

Newsletter

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Together
Against
Poverty



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The paper has been prepared as a scientific monograph consisting of **four chapters**. The **first** one is devoted to theoretical approach to poverty and social exclusion, especially their definitions in the literature of the subject. The second issue discussed is the presentation of existing data on the subject in six countries i.e. Estonia, Spain, Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Italy. These figures are primarily representing an overall demographic and social situation in each country and are a summary of statistical data and the existing research on poverty and social exclusion (so-called review of the literature).

The **second chapter** presents the research methodology, including research objectives, hypotheses, variables and the research tool - an in-depth interview questionnaire with a survey. The chapter also provides details on the research in individual country and discusses the socio-demographic results of the study. It's worth mentioning that in each country at least 90 interviews were conducted (in-depth plus the survey part), which served as the basis for this paper.

The **third chapter** of the monograph is devoted to the results of study conducted among the people affected, and at risk of, poverty and social exclusion. Included are descriptions of the economic situation of the respondents in each country, how they function in the society and the summary of the survey responses of the interviewed. In such a way, in addition to general answers, it was possible to obtain tangible results on their financial situation and ways of coping with life difficulties they face.

The last, **fourth chapter**, presents ways of prevention and exiting the state of poverty and social exclusion. It is based on information provided by the participants of the interviews, it includes evaluation of operation and change suggestions to the existing social assistance systems and it also includes evaluation of interviewees' entrepreneurial skills and discusses the options for possible self-employment. The conclusions present the summary of observed patterns which might be useful in the independent work of other researchers.



The publication will be available in digital and paper form in August.

ESTONIA: THERE IS LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR UNEMPLOYED TO START OWN BUSINESSES

Pavel Smulski, MITRA NGO president

Within the framework of the project: "TAP - Together against poverty", 10 representatives of social aid and assistance institutions were interviewed in Estonia and then analysed.

There were 7 respondents representing Department of unemployment that provides trainings to prepare people to labor market, internships on working places, working clubs. They also provide services for disabled people who need assistants, special tools and support to find jobs. Two respondents mentioned that they do career advising.

One respondent mentioned that the role of Department of unemployment is big "because many people are our clients and we help them to find jobs. I am specialist in career information and work with database to help people create own CV, to prepare to interview and find information about job opportunities. I work with groups and also with individuals." One respondent from the School of Economics answered that "my colleagues teach unemployed people how to write business plans and how to apply for financial support to EAS (Estonian Department for Development)." The representative of the School of Economics develops and provides trainings in the field of entrepreneurship skill development for the poor and socially excluded people and for the risk groups. One respondent from the Tallinn City Council doesn't provide regular services but helps individual poor people. One respondent representing private psychological company said that they provide psychological trainings. All interviewed people could enumerate examples of tasks performed by social security and assistance institutions.



Cooperation with the institutions in order to combat poverty and social exclusion, according to the respondents involves: interagency cooperation which is still very weak, but the Department of unemployment sometimes cooperates with local municipalities and social departments, Red Cross, soup kitchens. There were also mentioned initiatives of civic society, religious organisations, second hand clothes, donations and food bank. Several respondents were not aware of multiagency cooperation.



The main barriers in the work against poverty and social exclusion indicated by the respondents are: limited financial resources for unemployed who want to start own businesses, some people can not attend workshops, long term unemployment and alcoholism of some clients. There were mentioned people who have no any income, drug abusing people, bad living conditions. Many people make guilty themselves and agreed with their status as unemployed and socially excluded. Some clients experience problems to get social security services and don't have enough continuation and sustainability of these services.

Photo: Leonid Smulskiy

Department of unemployment provides trainings to prepare people to labor market, internships on working places and provide career advising.

From Thursday 14th to Monday 18th Vol.To, in collaboration with CSVnet - The National Coordination Network for Voluntary Service Centres, participated at the Turin International Book Fair. This Fair is the biggest in Italy and one of the more important in Europe, among its stand Vol.To organized several meetings about Volunteering, welfare and third sector inviting politicians and other Volunteer Centre representative. More than 160 publications were exposed at the stand, some in print, many version in e-books, 20 service centres representing 10 Italian regions (Abruzzo, Calabria, Emilia-Romagna, Marche, Lombardia, Piemonte, Sardegna, Sicilia, Toscana, Veneto). TAP project was displayed on the main desk and the staff of Vol.To gave information to the people interested, the project's objectives and the results achieved so far were presented on to people during short speeches along the fairs.



From March to July 2015 Vol.To and the other partners are working on data collection and analysis for the drafting of the final report on the operational models of welfare. The final result are going to be available soon.



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EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO GETTING PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY – DO WE TRULY MEAN IT?

