

*(English version)*

**Question for written answer E-004931/20  
to the Commission  
Chris MacManus (GUE/NGL)  
(9 September 2020)**

*Subject:* European Court of Auditor's Special Report of September 2020

The European Court of Auditor's Special Report of 3 September 2020 shows how the European Semester and country-specific recommendation processes are failing to achieve the EU's poverty reduction targets. The report states that there was 'no actual progress in the other two forms of poverty, i.e. income poverty and very low work intensity' and shows that as few as 6.9 m people out of a target of 20 million have been lifted out of poverty in recent years.

How will the Commission reorient or reform these processes to focus them on the eradication of poverty?

**Answer given by Mr Schmit on behalf of the European Commission  
(17 November 2020)**

Significant progress has been made in reducing poverty since the 2012 peak of the economic and financial crisis. In 2019, 92.4 million people were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU-27 — 16.3 million fewer compared to 2012 and 10.9 million fewer than the pre-crisis (2008) level.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 outbreak is likely to exacerbate poverty and strain efforts to reduce poverty to the levels set in the EU 2020 strategy.

To improve monitoring and strengthen focus on social issues in economic and reform processes, the Commission has already integrated the European Pillar of Social Rights and its 'Social Scoreboard' indicators into the European Semester, where country-specific recommendations have increasingly addressed employment and social policies.

The 2021 Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy highlighted that fairness remains one of the four key principles to guide the recovery from the crisis and underpin the green and digital transitions.

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (EUR 672.5 billion) will be embedded into the European Semester, including the European Pillar of Social Rights. It will support Member States to emerge stronger from the current crisis and ensure economic and social resilience.

This will add to the resources of the cohesion policy funds, in particular the EUR 86 billion of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), envisaged exclusively for employment, education and social measures. The Commission proposed that Member States allocate at least 25% of their ESF+ resources to social inclusion, at least 2% for the most deprived and 5% to tackle child poverty.

Early next year, the Commission will also put forward an Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights.

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