



**European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland**  
**Resource accompanying EAPN Ireland Manifesto for European Parliament elections**

**‘Delivering on EU Values to End Poverty’**

**Questions for Candidates and Background Information**

**Suggested questions for European Parliament Candidates**

- Is ending poverty a priority for you and how would you work to address it?
- How will EU Treaty values (respect for human dignity and human rights, equality and solidarity) guide your work in the European Parliament?
- As an MEP how will you make sure economic policies do not have a negative impact on the quality of life for people but instead help reduce poverty and inequality?
- Is delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals a priority for you?
- Is delivering the European Pillar of Social Rights a priority for you?

**Background Information**

**Poverty in EU and Ireland**

113 million people in the EU, or over 22% of the population, is at risk of poverty and social exclusion. In Ireland 750,000 people (15.7%) are living below the poverty line. Some groups such as people with disabilities, those living in lone parent households, Travellers, people who are unemployed are at higher risk of poverty.

**Europe 2020 Strategy**

In 2010 the EU and its Member States, including Ireland, agreed on the Europe 2020 Strategy for 2010-2020. The Strategy committed to a balanced approach to social, environmental and economic policy. A key part of Europe 2020 there were 5 targets agreed. Three of these are social targets including a poverty reduction target. The three social targets and progress under these is as follows:

	Target		Progress by 2018	
	EU	Ireland	EU	Ireland
Employment	• 75% of people aged 20–64 to be in work	69-71%)	72.2%	73%
Education	• Rates of early school leavers to below 10%	8%	10.6%	4.7%
	• At least 40% of people aged 30–34 having completed higher education	60%	40.5%	55.4%
Poverty and social exclusion	• At least 20 million fewer people at risk of poverty or social exclusion	200,000 fewer	4 million fewer	38,000 more (2017)

Source: Eurostat

The Europe 2020 Strategy is monitored through the European Semester progress, which was designed for monitoring economic progress in the EU and its countries. More information [here](#).

**European Pillar of Social Rights**

After two years of consultation the EU, its institutions (Commission, Parliament and the Council representing Member States) and each of its Member State Governments, signed the European Pillar of Social Rights in November 2017. Along with some new legislation the Pillar of Social Rights included 20 principles or rights, which they committed to deliver. The 20 Principles are under three areas as follows:

<b>i. Equal opportunities and access to the labour market</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Education, training and life-long learning</li> <li>2. Gender equality</li> <li>3. Equal opportunities</li> <li>4. Active support to employment</li> </ol>	<b>iii. Social protection and inclusion</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Childcare and support to children</li> <li>12. Social protection</li> <li>13. Unemployment benefits</li> <li>14. Minimum income (social welfare)</li> <li>15. Old age income and pensions</li> <li>16. Health care</li> <li>17. Inclusion of people with disabilities</li> <li>18. Long-term care</li> <li>19. Housing and assistance for the homeless</li> <li>20. Access to essential services</li> </ol>
<b>ii. Fair working conditions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Secure and adaptable employment</li> <li>6. Wages</li> <li>7. Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals</li> <li>8. Social dialogue and involvement of workers</li> <li>9. Work-life balance</li> <li>10. Healthy, safe and well-adapted work environment and data protection</li> </ol>	

The following are some of the Principles/Rights contained in the Pillar.

- **No 14:** Minimum Income (Social welfare): *“Everyone lacking sufficient resources has the right to adequate minimum income benefits ensuring a life in dignity at all stages of life, and effective access to enabling goods and services”*.
- **No 16:** Health care: *“Everyone has the right to timely access to affordable, preventive and curative health care of good quality.”*
- **No 19:** Housing and assistance for the homeless: a. *“Access to social housing or housing assistance of good quality shall be provided for those in need.”* b. *“Vulnerable people have the right to appropriate assistance and protection against forced eviction”*. c. *Adequate shelter and services shall be provided to the homeless in order to promote their social inclusion.”*

EAPN Ireland Briefing on the European Pillar of Social Rights is available [here](#) and further information [here](#).

## UN Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015 all countries, including Ireland, signed up to deliver the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. The EU also signed up as a block. The SDGs replaced the Millennium Development Goals but this time apply to all countries, rich and poor. There are 17 Goals which all form part an integrated approach to a more sustainable social, environmental and economic future for everyone. There is a clear commitment to ‘leave no one behind’ in achieving the Goals. Goal No1 is ‘No Poverty’ and the SDGs recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. The 17 Goals are.



More information [here](#)