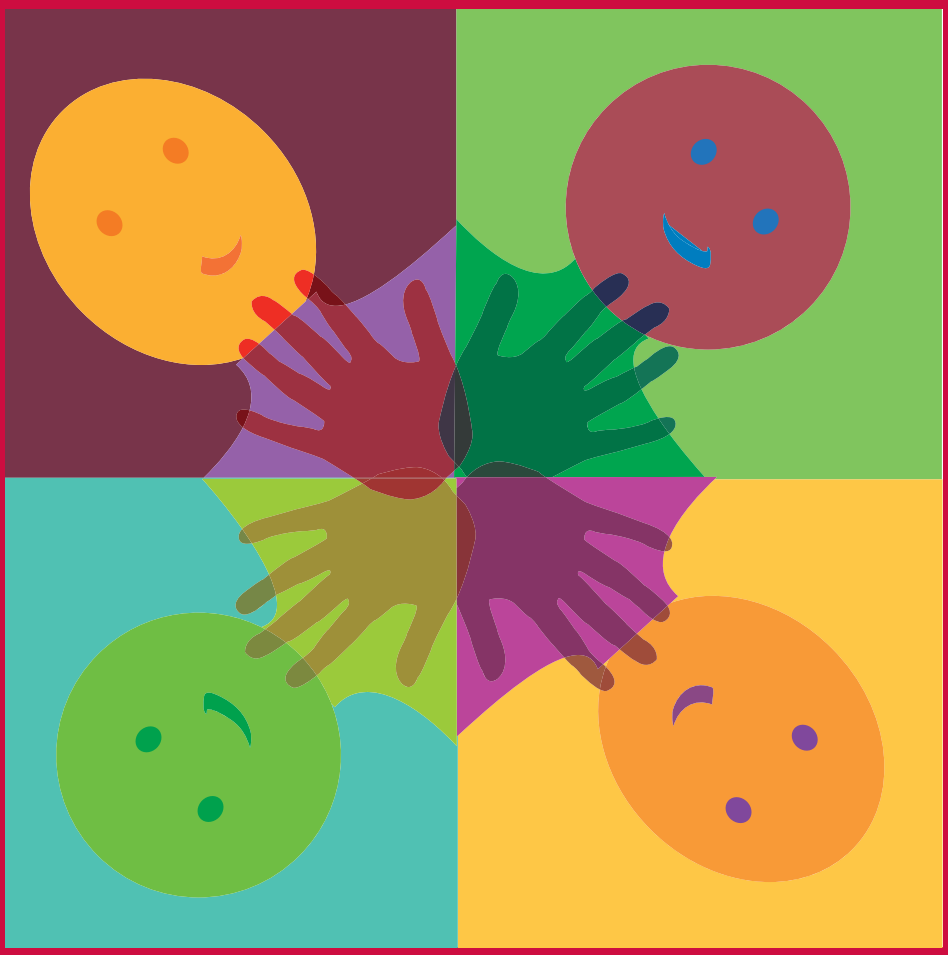
Trends in social cohesion, No. 1



Promoting the policy debate on social cohesion from a comparative perspective

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Promoting the policy debate on social exclusion from a comparative perspective

Trends in Social Cohesion No. 1

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Foreword

This new series "Trends in social cohesion" was launched by the Social Cohesion Development Division in order to provide a forum for observation and analysis of the developments taking place on matters of social cohesion in the Council of Europe member states. Each issue will address important aspects concerning social protection and social cohesion. Its aim is to ensure greater visibility and a wider dissemination of the results of the work carried out by the Council of Europe to promote social cohesion in its forty-three member states.

Social cohesion, as defined by the Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe, is a concept that includes values and principles which aim to ensure that all citizens, without discrimination and on an equal footing, have access to fundamental social and economic rights. Social cohesion is a flagship concept which constantly reminds us of the need to be collectively attentive to, and aware of, any kind of discrimination, inequality, marginality or exclusion.

The Council of Europe does not see social cohesion as being a homogenising concept that is only based on traditional forms of social integration, which nonetheless are important, such as : identity, the sharing of the same culture, adhering to the same values. It is a concept for an open and multicultural society.

The meaning of this concept can differ according to the socio-political environment in which it evolves. Indeed, the main objective of this series is to clarify the content and the value of the concept of social cohesion within different contexts and national traditions.

From an operational point of view, a strategy of social cohesion refers to any kind of action which ensures that every citizen, every individual, can have within their community, the opportunity of access :

- to the means to secure their basic needs ;
- to progress ;
- to protection and legal rights ;
- to dignity and social confidence.

