



**ATD**  
**FOURTH WORLD**

**2024 EUROPEAN  
ELECTIONS**

# **BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE EUROPE: TOWARDS THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY**

**ATD Fourth World Propositions**

**WWW.ATD-FOURTHWORLD.ORG**

ATD Fourth World is an international movement whose aim is to put an end to extreme poverty by ensuring access to fundamental rights for all, and by fostering the emergence of sustainable, inclusive human communities. Founded in 1957 by Joseph Wresinski, the movement has no political or religious affiliations. Today, the organisation brings together individuals of all cultures and social origins across over 30 countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe, including 10 in the European Union. ATD's approach is based on daily contact with people living in exclusion due to persistent poverty. It involves supporting them as they reflect on their situation and take actions to lift themselves out of poverty, while forging partnerships with other stakeholders.

From this experience, ATD Fourth World has learned that the fight to eradicate poverty can only succeed if it is designed, implemented, monitored, and evaluated with the people concerned.

Inequalities in Europe are on the rise. According to Eurostat, in 2022, 95.3 million people lived in a situation of poverty or social exclusion in the European Union. This figure represents 21.6% of the population or one in five individuals (1). Although these statistics are catastrophic in themselves, they are based on the criteria set by the European Union, such as level of income, severe social and material deprivation, and access to work within a household. Notably, they do not encompass other essential criteria that reflect poverty in all its dimensions, including institutional abuse and disempowerment(2).

The European Union has pledged to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 15 million by 2030 (including 5 million children)(3). Today, not only is this target far from being achievable, it also leaves over 80 million people behind. SDG1: "Eradicate poverty in all its forms, everywhere in the world", and the goal of "Leaving no one behind", which lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, cannot be regarded as mere positions of principle.

Current European and national policies are too far removed from the reality and needs of people living in poverty. Too many policies are geared towards short-term rather than long-term responses. To develop more effective policies, we believe that direct dialogue between European decision-makers and people experiencing poverty is essential. The experience and knowledge of those living in poverty must be valued and taken into account. This must be guaranteed by the implementation of permanent and adequately designed spaces for reflection and dialogue. It is vital to recognise people with this experience as key political players in a democratic Europe that leaves no one behind.

The European institutions have a responsibility to develop ambitious initiatives to implement the principles enshrined in the European principles of social rights and to move towards the complete eradication of poverty. European funds must provide the best possible support for these initiatives, aimed at a more inclusive and equitable European Union.

[1] Eurostat- People at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2022

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-eurostat-news/w/DDN-20230614-1>

[2]<https://www.atd-quartmonde.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Hidden-Dimensions-of-Poverty-2011-2019.pdf>

[3][https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_22\\_3782](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_3782)

**“What we'd like is for people to stop making decisions for us, to stop thinking for us, to stop doing things for us, and to do them with us”.**

Angélique Jeanne, member of ATD Fourth World in Normandy, France, during the 15th European Fourth World People's University at the European Parliament, February 6th 2019.

**We invite each candidate to include in their programme the following recommendations based on the works and preoccupations of the 150 local ATD Fourth World groups in Europe, and to make every effort to ensure their adoption and effective application once elected.**

**1**

**Ensure the effective and meaningful participation of people living in poverty in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all policies that may affect them, through institutionalised and appropriate mechanisms and processes**

Systematic input from people living in poverty is essential to the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies that are likely to affect them, either directly or indirectly. Their participation is crucial both to develop the most appropriate measures and to correct initiatives that may be ineffective or counterproductive. The systematic involvement of people in situations of poverty would also ensure an in-depth understanding of their realities by public authorities. Throughout EU member states, there are examples of measures taken without consulting people experiencing poverty, which have generated unanticipated harmful effects, such as non-access to rights, or have included features that have reduced their otherwise positive outcomes. Thus, the participation of people living in poverty is essential to devising solutions based on their needs, experiences, and aspirations, thus ensuring efficient and well-adapted policies.

## **Recommendation:**

➤ Establish permanent and adequately designed spaces for reflection and dialogue with people experiencing extreme poverty, in conjunction with various stakeholders, to ensure that they can contribute to the design of policies that directly affect them and the monitoring of their results.

➤ Safeguard the continuity of the Intergroup on Fighting Against Poverty as indispensable to eradicating poverty in all its forms and enabling the participation of the people directly concerned.

# 2

**Integrate a multidimensional and comprehensive approach to poverty within the framework of all relevant EU legislation, in line with SDG 1 ("End poverty in all its forms everywhere").**

Setting quantified and seemingly realistic objectives within a relatively short timeframe may often facilitate a concrete assessment of progress and allow adjustments to be implemented if necessary. However, targets and indicators that are usually relied upon in such cases may encourage the implementation of measures that do not consider the multiple dimensions of poverty. Consequently, there is a risk that those measures will primarily benefit those who can most easily be lifted above the defined thresholds and will never reach those who need them the most. Though the evaluation criteria associated with the European Pillar of Social Rights represent a step forward in taking into account the multiple dimensions of poverty, they still do not consider aspects such as social deprivation or social and institutional maltreatment.

