

City, date

To: [Insert name of European Semester Officer(s)]

Re: **Supporting the delivery of the European Semester and the European Pillar of Social Rights**

Dear Ms / Mr [Add name of European Semester Officer(s) and if need be delete “Ms” or “Mr”]

My name is [your name] and I represent [your organisation].

[Include here a **short** introductory paragraph about your organisation and insert hyperlinks.

- key group(s) you represent
- very brief overview of key data and trends from your own assessment – Poverty Watch
- very brief account of how you’ve been engaged in national and EU dialogue processes (submissions, consultation meetings, events, etc);
- mention that you are part of EAPN in your country and [EAPN Europe](#)]

The commitment to meaningfully involve stakeholders, including civil society organisations is enshrined in Recitals 5 and 11 of the new **Employment Guidelines**¹, which state: *While the Integrated Guidelines are addressed to Member States and the Union, **they should be implemented in partnership with all national, regional and local authorities, closely involving parliaments, as well as the social partners and representatives of civil society.***

At an informal ESPCO Dinner on a “Strategic vision for social and employment policies in the future EU” organised on 9 December 2019 by the Finnish EU Council Presidency², Commissioner Nicolas Schmit, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, said: (...) **Our goals are ambitious but they are concrete and reflect our people’s expectations. We can achieve them only if we move forward together.** With the Social Partners. Because social dialogue is essential to our social market economy and is a cornerstone of our prosperity. **With civil society – who have their finger on the pulse of our communities. I’ll listen to both.** (...)³

Building on these commitments by the current and former Commissioner, as well as on the **wealth of experience and expertise that we can bring to the table, including the direct feedback, voices, and stories of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion**, we are currently carrying out an in-depth assessment of the Country Report released by the European Commission, **based on our Poverty Watch analysis of the current poverty and social trends in [insert country name if you are elaborating a Poverty Watch or should you have done so in the last year(s), otherwise cut this out].**

¹ [Council Decision](#) on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, 16.07.2018

² You can read his full speech at the informal ESPCO Council [here](#).

³ Former European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Skills, Marianne Thyssen had stated in her speech for the thematic discussion at the Conference “The European Pillar of Social Rights: Working together to Deliver” on 27 June 2018 in Sofia: **I applaud the commitment and support from civil society.** *You are close to citizens, and close to people most in need. From the start, you pushed us to be as ambitious as possible. You shaped the Pillar, and many of our proposals. Often, you are the most convinced advocates of the Pillar, and its most convincing ambassadors, to all levels of government and to every man and woman in the street. And I am sure you will also be a committed guardian, helping us to make sure the Pillar is implemented. By pointing out success stories. And by ringing the alarm bell when things go wrong. Help us to keep the Pillar at the top of agenda!*

The current round of bilateral meetings between the European Commission and Member States, focusing on the Country Reports in preparation for the National Reform Programmes, also represents an ideal **opportunity for meaningful involvement**. We would be grateful for any information or possibility to engage with these key events.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our views and explore the best ways in which we could provide our input to the implementation of the targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Pillar of Social Rights, with the aim of improving delivery of the social dimension and upward convergence in the European Semester.

We remain at your disposal for any additional information you may require and we hope for a prompt and positive response to our request for a meeting.

Sincerely yours,

[Your name or the name of the Director or President of your organisation or network. Make sure to also include full contact details where you can be reached.]

*This communication has been addressed to you by regular **mail as well as by e-mail**.*

Background information

The European Anti-Poverty Network ([EAPN](#)) is the largest European network of national, regional and local networks, involving anti-poverty NGOs and grassroots groups as well as European Organisations. EAPN has been engaging with European inclusion strategies since its creation in 1990, born out of the European poverty programmes, and establishing itself as a key civil society actor and interlocutor in processes such as the Social Open Method of Coordination, the Lisbon Strategy, and now the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Since the beginning of the European Semester process (2010), EAPN, together with its National Network and European Organisation members, including EAPN **[insert name of your country]**, have been actively engaging at all stages of the processes, providing both timely input, as well as thorough analysis and assessments. Latest examples of this work include:

- EAPN [Response to the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy and Joint Employment Report 2020](#)
- EAPN [Proposals for a post Europe 2020 Strategy](#) (2019)
- EAPN [Assessment of the European Semester 2019](#)
- EAPN [Assessment of the Country Reports & Proposals for Country-Specific Recommendations 2019](#)
- EAPN [Response to the Autumn Package 2019](#) (AGS & JER)
- EAPN [Assessment of the Country Reports 2018](#) (including alternative CSRs)
- EAPN [Assessment to the National Reform Programmes 2018](#)
- EAPN [Analysis of the Country Specific Recommendations 2018](#)
- EAPN [Position paper on the European Pillar of Social Rights](#) (2017)
- [Letters](#) and [press releases](#) around EPSCO and European Councils and other key moments