



## EU 2020: Civil Society Organisations call for transparent and real participation in the European semester

Brussels, 14 May 2013 - At a Public Hearing today in the European Parliament, European Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have joined forces in an ad-hoc coalition to present country-specific recommendations for 2013 in the areas of employment, poverty, education, tax, environmental change and gender equality. Together, they call for a more balanced social, sustainable and equality-based Economic and Monetary Union, Europe 2020 Strategy and effective multi-stakeholder engagement in the whole European Semester process.

*“Strengthening ownership and democratic legitimacy through the voices of European citizens, national Parliaments and the European Parliament is the only way to restore confidence in the capacity of the EU to steer towards inclusive recovery”, states Sian Jones, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN). “To do this, we are calling for a balance between macro-economic objectives, Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) and budget proposals that will substantially enhance, rather than undermine, social, environmental/climate and equality objectives and funds to support effective multi-stakeholder engagement in the whole European Semester process.”*

As the EU enters its 5<sup>th</sup> year of crisis, the EU’s image is overwhelmingly identified with austerity, particularly in countries under the ‘Troika arrangements’. Steps are urgently needed to restore the balance between social and sustainable objectives and economic governance, if the EU is to revive trust in its Europe 2020 promises of a smart, sustainable and inclusive recovery based on democratic accountability and engagement.

*“European governance mechanisms need to move beyond enforcing budgetary and financial stability and re-connect to the lives of real women, men, girls and boys across Europe. Member States must be accountable to the broader social and sustainable goals embedded in the Europe 2020 Strategy”, says Mary Collins, European Women’s Lobby, on behalf of the coalition. “Country-Specific Recommendations have a key role to play and the input of citizens across Europe is crucial to ensure smart, sustainable and inclusive recovery”.*

This hearing is co-hosted by **MEPs Marije Cornelissen**, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance; **Veronica Lope Fontagné**, European People’s Party; Marian **Harkin**, ALDE; **Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto**, S&D. The Country-Specific Recommendations presented by the CSOs have been compiled by their respective members, representing the voices of thousands of citizen’s across Europe that are directly affected by austerity and the requirements of economic governance to reduce public deficits and debt.

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The ad-hoc coalition has produced a **JOINT REPORT** *Strengthening the democratic legitimacy of the European Semester: Civil Society Alternative Proposals for CSRs for a smart, sustainable and inclusive recovery, 2013-14.*

It includes the key messages of the ad-hoc coalition and compiles alternative country-specific recommendations from the social, environmental and equality perspective from the member organisations of the coalition. Links to the individual CSOs and their respective CSRs are also included.

#csr2020

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*For further information regarding the Country-Specific Recommendations and engagement in the Europe 2020 and European Semester, please see:*

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See: [EAPN Assessment and Alternative Proposals for Country-Specific Recommendations \(2013\)](#) with [detailed country fiches](#).

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See: MORE ACTION FOR MORE GENDER EQUALITY! :

<http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?article4915&lang=en>

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See: [Europe 2020 Shadow Report - Missing the train for inclusive growth](#)

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