

# OurVoices 2017



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**“Our Voices 2017”** is a project aiming to deepen discussions on the future of Europe, underlining the idea of an inclusive social Europe, which is emphasized in the [European Social Charter](#) (ESC) and the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) (CFR). It is to enhance the participation of people who are living in social exclusion to be in these debates.

The relevance of the project is related to the increasing distance from the European Union Institutions which many of the population in different European countries are experiencing, especially among those who live in poverty. It is essential to open a process in which people struggling with poverty and social exclusion can discuss the social and human dimension of the European Union construction. In this way their contribution is made to a better promotion of two fundamental European agreements (ESC and CFR).

The general aim of the project is to discuss the future Social Policy of Europe, by stimulating the participation of people living in vulnerable situations. Doing so, this project will contribute to reducing the processes which put the cohesion of the EU at a distance from people.

#### **The objectives of “Our Voices 2017” are:**

- 1) To promote a participatory process on EU social principles including people living in social exclusion and/or poverty.
- 2) To spread the content of the CFR and the ESC together with the work of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and the European Committee of Social Rights.
- 3) To produce collaborative knowledge on social difficulties and policies in EU countries as well as proposals to overcome them.
- 4) To develop effective proposals to build a more inclusive Europe for everyone.

In order to achieve these goals various participatory processes will be developed by the different partners of the project. The processes will address the guarantee of the social and economic rights in the EU. Each partner will choose a specific field to work on, related to certain articles of the CFR and/or the ESC.

There are mainly two target groups: The first is formed by EU citizens who are affected by social exclusion and poverty. The second includes professionals and volunteers from Local Authorities and Civil Society Organisations. This project will involve 50 to 75 participants from each country. A European gathering will be the momentum of this process with 50 participants.

# 3 Countries - 4 Partners

## ATD Cuarto Mundo – Spain – [www.atdcuartomundo.es](http://www.atdcuartomundo.es)

MOVIMIENTO ATD CUARTO MUNDO ESPAÑA  
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ATD Spain will assume the coordinating role of the project. It has experience coordinating with other organisations at national level and wants to make this step at international level with other associated organisations. ATD Spain will also assume the administrative and financial management of the project.

## ATD Poland – [www.atd.org.pl](http://www.atd.org.pl)



ATD Poland is expected to contribute in this project at national by developing all the participatory activities and also having a leading role at the last stage of the project by coordinating the production of the final report. This will involve the reading and selecting of the content and key issues offered by all partners. In addition a summary of the main ideas in a written document will be made, that takes into account the differences arising from the context and culture of each country involved.

## ATD Ireland – [www.atdireland.ie](http://www.atdireland.ie)

ATD Ireland will organise local meetings, and to reach and include citizens facing poverty who will also participate in the European gatherings. Because of its involvement in the “Irish Economic, Social & Cultural Rights Initiative”, its specific contribution will be to share expertise and animation tools to better understand the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Social Charter. At the same time it will make links with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and the Council of Europe Committee of Social Rights. ATD Ireland will take leadership in the preparation of the plenary gathering in spring 2017 and for the public communication about the project via Facebook and Twitter.



## Andecha – [www.equipoandecha.org](http://www.equipoandecha.org)

Andecha works to provide tools for the empowerment and promotion of community involvement to analyse and resolve its own concerns. Andecha implements participatory processes at various levels and community work projects which bring together excluded groups, local authorities and civil organisations. Andecha is expected to contribute to this project by facilitating technical support and specialised knowledge on working methods and project planning.



