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## ENVI Committee on long term food security in Europe



On 2 March 2023, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food safety of the European Parliament published an [opinion](#) highlighting the existential threat to European food safety over the long term.

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A reliable food production rests on a rich biodiversity, healthy soils and good conditions for pollinators. Conventional agriculture is putting all these elements under severe stress, compromising the viability of the environmental foundations of the food system. Agriculture must reduce its environmental impact to ensure high production levels in the long term.

**Yet, about 20% of all food produced is wasted along the food chain, which corresponds to 6% of EU greenhouse gas emissions.**

Among other things, the Committee highlights that reducing food waste would be an effective way to decrease food's environmental footprint.

Thus, the Committee calls on the European Commission to:

- Set a binding target of 50% waste reduction by 2030;
- Harmonise date labelling, which is responsible for a significant share of household food waste; and
- Prohibit the destruction of unsold food.

## The fight against poverty and the role of civil society organisations in combatting poverty



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**On 22 March 2023, the Civil Society Group of the European Social and Economic Committee received a special host: Marina Elvira Calderone, Italian Minister for Labour and Social Policies.**

**She explained that Italy has developed a method where social assistance is tailored to the precise needs of the beneficiaries, according to the form of poverty which affects them most.**

Evidence seems to indicate that this method, coupled with close cooperation with civil society, is an effective way to fight poverty and its consequences.

There was then a panel discussion involving Carlos Susias, President of the European Anti-poverty Network in Spain, and Christophe Robert from the Foundation Abbé Pierre.

The discussion revolved around the main policy areas which should be prioritised in fighting poverty, including housing policies and ensuring a minimum income for all: unemployed, pensioners, and workers.

**It was stressed that civil society organisations have an important role, not only in fighting poverty, but also in making it visible to the decision makers.**

# Forum for the Future of Agriculture



The [Forum for the Future of Agriculture](#) is an international event bringing together a wide range of stakeholders of food systems in order to provide an opportunity for discussion around the environmental challenges facing modern agriculture. The 2023 Annual Conference was held in Brussels on 28 March 2023.

Frans Timmermans, Vice-President of the European Commission, made an address which summarises well the overarching message of the Forum: climate change and biodiversity loss are an existential threat to agriculture.

He argued that acting now, including fighting the colossal quantity of food loss and waste, was critical to ensure the long-term resilience of food systems.