Any insufficiency of access to any of these fields operates against social cohesion. This idea is clearly acknowledged in the Council of Europe's Strategy for Social Cohesion which offers an instrument for reflection for its member states on topics such as how to :

- make social and economic rights effective and to enable citizens to assert and reclaim their rights through adequate procedures ;
- prevent the development of a two-speed society in which some prosper and others are stigmatised and confined to the margins ;
- make efficient the fight against poverty and to combat social exclusion through the use of new information technologies and appropriate support structures, especially for the most vulnerable groups ;
- reduce the unacceptable levels of unemployment and to promote access to employment, especially for the weakest groups, through economic policies and appropriate support measures ;
- improve the quality of public services and to ensure that all citizens have real access to them ;
- arrive at, and maintain, an adequate level of social protection in the context of increasing pressures to revise these concepts and traditional approaches ;
- respond to the needs of older people through an adequate pension system and through the establishment of intergenerational solidarity ;
- renew the sense of social solidarity and mutual responsibility within society ;
- respond to changes in models of family life (for example through the reconciliation of work and private life) ;
- develop policies of protection and participation of children and young people in society ;
- create the conditions necessary for the integration of, access to rights by, disabled people and vulnerable sections of society ;
- ensure the dignified integration of migrants and to combat all forms of racism and discrimination ;
- make cultural and ethnic diversity a source of strength for society.

These different points illustrate the complexity of all that is covered within the concept of social cohesion. Indeed, it is a foundation of democracy and requires seeking out logical complementarities between different actors and different institutions. It aims to give full expression to peoples' individual capacities, to social groups and organisations and to avoid any kind of marginalisation and exclusion by reducing the risk of neglecting and wasting human resources. Finally, through allowing different identities and cultures to speak out, it is a guard against any kind of fanaticism.

By concentrating effort on reflection on the concept and through research on ways of implementing and evaluating the underlying policies, the Council of Europe DG III – Social Cohesion aims to make social cohesion a systematic common practice.

This publication aims to define current practices, analyse and disseminate methods used and point out the tools and instruments which can further social cohesion.

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Introduction

On 14 and 15 June 2001, the Council of Europe, Directorate General Social Cohesion, organised a workshop titled "Towards innovative approaches to assess new social policy". Its main objective was to mobilise a network of national research institutions in the social field to stimulate the debate on how to improve policymaking in light of the findings and approaches offered by the vast ongoing research programmes on poverty and social exclusion. The workshop aimed at both highlighting policy issues that need attention and giving useful insights into social diagnoses and policy. The high level of the expert group and the quality of the background papers led to in-depth and fruitful discussion on crucial issues regarding social policy to fight poverty and exclusion.

The workshop gave the opportunity to discuss very different approaches and social policy frameworks between eastern and western Europe but also between Nordic countries and other members of the European Union. It emphasized key social problems shaping the social policy debate in the different countries and the research programmes developed by the researchers' institution. Researchers also exchanged views on some innovative policies implemented in Europe. This process led to the identification of common and specific problems and their consequences in terms of social policy.

The workshop was a first step in the process launched by the network of social researchers whose project was to operationalise concepts on which policy makers could develop effective social policy. Indeed, the concept of social exclusion is relatively new in the West and led to much discussion, but it is even more recent in eastern Europe and lacks a clear definition. Eastern European researchers have presented their analytical and operational problems with the concept of exclusion. This exercise contributes to the process of ownership by eastern European social researchers of new concepts for action. Through a collective work, the participants were able to identify the characteristics of, and the value added by, such an approach in the elaboration of social policy in both eastern and western Europe.

The following text is based on the background papers written by the participants and the discussion during the workshop. We are grateful to the participants of the workshop for their contribution : Peter Kenway, New Policy Institute, London ; Katalin Tausz, Eötvös Lorand University, Budapest ;

Miroslava Obadalova, Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, Prague ; Michel Chauvière, CNRS, Groupe d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques, ENS de Cachan ; Marthe Nyssens, IRES et CERISIS, Universite catholique de Louvain ; Sten-Åke Stenberg, Swedish Institute for Social Research ; Chiara Saraceno, Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, Università di Torino ; Chris Whelan, ESRI, Dublin, Cok Vrooman, Social and Cultural Planning Office, The Hague ; Torben Fridberg, The Danish National Institute of Social Research ; Kazimierz W. Frieske, Institute of Labour and Social Studies in Warsaw ; Arne Tesli, Norvegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) ; Matti Heikkila, STAKES, Helsinki.

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Defining a social exclusion approach

The notion of social exclusion is relatively new in the Anglo-Saxon literature but it is rapidly gaining currency and it has succeeded in becoming a widely used concept in research as well as in policy making (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1999). It was developed in France by sociologists concerned about the emerging social problems related to the socio-economic transformations of the 1980s. It refers to the weakening of social ties resulting from the processes of social disqualification (Paugam, 1993) or social disaffiliation (Castel, 1995) caused by the return of mass social and economic vulnerability in industrialised countries. The growing insecurity of a part of the population in terms of access to a decent job, income, housing, health service and education or the feeling of insecurity, which affects an even larger part of the population, exists concurrently with new economic opportunities for others who can take advantage of the potential for prosperity associated with the global economy.

The concept of social exclusion, as Paugam (1996a : 14) argues, took centre stage in France only in the early 1990s as analysis of and reflection on the operation of the *Revenue minimum d'insertion (RMI)* began to modify the traditional conception of poverty. Within the RMI framework, the integration contract is complementary to that of the minimum income allowance. It implies two things : on the one hand, the recipient must be actively engaged in (re)insertion activities developed for him/her. On the other hand, society or the state must break the vicious circle, in which the vulnerable people are trapped, by implementing a set of policies and institutions to overcome exclusion, especially from the labour market, housing education and health. The French innovation was this notion of insertion, which implies a contract linking the individual responsibility of the recipient to the collective responsibility of the society as a whole. It is an insertion contract implying both rights for and obligations from recipients.

