

POVERTY WATCH 2020

"Covid-19 supercharging poverty"

data and experiences from the ground

29 January 2021

Online conference

14.00-16.30

With MEPs

Cindy Franssen & Marisa Matias





Presentation of the Poverty Watch of the Belgian Anti-Poverty Network (BAPN)

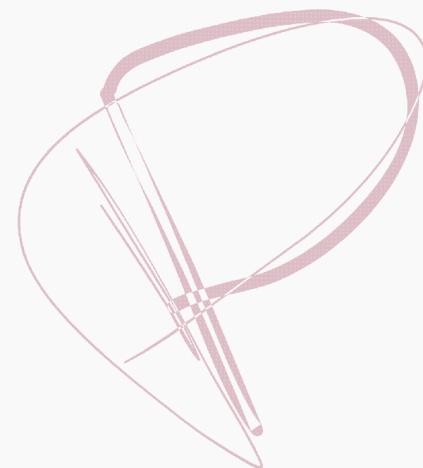
- ❑ **The Objective of BAPN: representing the voice of people experiencing poverty at the federal level in Belgium and at European level, through our membership of EAPN**
- ❑ **Participatory basis of our Poverty Watch**





Experiences and voices from the ground

- **Presentation of Noëllie Denomerenge, facilitator in prevention of inequalities at the Walloon Anti-Poverty Network (réseau wallon de lutte contre la pauvreté)**



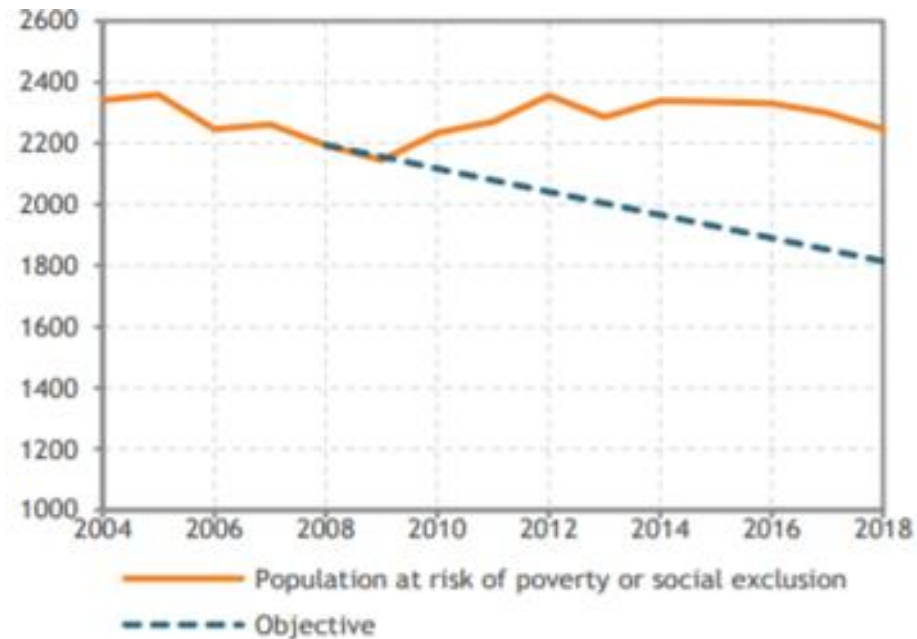


Highlights from our poverty watch:

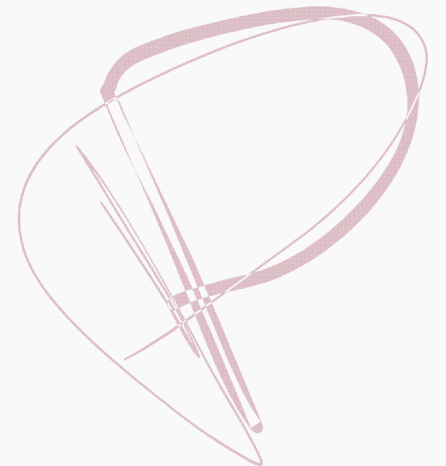
- Evolution of poverty over the last decade**
- Impact of the covid-crisis**
- Social protection (Income)**
- Policy analyses and questions (EU level)**



Evolution of poverty during the last decade:



- ❑ No progress to the EU2020 poverty-target
- ❑ **AROP (2019): 14.8% - almost 1.7 million people**





