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Briefing paper

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## **2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion**

The European Commission has designated 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The €26 million campaign aims to reaffirm the EU's commitment to making a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010.

79 million people in the EU – or 16% of the population – currently live at risk of poverty (Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009). The European Year 2010 intends to raise public awareness of the way poverty continues to blight the daily lives of so many Europeans.

### **The European Year has four specific objectives:**

- Recognition of the right of people in poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and to play a full part in society;
- An increase in the public ownership of social inclusion policies, emphasising everyone's responsibility in tackling poverty and marginalisation;
- A more cohesive society, where no one doubts that society as a whole benefits from the eradication of poverty;
- Commitment of all actors, because real progress requires a long-term effort that involves all levels of governance.

### **The European Year shall focus on 5 themes:**

- Child poverty and the intergenerational transmission of poverty;
- An inclusive labour market;
- Lack of access to education and training;
- Gender dimension of poverty;
- Access to basic services;

The 2010 European Year will coincide with the conclusion of the EU's ten-year strategy for growth and jobs (Lisbon strategy). The actions undertaken during this European Year shall reaffirm the initial political commitment of the EU at the start of the Lisbon strategy, in 2000, to making "a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" by 2010.

### **Key events at European level:**

- Opening and closing conferences organised under the auspices of the respective EU presidencies, i.e. the Spanish in the first semester 2010 and the Belgian in the second semester 2010.
- Two "Focus Weeks", the one in Spring, around the date of the Annual meeting of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion (Probably May 2010) and the other one in October, around the celebration of the International Day against poverty on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

The Member States have been asked to designate **National Implementing Bodies**, who will be in charge of elaborating and implementing the EY2010 activities at national level.

### **Activities of the European Churches**

CSC has been invited by the European Commission to join an EU stakeholders' expert group, which shall provide expert advice to the Commission throughout the course of the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the activities undertaken in relation to the European Year 2010.

From **28-30 April 2009** CSC is holding a **Conference on “Shaping European Economic and Social Policies in Times of Uncertainty”** in the European Parliament in Brussels. We shall use the occasion of this Conference to discuss the priorities of the churches with regard to joint activities during the European Year 2010.

Therefore we kindly invite our Member Churches to **inform us about their activities**, which could be linked with the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Please send your contributions to [csc@cec-kek.be](mailto:csc@cec-kek.be).

At the same time we would like to encourage our member churches and associated organisations to contact the Ministries of Labour and Social Policy of their respective government to be invited to the **National Implementing Bodies**. As most of the activities during the European Year 2010 shall be organised on national level, a participation in the work of the National Implementing Body would be the best way to actively participate in the national activities during the European Year 2010.

If you need support to identify the responsible persons for the National Implementing Bodies in your Member States, please contact CSC of CEC and we will try to help.

*Rev. Dr. Dieter Heidtmann*

### **Further information:**

European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=637>

Strategic Framework Document

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=637>

Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/joint\\_reports\\_en.htm#2009](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/joint_reports_en.htm#2009)

Response of the Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches and of Eurodiaconia to the Questionnaire on the Commission's proposal to designate 2010 as the European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion  
[http://www.cec-kek.org/pdf/CSCCombatPoverty\\_SocialExclusion.pdf](http://www.cec-kek.org/pdf/CSCCombatPoverty_SocialExclusion.pdf)