

## Briefing Note

June 2009

## 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

### In Brief

Each year the EU chooses a theme for a campaign aimed at raising public awareness of and drawing national governments' attention to a specific issue. 2010 has been designated the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion. There will be an overall budget of €26 million, of which €17 million will come from the EU. The majority of the budget will be spent on activities co-ordinated by national bodies decided by the Member States and implemented at national, regional and local levels. Overall the UK will have a budget for the Year of around £1.2 million. The Year will be organised in the UK by the Department of Work and Pensions. The UK's **Calls for Proposals** will be launched in late July/ early August.

### Why a European Year?

2010 is a highly symbolic date. In 2000 the EU States pledged themselves to make a "decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" by 2010 as part of the Lisbon Strategy. Europe is still far from this objective, and certain figures speak for themselves:

- ◆ 78 million people live below the poverty line (set at 60% of their country's average income). This is 16% of the population of Europe,
- ◆ 19% of children live under the threat of poverty - 19 million children are affected.

In designating this European Year, the EU aims to reaffirm the importance of collective responsibility in combating poverty, bringing together people working in this area, and giving a voice to those who are experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

### What are the objectives of the Year?

The European Union has 4 overarching objectives:

- ◆ **"Recognition"** - recognising the right of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and take an active part in society
- ◆ **"Shared responsibility and participation"** - promoting public 'ownership' of social inclusion policies and actions, emphasising collective and individual responsibility in combating poverty and social exclusion and fostering commitment and partnerships of public and private actors
- ◆ **"Cohesion"** - promoting a more cohesive society by raising public awareness of the benefits for all. Includes quality of skills and employment, social well-being, equal opportunities, sustainable development and solidarity between generations.
- ◆ **"Commitment and concrete action"** - strengthening political commitment, mobilising all interested parties, and giving further impetus to actions in this field from EU and Member States.

## Which policy areas have priority?

The EU intends activities to focus on a limited number of priority areas, and Member States are expected to adapt these to reflect their national, regional and local situations and challenges. The range of priority themes identified by the EU are:

- ◆ Integrated strategies to prevent and reduce poverty
- ◆ Fighting child poverty
- ◆ Promoting inclusive labour markets
- ◆ Eradicating disadvantages in education and training, including digital literacy, and the specific needs of disabled people
- ◆ Tackling the gender and age dimensions of poverty
- ◆ Ensuring equal access to adequate resources and services, including accommodation, health and social protection
- ◆ Access to culture and leisure opportunities
- ◆ overcoming discrimination and promoting social inclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities
- ◆ promoting integrated approaches to active inclusion (*ie. particularly inclusion in the labour market*)
- ◆ addressing the needs of people with disabilities, homeless people, and others in vulnerable situations.

## What is the Budget?

The Year has an overall budget of **€26 million**, of which €17 million is provided by the EU. The budget will be divided between the EU level and the national level. At the EU level there is an €8 million budget for Europe-wide activities such as information and communication campaigns, providing tools for the implementation of the Year, hosting European events. €19 million will be allocated between Member States, consisting of €9 million from the EU matched by €9 million in co-financing from Member States.

It is estimated that the UK will have an overall budget of up to €1.5 million.

## What kinds of actions are possible?

- ◆ awareness-raising campaigns ◆ studies ◆ innovative schemes to promote social inclusion
- ◆ conferences ◆ competitions to identify success stories

Activities will be identified and implemented by each Member State, and are expected to involve civil society, local and regional authorities. For the 2010 Year the EU recognises that many types of activities can make a contribution, and urges project developers to be "creative and innovative" and to "make their events highly visible".

## How will the Year be implemented?

There will be a mix of centralised and decentralised activities across Europe throughout the Year.

At the **EU level**, the Commission has a key role in encouraging the involvement and political commitment of the EU itself and from the Member States. It also intends to enable the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the most vulnerable groups. It will support Member States in their implementation of the Year, and monitor what they are doing, and will run an ongoing evaluation exercise.

As well as funding the Year's communication campaign and special events, the EU will also provide non-financial support such as authorising the use of the Year's logo and providing material.

At **national level**, each country is allocated a maximum amount of EU funding. The UK's provisional amount is €750,807, which is the highest level of allocation among Member States (jointly with France, Germany and Italy). Member States are required to match this allocation, so the anticipated UK budget is up to €1.5 million.

To organise the Year at national level, each country designates a **National Implementing Body (NIB)** which manages the funding. The main task of the NIB is to define and implement a national programme - a programme it is expected to draw up in close co-operation with stakeholders, consulting with relevant bodies including representatives of national, regional and local government authorities, civil society and the voluntary sector. The National Programmes are up to ten pages long and identify the national priorities for the Year, and include the arrangements for implementation - such as calls for proposals.

It is the NIB which prepares and launches calls for project proposals, awards grants, monitors, and makes payments.

EU funding will cover a maximum of 50% of the eligible costs, and national co-funding should match this, and come from public or private sources. Co-funding must be guaranteed in cash, and consequently contributions in kind are not acceptable. Salaries would be considered a cash contribution.

**!** The Commission has specifically indicated that NIBs *may* decide not to request any co-financing from NGOs, and to fully fund certain actions.

## The Year in the UK

The UK's National Implementing Body (NIB) is the European Social Inclusion Team at the Department of Work and Pensions, including the European Social Fund Division and the Devolved Administrations.