Thus in the 1990s, increased emphasis was placed in the European Union on the processes leading from precarity to exclusion, in the sense of exposure to the cumulative disadvantage and the progressive rupturing of social relations. A process, which Paugam (1996b) describes as a "spiral of precariousness". The "poor" were seen to constitute a heterogeneous group and the need to move from a static definition of poverty based solely on income, to a dynamic and multidimensional perspective, was stressed. This line of argument is consistent with the claim that the explanatory power of social class is waning and inequalities in life-chances are no longer significantly structured by class position (Andreß & Schulte, 1998 ; Beck, 1992).

Thus the notion of social exclusion raises issues relating to the changing of causal processes and qualitatively different outcomes. The notion of social exclusion has meaning only by implicit reference to normative ideas of what it means to be a member of and to participate in society (Silver, 1994, 1996). The notion of social exclusion has no meaning outside of the history and prosperity of the welfare state after the second world war because it presupposes a counterpart, a shared understanding of what is to be included. Its emergence is directly related to the fact that from the 1980s on high unemployment threatened national modes of integration (Kronauer, 1996).

The Human Dignity and Social Exclusion Project (1994-98)

The Human Dignity and Social Exclusion (HDSE) Project, a pan-European initiative launched by the Council of Europe in 1994 and completed in 1998, enabled the following :

- analysis of the status of poverty and social exclusion in Europe ;
- submission of proposals of actions, validated by the final conference of the project which took place in Helsinki from 18 to 20 May 1998, tackling five major themes : health, housing, employment, social protection and education.

1. The HDSE report : summary of the research work

The summary report *Opportunity and risk : trends of social exclusion in Europe* was prepared by Mrs Katherine Duffy (Director of research for the HDSE Project) on the basis of national and thematic reports relating to the five above mentioned strategic areas : health, employment, social protection, education and housing.

It draws attention to the opportunities and the risks which follow from the development of social exclusion situations and highlights the major problems as well as the most exposed groups. It concludes with the fact that social exclusion is a risk that is inherent within liberal societies and that governments which aspire to social cohesion have to reduce more actively the risk and frustrations it leads to.

In addition, working groups had been set up to examine, through a multidisciplinary approach, the four following themes :

- legal rights and vulnerable groups (Rapporteur : Bruno Romazzotti) ;
- family and personal networks of the least advantaged groups (Rapporteur : Solange Coppin de Janvry) ;
- the role of civil society in combating poverty and social exclusion (Rapporteur : Ruth Brand) ;
- intervention at the local level : public authorities and local communities (Rapporteur : Jean-Marie Heydt).

2. The Helsinki Final Conference (18-20 May 1998)

The Council of Europe organised a large final conference in Helsinki from 18 to 20 May 1998 in order to present and examine the results of the HDSE Project.

The conference gathered more than 300 people representing all member states of the Council of Europe and all the partners of the project. It identified the priorities of the Council of Europe in combating poverty and social exclusion in co-operation with all actors concerned and adopted a series of proposals for action in the following fields :

Health : work should concentrate on how health and social resources should be adapted to the specific health care needs of vulnerable groups and on improving equality of access through the provision of universal social coverage.

Housing : the challenges concerning access to and maintenance of housing for deprived groups concerns all states. It is necessary to respond to emergencies and prevent evictions as well as develop area-based policies (urban policy, town planning, regeneration of the countryside).

Employment : activities in this field should : promote the insertion/reinsertion into the workforce of disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised groups ; reinforce equal opportunities policies and the treatment of disadvantaged groups in the employment market by tackling, on the one hand, discrimination between men and women, towards migrants and disadvantaged ethnic groups and the disabled and, on the other hand, favouring reconciliation between professional and family life and reintegration into the workforce.

Social protection : priority areas should be targeted through analysing the obstacles leading to non-access or loss of social security benefits and through studying the contribution that social protection systems make to social and economic development.

Education : lack of training and education, both formal and informal, remain more than ever at the heart of exclusion. Priority will be given to : analysis of the obstacles to access to training and education, both school and lifelong learning ; awareness of the importance of democratic citizenship for active participation in society ; taking account of psychosocial difficulties concerning educational provision for vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, all the contributions to the HDSE Project highlighted the fundamental importance of the family and of culture in the preventative and curative approaches to combating social exclusion.

Social exclusion: a new analytical and operational framework for social policy?

