

## Annex 3

# Key Findings from the Breakout Rooms

### Group 1 – Facilitated by Rimgailė Baltutė

- Ensuring a fair ecological transition is a key challenge, as climate policies must not leave people in poverty behind.
- Demand for aid is increasing while donations are decreasing, putting significant pressure on support systems.
- ESF+ funding for material deprivation should be increased to 10%, ensuring sufficient resources for those in need.
- Food support remains a priority, but it must be integrated with housing policies, as both are essential to combating poverty.
- Different countries take different approaches, such as Spain prioritising families with children due to rising child poverty, highlighting the need for targeted resource allocation.
- Breaking the cycle of poverty requires investment in education and basic skills, including literacy and digital literacy, to improve access to jobs and social participation.
- Smaller NGOs must have better access to ESF+ funds, as they often work directly with people in need but face administrative barriers.
- Civil society plays a crucial role, and stronger national-level implementation is necessary to ensure policies effectively reach vulnerable populations.

### Group 2 – Facilitated by Angela Frigo

- Poverty is a complex issue that requires a multidimensional approach, and the EU APS should be aligned with the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan.
- Energy poverty and the digital divide were identified as key challenges, with access to technology becoming increasingly essential for employment and education.
- The political landscape is becoming more divisive, affecting how poverty and social support policies are framed and implemented.
- Active participation of people experiencing poverty is crucial, ensuring that policies are designed with those affected, not just for them.
- Future challenges include evolving skill requirements and the role of technology in education and employment, highlighting the need for stronger alignment between education systems and the labour market.
- Income support is important, but it must be combined with access to services and labour market opportunities, ensuring a comprehensive approach to social inclusion.
- The working poor are an emerging at-risk group, requiring targeted interventions to ensure that employment provides a pathway out of poverty.
- There is still a mismatch between material deprivation policies and active inclusion models, and more effort is needed to align social assistance with long-term empowerment strategies.

### Group 3 – Facilitated by Aistė Adomavičienė

- Innovative and collective approaches are needed to effectively tackle poverty, ensuring that social support systems are more accessible.
- Access to counselling services should be expanded, as many individuals face barriers in understanding and applying for available support.
- Fighting the non-take-up of benefits is crucial, with a need for resources and technology-driven solutions to help more people access assistance.
- Housing costs directly impact food poverty, as rising rents force low-income households to cut back on food expenses, highlighting the interconnection between housing and basic needs.
- Poverty should be addressed through a multidimensional approach, ensuring that housing, wages, and access to essential services are considered together.

- In-work poverty must be tackled, ensuring that employment provides stable and sufficient income rather than keeping workers in precarious conditions.
- The EU APS must address the root causes of poverty, focusing on prevention rather than short-term relief.
- Healthy food should be recognised as a right, and its availability must be connected to other fundamental rights, such as decent housing and fair wages.
- Some groups remain invisible in social protection systems, particularly undocumented migrants, who require inclusive policy solutions.
- Minimum income schemes should be adequate and linked to living wages, ensuring that people can transition from financial assistance to stable employment.