

22nd October 2009

**Make sure people in poverty don't pay for the crisis!
Sign the Parliamentary declaration on protection of social rights in
fighting the economic crisis! (0056/2009)**

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

The current crisis is starting to hit hard. Not only have large numbers of people throughout the EU lost their jobs, but the 79 million people already in poverty, are finding themselves in a worse situation – increasing homelessness, deepening cycles of debt without access to fair credit, and increased difficulties to access work, whilst many Governments increase pressure on people in poverty through increased conditionality, restricting benefits when there are no jobs to go to.

The Spring Council in March 2009 in its backing to the EU economic recovery package called on the need for *"solidarity, allowing social protection systems to fully play their role as automatic stabilizers, calling for particular attention to be given to the most vulnerable and to new risks of exclusion"*. But in reality, no social impact assessment has been made and many countries, like Ireland, are already starting to inflict massive cuts on public services to recoup public deficits as a result of bank bail outs.


Meanwhile for New Member States like Latvia, Hungary and Rumania, the situation is even worse. The bail-out loans given by the IMF and the Commission have focused on the need to cut public expenditure **without guaranteeing social rights through social conditionality**. This has led to massive cuts in pensions, wages, hospital and child care services and benefits - threatening the very livelihoods of people already on the poverty line. For example in Latvia, wages have been cut by 40% in schools, with 10% cuts in pensions and sick leave payments reduced, threats being made to cut the minimum wage further – and this in a country with the greatest inequality and 21% of people at risk of poverty!.

EAPN calls on you to:

- *Sign the [European Parliament written declaration\(0056/2009\)](#) on the protection of social rights fighting against the economic crisis in the European Union.*
- *Take action within your political group to get signatures before January 2009.*

We very much hope you will sign the declaration and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely



Fintan Farrell
Director of the European Anti Poverty Network

The [European Anti Poverty Network](#) is an independent coalition of NGOs working with and for people experiencing poverty in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. See: www.eapn.eu and [Anti-Poverty Mag](#) on the crisis.