

EAPN ONLINE POLICY CONFERENCE

HOW TO ENSURE THE POOR DON'T PAY FOR COVID-19?

FROM SHORT-TERM RESPONSE TO AN
EFFECTIVE RIGHTS-BASED INTEGRATED
ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

TUESDAY 14 JULY
14.00-16.30

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OBJECTIVES

- 1.To present the findings and recommendations of the EAPN study on the impact of COVID19 and the policy responses on people experiencing poverty, including voices from the ground.
- 2.To discuss how to build on short-term measures addressing immediate impacts of COVID19, to embed an effective integrated strategy to fight poverty, based on strong welfare states (minimum income/social protection/ public and essential services) and quality jobs.
- 3.To exchange with decision-makers and stakeholders on the way forward to achieve this goal.

WHEN

- **Tuesday, 14 July, 14 - 16:30**, <https://zoom.us/j/95669218051>

WHY

The current COVID19 epidemic is decimating Europe, with a wide-reaching social impact, particularly on the poor and most vulnerable who are hardest hit. This is already leading to a substantial increase in poverty and inequality, unequally spread across different regions and countries (see **EAPN COVID-19 statement**). Most Member States have developed immediate aid packages which in many cases directly benefit the poor and vulnerable. Most however are only temporary. Will these deliver concrete results for people experiencing poverty? Will these short-term measures feed into a progressive, rights-based EU strategy to fight poverty? What needs to be done to ensure this outcome? To exchange with decision-makers and stakeholders on the way forward to achieve this goal.

President Von der Leyen's Political Guidelines already before COVID19 stated '***we must do more to fight poverty***'[1]. Commissioner Schmit, in the EP hearings, stressed that an **EU antipoverty strategy** was crucial. Now, **post COVID-19** the EU must take the lead to effectively tackle poverty in the short and long-term, ensuring direct benefits to people facing poverty, as part of an integrated approach.

EAPN responded quickly to the outbreak of the virus with a Statement and letter to the European Council on key measures as well as a letter to Commissioner Schmit, signed by large number of MEPs and key stakeholders. Over the past 2 months we have carried out a **detailed study** including webinar exchanges with our members in 32 countries, tracking the impact of the crisis on people experiencing poverty and the efficacy of the measures being taken. In this important online policy conference **we will present the main findings and policy recommendations for national and EU levels** and discuss them with EAPN Members, partners, governments and EU institutions.

[1] EC Political Guidelines: A Union that strives for more (16 July 2019).

The Europe 2020 strategy set a target to reduce poverty by at least 20 million (AROPE). Although some progress has been made, **109 million people were already at risk of poverty and social exclusion**, nearly 1 in 4 of the population (2018 data). This figure disguised a growing gap between and within Member States – with poverty levels over 35% in some countries (BG, EL, RO) and higher risk levels to children, single parents, people with disabilities, migrants and ethnic minorities. In 2017, the EU adopted the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR). The Action Plan for the EPSR must integrate these individual rights into an overarching rights-based antipoverty strategy as the main 'chapeau', if the individual principles/rights are to achieve a real impact on poverty. **This requires an integrated, rights-based strategy, with an ambitious poverty reduction target of at least 50% (AROPE) and improved indicators, as part of an ambitious social and sustainable post 2020 strategy.**

As part of EAPN proposals for a post Europe 2020 strategy: **Delivering Agenda 2030 for people and planet including a right-based integrated antipoverty strategy**, EAPN has set out its proposals for a rights-based integrated EU antipoverty strategy, building on the 3-pillar Active Inclusion approach, underpinned by the EPSR and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **In the light of COVID19, this approach becomes even more essential. The EU must prioritise public social investment to strengthen welfare states (minimum income and social protection, public and essential services, eg health/care, affordable housing and education) as well as quality, sustainable jobs if a massive increase in poverty and inequality is to be avoided. An increased role for tax and tax justice is key. The voice of people from the ground and NGOs have a key role to play in finding sustainable solutions.**



EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

EAPN CONFERENCE: TUESDAY 14 JULY, 14-16.30

CHAIR: LEO WILLIAMS, EAPN DIRECTOR

HOW TO ENSURE THE POOR DON'T PAY FOR COVID-19? FROM SHORT-TERM RESPONSE TO AN EFFECTIVE RIGHTS- BASED INTEGRATED ANTIPOVERTY STRATEGY

PROGRAMME

- 14.00 Welcome: **Leo Williams**, EAPN Director
- 14.05 Introduction: **Carlos Susias**, EAPN President

SESSION 1: THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND POLICY RESPONSES ON PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY

- 14.15 Presentation of main findings and recommendations from EAPN Study on the impact of COVID-19 and policy responses: **Graciela Malgesini**, Author, Co-Chair of EAPN Inclusion Strategies Group/EAPN Spain
- 14.30 Presentation from people with direct experience of poverty who participated in the study: **Sonja Leemkuil**, EAPN Netherlands and **Vera Hinterdorfer**, EAPN Vice President/EAPN Austria (tbc)

EU AND UN RESPONSES FROM:

- 14.45 **Nicolas Schmit**, EU Commissioner for Jobs & Social Rights
- 14.55 **Olivier De Schutter**, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights
- 15.10 Q & A/ Discussion

SESSION 2: WHAT WAY FORWARD? FROM SHORT TERM MEASURES TO EFFECTIVE EU ANTIPOVERTY STRATEGY

- 15.30 Round table discussion
- **Jan Farzan**, German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/SPC
 - **Esther Lynch**, Deputy General Secretary, ETUC
 - **Jana Hainsworth**, General Secretary, Eurochild
 - **Cindy Franssen**, MEP/EPP and Co-chair of EP Poverty Intergroup
- 16.00 Discussion with panel and audience
- 16.15 Wrapping up
- **Katarina Ivanković-Knežević**, Director of Social Policy/DG Jobs & Social Rights (tbc)
 - **Marija Babović**, Co-Chair of EAPN Inclusion Strategies Group/EAPN Serbia