

1. Setting the scene: ensure every person's fundamental right to live a life in dignity

- People living in poverty since 2009: **+10 million**. Now **over 124 million**. $\frac{1}{4}$ population cannot enjoy their right to live a life in dignity.
- Current **policies fail to deliver** on the Europe 2020 target of reducing poverty by at least 20 million by 2020.
- **Little evidence of progress** in member states to improve benefits systems and ensure adequacy of benefits. **Crisis and austerity measures**: Increased conditionality and failure to upgrade benefits.
- **A balanced socio-economic policy with a rights-based approach needed!**

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- What we want: binding **European Social Standards** for upward social convergence and **social progress**.
- **Adequate minimum income schemes in all member states is a corner stone** = basis for high quality social protection schemes and positive hierarchy with other social benefits and minimum wages.



2.1 Awareness raising and public debate: We have the arguments!

- **Adequate Minimum Income:** income that is indispensable to live a life in dignity and to fully participate in society
- **Human rights of citizens!** Treaty EU, Charter
- **Many commitments !** European Council, Commission, European Parliament, European Committee of regions, European Economic and Social Committee have committed to ensure adequate minimum income
- **ETUC and Social Platform strongly support**

2.1 Awareness raising and public debate: We have the arguments!

- Well-designed, adequate and widely available income support schemes do not discourage a return to the labour market. On the contrary, they give people **greater chances to take up a job** than non-recipients = **good social investment!**
- It is crucial to guarantee adequate income for **people in vulnerable situations** for whom a return to work is not possible: **human right**
- Also **economically sound**: member states with good social welfare policies are amongst the **most competitive and prosperous.**

2.1 Awareness raising and public debate: We have the arguments!

- Ensure that people who need them can remain **active in society**, and allow them to **live in dignity**
- **More equal societies** = better for the whole of society
- **‘Economic stabilizers’**: countries with high quality social protection systems are better able to resist negative impacts of the crisis
- Very small percentage of social spending and have a **high return on investment**. Cost of non-investment: enormous impacts for individuals and for society

2.1 Awareness raising and public debate

- They are **cost effective economic stimulus packages**, as the money involved immediately re enters the economy
- They can play a positive role in **reversing the destructive trend of rising numbers of 'working poor'** in Europe
- Inadequate Minimum Income Schemes help in addressing very basic needs, however they are likely to lock people in a **cycle of dependency** without adequate means to access opportunities or to fully participate in society

2.2 EU Directive on adequate MIS – Why?

- **New start and stronger base for action** needed.
- Give meaning to EU commitment on combating social exclusion of the **Fundamental Rights Charter**.
- No longer viable to develop national social policy without considering the European perspective. **Common EU level efforts are needed** to help achieve high social standards.
- Citizens are strongly attached to the European Social Model. Convergence of costs of living is growing without similar convergence of levels of social benefits and wages → a **highly divided Europe** with **loss of solidarity** and **growing distrust** of European institutions. A Directive would show **commitment to a Union of social values** and would help restore confidence.

2.2 EU Directive on adequate MIS – Content

Treaty allows EU to act: people excluded from labour market!

Content:

- **What is adequate Minimum Income?**

- at risk of poverty indicator, **60% of median equivalised income** and **material deprivation** indicators,
- common EU-wide methodology for **reference budgets** to test the robustness of the level of MI and of the 60% threshold, based on **active participation of people experiencing poverty** in the establishment of the basket of goods and services

2.2 EU Directive on adequate MIS –

Factors to be considered

- **Who is covered? How to ensure better covered and take up?**
- Member States to **evaluate** their MIS: avoid the creation of hidden poverty, to ensure take up, by reducing conditionality requirements, increasing transparency, informing eligible benefit recipients actively about their rights, by establishing simplified procedures and by putting in place policies to fight stigma and discrimination
- **Uprating? Appeal?**
- **Common information requirements, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder involvement.**
- **Active inclusion approach: adequate minimum income, combined with inclusive labour markets and enabling (social) services**

2.3 Integrate follow up on adequate MIS in key EU processes

- Europe 2020 strategy

- Adequate MIS will contribute to the **delivery of the Europe 2020 poverty reduction target: progress reports, country specific recommendations on adequate minimum income**
- **Use 20% of European Social Fund for social inclusion in partnership with NGOs**
- **Exchange best practices to find ways to tackle poverty and social exclusion**
- European Commission should use **horizontal social clause** to assess austerity measures and reforms
- Develop a system of well-defined and **binding EU level social standards** in hard law, as part of a **Social Pact for Europe: adequate Minimum Income as pioneer.**

A story that millions of Europeans would want to hear

- **Many existing commitments** on adequate and accessible Minimum Income Schemes at EU level
- **Not something new:** common effort to ensure high quality scheme in all EU Member States
- **Feasible to introduce a Directive** on the Adequacy of Minimum Income Schemes under EU treaties
- **Good arguments** why this would be good for the people, for the society in general and for the EU
- EU citizens would want **to know what Member States and other EU political leaders are doing to introduce or to block such a development** and to explain their approach
- The EMIN project is an **exciting opportunity** to contribute to this 'story'