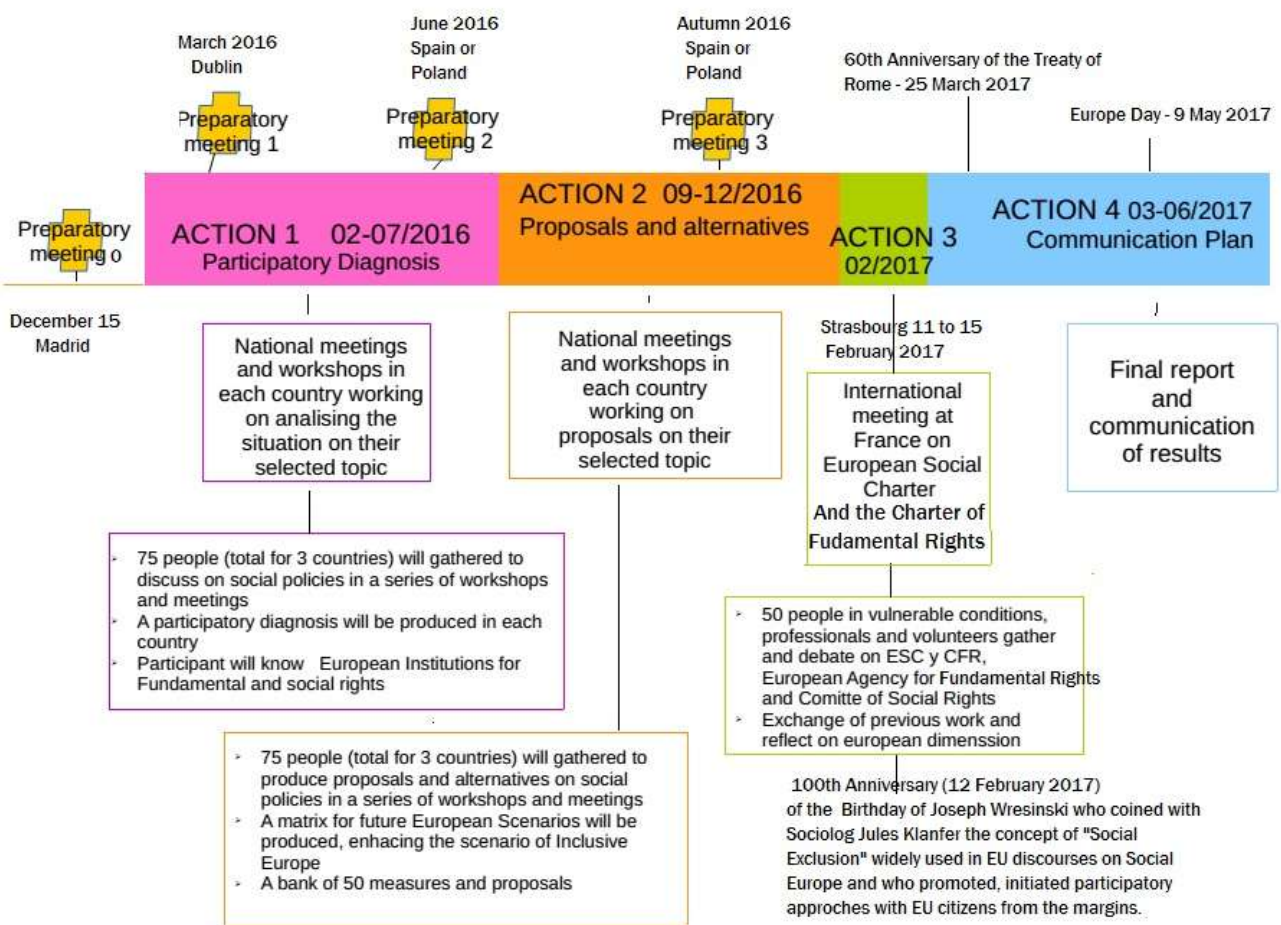
Andechas members will contribute by designing the techniques to be implemented in the process of the project. They will facilitate various activities such as the workshops, the meetings and work events, as well as provide capacity building tools to enhance the abilities of the partners involved in the project through methodologies and participation strategies. Also, Andecha will have a leading role in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the project. It will be contributing with technical tools, knowledge and supervision of all the technical aspects of the work carried out by the grass roots organisations and those from the civil society who are involved. Andecha will produce concrete outputs (diagnosis, proposals, conclusions) These could become a toolkit to create spaces where it would be possible for people from diverse social backgrounds to share ideas and build common discourses on European cohesion, assigning them an equal value in society.