Impact of the covid-crisis: People with a low income have been hit the hardest

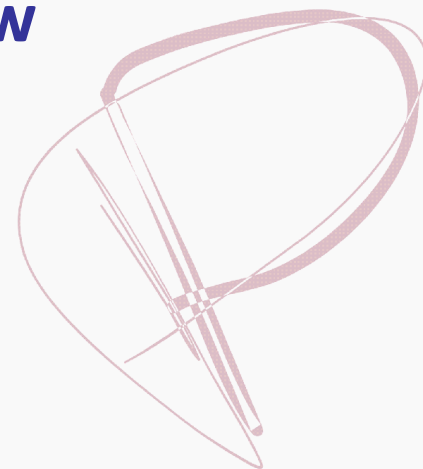
- Pressure on household budget: loss of income, increase of prices (e.g. food), lack of savings**
- Lack of access to services**
- Consequences:**
 - Increase of debts**
 - Medical issues**
 - Mental health issues**
 - Effects on children and young people**
- Lack of perspective**





Social protection (Income)

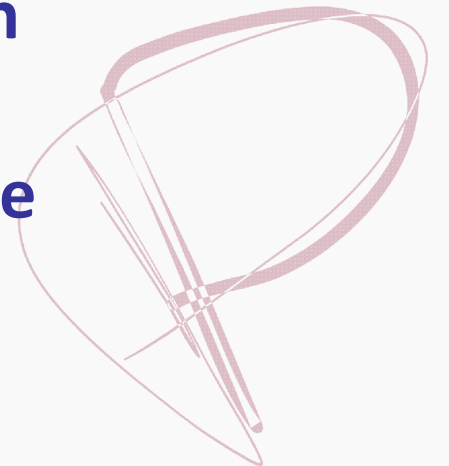
- ❑ **Social Scoreboard indicator 'impact of social transfers on poverty reduction': worrying decline of effectiveness of social transfers on poverty reduction**
- ❑ **Minimum income schemes still remain far below the European poverty threshold**





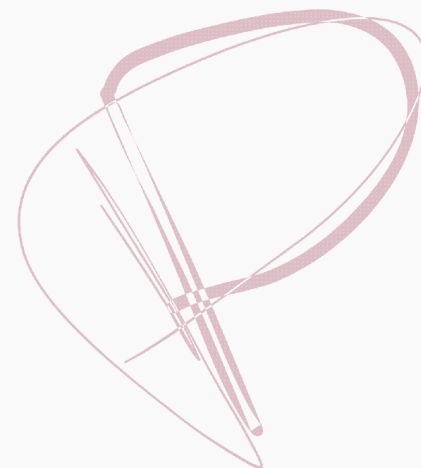
Social protection (Income)

- ❑ **Problems with access to Minimum Income Schemes, some groups are even excluded**
- ❑ **Statute “cohabitant” : This statute reduces benefits in a way that is disproportionate to what people can actually save by living together. The status also seriously curtails the rights and liberties of those classified as living together.**



Policy analysis of (income) measures taken by the federal government

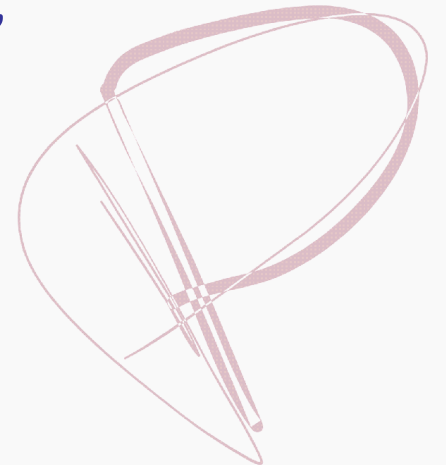
- Budget federal task force “vulnerable groups” (€75 million):
 - not enough to combat a social crisis
 - Covid-allowance not enough, groups excluded
- Plans to increase minimum income schemes: too little, too late?!





Policy analysis of (income) measures taken by the federal government

- Resilience and recovery plans:**
 - No consultation of anti-poverty organisations or CSOs
 - Process not transparent**
 - Vision to combat social exclusion seems to be missing, political agreement



Questions to the EU level:

- EP Intergroup on poverty: role to support a strong implementation plan of the EPSR?**
- European Commission:**
 - Follow up on Council Conclusion on Minimum Income?**
 - Recovery and resilience: involvement anti-poverty organisations and CSOs / vision on social inclusion ?**
 - Evaluation of Europe2020-strategy?**
 - European ant-poverty strategy?**