Social exclusion is related not only to a lack of material wealth but also to symbolic exclusion, social deprivation and incomplete participation in the main social institutions (Silver, 1995). It emphasizes the quality of the relationship between the individual and the society. An approach in terms of social exclusion highlights the new social questions affecting social cohesion, and calls for major changes in social policy. Indeed, social safety nets and minimum income policies can prevent people from falling below the poverty line, but they do not answer the problem of the weakening of social ties associated with the fragmentation of society. Unemployment, for example, not only denies income and output to whose are excluded, it also fails to recognise their productive role as human beings in society. In other words, employment provides social legitimacy and social status as well as access to income (Sen, 1975). It brings with it human dignity and entitles individuals to economic rights and social recognition that are essential for full citizenship. The symbolic dimension of exclusion is related to these criteria of personal achievement and to the need to be useful to society and to be recognised as such by society.

Two main processes contribute to social exclusion : (i) high unemployment (especially long-term unemployment) and job precariousness for people who were previously fully integrated into the society's main institutions, and (ii) difficulty, in particular for young people, in entering the labour market and enjoying both the income and the social network associated with it. The strength of the links between the employment situation and other dimensions of life (family, income, housing, health, social networks, etc.) suggests that those people, who are trapped in the bad segments of the labour market or excluded from it, suffer from the risk of becoming excluded from society (CERC, 1993). The relationship between long-term unemployment and precariousness and social deprivation will depend on the nature of the networks of solidarity. Social deprivation leads to the loss of solidarity networks (which are crucial, in particular, in job seeking). Material deprivation can produce a sense of social inferiority, which leads to social isolation and alienation. Finally, the spiral of cumulative disadvantages leads to social exclusion.

The Strategy for Social Cohesion

On 12 May 2000, the European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS) adopted its Strategy for Social Cohesion. This document, approved by the Committee of Ministers on 13 July, represents a statement of intent setting out a precise agenda for the Council in the social field for the coming years.

It does not define social cohesion as such but seeks to identify some of the factors in social cohesion such as :

- setting up mechanisms and institutions which will prevent the factors of division (such as an excessive gap between rich and poor or the multiple forms of discrimination) from becoming so acute as to endanger social harmony ;
- the importance of decent and adequately remunerated employment ;
- measures to combat poverty and social exclusion, particularly in areas such as housing, health, education and training, employment and income distribution and social services ;
- strengthening social security systems ;
- developing policies for families, with particular emphasis on children and the elderly ;
- partnership with civil society bodies, in particular trade unions, employers' representatives and NGOs.

Accordingly, social cohesion policies should :

- help to revitalise the economy and capitalise on the contribution made by the two sides of industry and other interested bodies, particularly by creating employment, stimulating enterprise and ensuring employment opportunities for all ;
- meet people's basic needs and promote access to social rights within the universal spirit of the Council of Europe's many conventions and recommendations, particularly in the fields of employment, education, health, social protection and housing ;
- acknowledge human dignity by focusing policies on the individual and guaranteeing human rights in Europe ;
- establish forums and procedures enabling the underprivileged and those whose rights are insufficiently upheld to make themselves heard ;
- develop an integrated approach bringing together all the relevant fields of action.

The Council of Europe will be carrying out four types of activities : standard-setting activities and monitoring of the application of legal instruments ; policy development ; projects in member states ; and research and analysis.

The Strategy for Social Cohesion will naturally evolve as time goes by and as more experience is gained in this new approach by the Council of Europe.

This analytic framework does not focus on social exclusion as a final stage characterising social and economic deprivation but instead, on the dynamic processes which create those states, pushing individuals from a zone of integration to a zone of precariousness, vulnerability and finally, exclusion. As Castel (1995) emphasized in his book, the intermediate zone of vulnerability, which rapidly increased in the 1980s and 1990s, is crucial. What is important is to point out the different paths leading to precariousness and exclusion. To conclude, the main characteristics of the approach, in terms of social exclusion that we will develop below, are the following :

- exclusion as a dual risk process : a social risk of exclusion for any individual and a societal risk for all society that can be deeply affected by this weakening of social ties ;

- exclusion as the result of structural processes that are excluding a part of the population from the productive sphere and not as the result of individual failures ;

- exclusion as a dynamic approach, which emphasizes the processes toward social and economic deprivation ;

- exclusion as a multidimensional approach combining economic, social and political aspects that are interconnected.

The widespread use of the term "social exclusion" is relatively new, and is a result of a deliberate shift in usage away from "poverty" by the European Union (EU) in the late 1980s. Suspicion exists that the emergence of the term to centre stage may reflect the hostility of some governments to the language of poverty and the attraction of substituting a "less accusing" expression (Room, 1994 ; Berghman, 1995). Indeed a significant resemblance may be found between poverty and social exclusion research programmes. A number of authors associated with the London School of Economics' Centre for Social Exclusion have stressed five aspects of the notion – relativity, multidimensionality, agency, dynamics, and multilayering – while acknowledging that these are hardly new ideas (Atkinson, 1998 ; Hills, 1999). Nonetheless substantive claims have been made for the merits of conceptualising issues in terms of social exclusion rather than poverty. Of course social exclusion is often used to refer to quite different processes. Thus Abrahamson (1997) concludes "there are people who simply lack

enough money to make ends meet because of their position in the social structure, while others are shut out of mainstream society on the grounds of ethnicity, social orientation, etc.".

