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International Day for Eradication of Poverty

Renewed focus needed

Green MEP for London, **Jean Lambert** has marked the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty by calling on governments across Europe to prioritise the alleviation of poverty over excessive and severe austerity measures.

Jean's call coincides with the First Annual Convention of the European Platform against Poverty and Social exclusion, hosted by the Polish Presidency, which will review the progress made towards the EU-wide target of reducing poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million by 2020.

A key commitment in the EU 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the European Platform sets out a number of actions intended to help reach the 20 million target, including improved access to work and social security, better use of EU Funds to support social inclusion and the creation of new partnerships between the public and private sector.

Speaking ahead of the conference, Jean said:

"It is absolutely essential that in these times of economic hardship, governments continue to support their most vulnerable rather than blindly following so called 'austerity measures'. Rather than cutting national debt and repairing finances, severe spending cuts can often have the opposite effect, gutting essential social security services, increasing unemployment and disproportionately hitting those most in need.

"Despite making a commitment to reduce poverty by 20 million by 2020, recent figures show that almost 80 million, or 17 per cent, of the EU population are still at risk of poverty. If Europe is to prove that it is serious about committing poverty to history, then this target must be backed by robust, inclusive policies which promote an active labour market, quality public services and a basic income which allows people to live in dignity. We must emerge from this financial crisis transformed, looking to a different future. This will only happen if Member States work together in the same direction for the same goal."

- [View the statement from from Jean Lambert](#)

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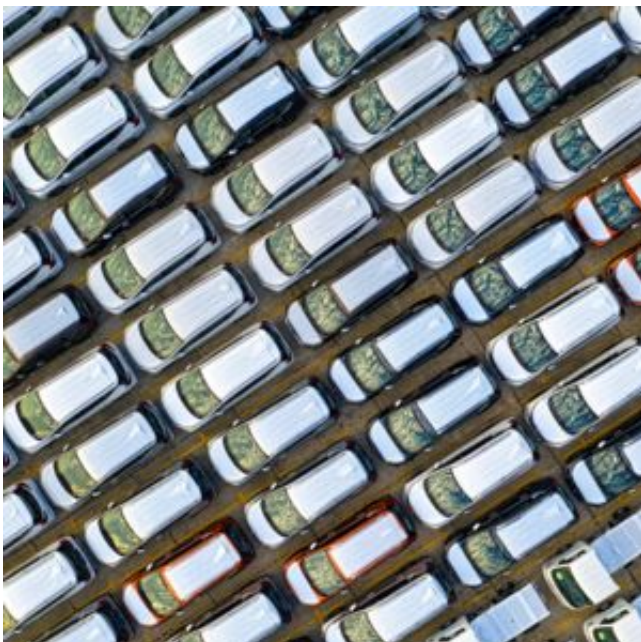


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Jean Lambert

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Jean Lambert

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