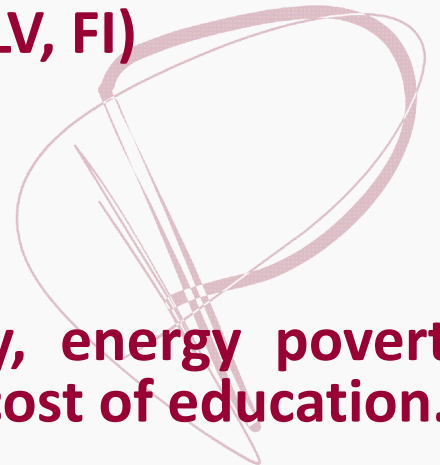
Overall Assessment

- ❑ Improvement in analysis and social focus, with some rebalancing of economic and social concerns (11)
- ❑ Macroeconomic priorities still dominating discourse
- ❑ Report too complacent about progress
- ❑ Useful analysis of national statistics but numbers were misleading, missed other key data.
- ❑ Positive focus on key topics but not consistently eg
 - *Social security/social protection, Child Poverty, Regional disparities and outcomes for different key groups, Quality of work, education and lifelong learning, access to quality services – health and childcare, fight against inequality (FR, IE), over-indebtedness, gender pay gap.*

What is Missing?



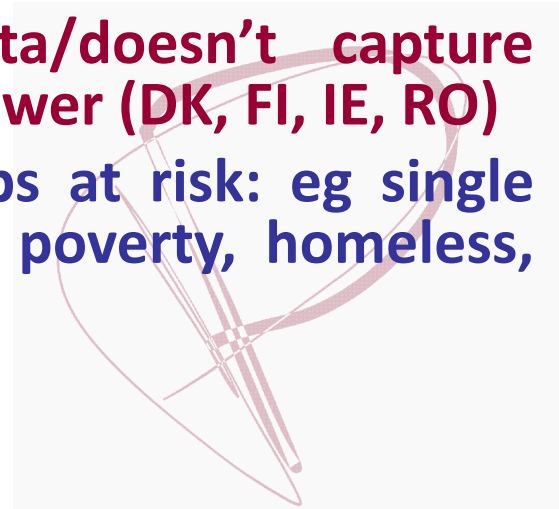
- A Social Focus on Social Rights? (BE, HR, IE, LV, SE, UK)**
- Housing and Homelessness (BE, DE, EK, EE, LU, PT, SE)**
- Social Protection – welfare benefits (BE, HR, LT)**
- Situation of vulnerable groups (IE, LT, PT, SK, SE); Child Poverty (DK, LV, LT)**
- Access to affordable healthcare (DK, LV, FI)**
- Indebtedness (BE, LV, SE)**
- Precarious LM and in-work poverty, energy poverty, ageing population, gender gap, high cost of education.**



Poverty Target – What Progress?



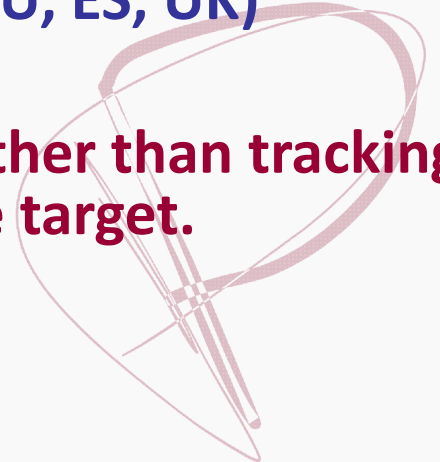
- ❑ **Inconsistent and insufficient focus on poverty**
(BE, DK, EE, SE)
- ❑ **Lack of strategic approach – Integrated Active Inclusion**
- ❑ **Some progress in some countries, but more to do!**
(PL, FI, IE, RO, SK).
- ❑ **Where poverty target reached insufficient focus on causes eg Poland due to generous family benefit, but report warns against intergenerational transmission of benefit dependency.**
- ❑ **Contradictory or incomplete data/doesn't capture reality eg adequacy + purchasing power (DK, FI, IE, RO)**
- ❑ **Under-representation of key groups at risk: eg single parents, precarious workers, child poverty, homeless, migrants, Roma.**
(EE, IE, LU, CZ, PL, PT, RO)



Social Pillar – What impact?