All in all, the poverty concept may incorporate many aspects of social exclusion, but it is still useful to make a distinction. Poverty primarily refers to the limited financial means of a person or household, making it impossible to satisfy customary needs. The precarious financial situation may be the consequence of a low income and/or high unavoidable expenditures (for example chronic diseases). Poverty may lead to social exclusion, in the sense that people are cut off from the labour market, do not take part in dominant behavioural and cultural patterns, lose social contacts, live in certain stigmatised neighbourhoods, and are not reached by welfare agencies. Or, conversely, such aspects of social exclusion may be the result of a precarious financial situation, but also of other factors.

Access to social rights

Access to basic social rights is the starting point for the Council of Europe's Social Cohesion Strategy. From this perspective, the Council of Europe has developed a series of programmes in the field of social cohesion with the aim to achieve access to social rights for everybody in five main aspects: employment, housing, social protection, health and education. The corresponding working groups started their activities in 1999. Three of these (employment, housing and social protection) have already completed their work and have drawn up specific guidelines. The newly created Editorial Group for the report on access to social rights will bring together the findings of these three separate committees and prepare a report during the year 2002.

1. Access to employment

The Committee of Experts on Promoting Access to Employment (CS-EM) was responsible for working out effective policies in the fight against long-term unemployment. Member states of the Council of Europe as well as observers from the ILO, OECD, the European Commission, and NGOs in the employment field participated in the work.

The committee has developed over twenty guidelines under following headings: local partnership, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, entrepreneurship and training, education and longlife learning, monitoring and evaluation.

2. Access to housing

The Group of Specialists on Access to Housing (CS-LO) proposes policy measures on access to housing for vulnerable groups. The work focused on four specific themes : housing emergencies, evictions, supply of quality housing and area-based policies. The committee adopted a certain number of guidelines which include : general principles of policies on access to housing for vulnerable groups ; the legal framework ; the institutional framework and co-operation between public authorities and civil society ; improving the supply and the financing of affordable housing for vulnerable groups of people ; the importance of area-based housing policies ; reducing the risk and the negative consequences of evictions for vulnerable persons ; dealing with emergency situations ; and recommendations for future work.

3. Access to social protection

The Group of Specialists on Access to Social Protection (CS-PS) aimed at identifying and assessing obstacles to access to social benefits and services. The CS-PS also developed its guidelines for improving access to social protection. More specifically, they enclose : improving communication and information about rights, benefits and services ; improving the management and organisation of benefit providers and social services ; and improving the partnership between social protection bodies, services, NGOs and the other actors of civil society.

4. Access to health

In order to improve access to health, the European Health Committee carries out a number of studies concerning : effective health policies for health promotion and health protection in society today ; the organisation of palliative care, and the assurance that this type of care is available equally to all those who need it ; the impact of information technologies on health care "Patient and the Internet" and the role of the media in health matters and its impact on health measures and policies.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted on 10 October 2001 an important recommendation : Recommendation Rec (2001)12 on the adaptation of health care services to the demand of people in marginal situations for health care and health care services.

5. Access to education

In order to contribute to the work of the CDCS, the Education Committee carries out a permanent activity : Education strategies for social cohesion and democratic security. In its framework an annual forum was organised. It examines the major education policy issues in Europe. In 2000, the forum was devoted to education and social cohesion and the book *Education and social cohesion* reproduces the text of the communications of the experts at the forum. In October 2001 the second forum was devoted to the problem of equal access to education in order to examine the new factors that could lead to inequality in access to education. A report on the forum is being prepared.

In recent years, we saw an intensive debate on the meaning of social exclusion, and its relationship with the concept of poverty. The Belgian researchers Vranken et al. note, somewhat irritatedly, the proliferation of meanings that has emerged from the discussion on social exclusion. What seems clear, however, is that social exclusion may be considered a broader concept than poverty. The relevant literature shows at least four seemingly different aspects of the concepts of poverty and social exclusion :

- material against immaterial ;
- static against dynamic ;
- individual against collective phenomenon ;
- individual against collective causes.

Relationship between social exclusion and income poverty

Customarily, as in a number of studies by the EU Commission or Eurostat, income poverty is measured by setting the poverty line at a particular percentage of mean or median income. The general rationale is that those falling more than a certain distance below the average are excluded from the minimally acceptable way of life of the society in which they live because of a lack of resources (Townsend, 1979). Thus the logic of both poverty and social exclusion approaches is more similar than many would acknowledge. In particular if one is to evaluate the utility of the social exclusion perspective it would seem necessary to avoid the caricature that sees poverty research as having adopted a static perspective. The availability of panel data has stimulated an analysis of poverty dynamics that is central to our understanding of exclusionary processes. Interest in persistent poverty has been driven by concern about state dependence or vicious circle processes. Assumptions about the long-term nature of poverty have been central to the development of notions such as "culture of poverty" and "underclass" (Gans, 1990 ; Wilson, 1987).

Persistent poverty and multiple disadvantages

Increasing concern for multiple disadvantages has also been reflected by the prominence that the term "social exclusion" has come to have in

British policy making. Kleinman (1998:7) concludes that one consequence of employing the term "social exclusion" to denote multiply deprived groups is that it defines the key social cleavage between a comfortable majority and an excluded socially isolated minority. This tendency is also stressed in Room's (1999:171) discussion of notions of continuity and catastrophe in the social exclusion literature.