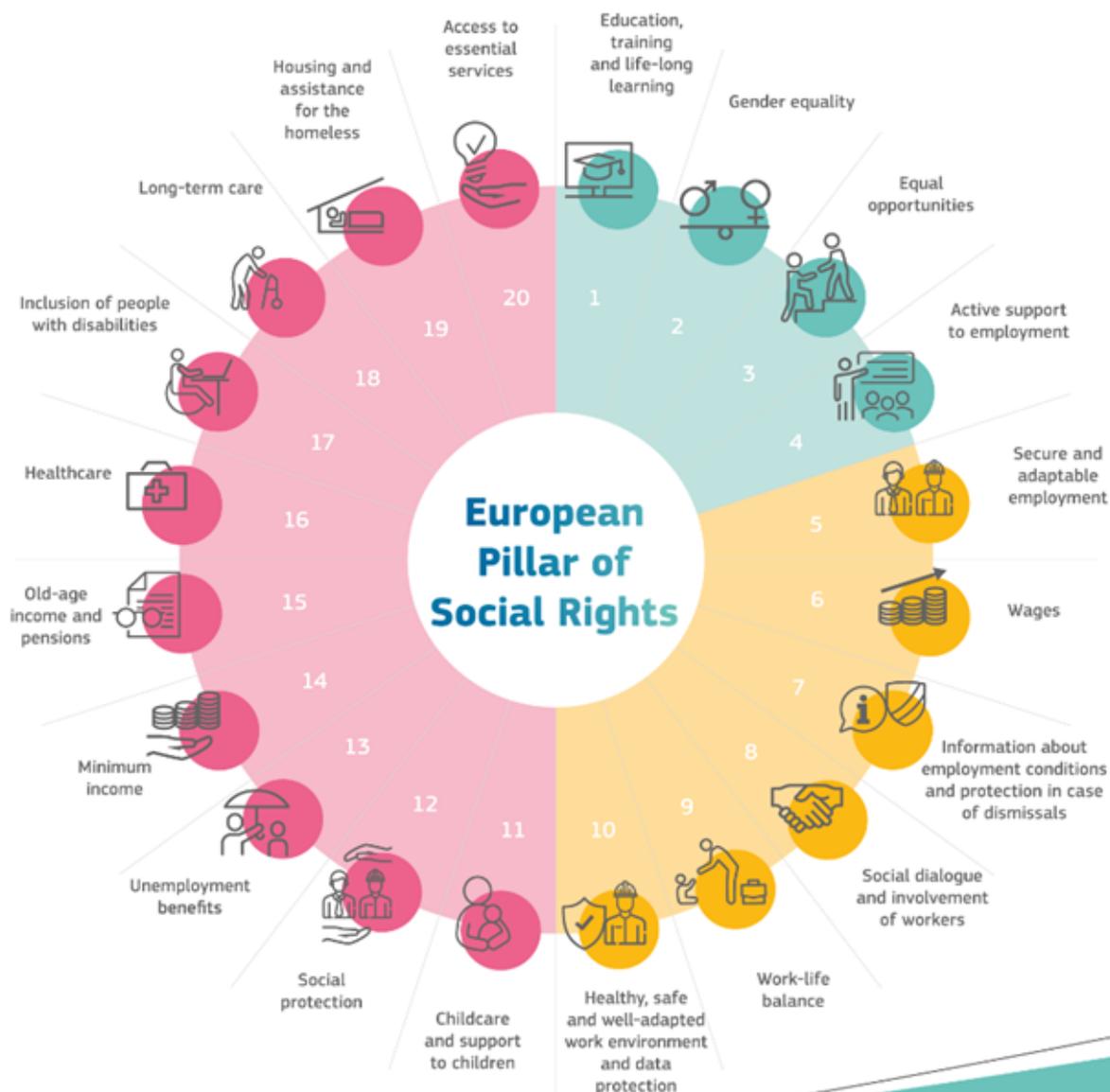
# 2nd anniversary of EPSR Action Plan

The European Pillar of Social Rights is a text proclaimed in 2017 by the Commission, the Parliament and the Council of the EU, at the Gothenburg Summit. It is composed of twenty key principles to guide the EU towards a fair social Europe like gender equality, social dialogue or access to essential services.

The Action Plan sets more precise targets for the EU by 2030 and outlines possible initiatives to be carried out by Member States, local authorities and the civil society.

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## The 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights



#SocialRights



## THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS ACTION PLAN



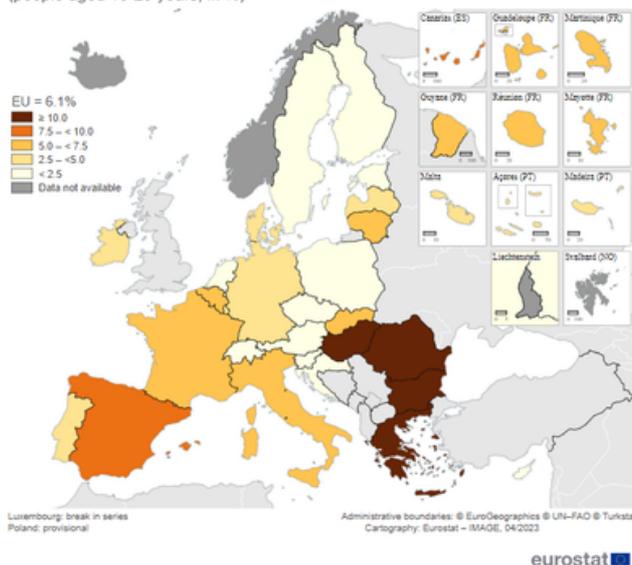
The Plan sets out three main targets:

- 78% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment by 2030;
- 60% of all adults should be participating in training every year by 2030; and
- a reduction of at least 15 million in the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, including at least 5 million children.

As explained by the Commission in a written answer to the European Parliament, Member States have the final responsibility in ensuring that concrete action is taken to meet the headlines target of poverty reduction. However, the EU supports its members through legislation, policy guidance or through specific funding.

# 6% of EU youth were severely materially & socially deprived in 2021

Severe material and social deprivation rate for young people, 2021  
(people aged 15-29 years; in %)



According to [statistics](#) of Eurostat, in the EU in 2021, the severe material and social deprivation rate among young people (aged 15-29 years) was 6.1%.

The highest proportion of young people who were severely materially and socially deprived in 2021 was recorded in Romania (23.1%), followed by Bulgaria (18.7%) and Greece (14.2%).

On the other hand, the proportion was less than 3% in 11 of the 26 EU members with available data: Luxembourg, Poland, Sweden, Cyprus, Czechia, Netherlands, Croatia, Slovenia, Finland, Austria, and Estonia.

# FAO – Global indicators on the costs of healthy diets and how many people can't afford them



On 1 March 2023, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations published the country-by-country details of its extensive [analysis](#) on food prices compared to the income of local inhabitants.

The data is now available on an interactive dashboard and will be regularly updated. A healthy diet is a diet which diversified, nutrient rich and aligned with national recommendations.

**Many interesting conclusions can be made from the available data, among which:**

- The cost of healthy diets is increasing with time: +7% between 2017 and 2020;
- In Europe the average cost of a healthy diet is \$ 3.18 USD per PPP per capita per day;
- In 53 countries for which data is available, more than half of the population cannot afford a healthy diet; and
- Fruits, vegetables, and animal products each account for a similar share of the cost of a healthy diet, around 25%.

# IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Synthesis report 2023

The IPCC is an international group of expert which regularly releases [reports](#) on climate change and related issues.