## **Recommendation:**

- Develop analytical tools that will more accurately capture the reality of people living in poverty and social exclusion to ensure an EU legislation that takes into account the multidimensional nature of poverty.
- Adopt a binding measure for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in all Member States and monitor their effective application.
- Adopt a binding provision requiring all policies implemented by the European Union to be subjected to both ex-ante and ex-post impact studies regarding their effects on the poorest 10% of the European population.

# 3

## Acknowledge socio-economic discrimination in EU legislation

Discrimination undermines the fulfilment of economic, social, and cultural rights. Although ATD Fourth World has welcomed the adoption of directives prohibiting discrimination on multiple grounds, progress towards the recognition of socio-economic status as a ground for discrimination has not been achieved. In view of the psychological suffering as well as the multiple deprivations of fundamental rights, such as access to housing, employment, or education, that are caused by socioeconomic discrimination, it is crucial for European Institutions to undertake all necessary actions to address these human rights violations and adopt an appropriate legal response to address them.

### Recommendation:

- Ensure that the Fundamental Rights Agency's multiannual work programme includes the analysis of instances of socioeconomic discrimination and their impact on individuals facing extreme poverty.
- Secure the recognition and prohibition of socioeconomic discrimination in all Member States of the European Union through the adoption of a directive, and monitor its national application.
- Include in EU legislation the requirement for Member States to develop training and awareness campaigns addressing both conscious and unconscious biases that impact decision-making among private and public entities.

# 4

## Climate action must contribute to the eradication of poverty and access to fundamental human rights

People living in poverty are disproportionately impacted by both climate change and the adverse side effects that may arise from initiatives promoting ecological transition.

Ensuring that EU environmental measures are oriented toward fostering a just transition requires considering the situation of people experiencing poverty. Their full participation must be guaranteed in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all relevant legislative packages. In Europe, as well as globally, actions to address poverty and climate change should be interconnected.

## Recommendation:

- Ensure that all financial aid provided under EU environmental law, such as the Social Climate Fund, reaches people in situations of poverty as a priority.
- Ensure that people living in poverty can benefit from free training and the creation of decent and dignified jobs as part of a just transition to an economy that respects people and the planet.
- Promote the adoption of a directive recognising the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment aligning with the 2022 UN General Assembly resolution. This would address the heightened vulnerability of people in poverty to the environmental degradation caused by our modes of consumption, production, and resource allocation.
- Promote the inclusion of evaluation criteria related to the eradication of poverty (ODD1) in every national action plan designed to foster an ecological transition, as well as in the overview of the corresponding reports.

# 5

**Guarantee the right to legal existence for all people living in European Union Member States throughout their lives.**

Inside the European Union, one's right to a legal existence can be hindered by the precariousness or lack of one's administrative status, the absence of a recognised home address, and/or the lack of required administrative documents. This situation concerns a wide range of individuals, including but not limited to undocumented migrants (coming from inside and outside Europe) or individuals who are homeless. This prevents them from enjoying the same access to human rights and services as other people who live in the same territory. For this reason, ATD Fourth World urges every Member State to guarantee official administrative registration to all individuals on their territory, and to facilitate access to essential documentation.

## Recommendation:

➤ Guarantee administrative registration for all and simplify the process of obtaining and preserving essential administrative documents. This includes utilising digital tools while taking into account the limited or lack of access to the latter, faced by many individuals in situations of poverty or social exclusion. Legal registration without an address or with an administrative address should be possible to ensure the right to a legal existence. Access to an administrative address should simultaneously be facilitated for any individual who needs it, as it allows to set in motion the steps needed to establish a legal situation.

➤ Provide clear information on the procedures to be followed and commit to bringing them to a successful conclusion within an announced timeframe.

# 6

**Guarantee and implement a minimum income scheme in all Member States to enable every citizen to secure a decent standard of living.**

Minimum income schemes are an indispensable part of social protection systems and are fundamental to ensure the effective realisation of several fundamental rights. Although the majority of European Union

Member States have implemented some form of minimum income schemes, their design and level of protection vary. As a result, people do not enjoy sufficient stability nor the necessary means to break the cycle of poverty (often worsened by patterns of discrimination). Universal minimum income schemes are essential to reduce the stigma of those dependent on social benefits and decrease the non-take-up of rights for people living in poverty.

## Recommendation:

➤ Commit to a directive on minimum income following the European Union resolution 2022/2840 ([RSP](#)).

➤ Ensure the development of a minimum income scheme that takes into account economic, social, and cultural factors to ensure that the multidimensionality of the obstacles to a decent standard of living is considered.

**YOU CAN ENDORSE THESE RECOMMENDATIONS HERE:**

**HERE**

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Your endorsement can also be send to:  
[delegation.ue@atd-quartmonde.org](mailto:delegation.ue@atd-quartmonde.org)

Full Name:

Function/Organisation:

I underline the call of the International Movement ATD Fourth World for a Europe that leaves no one behind

Signed on ....., in .....

Signature:



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