European Anti-Poverty Strategy – Input from the Netherlands

For a strong, competitive and inclusive Europe, it is essential to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan has set an ambitious target: to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2030 by at least 15 million people, including 5 million children. The Netherlands welcomes the intention of the Commission to present a European Anti-Poverty Strategy. Anti-poverty policies fall primarily within national competence; therefore, the proposed Strategy should support Member States with their national policies and not lead to additional administrative burdens. It should support Member States to **address shared challenges by raising awareness, providing guidance and stimulating effective knowledge sharing**.

To achieve the target the European Anti-Poverty Strategy should:
- Adopt an integrated approach;
- Prioritise prevention;
- Pay attention to intergenerational poverty; and
- Encourage Member States to include 'experts by experience' in the policy making process.

Preventing and addressing poverty effectively requires an **integrated approach** that connects social, economic and employment policies. Poverty is not an isolated phenomenon but the result (or cause) of multiple, interrelated factors such as limited access to education and transport, unstable employment, poor health, inadequate housing, and discrimination. The Strategy should encourage Member States to ensure coordination across policy areas and levels of governance, involving public authorities, social partners, civil society and experts by experience. An integrated and inclusive[1], approach allows for more coherent and sustainable outcomes. Long term commitment to and the availability of resources for national anti-poverty policies are essential. Lastly, it is important to consider the consequences of policies for people in vulnerable situations.

The European Anti-Poverty Strategy should prioritise a **preventive approach.** Therefore, the Strategy should pay attention to comprehensive policies that promote social inclusion, labour market integration, and skills development as preventive tools rather than only corrective measures. Investing in social inclusion helps combat poverty by giving people equal access to opportunities, networks, and support, strengthening both resilience and participation. Investing in skills and training can increase employability and future opportunities. Increased labour market integration creates pathways to stable income and social participation. Prevention should also include attention to online temptations, financial education and the role of employers to support their employees with financial concerns.

Growing up in a family with insufficient income affects a child's entire life and can have a long-lasting impact on wellbeing. It is pivotal to address this issue early on. Therefore, the Strategy should pay particular attention to breaking the cycle of **intergenerational poverty**. The European Child Guarantee offers valuable inspiration, as it takes a comprehensive approach to poverty and social inclusion that goes beyond financial aspects. It has also established a strong network of policymakers, NGOs, and academics to share insights and best practices, and has provided concrete tools to combat child poverty. Building on this experience, the European Anti-Poverty Strategy could further support Member States in preventing and reducing intergenerational poverty.

Finally, the European Anti-Poverty Strategy should encourage Member States to involve **experts by experience and grassroots organisations** in all stages of the policy processes. Their insights help to design policies that effectively address real needs and also strengthen trust in public institutions.

[1] Gender, ethnicity, age and/or disability.