

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME FOR THE EUROPEAN YEAR FOR COMBATING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION 2010

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT: CHALLENGES TO BE FACED

1.1 Challenges and national strategy for combating poverty

Counteracting poverty and social exclusion constitutes a basic objective of social policy executed by the Government in cooperation with the territorial self-government units and non-governmental organizations. The National Social Integration Strategy (NSIS) adopted for the years 2005-2010 is a strategic document identifying the objectives to be delivered in medium-term perspective.

Challenges and priorities of the social policy in the area of counteracting poverty and social exclusion for the years 2008-2010 were identified in the national Action Plan for Social Integration, being a part of the 'Social Security and Social Integration' National Programme for the years 2008 – 2010, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 16 December, 2008.

Key objectives of the National Development Programme / Integration for the years 2008-2010 were agreed in the course of consultations with the representatives of self-governmental authorities, social partners, scientific environment and non-governmental organizations. Also the recommendations of the European Commission referring to Poland in the Joint Report on Social Security and Social Integration for 2007. Both the priorities and activities of the National Development Programme / Integration for the years 2008-2010 are also coherent with the assumptions of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010).

The objectives of the social policy in the scope of counteracting poverty and social exclusion were specified in the National Development Programme / Integration for the years 2008 – 2010 within the framework of three priorities:

1. Counteracting poverty and social exclusion of children
2. Integration via social and occupational activization of persons threatened with social exclusion
3. Development of high-quality social services.

All the above-mentioned priorities are being delivered by the national social policy. In addition, support for individual activities within the EU funds and programmes (in particular the ESF) has contributed in a great degree to implementation of effective and innovative solutions in this area.

Activities delivered within the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) must be of complex nature (in its general message) and at the same time, it would be profitable to focus additionally on the areas supported from the other sources in lesser degree (ensuring complementarity of various initiatives). Therefore, in the national implementation programme for the European Year 2010, detailed activities should focus on two social groups:

- youth and children (the greatest threat of poverty – in 2005 in a group of youth and children in the age of 0 – 17 years old, 26% were classified below 60% of median of equivalent revenue, whereas the average for EU25 amounted to 19% - source: NDP/Integration)

- older persons (threat with social exclusion also in context of society ageing phenomenon and the necessity to ensure high-quality services).

Youth and children constitute the most threatened with poverty and social exclusion group of revenue nature. Older persons, despite their relatively more beneficial situation in context of revenue poverty threat, are threatened with social exclusion risk resulting from the other factors, e.g. lower activity in the society, growing needs related to satisfying medical and care needs, threat with so called ‘digital exclusion’, etc.

1.2 Current administrative structure

In Poland the tasks related to social security issues covering among others social insurance and benefits, social aids and family benefits, social allowances, employment, social and occupational rehabilitation of disabled persons, public benefit activities are within the competences of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy. Therefore the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy will act as the national implementing body for the European Year purposes. Function of the national coordinator of the European Year will be fulfilled by Mr. Jarosław Duda, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

2. NATIONAL PROGRAMME covering the COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

2.1 Activities within the European Year 2010:

Considering the specific nature of the national situation in the area of poverty and social exclusion, delivery of the four priorities of the European Year 2010 in Poland will be based on the assumptions (objectives) presented below, using the methods, measures and types of activities optimal for each objective.

RECOGNITION OF RIGHTS

Recognition of rights –recognition of the basic right of the persons suffering from poverty and social exclusion to dignified life and full participation in society’s living. The European Year will aim at increase in public opinion awareness in the scope of situation of people living in poverty, in particular of persons or groups being in difficult condition and will support in provide them with effective access to social, economic and cultural rights as well as to sufficient resources and high-quality services. The European Year will also support combating stereotypes and social censure.

