

# PRESS RELEASE

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People with direct experience of poverty from 30 countries gather in Brussels

## LET'S TACKLE IN-WORK POVERTY!

### The 16<sup>th</sup> European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty

**9-10 November**, EAPN organises the **16th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty** (PeP Meeting), which takes place in Brussels at the MCE Conference & Business Centre (Rue de l'Aqueduc 118). Over 120 people (with direct experience of poverty) from 30 countries participate in this meeting.

EAPN has been organising these meetings, in partnership with the European Commission, for the last 15 years, giving a voice to people experiencing poverty, as key to understanding and addressing the causes of poverty and social exclusion.

EAPN believes that developing effective anti-poverty policies largely depends upon asking the right questions and getting the right answers. This means **putting into practice an effective participative process** which can harness the expertise and know-how of all key actors. The **opinions and solutions coming directly from people with direct experience of poverty** are therefore key in fighting poverty and social exclusion.

*"It is of the highest interest of the European Union to recognize that such a meeting (PeP) can do more for the reinforcement of democracy and trust of EU citizens in the EU institutions than anything else. To reinforce this, the EU must support this kind of participation in a meaningful way, starting by taking seriously the voice of those who represent 25% of the EU population, people at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Their concrete proposals should be heard and taken seriously."* Sérgio Aires (EAPN President)

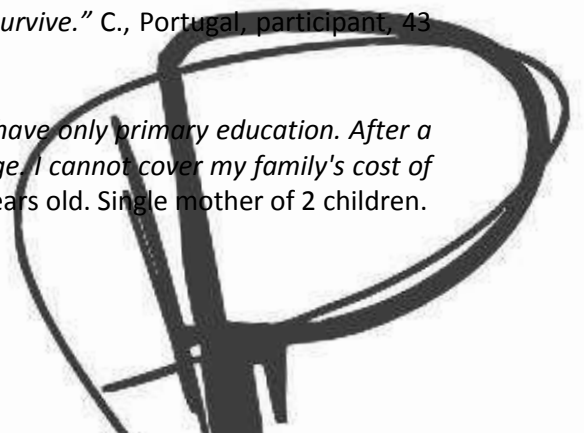
As you can see in the attached Programme, the topic of this year's meeting is **in-work poverty**, which has become a priority topic on the Commission's agenda.

*"Too many people in Europe have been let down by a political and economic system which permits companies and the rich to avoid paying billions of euros in tax, while simultaneously permitting the same companies to employ people on zero hours contracts, often on bogus 'self employed' status, often with wages which are simply not enough to live a dignified life."* Leo Williams (EAPN Director)

*"Stop in-work poverty because we cannot offer a future to our children! We work so hard and we cannot afford education, health services and we have no security for tomorrow."* M., Romania, participant, 50 years old

*"I need a decent salary to be able to live and not to just survive."* C., Portugal, participant, 43 years old, precarious worker

*"I cannot find any good job, because I was in prison and I have only primary education. After a long time I work like auxiliary assistant for a minimum wage. I cannot cover my family's cost of living for this money."* Z., Czech Republic, participant, 23 years old. Single mother of 2 children.





Our Director, Leo Williams, our President, Sérgio Aires, and several delegates (people with direct experience of poverty) will be available for interviews.

Note to the editors: We would like to draw your attention to two specific opportunities during this meeting:

**Thursday 9 November at 10.30 am, Commissioner Marianne Thyssen** will be present, and will engage in a dialogue with some of the delegates

**Thursday 9 November at 6.15 – 6.45 pm**, all delegates will go to **Flagey square**, for a **public visibility action**: they will carry posters with photos (of themselves) and slogans related to in-work poverty

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