**EUISG WEBINAR: Poverty Watch in the COVID-19 Context**

**Break-out group 1**

**Notes**

**Participants**: EAPN NO, IE, HR, FI, ES, EL

**Staff:** Rebecca

**Feedback on the first 2 Questions:**

**1) *Have you done/planning a PW in 2020? What are your main findings, including on COVID 19? How will you use it in Oct 17 campaign?***

***2) Did you involve people experiencing poverty? If yes, how, what kind of methodology did you use? How could this be improved?***

**Dina/EAPN Greece:** EAPN Greece has not done a PW yet as conducting a survey with service providers. They will be taking an asylum/refugee approach. They will contact representatives at local level and platforms/networks with the results.

**Anna/EAPN Finland:** EAPN Finland has done a long PW this year. AROPE figures were going better but now the tide will be turned. Those who were already vulnerable are a bit worse off – mostly older people and young people. They have no precise launch plans at the minute but will work on this.

An active member of the PeP group helped write the report, and commented on it.

**Paul/EAPN Ireland:** EAPN Ireland did their PW in June. They focussed on the type of recovery they want to see. Key themes across areas are pulled out. It has been used for submissions to the government budget and input to the EPSR consultation. A Twitter radio-interview has been conducted.

PeP were involved in a Health project launched yesterday, and other activities, and they drew on that for the PW.

**Froydis/EAPN Norway:** EAPN Norway has done a PW. It includes the increase in poverty and persistent low income. It focusses on recipients of social assistance benefits and recipients of Minimum Income. The share of child poverty has been growing since 2014 and will be an increasing focus for EAPN Norway. They looked at the government response: positive/negative/absent. There was an aid of 9 bill eur. but it took too long to come in.

**Aleksandra/EAPN Croatia:** EAPN Croatia has done a PW. It is a summarised report saying that there is no serious increase in poverty. However this is related to years of incomprehensive measures of financial support to the deprived. EAPN Croatia’s recommendations have been the same for years.

PeP are in the board and included in the whole process of writing and deciding which values to introduce and providing some quotes.

**Graciela/EAPN Spain:** EAPN Spain has done a PW, with lots of detail. The Covid impact on vulnerable groups is the focus. Those vulnerable before are in worse state. Government reactions have been positive regarding a social shield, but delayed implementation and most aide only just reached people. For the first time there is a single Minimum Income for all the regions which is more adequate.

In terms of PeP participation, they drew from engagement in previous years as no national PeP meeting this year.

***3) What common EU messages would you give to the EU report?***

Graciela proposed 5 messages and asked for responses from the group:

1. It is essential to ensure universal and free access to public health by all administrations and this should be coordinated & monitored by the EU.

2. The EU should prevent discrimination in Schengen treaty.

3. GMI is more essential than ever due to uncertainty and youth unemployment and change to green & digital economies.

4. CSO participation is imperative to control the recovery funds which is untransparent.

5. The Semester should not return to neoliberal measures, to condition measures and access to funding.

Paul suggested a 6th common message should be the need for an EU Anti-poverty strategy.

On the MI message, Paul commented that the government seemed generous initially (higher level of benefit) but that it will reduce the level and become inadequate again). The principle of the poverty line should be encouraged plus the use of reference budgets.

On the Schengen message, Dina mentioned the new pact in the EU announced the previous day and the unclarity as to how this will affect migration and poverty.

Graciela replied that EAPN ES and herself reacted on facebook, but it needs more detailed work. She suggested that her and Dina should lead on writing a reaction as EAPN, and that Aleksandra and Paul could look at it to agree on key points. She remarked that identity data is not available so we cannot include this in social policy work and have to look at the migration field, when Paul mentioned that it is not an easy topic for EAPN and should be led by the ExCo. Anna and Froydis did not see how to get involved from EAPN FI and NO respectively.