Reasons for the activities:

- raising awareness of general society on poverty and social exclusion phenomena and on rights of people suffering from such phenomena
- raising awareness of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion on their rights
- liquidation of censure of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion as well as negative stereotypical image of people suffered from poverty and exclusion
- emphasizing of scale and symptoms of the activities being in contrary to respecting the basic rights of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion =
- emphasizing of the meaning of respecting rights (both in contacts with institutions and everyday life) of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion
- propagation of good practices

Activities:

- informational campaigns
- nationwide conferences and local seminars
- trainings and workshops
- media news and reports
- publications for wide propagation (leaflets, informational brochures)
- exhibitions and other social and artistic events

CO-RESPONSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

***Co-responsibility and participation** – increase in public responsibility for policy and activities related to social integration, emphasizing both collective and individual responsibility for combating poverty and social exclusion and supporting of the operations within voluntary activities. The European Year will promote involvement of all public and private entities, by among others active partnership. It will increase awareness level and involvement and create participation opportunities for all citizens, in particular of people having direct or indirect poverty-related experiences.*

Reasons for the activities:

- facilitating permanent dialogue between public and private sector, including non-governmental organizations, in the scope of launching the initiatives focused on counteracting poverty and social exclusion
- strengthening of good practices sharing process in the scope of co-responsibility between public and private sector entities
- propagation of good practices in the scope of co-responsibility as well as showing the benefits for the entities applying such practices

Activities

- competition for good practices applied by public institutions, commercial companies and non-governmental organizations together with propagation of information in media
- informational campaign
- joint seminars, workshops and trainings
- social and cultural meetings and events with participation of all interested communities (including artistic competitions)
- informational actions for the entire society and people threatened with exclusion concerning responsibility of the entire society and its entities in the scope of counteracting social exclusion and supporting social integration
- local informational actions (schools, local communities)

COHESIONS

***Cohesion** — promoting a more cohesive society by raising public awareness of the benefits for all of a society where poverty is eradicated, fair distribution is supported, and no-one is condemned to live in the margins. The European Year shall foster a society that sustains and develops quality of life, including high quality of skills and employment, social well-being, including children's well-being and equal opportunities for all. In addition, it*

will ensure sustainable development and solidarity between and within generations as well as policy coherence with EU actions worldwide.

Reasons for the activities:

- providing opportunities for the possibly widest inclusion of the concept of combating poverty and social exclusion into the mainstream of policy, public debate, launched educational and research activities
- propagation of strategy, programmes, actions and initiatives launched within combating poverty and social exclusion activities – both in national, regional and local communities scale
- supporting scientific research focused on complexity of poverty and social exclusion and propagation of research results

Activities

- conferences, seminars, workshops
- events and actions with media participation
- competition on research covering certain aspects of poverty and social exclusion in individual social life areas
- conference and publication presenting the results of research on various aspects of poverty and social exclusion

INVOLVEMENT AND SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

***Involvement and specific activities** – emphasizing of strong political involvement of both the European Union and its Member States for putting a final strain on elimination of poverty and social exclusion as well as propagation of involvement and activities at each management level. On the basis of achievements and potential of open coordination method for social security and integration, the European Year will focus on strengthening of political involvement by means of drawing of politicians' attention and mobilization of all the interested for counteracting poverty and social exclusion and combating them, and in addition will give further incentives for activities of both the Member States and European Union in this scope.*

Reasons for the activities:

- greater presence of poverty and social exclusion-related issues in public debate
- propagation of information on national and international events related to eradication of poverty and social exclusion (e.g. International Day for Eradication of Poverty).
- promotion of the existing instruments for eradication of poverty and social exclusion, determining their effectiveness, as well as creating solutions for their weak points
- propagation of information on the objectives and tools of national policy orientem on combating poverty and social exclusion
- supporting development of local policies in the scope of eradication of poverty and social exclusion

Activities:

- media events
- events involving the representatives of authorities of national, regional and local level
- conferences, seminars

- national journalistic contest concerning social integration-related issues

General thematic priority should be promotion of multidimensional, integrated strategies for preventing poverty and providing equal access to target resources and services.

Among detailed thematic issues, the activities of the European Year 2010 in Poland should focus on eradication of poverty of children, including transfer of poverty between generations as well as on counteracting social exclusion of the older people and promotion of solidarity and integration between and among generations.

