



Foundations for Future Europe  
Smooth Symposium – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021



[www.eapn.ie](http://www.eapn.ie)

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**The Case for a more  
Social Europe**



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"Europe for Citizens"*

## Social Europe reflected in Values of the European Union

*“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”*

Article 2 of the [Treaty on European Union](#)

Supported in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU

## Delivering on EU Values

- EU Decision making structure and political will



- EU Competence
- Hard law and Soft law
- Cooperation
  
- No one European Social model

## Some Social Policy Milestones

### Hard law



Workplace standards



Anti-Discrimination in workplace and outside (gender and race)

### Soft Law



Lisbon Strategy(2000-2010)



Europe 2020 Strategy (2010-2020)

**Recommendations:** Minimum Income, Active Inclusion, Child Guarantee

### Others

- Poverty Programmes 1975-1992 – Patrick Hillary, EU Commissioner for Social Affairs
- European Charter of Fundamental Rights – 2000
- European Semester – 2010 to date – Country Specific Recommendations



# European Pillar of Social Rights- Action Plan and Targets



**Target:** Reduce by at least 15 million the number of people experiencing poverty or social exclusion by 2030 (must include 5 million children)

# WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH POVERTY & INEQUALITY



Source: EAPN Poverty Watch 2020

## Failure of EU to realise its vision

- Poverty, inequality, quality of jobs, austerity policy, migration, etc
- Failure exploited by far-right and Eurosceptics

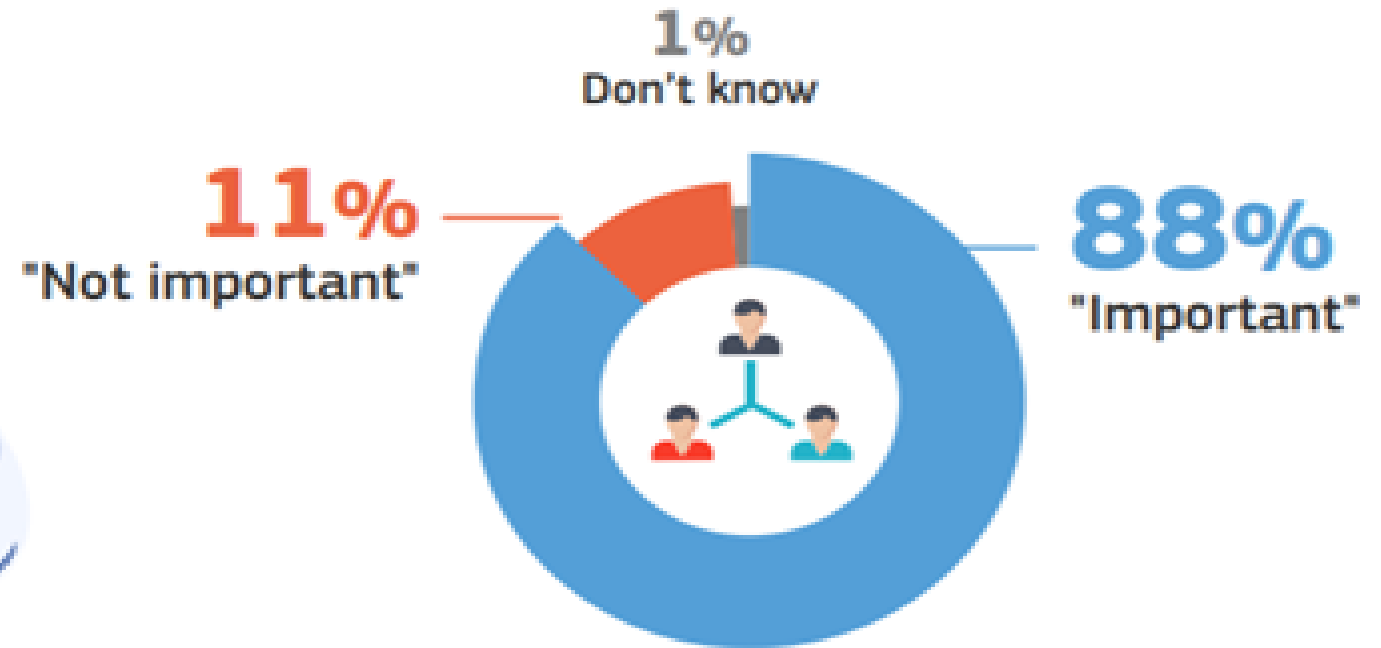


# Future of Europe

- Conference on the Future of Europe
- What Irish people said the last time (2018)
  - want to be part of a **Union that lives up to its values** and is ready to meet the new challenges that we face.
  - had an **overarching desire is for fairness** – fairness in the opportunities available to citizens, fairness between generations, fairness between Member States, fairness in Europe's dealings with the rest of the world and fairness towards the environment.
  - **want to tackle social exclusion** and to see stronger interventions at a European level to combat discrimination, integrate migrants and improve access to services

# Future of Europe

**88% OF EUROPEANS CONSIDER SOCIAL EUROPE TO BE IMPORTANT FOR THEM PERSONALLY**



Eurobarometer Report- March 2021

## Some areas of focus for a Social Europe

- Balanced model (economic, social and environmental) - European Semester
- Economic model of investment – not austerity
- Place of Social Europe, Pillar and EU values within current EU Priorities - Recovery and Resilience Plans, Climate and Digital transitions
- Implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights
- Adequate wages and decent jobs
- Minimum Income
- Services
- EU Child Guarantee
- Equality and discrimination
- Socio-economic status/class within equality legislation
- Migration
- Role of civil society – Social Dialogue – autonomy
- Implementation

## Conclusion

Need political commitment to turning  
EU values into reality and creating a  
more social Europe





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