**Consultation Session on the European Pillar of Social Rights**

**Organized by the European Commission Representation in Malta**

**Friday 2 September 2016**

**Summary of the Civil Society Consultation recommendations**

**General Comment**: Gender issues, social rights, health care and persons at risk of poverty were some of the topics that should be addressed horizontally in all 20 topics of the Proposed Social Pillar

**Question 1 Most pressing priorities for the EU.**

1. The issue of **healthcare** and choosing healthier life styles that will keep each person healthier for a longer period of time. Youths should be particularly targeted to eat healthier food and live better life styles.
2. Primary health care to be improved especially for mental health patients.
3. Persons suffering from dementia and their families should be provided with better human and financial resources
4. Poverty should be identified in vulnerable groups to be helped to get out of the **risk of poverty.** The circle of poverty should be broken.
5. The **Education** system should be revised to create better economic activity and create new job opportunities.
6. Emphasis should be made on low skills of early school leavers who are seeking a job.
7. Long term solutions are need for NEETs.
8. Country wealth should be better distributed in particular for pensioners and low income workers.
9. More empowerment of low earners in order to elevate them from the risk of poverty.
10. There should be more convergence between **employment** **and social policies** .
11. The EU should aim to have a better structured dialogue with citizens. This will help to eliminate situations that could distance the citizens from the aims of the EU.

**Question 2 . Should the European Pillar of social rights address priorities and trends.**

1. Addressing the grey economy. Statistics show that the highest rates in the grey economy are occupied by women.
2. Addressing the issue of part time work as more women than men are employed in this sector of employment
3. Addressing bullying in schools and ensuring that **LGBTI** students and members rights are respected .
4. Improve health service to LGBTI persons.
5. Youths should be better empowered to create job opportunities and to help them create start ups.
6. Youths should be consulted more and action taken on valid points raised by youths.
7. The issue of renting dwellings for youths should be monitored and access to affordable housing facilities and accommodation be given to youths.
8. Addressing corruption at different levels

**Q3 comment on the 20 points of the pillar.**

1. The participative role of civil society organisations to be given more weight in political and economic decisions-making
2. Identifying vulnerable groups, in particular students
3. Active aging to be more incentivised.
4. More participation of adults in Lifelong learning programmes
5. Make cities more friendly for older persons

**Q4 How could the pillar play a special role to foster upward social and economic convergence.**

1. There should be more emphasis on progressive taxation instead of regressive taxation.
2. Application for EU funds made available to organisations to be more user friendly

**Q5 How can the pillar be more operational.**

1. Benchmarking to be introduced so that targets can be more easily identified and reached.
2. Programmes for the integration of inmates of prison to better integrate in society.
3. Children in alternative care should be better monitored .
4. Addressing gender violence based on the Istanbul Convention criteria .
5. Research findings to be disseminated to reach more persons.
6. Linking longevity to increase in pensionable age should not be followed.

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