The effects of the activities of the Year 2010 in Poland will cover propagation of knowledge on poverty and social exclusion phenomena, responsibility of the entire society for these issues as well as methods and indispensable tasks to counteract this problem. Solutions delivered in the course of execution of individual tasks (website, publications) will constitute a basis for further continuation of the activities after the European Year 2010.

2.2 Communication strategy covering inauguration, website and national campaign

Communication strategy adopted for the European Year 2010 shall be addressed to the entire society, including the people suffering from poverty and social exclusion as well as other social groups and institutions having the opportunity to develop policy in the area of social integration or influence such policy. Particular attention will be put to reaching of groups and entities perceived as not related to poverty (entrepreneurs, institutions of the sectors not directly involved in social policy, etc.).

All communication strategy-related events will be of coherent nature, ensured by selection of the entity operating within social communication and media, which will prepare and deliver the strategy covering the events in media of national and regional range as well as servicing and promotion of individual events carried out within the European Year.

Delivery of the European Year in Poland will be inaugurated by all-Poland conference with participation of leading media (TV and radio stations as well as nationwide press).

All and any information concerning the Year, including individual activities delivered within the European Year will be published on national website of the European Year.

Activities aiming at delivery of the European Year priorities will be marked with all-European logo. Despite the projects selected for delivery and co-financed within the Year, the entities executing the initiatives taking place within the Year and able to contribute to delivery of at least one objective in significant manner may also apply for using of European Year logo.

2.3 Inclusion of gender-related issues: how it will be perceived within each priority area of each activity or its part

The issue of gender equality will be included in all the activities of the European Year. In particular, the European Year activities will cover all specific threats and aspects of poverty and social exclusion suffered by both men and women. In addition, works related to the European Year will in particular focus on maintenance of gender equality for effective delivery of individual priorities of the Year. Gender-related issues in context of social

exclusion and poverty will be reflected by detailed criteria for selection of the European Year activities.

2.4 Availability of the activities

All the national activities delivered within the European Year will be carried out in a way to ensure access of these people, who suffer from poverty directly and disabled persons. Both the activities delivered by the national implementing body and launched within the co-financed projects must ensure due place and implementation method and provide access of all people.

Direct involvement in the activities of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion will constitute an important evaluation criterion in the activities selection procedure within the European Year.

3. CONSULTATIONS WITH CIVIC SOCIETY AND INTERESTED PARTIES

3.1 Interested parties participating in consultations

Interest in works on implementation of the European Year was expressed for the most by non-governmental organizations associated in FEANTSA and EAPN Poland as well as other associations and foundations. Also research institutions, local self-governments (regional centers of social policy and city offices), central offices and web portal dedicated to social aid issues are also among the interested entities. Contacts with the representatives of these institutions have been established.

3.2 Consultations process, its effects and further activities

On 20 April, 2009 information on Polish preparations to delivery of the European Year 2010 was published on websites of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (www.mpips.gov.pl). Information on the objectives and ideas of the Year, national structure for the Year implementation was provided, interested parties were invited to provide their comments and remarks on the national priorities of the European Year 2010.

In addition, a separate email box in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for permanent communication on preparations to delivery of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) was launched (rok2010@mpips.gov.pl).

All interested parties were invited to participate in the meeting held on 28 April, 2009 in the seat of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. 35 people participated in the meeting.

All participants of the meeting were asked to provide their suggestions on the national programme. Nine organizations delivered their remarks in response.

The provided suggestions were analyzed with a view to their compliance with the selected priorities of the European Year and constituted a basis to prepare draft national implementation plan for the European Year 2010 in Poland.

Draft programme was provided to the social partners, regional centers of social policy, research institutes and non-governmental organizations as well as other entities which expressed their interest in the initiatives (53 entities in total) for their opinion. At the same time, draft programme was published on websites of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy with a request to provide comments and remarks via email.

Opinion on draft programme was provided by several entities. On their basis, modification and completion of the content of the national implementation programme was made.

