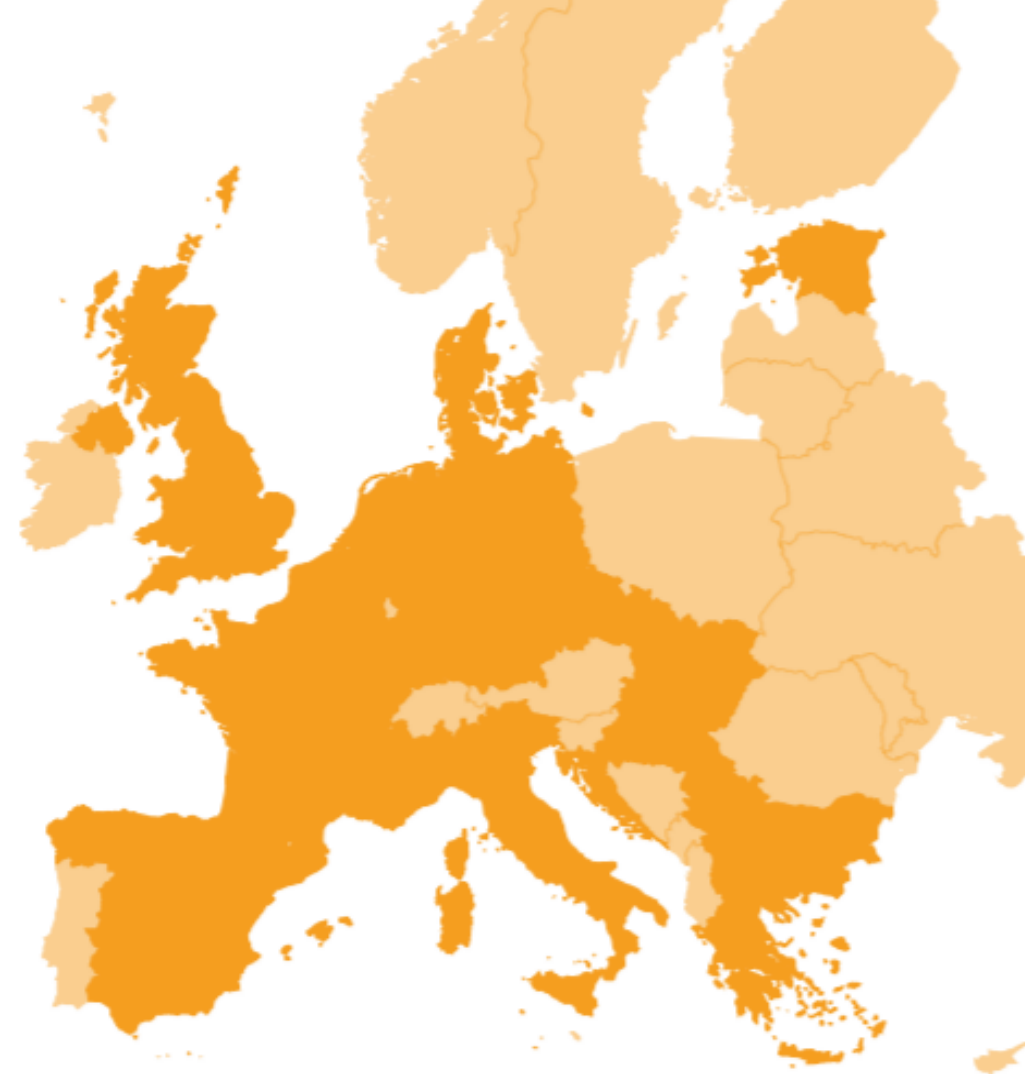


# SOCIAL RIGHTS MONITOR 2020

## EUROPEAN TRENDS



**solidar**



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# What is the Social Rights Monitor?