The Project Manager is taking up her post in June. There will also be a 'stakeholder group' bringing together government, local government, voluntary and community sector, people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and the groups that represent them.

The **UK aims** to:

- ◆ raise awareness of the causes, prevalence and consequences of poverty and social exclusion, and of the policies that aim to tackle these issues.
- ◆ promote and facilitate the engagement and participation of a broad range of people, including among others businesses, voluntary organizations, social enterprises at the local, regional, and national level.
- ◆ ensure a lasting legacy - including finding and sharing good practice and setting up ongoing contacts.

The **UK programme** will have a mix of activities at local and national levels.

In the run-up to the Year there will be a series of 'road-shows' held in each region during Autumn 2009.

**!** In late July or early August 2009 bids will be invited at regional level in each of the nine regions of England and each of the devolved administrations. The NIB will not specify methods or approaches, but the activities proposed must meet the 2010 objectives. Examples might be:-

- ◆ involving people experiencing poverty and/or those experiencing or at risk of social exclusion
- ◆ workshops, seminars, focus groups for people who use services to see what's working and what's not
- ◆ bringing together people experiencing poverty and the policy-makers
- ◆ giving a voice to children and young people
- ◆ galvanising public opinion, such as celebrating the International day of older people, or International day of poverty.

- ! Some of the budget will be allocated to activities at the local and grass-roots level. Proposals will be invited for activities that address child poverty, multiple deprivation, overcoming barriers to the labour market, older people and poverty and social exclusion. Proposals will be expected recognise the need for inter-generational approaches. Proposals will be invited from national organisations, or from consortia of organisations working in partnership. These activities might include a further distribution of funds from a successful organisation/partnership to smaller organisations.
- ◆ Among other things, these activities are expected to involve grassroots organisations , showcase good practice, and help share experience.
- ◆ The NIB will encourage the replication of activities with a proven track record, or which will add an innovative dimension to the work of an organisation that will help them extend their reach or develop new ways of working.

At the UK level there will be launch events in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A UK 2010 website will be launched imminently. There will be a media campaign challenging stereotypes and myths. A single closing event will showcase successes and promote the ongoing legacy of the Year.

- ! For more information or a copy of the National Programme, please contact the Brussels Office.

### **What would the EU consider to be a successful Year?**

- ◆ An enhanced political commitment, which might take the form of a Declaration by all Member States, perhaps during International Day Against Poverty on 17th October 2010
- ◆ Improved awareness and understanding within societies
- ◆ Contribution towards better ongoing co-ordination and partnership between central and local authorities
- ◆ Promoting a debate on European values and linking these to EU and Member State decision-making
- ◆ Contribution towards a change in attitudes towards people experiencing poverty, enabling all to play a part in society and exercise their rights in full

*(source: European Commission, information from responsible officer, April09)*

### **What do others think?**

The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) has been active in lobbying for the 2010 Year. It has since adopted a Declaration entitled "Ensuring a lasting legacy from 2010". Among other things, this calls for the EU to establish ambitious targets to eradicate poverty in the EU by 2020, monitoring this through an annual 'scoreboard'. It also suggests the setting up of a "Social Progress Pact" to put social cohesion and the fight against poverty at the top of the EU agenda, and calls for the development of a new EU "Poverty and Social Inclusion Programme" capable of supporting an EU inclusion strategy.

EAPN's national networks are preparing for the Year, and the EAPN is coordinating a coalition of NGOs at European level with the aim of promoting dialogue with the EU institutions and ensuring that the Year results in concrete actions and efficient policies. A website will be launched in September 2009.

## A Roadmap towards 2010

June 2009	<u>Member States</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare calls for proposals for activities</li></ul> <u>Commission</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve or request amendments to national programmes (end June)</li><li>• Provide support to NIBs</li></ul>
July/August	<u>Member States</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launch Calls for Proposals</li></ul>
October/November 2009	<u>Member States</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Selection of projects</li><li>• Preparation of NIB proposal for EU funds</li></ul> <u>Commission</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conference on "Social Exclusion and the media"</li></ul>
December 2009	<u>Member States</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present their national applications to the Commission (10 December)</li></ul>
January/February 2010	<u>Member States</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National launch events</li></ul> <u>Commission</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opening Conference</li><li>• Finalise and sign EU co-funding and delegation agreements with NIBs, pay first instalment to NIBs</li></ul>
March/April 2010	<u>Member States</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Start of the activities of the EY 2010</li></ul>
November/December 2010	Closing Conference (under the Belgian Presidency of the EU) National closing events

## For More Information

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## Key Links

European Commission's website dedicated to the 2010 Year can be found at:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=637>  
You can find the Strategic Framework Document at this site, which gives guidelines for the Year.

The EU Decision adopting the 2010 Year can be found at:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:298:0020:0029:EN:PDF>

The general European Commission website for Employment and Social Affairs can be found at:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/home.jsp?langId=en>

Information on the EU's Renewed Social Agenda 2008 can be found at:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=547&langId=en> and a briefing note is available from the Brussels Office.

EAPN Declaration can be found at:  
[http://www.eapn.eu/images/docs/finalgadeclaration2008\\_en.pdf](http://www.eapn.eu/images/docs/finalgadeclaration2008_en.pdf)

UK National Action Plan on Inclusion 2008 (which is not the EY 2010 National Programme) can be found at:  
<http://www.tsen.org.uk/documents/uknationalactionplan.pdf>

Details of the UK 2010 Website and email address will be circulated as soon as they are available.