



ADDRESSING POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE EU

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Basis for this paper

- This paper is based on 10 pieces of research conducted by *Social Justice Ireland* in recent years several of which addressed the challenges of poverty and unemployment in the EU.
- The most recent of these studies is titled: **Europe: The Excluded Suffer while Europe Stagnates** may be accessed at:
www.socialjustice.ie

Outline

- Current situation
- Conclusions
- Recommendations



WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Poverty

- 23.7% - 119 million people in poverty/social exclusion
- 86 million in income poverty (17.3%)
- Great divergences between countries

Employment and unemployment

- Growing numbers employed
- BUT
 - 21million unemployed (8.2%)
 - 11 million long-term unemployed
 - Working poor numbers rising (9.6%)
 - Youth unemployment very high (4.6m – 18.6%)

Related issues

- Education
- Health
- Taxation



CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions (1)

- Traditional approaches NOT working
- Poverty persisting
- Unemployment persisting
- Major groups at risk
- Economic issues prioritised over social.

Conclusions (2)

- Great differences between and within European countries
- Risks of a breakdown in social cohesion & social contract
- New approaches needed on income, work and participation



RECOMMENDATIONS

To UN/EU and institutions (1)

Issue	Policy
1. Policy Coherence	Ensure all policies (especially economic & participation) are consistent with SDGs
2. New social contract	Develop a new social contract more appropriate for 21 st century
3. Work	Recognise ALL work (not just paid employment) as meaningful.
4. Income	Move towards a Universal Basic Income System.
5. Minimum standards	Prioritise achieving minimum social protection standards

To UN/EU and institutions (2)

Issue	Policy
6. Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inappropriate governance?- Engage meaningfully with stakeholders
7. Child poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Targeted action needed- Always requires addressing family pov.
8. Youth unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Youth guarantee programmes- More resources needed
9. Social econ/ life-long learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support social economy initiatives- Promote life-long learning
10. Human rights strategy	Promote human rights in the areas of income and work

To national/regional govts(1)

Issue	Policy
1. Investment	Prioritise Investment in job-intensive areas energy/health/social care/education
2. Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Should support unemployed people- Should NOT increase insecurity
3. Welfare systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- More resilient systems required- Equal access / social cohesion
4. Low pay	Support development of a LIVING wage rather than a minimum wage
5. Taxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Develop sustainable approaches- Protect low income groups

To national/regional govts(2)

Issue	Policy
6. Tax evasion	Promote fair tax systems by tackling tax evasion and the grey economy
7. Employer of last resort	Given reduction in full-time well paid jobs Government could consider this approach
8. Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engage with key stakeholders- Social dialogue should include ALL sectors of society
9. Poverty-proofing	All Government decisions should be subject to a poverty-proofing process
10. Social investment	Promote social investment aspects of government policies to fund measures that promote social cohesion

“Human destiny is a
choice not a chance”

- Selim Jahan

UN Human Development Report 2015