Europe 2020 and the strategy for combating poverty & social exclusion: actors’ mobilisation, problem pressure and the effectiveness of the EU tool-kit
• Europe 2020 and the fight against poverty & social exclusion
• Aim & Method
• A weak start
• After modest beginnings...governance in the making?
• Concluding remarks
### Europe 2020 and the fight against poverty: priorities, targets, tools

#### Europe 2020

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| 10 Integrated guidelines      |                          |                         |
|                               |                          |                         |
The European Semester: an iterative process of policy coordination

- **November**
  - Annual Growth Survey

- **March**
  - Debate & orientations

- **April**
  - Debate & orientations

- **May**
  - Council adopts rec. for Council opinions on SCPs + country-spec. rec.

- **June**
  - Council adopts SCP opinions + country-spec. recommendations

- **July**
  - Endorsement of country-spec. recommendations

- **Member States**
  - EDP notifications
  - Adoption of National Reform Programmes (NRPs) & Stability and Convergence Programmes (SCPs)
AIM
To analyse the implementation of EU2020 in the first three cycles 2011-13

METHOD
Qualitative research:
Document analysis
12 Interviews at supranational level
(75 Interviews at national level: Ger, Ita, Pol, Sw, UK)

3 ANALYTICAL DIMENSIONS
• Effective interaction between different levels of government
• Steering ability of EU bodies – European Commission/EPAP
• Stakeholder involvement at various level of government
A weak start, 2011-mid 2012

Multi-level interaction & steering ability of EU institutions

- **Annual Growth Survey**
  2011, poverty NOT among top priorities

- **National Reform Programmes**
  economic and fiscal consolidation measures predominant
  missing link btw measures and goal/target

**National Poverty Targets**
10 MS used different poverty indicators from those agreed at the EU level
BG, DE, DK, EE, FR, IE, LV, NL, SE, UK

- **Country Specific Recommendations**
  3 only, Bulgaria Cyprus Estonia

- **EPAP**
  very limited staff; NOT integrated in the European Semester
Stakeholder participation

• Partial abandonment of the “Social OMC”

• Limited and mostly formal at supranational level
  Stakeholder dialogue meetings
  Annual Convention on Poverty

• Very limited and mostly formal at national level in drafting NRPs
  + social partners
  - NGOs

A weak start, 2011-mid 2012
Multi-level interaction & steering ability of EU institutions

- **Annual Growth Survey**
  - 2012, Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis
  - 2013-2014 same

- **Country Specific Recommendations**
  - 2012, 4 countries (BG, LV, LT, ES) + 4 (AT, CY, PL, UK) indirect reference to poverty
  - 2013, 11 countries (BE, BG, ES, HU, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO, SK, UK) + 8 indirect ref.

2012 Attempt to reinvigorate the social OMC
  “Social protection performance monitor” by SPC
After modest beginnings... governance in the making?

2013 Social Investment Package and link with Active Inclusion Strategy

EC’s communications

2013 “Strengthening the Social Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union”, COM(2013) 690

2013 Key decisions about linking EU2020 and European funds

• At least 20% of ESF used to fight against poverty & social exclusion in each MS
• New ex ante conditionality requirements for receiving ESF
Combating poverty in EUROPE 2020

Weak governance

Quantitative target

Weak implementation

Increased problem pressure

Social actors (NGOs) mobilization
Institutional actors actions

EU Institutions’ attempts to
Reinforce governance
Improve the EU steering capacity

Economic/sovereign debt crises + Austerity measures
Concluding remarks

- **Two phases.** From weak start and modest beginnings to attempts to reinforce the Europe 2020 anti-poverty dimension.

- **The European Semester** emerged as the *main governance tool* also for soft social policy coordination.

- The partial dismissal of the Social Inclusion OMC has abandoned an important legacy.

- However, **greater visibility & political salience** of the poverty issue in the supranational debate due to the **quantitative poverty target** which allows and “legitimises” stakeholder mobilisation demanding EU action.

- **Key decisions on funding and conditionality** in using EU resources.

- **Challenges:** mainstreaming social priorities / integration of the various tools.