# The work programme

The working methods of the project are inspired by the approaches taken in “Participative Action Investigation”, “People's University” and “Merging of Knowledge” which are promoted by Andecha and ATD teams. The participative methodologies implemented allow people, through a process of reflection and action, to become involved in the design and evaluation of social policies.

To guarantee the maximum participation of citizens in social exclusion and to raise the sense of belonging to the UE within this project, the partners will address the social policies which citizens are more worried about.

To do this, the project will develop 4 actions which will be carried out simultaneously in the 3 participating countries.



## Action 1 – February to September 2016

Partners will organise local meetings and workshops focused on the analysis of some existing European policies, human rights framework or initiatives (as the “Turin Processus” lead by the Council of Europe) This will be in connection with the theme chosen by the people involved in their country. Discussions could be held on minimum income / the guarantee of human rights / existing in marginal conditions and other issues, which identifies the problems, needs and difficulties encountered by people experiencing social exclusion.

## Action 2 – September 2016 to January 2017

Partners will organise local meetings and workshops focused on the design of the proposals and the alternatives to some existing European policies or human rights framework in connection with the theme chosen by the people involved in their own country.

## Action 3 – February or March 2017 – European Plenary Meeting in France

### European meeting "Towards a renewed implementation of the European Social Charter and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights".

A plenary meeting will take place in France (Strasbourg or Paris )with all the partners bringing together 50 project participants and guests. It will involve the stakeholders responsible for the promotion and implementation of the ESC, the "Turin Processus" and the CFR. Debates (open to the public or limited to the project participants) will reflect on the future of Social Europe The starting point will be the work done in each country during action 1 and 2. The proposals and alternatives prepared by citizens from each country , living in social exclusion and/or poverty ,will be discussed in plenary sessions and workshops.

The date and venue of the plenary meeting could be Strasbourg from 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017. This would enable the final plenary meeting to include:

- Marking publicly the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Joseph Wresinski on 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017 with friends at the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and from the Alsace Region.
- Organising with MEPs a special meeting of the European Parliament Intergroup on Poverty and Human Rights.
- Meeting the team responsible for the promotion of the European Social Charter at the Council of Europe.

To be able to organise the final meeting in Strasbourg, project partners need to find additional funding (from €5,000 to €8,000 to cover extra transport and accommodation costs for the 50 participants). Main funding by the EU programme "Europe for Citizens" does not enable this special budget to be covered.

## Action 4 – March to June 2017



Partners will run events in their countries and media campaigns to publicise the project's results and learnings to: the general public, people living in poverty and social exclusion, anti-poverty and citizens organisations, local, national and European authorities. This will occur particularly in the days close to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rome Treaty **25<sup>th</sup> March 2017** and the time around 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017–Europe Day and the anniversary of the [Declaration made by Robert Schuman](#) on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1950)





## And during action 1 and action 2, three European exchange and preparatory meetings:

To meet the “participatory” challenge, the adequate collaboration and the cohesion of the project, partners will meet 3 times for preparatory meetings and “Voices exchanges”.

The aims of these meetings are:

- to set a common strategy, evaluation and plan.
- to discover and experiment together the “participatory” processes developed by each partner involved

In each country the real experience of the participatory methodologies will offer the development of a discussion process which allows the partners to improve their own approaches. The participation of each citizen will be ensured offering their different types of knowledge and social abilities.

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The “Our Voices 2017” project is one of the 17 actions planned by ATD Ireland in 2017 as part of a one year global campaign to make sure that we are on track to reach the 17 Global Goals by 2030, leaving no one behind in a world free from extreme poverty.



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The Foundation ATD (Paris, France) is also supporting the project.



**Partners of the project are still looking for sponsors and additional grants to complete the budget of the project and especially to cover the costs of the European meeting in Strasbourg in February 2017.**