Using the first three waves of the European Community Household Panel (ECHP), Whelan et al. (2001a) seek to establish the extent to which persistent income poverty is associated with multiple lifestyle deprivation, social isolation, and respondents' evaluations of their health. Their findings indicate that while the impact of persistent poverty is widespread, its relationship to social isolation is extremely modest. Furthermore, the degree of overlap between the range of disadvantages was considerably less than might have been anticipated on the basis of the theoretical literature on social exclusion.

Furthermore, recent research has begun to question the empirical and theoretical validity of some of the linkages implicit in social exclusion discourses: for example between poverty and social isolation, between unemployment, particularly long term, and social isolation and/or psychological ill-being. Comparative empirical data suggest that these linkages vary among social groups and on the basis of the duration of the experience of economic distress or unemployment (Leisering & Leibfried, 1999); but they also differ across countries according, *inter alia*, to the social security system, family arrangements and culture (Saraceno, 1997; Gallie & Paugam, 2000). Indeed, the cultural context can be important in assessing the impact of long-term unemployment. For example, social deprivation and homelessness related to exclusion from the labour market are more likely to be experienced by men than by women because the latter have other forms of social integration whereas for men long-term unemployment is very often perceived as a personal failure leading to their exclusion from the main institution of society.

The need to understand poverty dynamics has become more pressing as both popular and political discourse has increasingly referred to a new class of "losers" as reflected in labels such as the A-team and the B-team and the new underclass. However, as Esping-Andersen (1997) has stressed, the interpretation of such phenomena is dependent on the extent to which peoples' marginality is only temporary, or involves a degree of

permanence, which may contribute to a further deterioration of life chances. Based on the first two waves of the ECHP, Whelan et al. (2000) analysis showed that poverty dynamics were predominantly a consequence of corresponding variations in overall poverty rates and short-term movements in such rates.

Relevance to post-communist countries

The social status of several groups of the population was shaken during the transition period in post-communist countries and large-scale poverty became one of the most important social problems. Certain social groups are especially threatened by poverty such as the unemployed (who are, for a great part, long-term unemployed); single parent families; single elderly citizens, mainly women over seventy; families with three or more children as well as families with small children; people lacking vocational skills; citizens in certain types of localities (farms, small villages) and Roma/Gypsies.

Despite the growing anxiety of the population about economic and social insecurity, there is no explicit public discourse on poverty and exclusion. No national strategies were worked out to fight against deep poverty, or poverty in general. There were no endeavours to reduce inequalities, or to weaken the processes of exclusion. On the contrary there is a tendency to accept poverty as a natural corollary of social life, and also to blame the poor (Ferge, 2000).

The forecasts, by the advocates of shock therapy, predicting a rapid recovery turned out to be wrong. Both the economic recession and the social costs have been deeper than anticipated. Output and employment slumped to a degree unknown in Europe since the Great Depression. During the early 1990s real gross industrial output fell by about 40% in eastern Europe as a whole (ECE, 2000 : 228), unemployment reached unprecedented proportions, and poverty increased massively throughout the region. Despite the recent return to positive growth in most eastern European countries (except Yugoslavia and Romania and, to a lesser extent, Croatia and the Czech Republic), the average rate of unemployment in eastern Europe at the end of 1999 was at its highest level since the beginning of the transition (close to 15%, or some 7.6 million people).

Although estimates of poverty varied widely, there was general agreement about the magnitude of its increase during the first half of the 1990s. The total number of people living in poverty rose more than tenfold between 1988 and 1994 in the transition economies of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union : from 14 million to over 119 million, raising the percentage of the population living below the poverty line (US$4 a day in 1990 Parity Purchase Power) from 4 to 32% (Ruminska Zimny, 1997 :11). Changes in wealth and income distribution are among the most dramatic in the transition countries in recent years (table 2). The average Gini coefficient of disposable income rose from 24 to 33 during the first five years of the transition (Milanovic, 1998 :40). To a large extent, the widening of income inequalities is attributable to a greater dispersion of earnings caused by larger wage differentials, lower participation rates and an increase in unemployment.

Main characteristics of a social exclusion approach

Do not just study the excluded

Social research on poverty and social exclusion is at risk of being marginalised if it cannot manage to place the situation of the excluded groups in a broader perspective. The day-to-day problems of socially excluded groups often seem so urgent that researchers are tempted to concentrate their attention on these groups. In order to fully comprehend the underlying mechanisms of social exclusion, the situation of excluded groups, and ways to enhance social (re)integration, we must place the problems in a broader perspective. Indeed, social exclusion is a process and what is important is not to focus only on the excluded, who are the last stage of the process, but to analyse the structural factors leading from a stage of integration to a stage of vulnerability and from that stage to the one of exclusion.

Direct attention towards the processes

Many social studies are done by use of so-called cross-sectional data. We study a phenomenon at one given point in time. In this way we are naturally able to get an image of the social situation at this point, but these descriptions may also be very inadequate. We must strive to investigate

the excluded by use of longitudinal data, preferably through panel studies. This means that the same individuals are followed over a longer period of time.

