



EMBARGOED UNTIL 07/04/2014 at 11:00am

New EU Alliance calls for a Social and Sustainable Europe

Brussels, 07 April 2014 - The new EU Alliance for a democratic, social and sustainable European Semester, a broad coalition bringing together environmental, social and equality NGOs and trade unions, holds its launch in the EESC. Highlighting the failure of the Europe 2020 Strategy commitments and official targets in the social, environmental, employment and equality fields, the Alliance members come together to call for progress on the Europe 2020 Strategy's commitments and for reviving the involvement of civil-society organisations and trade unions in the shaping of European policies.

"Our Alliance believes that the EU can offer a positive agenda, if the Europe 2020 Strategy is put at the heart of EU policy, making smart, sustainable and inclusive growth with delivery on the social and environmental targets and a real commitment to equality the key goal," said Barbara Helfferich on behalf of the EU Semester Alliance. *"Effectively engaging civil-society stakeholders in these processes is key to get sustainable policy solutions at national and EU level, as well as reinforcing much-needed legitimacy of the EU. We are offering the partnership of thousands of our member organisations across the EU to make this happen,"* said Barbara Helfferich.

The EU Semester Alliance, referring to the European Semester, which is the driving decision-making process of the Europe 2020 Strategy, aims to support progress on the Europe 2020 Strategy's social and environmental commitments. For the Alliance, the legitimacy of the EU Strategy is at stake and can only be restored through 1) the engagement of environmental, social, equality organisations and trade unions in EU decision-making and 2) the contribution of all policies, including macroeconomic, to the social, environmental targets and equality commitments of the EU's Strategy (Europe 2020), at EU and national levels.

The launch comes at a timely moment as the European Commission prepares its Mid-Term Review of the Europe 2020 Strategy¹, recognizing that progress on the social and environmental Europe 2020 targets² has been dismal, with a backward slide on the poverty and employment targets, with 8 million more people in poverty, and a declining employment rate of 68.4%, and limited progress on early school leaving (12.7%) and on greenhouse emissions. The Commission also recognized the need to get greater ownership and involvement of stakeholders, if progress is to be made.

The event will also be the occasion for the EU Semester Alliance members to present their joint analysis of the 2014 Semester.

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

¹ EC Communication (05.03.2014): Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

² Key Targets: lift at least 20 million out of poverty, achieve a 75% employment rate for women and men, 10% school drop-out and reduce greenhouse emissions by at least 20% and achieve a 20% increase in energy efficiency.

The *EU Alliance for a Democratic, Social and Sustainable European Semester* (or *EU Semester Alliance*) is a broad coalition bringing together major European civil-society organisations and trade unions, representing thousands of member organisations on the ground at European, national and local levels in the European Union.

The Alliance aims to support progress towards a democratic, social and sustainable Europe 2020 Strategy, through strengthening civil dialogue engagement in the European Semester at national and EU levels.

ENABLING CIVIL-SOCIETY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SHAPING OF EU POLICIES AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO PROGRESS ON THE TARGETS OF THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY CONCERNS US ALL!

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The EU Semester Alliance is coordinated by the European Anti-Poverty Network

The Alliance



The *EU Alliance for a democratic, social and sustainable European Semester* or (*EU Semester Alliance*) is a broad coalition bringing together 16 major European civil-society organisations and trade unions, representing thousands of member organisations on the ground at European, national and local levels in the European Union.

The 'Semester Alliance' aims to support progress towards a more democratic, social and sustainable Europe 2020 Strategy, through strengthening civil dialogue engagement in the European Semester at national and EU levels.

The EU Semester Alliance members

The EU Alliance members include:

- Age Platform Europe
- Caritas Europa
- CECODHAS Housing Europe
- Eurochild
- Eurodiaconia
- European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)
- European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- European Federation of Food Banks (FEBA)
- European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless (FEANTSA)
- European Public Service Union (EPSU)
- European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
- European Women's Lobby (EWL)
- Green Budget Europe
- Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
- Social Platform

The Alliance's key publication



See here: [EU Semester Alliance's analysis of the 2014 Semester](#)

The Alliance – A voice to be heard and followed

<http://semesteralliance.net>

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Enabling civil-society to participate in the shaping of EU policies and to contribute to progress on the Targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy concerns us all!