- Social Pillar and Social Scoreboard more present (All)**
- But not adequate mainstreaming of all principles (BE, DK, IE, FR, LU, PT, UK) beyond box on social scoreboard.**
- Scoreboard at least keeps some focus on poverty and inequality (not mentioned in principles)**
- But focus on EU averages does not support upward convergence (BE, HR, EE, DK, FI, HU, LU, ES, UK)**
- Focus on comparison between MS rather than tracking trends in each country - no link to the target.**



Implementation of CSRs?



- ❑ **Most members support Commission view on implementation of CSRs in Country Report**
- ❑ **Lack of policy coherence: macroeconomic CSRs require cuts/efficiencies in social spending + wage restraint (FR)**
- ❑ **Disconnect between analysis and CSRs** *eg focus on housing supply and housing market, not affordable housing, particularly social (UK and SE)*
- ❑ **Many governments do not fully implement positive CSRs (AT, FI, HU, LV, LT, LU, ES, UK) with repeats** *eg Adequacy of benefits (LV) more progressive tax (LT)*
- ❑ **Key principles –Adequate Minimum Income (14), Social Protection (12) insufficient progress (BE, LT, FI, PT, HR).**

Is EAPN engagement improving?



❑ Increased input

- ❑ 16 Members produced Poverty Watches fed into CR (*BE, CZ, FI, FR, DE, IE, IT, LT, NL, PL, PT, RO, ES, SE, RS, AGE*)

❑ Increased contact/dialogue with Commission

- ❑ Commission Desk Officers (*AT, BE, EE, HU, LU, LV, PT, ES*)
- ❑ European Semester Officers (*CZ, HR, IE, FI, NL, LT, ES*).
- ❑ 5 EAPN members presented analysis for Civil Society Reviews (DG EMPL) - (*AT, EE, LV, LT, PT*)

❑ More impact?

- 6 felt input taken on board (*AT, EE, BE, LT, LV, ES*) eg Education (*AT*), Poverty (*EE*), Inequalities (*LT*) Social Housing (*BE*), Spain
- 7 felt concerns reflected (*DE, IE, HU, LT, PT, RO, UK*) eg Hungary, pleased to see Active Inclusion taken up + end to public works.

❑ Engagement with Governments could improve...

- 36% networks consulted (2018) some getting input into NRP (*DE, IE, NL, PL, ES*) – how to get more useful engagement?

Key Messages on Country Reports



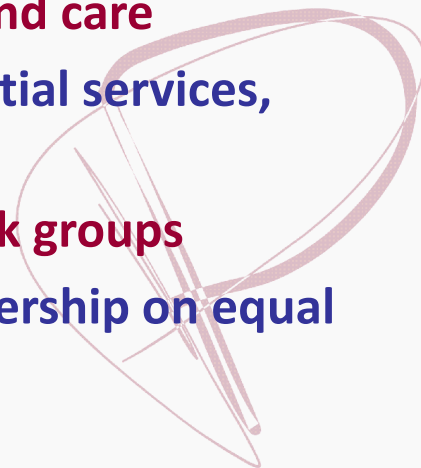
- 1. Positive steps rebalancing economic and social but macroeconomic priorities still predominant**
- 2. Social Rights + Poverty less well developed than economic /employment – need separate section**
- 3. Full set of principles not adequately mainstreamed**
- 4. Scoreboard insufficient to analyse realities of poverty and social exclusion on ground (Target)**
- 5. Promising progress in engagement of civil society with Commission but more needed (MS too!)**



EAPN proposals for CSRs 2019

Messages on Country Reports

1. **Socialize macroeconomic policies to promote well-being and defend social rights**
2. Give a systematic priority to poverty target and social rights require progress with integrated active inclusion.
3. **Require urgent action to increase adequacy of minimum income and social protection**
4. Embed living wages, quality jobs and personalized support through inclusive labour markets
5. **Invest in universal, free, public education/training and lifelong learning, including early learning and care**
6. Guarantee rights for all to affordable essential services, particularly housing and health.
7. **Promote integrated strategies for key at risk groups**
8. Embed meaningful participation and partnership on equal terms with NGOs at all stages.





**Putting people and social rights
at the heart of policy change!**



Thank you for your attention!

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