- Monitors social and civic rights from the perspective of civil society
  - Equal opportunities and fair working conditions
  - Social protection and inclusion
  - Civic space
  - + The socioeconomic effects of Covid-19
- Highlighting good practices from civil society
- Complements the European Semester
- Based on observations from SOLIDAR's National Strategy Groups

# Covering 17 European countries

## EU:

- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czechia
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France

- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Slovakia
- Spain
- the Netherlands

## Non-EU:

- Serbia
- North Macedonia
- The United Kingdom

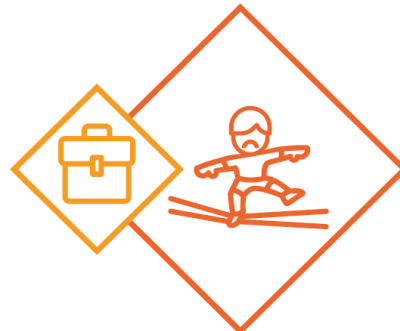
# What are National Strategy Groups?

17 groups coordinated by a SOLIDAR member or partner, gathering experts, trade union representatives, NGOs, etc.



# Equal opportunities and fair working conditions

- Positive development at the beginning of the year, often linked to increasing employment:
  - Lower AROPE and in-work-poverty rates
  - Newly increased minimum wages in Spain, Czechia, Hungary and Slovakia.
- BUT National Strategy Groups are concerned by
  - The (long-term) effects of Covid-19
  - Growing income inequalities
  - More precarious work



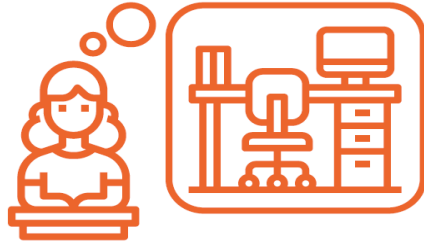
# Gender equality



- Progress for gender equality is slow
  - EU-28 gender equality index went from 67.4 in 2019 to 67.9 in 2020
  - Improvement in some countries with better childcare provisions and pay transparency
  - National Strategy Groups lament the lack of an overarching framework in most countries
- Gender pay gap: from 17.1% in 2010 to 15% in 2018
  - Large differences between countries: 1.4% in Luxembourg vs 21.8% in Estonia
  - Employment gap: 1.6% in Lithuania vs 21.3% in North Macedonia
  - Segregated workforce: e.g. women in Denmark are overrepresented in lower paid public jobs



# Education



- Number of early school leavers down from 14.2% in 2009 to 10.3% in 2019
  - National strategy groups point out that (Roma and low-income students) are still more likely to leave school without a diploma
- Remote learning is a challenge for low-income families due to lack of equipment and a quiet space to study
- Sudden need for remote working has exposed a lack of digital skills among Europeans

# Social protection and inclusion

- Government expenditure on social spending (% of GDP) in decline since 2013
  - Some countries have even lowered the employer's contribution (e.g. Hungary, Greece)
- Hardest hit sectors (e.g. hospitality and tourism) often employ a relatively large share of precarious workers and people from vulnerable groups such as women, youths and migrants.
  - Precarious contracts leave them under-protected against unemployment and sickness





# Housing

- Need for more affordable and adequate housing:
  - 10.1% of European households spend over 40% of their total disposable income on housing
  - Lack of sufficient social housing (e.g. in the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders))



# Impact of Covid-19



- Healthcare: The pandemic has in many countries been met by weakened healthcare systems after more than a decade of cuts and austerity. Large regional disparities.
- Social rights under pressure, existing inequalities are exacerbated
  - Income & job security
  - Education
  - Access to healthcare and essential services
- Civic freedoms: Limits on peaceful assembly, distrust of media

# Civic Space

- Strong limitations on freedom of assembly due to Covid-19, compared to often more lenient measures for commercial enterprises
- Undermining of Social Dialogue (e.g. France)
- Attacks on CSOs, especially those working with migrants (reports from Greece, Hungary, Croatia and Bulgaria)
- Attacks on journalists and the media (e.g. The Netherlands)



# We thank you!



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# Social Rights Monitor 2020 EU trends out now!

All country monitors will be out soon, keep an eye on our website!