

**EAPN Webinar on the European Green Deal**

**16 December**

**Notes**

**Objectives**

1. To understand how EAPN members are working on the European Green Deal and the links between social and environmental justice
2. To share intelligence on the political process to agree the Green Deal
3. To discuss how EAPN will work on this issue
4. To reflect on our core demands around the key issues

**Participants**

Representatives of EAPN national networks from **Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Spain, UK.**

Representatives of European members, notably **Emmaus Europe, International Federation of Social Workers, ATD 4th World, SMES, FEBA.**

**Background material**

Presentation: Political and policy overview of the European Green Deal and current state of play (Sian Jones, EAPN Policy Coordinator)

Presentation: Potential EAPN ‘core demands’ (Leo Williams, EAPN Director)

**Key points from the discussion on the political and policy overview**

The main points from the presentation can be found in the presentation. Further discussion points included:

* There is a ‘Task Group’ led by Vice President Timmermans, which we think may bring together all EU Commissioners. The Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit, should be an ally in this Task Force.
* The European Green Deal proposal is meant to help ‘lagging regions’, and funds will be directed here via the Just Transition Fund. It is not clear whether this will be under a ‘Communities Fund’ model which has proved successful in the UK.
* EAPN should focus on protecting PeP from any potential negative impacts of carbon taxes, environmental charges etc, including passed on costs from energy efficiency/housing reforms, this should include a demand for poverty impact assessments
* EAPN should also have a positive message around the potential benefits of the transition for poor people and people who live in poor areas, while insisting that PeP don’t carry the cost
* We should also focus on the need for better social protection and minimum income systems, living wages etc to be high enough to help protect people through the transition – or other mechanisms must be found to protect people

**Key points from the discussion on how members are working on these issues**

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| **Member** | **Focus** |
| Belgian Anti Poverty Network | * Working in a Belgian coalition, but will have their own position
* Main demand is for Poverty Impact Assessments to be done before any new measures are put in place, so we understand potential impact on poverty and inequality. (For example, tax breaks for electric cars tend to favour wealthier people),
* Focus on **taxes, energy, housing, transport,** as part of a fair and just transition, recognising that PeP are afraid of the cost of the transition
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| EAPN UK | * Many groups in UK working on this, but EAPN UK is struggling to build alliances on it
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| EAPN Spain | * Works in a coalition with Environmental Groups (Futuro en Comun). Focus is on SDGs, and advocacy towards Spanish High Commissioner on SDGs.
* They have 2 key documents which they use
* They lobby a Government Working Group which focuses on the SDGs
* Participated in CoP25 in Madrid
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| EAPN Ireland | * Work in coalition with NGOs focusing on SDGs and environment
* Approached recently by ‘Stop Climate Chaos’ to try to get a joint manifesto on the Green New Deal
* Social and environmental organisations meeting in early 2020 to try to take forward a joint approach
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| ATD 4th World | * Trying to involve PeP more in talking about solutions, rather than simply protecting them from the potential adverse effects of the transition
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| Emmaus Europe | * Involved in ‘Re-use’, a project focusing on the circular economy
* Link with EAPN France, focusing on food sustainability, which is part of the Green New Deal (from farm to fork)
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**Key points from the discussion on EAPN key demands**

The first draft of our key messages can be found in the presentation, and the two pager. The headlines are below:

**Key message 1: A European Green and Social Deal must ensure the poor don’t pay for a Just Transition**

**Key message 2: A European Green Deal must be a European Social Deal**

**Key message 3: Massive public investment is needed**

**Key message 4: The richest, the most powerful and the most polluting should pay – tax justice must be a key pillar of the Just Transition**

**Key message 5: Importance of civil society and PeP engagement in Green and Social New Deal and Climate Pact.**

**Key message 6: Right to affordable clean energy must be part of Green New Deal**

Further discussion points included:

* Broadly, these are the right ‘level’ of messages for EAPN
* We should be clear that this simply **cannot** be a just transition if PeP are asked to pay. (We see what happens when PeP are asked to bear the brunt of the costs in France, with Les Gilets Jaunes protesting for over a year now)
* We should retain the demand for tax justice but recognise that this will also need to be funded by borrowing.
* Corporations shouldn’t be able to pay their way out of this crisis; they should be paying for the solution as well.

**Key points from the discussion on how EAPN should continue working on these issues**

**Proposals from the staff team on how we work include:**

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| **What** | **Who** |
| Finalise short position paper with key demands | EUISG and Policy Team  |
| Encourage members to engage (Climate Pact Consultations, Future of Europe discussions at national level etc) | Ex Co and Director |
| Limited advocacy towards Commission, Council, Parliament (Intergroups) | Policy Team, EUISG |
| Social media activity to support the advocacy | Comms Teams (EAPN staff and members) |
| Feed positions into key alliances (Right2Energy Coalition (clean energy and energy efficiency/housing initiatives), Social Platform informal group, SDG Watch)  | Director and Policy Team as feasible. |

**Other possibilities discussed:**

* Encouraging the Social Protection Committee to work together with expert committees from European Commission
* Back up our key messages with experiences from PeP and national networks at the national level – eg. around negative and positive experiences of both climate change and transition measures eg. in Germany (see energy poverty booklet) from EAPN DE
* Linking with Trade Unions to strengthen our position
* Trying to include this in our core work – i.e Semester, Poverty Watch, post-2020. Could it be built in here? Could we use the evidence we already have from Poverty Watch or the Semester work? We should use Ex Co and EUISG meetings to progress the work

It was agreed that we should focus on our value add – the link between poverty and the European Green Deal. We shouldn’t be trying to engage with the whole of the Green Deal. **Our focus must be on protecting PeP from the impact of the Just Transition**, and the right to participate in the discussions. We must focus on our ‘niche’ and avoid the ‘scatter gun’ approach. We must also be realistic about our available resources (time / money) and prioritise developing a position and being part of advocacy efforts.