Direct attention on previously untackled problems

Essential services include both basic services (for example water, gas and food) and infrastructure services (for example transport, telephone and basic financial services). Affordable access to such services is a crucial part of social inclusion. The contribution of essential private sector services within a national strategy for social inclusion should be built on the "minimum standards" approach. One reason for preferring this approach is that, by being universal, it can reach the substantial minority who are the intended direct beneficiaries of a social inclusion strategy.

It is also better for companies. Up-front negotiation to develop minimum service standards is far preferable to government taking wide-ranging powers to intervene to correct instances of unfavourable treatment – powers that the new Utilities Act in the United Kingdom (UK) has brought into being for the gas and electricity industries. The UK Government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (2000) introduced an emphasis on core local services in highly deprived areas, alongside special initiatives. This is welcome, but it cannot be enough because only a minority of people in poverty actually live in these areas. The commitment to core public services in deprived areas should be extended to a general commitment to core public services for poor and excluded people in all areas.

Shared responsibility between the society and the individuals

In a simplified way, one can see an ongoing trend towards active social policy and social activation redefining the individual versus collective responsibilities. For example, policies called "linking welfare and work" quite explicitly define the rights and obligations of the unemployed individual, the state and the employer/firms/the market. The emphasis has clearly moved toward social and individual responsibilities. The society, and in particular the public authority, has the duty to create the best environment possible for insertion (through social protection, education, training, health systems, employment services, etc.) but the individual has

also the duty to involve himself in the process of insertion. This is the ethos of the new employment policy in the UK but it implies both advantages and disadvantages even from the individual's point of view.

The central role of access to a decent job for (re)insertion

Whatever the diagnosis chosen, it seems that the main policy response is social integration through employment. Within this response we can differentiate three types of directions. The activation approach aims to insert activation elements into the basic social benefits using both incentives and sanctions as persuasion techniques. As a relatively recent variant we can find here the insertion or integration contracts attached to the minimum benefits as a new conditionality. The tightening approach tends to restrict access to benefits, reduce the levels of compensation, restrict the duration of pay and so on. This kind of policy works as a push factor making the social protection less user-friendly. The third direction, which partially includes the previous ones, can be called low-pay policy. This approach seems to be the main means chosen to reduce unemployment in Europe.

For those who can work, governments hold up employment as the key to ending poverty. However, if employment really is to be the guarantee against poverty, a far more critical view of the nature of work is required. The first consideration here is obviously low pay, which remains endemic. The National Minimum Wage in the UK is currently set at an extremely cautious level, and has fallen in real terms since its introduction. Tax credits that raise the income of working households, whilst welcome, only treat the symptoms of low pay. Other aspects of a job that contribute to its quality include : a degree of certainty over working hours ; sick pay and pension provision ; opportunities for training and career development ; democratic representation at work ; and freedom from discrimination.

Poor living conditions and welfare are linked, perhaps more than anything else, to lack of work. In Norway for example, work is considered as the most important factor to develop a fairer distribution of income and wealth. It is considered essential that as many citizens as possible are able to support themselves through their own work. The authorities have therefore implemented some measures, which to a certain extent set out to limit the strong rise of the number of disability pensions that has been experienced in the last years. The aim of this is to give room to a labour

market that also can include persons that do not have full working capacity. The government is thus trying to find more flexible ways for people to combine work and disability pensions. New arrangements and models are being tested out for this.

Targeting versus universalism: assessing the new consensus on more individualised approaches to insertion

Recent changes in social policy in Europe have shown a progressive shift from universal towards targeted social policy. However, this shift has not had the same causes and effect everywhere. In eastern European countries after the transition, mass unemployment, poverty, urgent pension system problems, and the sharp economic recession led to reform of the past universal system. The limited resources of the state were targeted toward the most vulnerable groups. In western Europe, the development of targeted social policy results from the emerging consensus on the need for a more individual-oriented approach regarding active labour policies and insertion policies for vulnerable and excluded individuals. This new generation of social policies aims at fighting the social deprivation related to the exclusion process which affects the capability of the excluded not only to (re)integrate the labour market but also to have access to housing, social, education and health services.

An example of an area in which the relational focus is crucial is that of low skilled youth who have left school early. As a study on these youth in Turin, Italy, has indicated, there is no use either in forcing them back to school, since they have a very bad experience of their time there, nor is there any use in forcing them into dead-end, low qualified jobs, which will only confirm the unworthiness and lack of hope they have experienced in school. Rather they need to reconstruct trust in themselves and in the experiences offered to them : they need a time horizon and an accompanying person who supports them in a path in which, for them, work and school are linked in a meaningful way, which opens up the opportunity to discover and develop one's own capacity. Too often discourses on the learning society forget that there are individuals who have been severely scarred by their experience in school.

