



European Ministers for Employment & Social Affairs
Via email

Brussels, 12 October 2020

Subject: Adequate Minimum Income for All – The Time for Action is Now!

Dear Minister,

We welcome the adoption of the council conclusions on 'Strengthening Minimum Income Protection to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion in the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond'. In times of COVID-19, the adoption of the council conclusions is an important and symbolic step for tackling and preventing poverty and social exclusion more effectively in the European Union.

In 2018, more than 109 million people in the EU were living at risk of poverty and social exclusion. The full magnitude of the pandemic's socio-economic consequences will present themselves in the years to come, but we expect unemployment, poverty and inequality to increase even further; particularly for groups already in vulnerable situations. Some EU Member States have and will continue to be hit harder by this crisis. Therefore, it is paramount that the European Commission and EU Member States show leadership within their respective competences and continue to build on the council conclusions.

In the past 30 years, the EU has built a policy framework to tackle poverty and social exclusion and emphasised the need for adequate minimum income support. Key milestones included, amongst others, the 1992 Council recommendation on common criteria concerning sufficient resources and social assistance in social protection systems, the 2008 Commission recommendation on active inclusion and country-specific recommendations in the European Semester. However, these soft law instruments have failed to deliver national reforms which enable people to live a life free from poverty.

Social Platform urges the European Commission and EU Member States to build on the council conclusions and move towards a legally binding EU Framework Directive to ensure that all national reforms set minimum standards guaranteeing everyone an adequate minimum income throughout their life cycle and access to benefits and services.

People need to be able to thrive and not just survive! For a full outline of our recommendations on an adequate minimum income, please consult our [position paper](#).

As the largest network of civil society organisations in the EU advocating for a social Europe, we strive for a society based on social justice, where dignity, wellbeing, respect for every person and their human rights are at the centre of all decisions and actions. We believe that the only way to restore people's faith in the European project is by showing that Europe works for them, not against them. We look forward to seeing a strong commitment made to an adequate minimum income with a view to combatting poverty, social exclusion and inequalities faced by millions of people every day.

Yours sincerely,

Piotr Sadowski
President of Social Platform