



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK ■ RESEAU EUROPEEN DES ASSOCIATIONS DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETE ET L'EXCLUSION SOCIALE
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EAPN campaigns to support 20% ESF allocation for social inclusion

Brussels, 13 March 2012 – Following its response to the Commission’s legislative package for Cohesion Policy, EAPN calls on all Member States to support the Commission’s proposal of a 20% ring-fenced allocation of the European Social Fund (ESF) for social inclusion and the fight against poverty. The call was made in a letter to all Directors General of Cohesion Policy in the Member States, in advance of their meeting on the 13-14 March. The ESF’s potential for contributing to the EU poverty-reduction target is currently under threat, as some Member States are expressing reservations with regard to the introduction of the proposed 20% ring-fencing for social inclusion.

“Prime Ministers cannot agree a target to reduce poverty on one hand and then deny the financial means to make progress towards reaching that target” said Ludo Horemans, President of EAPN. *“The ring-fencing of 20% will not deny Member States the possibility to allocate more of the funds to the vital task of address poverty and ensuring inclusion which is what citizens want from the EU”*, added Mr Horemans.

“This ring-fencing should have a clear monitoring system to ensure transparency, to ensure that this is really an extra investment in combating poverty and to ensure the opportunity for countries to learn from each others practices”, added Fintan Farrell Director of EAPN.

EAPN will launch in early April a campaign to defend the 20% allocation in the European Social Fund. Organisations and individuals will be encouraged to sign a letter to Prime Ministers that will be sent by EAPN in advance of the June Council where key decisions will be taken on the future Cohesion package.

The Campaign will be visible on EAPN website’s homepage www.eapn.eu.

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Further information:

- [EAPN’s letter to the Directors of Cohesion Policy in the Member States](#)
- [EAPN’s response to the Commission’s draft legislative package on Cohesion Policy \(2014-2020\)](#) - Key messages here below:

- Establish clear Commission guidelines on how Structural Funds should deliver on the poverty-reduction target through integrated and socially inclusive approaches, (particularly through Active Inclusion) for ESF, ERDF and other Cohesion Funds.
- Strengthen the partnership principle at all stages of the Structural Funds’ process (both for partnership contracts and Operation Programmes) and make these Funds accessible for small NGOs (with tailor-made grants and technical-assistance schemes).
- Ensure a proper monitoring process of effective use of Funds in Europe 2020, in both National Reform Programmes and National Social Reports.
- Give equal importance to each Europe 2020 headline targets in all Structural Funds.
- Solidarity with poorer regions, not double penalty! – NO to macro-economic conditionality, but favour social conditionality and incentive mechanisms.
- Develop a social-inclusion mainstreaming clause and a social evaluation system based on hard and soft social indicators.

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