

Fighting poverty and social exclusion

Committee of the Regions conference

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Comments

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Outline of the talk

1. Introduction
2. The Social Investment Package
3. Flagship against poverty
4. Regional and local good practice
5. Conclusion

Introduction

Aims:

- To provide feedback on interventions on behalf of the European Social Observatory
- Pose questions to the speakers present

Background note from the Committee of the Regions

Allows for a dialogue between EU and subnational developments

Three main points of interest:

- The Social Investment Package
- Flagship against poverty
- Regional and local good practice

The Social Investment Package

Importance of EU proposals: unknown

Change of language: from “Pact” to “Package”

- *Good* ideas (knowledge bank, active inclusion, homelessness, work on reference budgets, poverty maps)
- Excellent analysis in Working Staff Documents
- However, **non constraining**

The perspectives of the SIP

Question for Nicholas Costello

- Is there any chance that discourse and the momentum of the SIP may lead, at some point, to an instrument with more **bite**?

Suggestions for Mr. Aboutaleb

- The Opinion should be made as a strong plea to a more **constraining** Pact.
- Make the SIP more operational
 - Time frame
 - Stepping stones
 - Division of labour between the actors and institutions
- It should also be made clear that the SIP **builds on and compliments** the European anti-poverty strategy but does not replace it.

Flagship against poverty

Platform Against Poverty (EPAP)

- Platforms are key to Europe 2020
- **But do they really take off?**

Call upon the Committee of the Regions to use the EPAP as an opportunity to have a say on things that really matter:

- European Semester
- Multilateral surveillance (NRPs)
- CSRs, incl. on poverty

Two questions:

What **role** can social actors such as stakeholders play in all this?

- Need for **precision** and **realism**

How do we bring in the regional dimension more generally?

- Regional representatives to EMCO and SPC? Or at least transparency and information about key discussions?
- Regionalization of Europe 2020 targets?

Regional and local good practices

Conviction of learning potential and the sharing of good practices

- Housing project in Skuodas
- Urban development in Rotterdam
- One-stop-shop for Roma
- Adequate budget standards project
- Lifelong living in DK

What has the EU done for you?

What more could be done?

- How do cities and regions really see this “policy learning” from within the EU?
- Can you **really learn** from other cities, in your own country as well as from foreign experience?
- To what extent have policies, and the “way of doing things” in your city **already been inspired** by EU or Member State experiences?
- Does the Social OMC influence political objectives, the focus on disadvantaged groups and areas?

Twofold conclusion

1. **Raise awareness** to the fact social Europe is still being developed, is **alive and under the radar**

- Sectoral European social dialogue
- Supplementary pensions
- Women on boards
- Patient mobility
- Etc.

2. Social Europe is still in bad shape

- **Constant struggle**
- Need for a **constructive** discussion: empower those who still care

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