Within further activities of the preparations process and implementation of the European Year 2010, participation of all interested parties on each delivery stage is assumed by: publishing information on each and any activity and decision concerning the European Year on website, organization of consultation meetings and correspondence consultations as well as participation in the initiatives launched directly by the national implementing body and joint organization of the events related to the Year 2010.

Selection of partners, with which regular contacts will be maintained will be determined by ability of these organizations to represent, propagate and defense of rights and interests of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion. Also the Social Aid Council, the opinion making and advisory body operating by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy will be involved in consultations process of the activities launched within the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010).

Consultation process will contribute to spread of information on the European Year objectives, preparation methods and its delivery as well as to working-out of methods of permanent cooperation between all interested entities.

4. AGREEMENTS ON DELIVERY

Invitations to submit the suggested activities, selection criteria, selection procedure, etc.

The basis to submit the suggestions to execute specific activities of national, regional and local nature in Poland within the European Year 2010 will be the agreed objectives of the National Programme specified in title 2 of this document.

Invitations to submit the activities will be generally available, will be published pursuant to the standard competition procedure. In addition, information on invitation to submit the projects of the activities will be published on websites of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, national website of the European Year 2010, on 'sectoral' websites and portals cooperating in the area of social policy in permanent manner.

Competition for projects of the activities will be closed (deadline to submit projects will be specified). Submitted projects will be evaluated by the Evaluation Team composed of the representatives of the national implementing body and possibly external experts. Evaluation will include both formal and content-related assessment.

The activities will be selected under the following criteria:

- formal assessment – compliance with the competition criteria,

- geographical range of the activity,
- duplicating potential of the activity,
- innovative nature of the activity,
- direct involvement of people suffering from poverty and social exclusion,
- covering gender-related issues.

Evaluation of each submitted project will be made independently by two persons on the basis of uniform evaluation form.

4.2 Approximate schedule

Approximate schedule of implementation of the European Year in Poland is as follows:

- June 2009 – preparation of invitations to submit the activities;
- June 2009 – agreeing together with the European Commission on the final programme version;
- July/September 2009 – preparation of national media campaign;
- October / November 2009 – projects selection, preparation of applications for co-financing from the EU funds;
- up to 10 December, 2009 – submission of application for co-financing to the European Commission;
- February 2010 r. – (Warsaw) conference opening the Year;
- March 2010 – launching of the European Year activities (17 March – Social Work Day)
- April 2010 – inauguration of media campaign;
- September 2010 – social and cultural events (including deciding on possible artistic competition);
- October 2010 – events concerning the International Day for Eradication of Poverty and Social Exclusion (17 October)
- November 2010 – events concerning the Social Worker Day (21 November)
- 2010 – report from the Year execution.

5. APPROXIMATE BUDGET

Amount of co-financing from the EU funds allocated to Poland is EUR 691 424. With regard to the above, ensuring of the amount of EUR 691 424 in state budget for the purposes of participation of Poland in the Year's celebrations is indispensable.

In addition, the submitted projects should assume at least 10% share of the implementing entity in the project's budget.

6. MECHANISMS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy assumes the following method to monitor the delivered activities:

- the agreements to be signed with organizations, which will be co-financed from the national implementing body, will specify the objectives, to which a grant is allocated, in details;
- submission of the report from the delivered activities will be required;
- providing of general report from the delivered activities by the projects implementing entities will be required;
- selective controls in the seat of the entity implementing the project will be carried out to determine execution stage of the task;
- entities implementing the activities will be notified on the necessity to submit specific documents in the agreement on delivery of the activities;
- competition results as well as information on the required documents will be published on websites of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as well as on websites of portal servicing the European Year.

Final evaluation of the delivered activities will be prepared in particular with a view to:

- 1) execution stage of the task;
- 2) effectiveness, reliability and quality of task delivery;
- 3) correctness of allocation of public funds obtained for task delivery;
- 4) keeping documentation specified in legal provisions and regulations of the agreement.