Maria Kovacs, CILSDGC

In the last three months, we have been busy processing and analysing the data we have collected from policy-makers in the field of social assistance. From the perspective of educationalists, this has been a very enriching period, full of learning about a field that is new to us. To understand what precisely the policy-makers we interviewed earlier in the project were saying, we had to read relevant policy documents (laws, government decisions, strategies, etc.) that define the modus operandi especially of the public institutions. This in itself has been a gain.

However, what I value most as a finding from data analysis is that – just like us, educationalists – most of our respondents as well appear to believe that education is the key to getting people out of poverty. In response to the question ‘Which of the services provided for the poor and socially excluded people and people at risk are the most effective?’, they respond: ensuring access to education and supporting children them to stay in school (with the help of e.g. school mediator); educating the family how to budget, what the value of work is, what effect poverty has on their children; empower the poor to make their voices heard in community matters (which to me is synonymous with education); train the adults to have the skills needed on the job market, assist them to find and keep a job, educate/ train the social workers to better support families in poverty, to identify integrated, comprehensive solutions to their problems ... If all these are seemingly so widely accepted measures as effective practices of tackling poverty, why is it that the ‘minimum 6% of the GDP for education’, as stated in the 2011 Education Law, is ‘an unrealistic claim’, according to the Romanian minister of education (as quoted by the Mediafax news agency on 24 Nov 2014)?



Most of our respondents appear to believe that education is the key to getting people out of poverty.



After the interviews with those who are clearly in a situation where it is difficult to deal with poverty, we as Leido have watched emphatically the media. The aim was to see what the position of young people is in our society. Reports from other countries such as Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal, show that there is a 'lost generation' emerging, so that for those who have graduated in the last few years and left school, it will be very difficult to make their life successful. Will this lead to a generation of 'professional unemployed people'? Should it get better with the economy for some time, there will be plenty of young people with a recent diploma ready to fill in the new jobs. In the Netherlands, youth unemployment is not so visible, although it is clear that there are few permanent jobs with a decent size and with sufficient income to live independently.

Seminar for students

On May 8, we held a seminar in cooperation with The Hague University for 130 students. It was found that young people in the Netherlands are still optimistic about their future, but as showed by a presentation of an Associate Professor of the University there is no reason for this, according to the statistics. He therefore called for a different approach 'when you come out of school'. Accept a small job and start your own business if possible – as a hybrid form of implementation of the first phase of your life.



LifeManagement

All this ties in with the EBC*L career program LifeManagement of the European organization EBC*L, which has been recently developed. Within our organization, we believe that the approach used for this program can be very useful for young people and also older people who want to give their career a particular interpretation. In the next part of the project, we want to give this program a place in the workshops that are necessary for our target groups.

On <http://www.ebcl.at/lifemanagement/> you find more information about the program.

Seminar in The Hague, 8 May 2015

In addition to that, it remains important to focus at an early stage on the possibilities with a diploma and whether it is convenient to look for jobs where working and learning can be combined. The undersigned emphasized in his introduction that this can be learned from good practices from other countries, in a way that young people can try to give a good boost to their career. This also included the observation that young people in the Netherlands have a relatively good position in our society, looking at the countries with very high unemployment rates - but with the warning that too much optimism should not lead to complacency.



NEWS FROM CECE

Nearly 13 million people are at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Spain – 27.3 percent of the population, or almost one in three people – according to research released on Tuesday by the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), a coalition of NGOs, grassroots groups and European organizations. The Spanish numbers, which reflect social reality in 2013, make up part of a report on the evolution of social vulnerability between 2009 and 2013, the worst years of the economic crisis. The study was based on official figures released by the Spanish INE statistics bureau and other organizations.



Within the framework of the project: "TAP - Together against poverty", in days from November 1, 2014, to March 31, 2015, 10 representatives of social aid and assistance institutions were interviewed. The study was to diagnose the social security model. In Spain who uses the services are: Unemployed people, Families with many children (3 and above), People with low skills or low level of education, People with low income. The main services that are currently provided for poor and socially excluded people at risk in Spain are: financial aid, counseling and workshops, NGOs remain as the most active agents fighting against such problems. The general opinion of the Spanish population regarding this matter is that the most effective services

provided for the poor and socially excluded people and people at risk is the education and psychological support and help provided in the employment seeking process.

Also we conducted a survey related to Poverty in Spain where the target was a 15 people group that were currently going through a difficult economic situation: In conclusion to this questionnaire we can say that most of them used to have a better economic situation back on 2009 and that their expectation regarding the future is to find a job that can provide them with enough incomes to take care of their family and themselves.

Both surveys were conducted by Aurora Gómez García, Job Technical Senara Foundation and Margarita Morales Sánchez, currently project director of the Senara Foundation.

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