

Proposed EAPN statement on racial justice

28 September 2020

As the largest anti-poverty network in Europe, comprising of 32 national networks and 13 European organisations, EAPN stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and with all racialised communities in Europe and across the world, who continue to experience systemic racism and discrimination, as it has been particularly highlighted with the Covid-19 pandemic.

One of the clearest impacts of this systemic inequality is poverty, with racialised people being disproportionately more likely to be living in the grip of poverty across Europe. In key areas like health, employment, housing, social security and social assistance, education, culture, and justice racialised individuals and communities are confronted with structural discrimination and exclusion.

We simply cannot achieve our aim of eradicating poverty without also eradicating the entrenched racial inequalities that are embedded within our economic, political and social systems and institutions. **Poverty and racial inequality are inextricably linked, and there can be no social justice without racial justice.**

Covid-19 has made the need to make this case even more urgent. The pandemic has not only exposed but exacerbated structural inequalities across Europe, including social, class and racial inequalities. It has never been more important to re-design our economies and our societies to deliver equality and income adequacy for all, with the principle of solidarity, respect for human rights and the dignity of every human being, at the heart of this work.

EU institutions, national governments, but also civil society, including businesses, trades unions, NGOs, faith groups and communities, must no longer ignore the systems of oppression and persistent racial inequalities that confront racialised people across Europe. Racism and discrimination are a fundamental violation of our values and our laws on human and social rights and equality. **A Europe free from poverty and social exclusion – and with systemic injustices like racism and discrimination eradicated – is not just possible, but imperative.** All of us must step up in the fight for an inclusive Europe, and EU institutions must do more to live up to their responsibilities– as detailed in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union - on human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

EAPN recommits itself to active participation in the fight for equality and racial justice and calls on the European and global community to support efforts for democracy and justice, against any and all discrimination.