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## PIE NEWS PROJECT AIMS TO IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS AND PROSPECTS OF PEOPLE IN EUROPE

### Press Release:

In the European Union, more than 122 million people (about 24% of the population) are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. Even after social transfers, 17% of the population remains in such conditions. Among them, 9% of the European population is severely materially deprived - for example, being unable to pay the bills or face unexpected expenses ([Eurostat](#), 2016).

In this context, the PIE News project is building a Collective Awareness Platform, *commonfare.net*, that will enable people in Europe to access information about poverty support measures, share good practices, and being engaged in networking activities. The research project and the digital platform aims to supplement the existing public measures contrasting social conditions of Poverty, lack of Income and unEmployment, but also to promote experiences of Participation, Imagination, and Empowerment among European citizens. The digital platform, and the project itself, are oriented toward fostering the *Commonfare*, a new collaborative form of welfare provision that leverages the wealth produced nowadays by social cooperation to counteract the conditions of precarity and indebtedness many people face.

More specifically, anyone connecting to the platform will also be able to find other people in similar socio-economic situations in their country and elsewhere in Europe. They will be able to exchange stories and struggles, and access mutual



support. The platform will also make information available on existing welfare provisions, like the Croatian Youth for Community initiative, the culturally oriented Ooievaarspas in The Hague, or the “Torno Subito” program in Rome. In the long term, this new project hopes to improve conditions for the more than 1 million European people who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

How will the platform work? Imagine an unemployed single mother, Helena, living in the Netherlands. Because she has no access to childcare, her ability to work, volunteer, or develop herself through education or social engagement is limited. Using *commonfare.net*, Helena finds other women in the same situation in her city. Together, inspired by an Italian experience they see on the *commonfare.net*, they organize a self-managed, communal childcare arrangement. By coming together in this way, Helena and the other women in the childcare cooperative have been able to take more control over their own lives.

In order to reach out to a wide and the most diverse range of potential users, the project aims to involve in its activities those organizations that help people in vulnerable conditions. Interesting experiences in this regard are the Household Appliances Scheme provided by the city of Amsterdam, which supports low-income citizens to replace broken domestic appliances such as stove, refrigerator or washing machine. A similar initiative is undertaken by the Italian housing cooperative “Inventare l’abitare”, which took up the issues advanced by the social movements for the “right to housing” and the many house occupations in the city of Rome in order to promote the recovery of old abandoned buildings and their re-design with residential purposes.

Potential users or people interested in the development of the may come also from those networks and experiences committed to promoting good practices within local communities. Engaging examples in this respect are Macao – an independent artistic, cultural, and research center based in Milan, committed to fostering new forms of organization and technological solutions along with political participation – and Guerrilla Kitchen – a grassroots movement based in Amsterdam which campaigns against food waste by preparing delicious dishes of all kinds for the people of Amsterdam thanks to the donations of from suppliers and common



citizens. In parallel, the Croatian ZMAG is an NGO promoting the “Recycled Estate” educational activities, based on real life project on renewable energy and energy efficiency, permaculture and eco-systems design, organic agriculture and urban gardening.

The platform will initially work in three countries: Croatia, Italy, and the Netherlands, but the team hopes to expand the platform to all other European countries. Initial launch is expected in Spring 2017. More information about the project is available at [www.pieproject.eu](http://www.pieproject.eu)

**About PIE News** - The PIE News project aims at improving conditions for the “new poor”: that 25% and rising of the European population composed of precarious workers, the working poor, people unprotected by safety nets, and young people who are no longer in the education system and experience difficulties in finding a job. In order to cope with these conditions, the project aims to promote experiences of Participation, Imagination, and Empowerment among European citizens.

More information at [www.pieproject.eu](http://www.pieproject.eu)

Pictures available at: [www.facebook.com/PieNewscommonfare/photos](https://www.facebook.com/PieNewscommonfare/photos)

**Contacts** - The PIE News Team is available to answer any questions, and can be contacted by e-mail ([info@commonfare.net](mailto:info@commonfare.net)).

**About the Project Pilots** - The project will be developed by leveraging existing collaboration with local communities: the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb, Croatia; Basic Income Network Italy in Milan and Rome; and Museu da Crise in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague, in the Netherlands.

**About the Consortium** - The project is being undertaken by an international team, comprising 8 organizations from 5 different countries, and it is funded by the European Commission Horizon 2020 programme. The team comprises the Abertay University (United Kingdom), the Basic Income Network Italy, the Centre for Peace Studies (Croatia), CREATE-NET (Italy), Dyne.org (the Netherlands), Madeira



Interactive Technologies Institute (Portugal), Museu da Crise (The Netherlands) and the University of Trento (Italy, Project Coordinator).

**About Horizon2020** - This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 687922. Horizon 2020 is the main EU Research and Innovation programme with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020).

### **Sources**

Eurostat (March 2016). Europe 2020 indicators - poverty and social exclusion.  
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