On 20 March 2023, the IPCC released its Synthesis Report 2023 which summarises the different reports since 2014. The report highlights that food systems have already been negatively affected by climate change, and that the situation is about to get worse. The IPCC states that food production will be affected even in the short term.

**Food production and food security will be affected by climate change, but food systems also have a considerable impact on climate change. Reducing food loss and waste is presented as having a double advantage of increasing food supply while reducing environmental impacts of food production.**



**ipcc**  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON  
climate change



# FAO in University of Ghent: The triggers and drivers of transformation

Lorenzo Giovanni Bellù, senior economist at the FAO, presented the institution's latest report 'The future of food and agriculture: drivers and triggers for information'. The report identifies 18 drivers and outcomes of the agri-food system.

**These drivers reflect the fact that agricultural systems are influenced by external factors over which they have little or no influence (natural disasters, national GDP, geopolitical factors) but also that they affect their environment (climate change, local economy).**

After studying four different scenarios of change, the overarching message of the report is sobering:

**Following today's trajectory will have disastrous consequence. A collapse of the agrifood system is avoidable but it will be costly and requires immediate investments.**



# Roundtable Discussion: Food aid & cost of living crisis in Europe

On 13 April 2023, Eurodiaconia and the Red Cross EU Office co-organised a roundtable on the topic of food aid in this time of crisis with speakers from their organisations and local branches but also from FEBA, the European Parliament and Ms Ivankovic-Knezevic, Director Social Rights and Inclusion from DG EMPL, European Commission.

**The first session focused on input from the network, with Veronika Láchová, CEO of Česká Federace Potravinových Bank elaborating on the impact of the refugees on the Czech Federation of Food Banks as well as their experience with food aid and a call for more flexibility to the EU funding mechanisms in times of crisis.**



The conclusion was unanimous: whilst the need for food aid is on the rise, non-profit organizations providing social services are struggling to increase their operations at the same speed or on the same level.

It was emphasised that what charitable organizations desire is not so much an increase in state support for NGOs, but rather that Member States take action to tackle poverty at its roots. Food aid addresses food insecurity, which is but one of the many symptoms of poverty.



**It was also noted that food insecurity is becoming widespread in new categories of population, like part-time workers or pensioners.**

Enhanced cooperation with managing authorities, including on flexible use of European funds, was evoked as a useful tool towards improving the resilience of food aid in times uncertainty.



## Study supporting the preliminary evaluation of the support provided by ESF/ FEAD under CRII and CRII+

The report assesses the immediate response of the European Social Fund and the European Fund for the Most Deprived to the Covid-19 pandemic. It focuses on the process of reacting to the crisis.

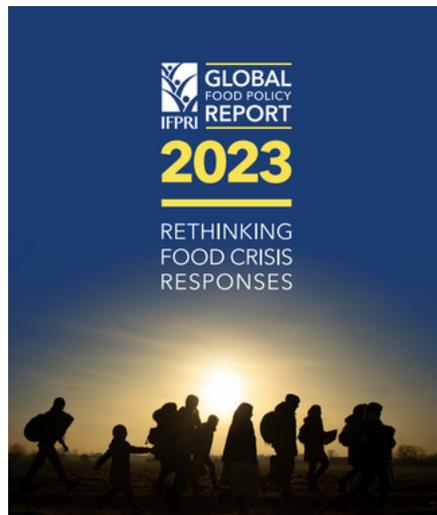
It also takes stock of the operations implemented in the thematic areas of employment, healthcare, social inclusion and education to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 crisis. The report includes lessons learnt on the use and the role of the ESF and FEAD in a crisis context.

# Global Food Policy Report 2023

Rethinking Food Crisis Responses – with this title the International Food Policy Institute (IFPRI) published their [report](#) for 2023.

**The 2023 Global Food Policy Report draws on a growing body of evidence on how diverse policy responses can reduce both the immediate and longer-term impacts of food crises, and improve livelihoods, incomes, and food security and nutrition for the future.**

Drawing on research from IFPRI and other CGIAR centres, it provides evidence-based policy recommendations for governments, donors, and nongovernmental organizations.



## ESF+ in Romania



In Romania, the European Social Fund Plus (EFS+) will soon replace the previous European funds around social issues, like the European Social Fund (ESF) or the Fund for the European Aid of the most Deprived (FEAD).

**The ESF+ can be used in many ways and Romania has chosen to support projects like “servicii comunitare integrate” (integrated community services), a project helping vulnerable Romanians to cope with the cost-of-living crisis and fight poverty. The project provides school counselling, career guidance, community nursing and social services.**

It has helped children to attend school more regularly. The government is planning on scaling up this kind of programmes during the next ESF+ programming period.



European Food Banks Federation asbl - FEBA  
Chaussée de Louvain 775, Brussels 1140, Belgium  
+32 2 538 94 50 / [info@eurofoodbank.org](mailto:info@eurofoodbank.org)



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