These more relational-oriented social policies require a more comprehensive approach in social work, which takes the general situation of the individual person into consideration. This again requires that offers are

individually adapted and include necessary measures, even if these measures are the responsibility of other agencies. Partnership (co-operation between different sectors, authorities, agencies, etc.) is necessary. It is a risk that the system of assistance becomes very discretionary if rights of entitlement are unclear. Another risk is that the person may feel that she/he is up against the big system. It is important that the vulnerable people involved have an influence in finding the right solutions and in defining appropriate measures with the social authorities. Written action plans (agreements) may be a good instrument.

The relative merits of effective participatory mechanisms are of course to fix more public and political attention onto the interests of the weak groups in the society as well as possibly establishing more effective policies in terms of resources allocated. For all groups more targeted policies have been developed which aim to integrate excluded persons into more normal ways of life. Often the perception is that the problems of social exclusion are aggravated by general developments in society, which entails less robust social networks around the concerned person. Among the trends are unstable families, deteriorating coherence of local communities and high demands on skills and flexibility in the labour market. Social policies are more and more aiming at (re-)establishing some kind of network around the person, which may further a process of integration. Increasingly also, new partners are mobilised in the fight against lacking networks.

Specific measures have to be targeted in the sense that the specific problems should be addressed by special measures within the general system of social services. For example, there is no doubt that the situation has improved for some of the non-hospitalised mentally ill persons, through the development of social services combining sheltered housing, contact persons and affiliation to day centres. It has taken some years to develop the models, partly because responsibilities had to be clarified, and structures of co-operation between agents had to be established. The trend is towards services becoming more specialised in order to deal with groups with special problems. This development appears not to be stigmatising for the target groups, as it is taking place under the umbrella of the universal social security system. However, problems of feeling stigmatised have been reported among persons working in ordinary working places but with subsidised wages.

This targeted approach is not without problems and in some ways is not very well fitted with the social democratic welfare thinking. Indeed, all special programmes and sets of measures aimed specifically to improve the position of various deprived groups are seen as new strategies for a comprehensive policy frame where the overall objective is to keep income differentials moderate and the poverty rate low. The main reason for criticism towards this new targeted approach is the fear of increased stigmatisation of the poor, marginalisation of poverty issues in the society and a weakening of the traditionally strong legitimacy of the system.

First of all, a selective social policy where cash benefits and policy measures are targeted towards the most deprived is usually seen as more redistributive than a universal or insurance based social policy. By seeking those who need help most, one hopes to eradicate, or at least ameliorate, poverty and social exclusion. Such measures may, in turn, be evaluated through proofing of policy. However, there is a risk that this strategy may be at odds with its original intentions. One can here point to three major shortcomings of social policies.

The problem of legitimacy

Research has shown how a universal, redistributive social policy is fundamental to reaching the most deprived with effective measures. This phenomenon is often termed the "paradox of redistribution" (Korpi & Palme, 1998). In brief, the paradox implies that the best way of guaranteeing acceptable standards for the poor/excluded within social policy measures is to make sure that the more privileged groups also benefit from these measures. In order to ensure basic consensus about social policies, all social groups that contribute to them also potentially benefit from them. Because this sort of system demands a relatively high level of taxation it is also important that a large majority of the population not only covers the cost but also gains in terms of child allowance, pensions, reasonable health care, etc. If the general social policy is constructed in this manner, the necessary selective policies targeted towards special groups may still be effective and profitable. If, on the other hand, social policies are dominated by selective and means-tested schemes, they risk losing the legitimacy needed to keep benefits and measures at a high level and to guarantee their financing.

Stigmatisation

A selective social policy is likely to become stigmatising. The traditional distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor is latent in all policy specially targeted towards the poor/excluded. This is why selective social policies must be based on a universal social protection system in order to gain support among the broad masses. In this way there is less risk that beneficiaries are stigmatised. It is clear that a universal social policy creates a base that may give legitimacy to measures specially directed to those who have the greatest needs.

Thus, the more that beneficiaries are restricted to those with fewer options, the more a policy is perceived as being hopeless, inefficient (and in the case of income support even creating dependency). A study in Turin showed that in the most deprived neighbourhoods, in which the offer of municipal childcare services for the under-3-year-olds is greater than in other parts of the town, local parents who do not belong to the most deprived categories (the first in the queue) prefer not to enrol their children lest they be stigmatised for attending a service with a high concentration of social cases. As a consequence, these services are becoming a sort of ghetto for deprived children, while in other parts of town there are long waiting lists.

Welfare bureaucracy

Social policy measures that are specially targeted towards the excluded and poor are almost invariably accompanied by an expanding administration. Indeed, there are two main problems with this phenomenon : First, a growing administrative apparatus increases total costs, but the percentage of these expenses that target groups directly benefit from decreases as wage expenditure and other administrative costs increase. Second, there are bound to be inherent growth mechanisms in an expanding welfare bureaucracy and a self-interest in the proliferation of the social problem(s) in question. Another problem is that targeting implies trust regarding both potential recipients' honesty and the adequacy and effectiveness of administrative bodies and monitoring procedures. One of the problems in introducing a programme similar to the RMI in Italy, for example, is the widespread opinion that people cheat on their income (also given the size

of the informal economy), and that national and public administrations are not able to check actual incomes. Lack of trust in that field causes not only bad targeting but also lack of legitimacy.

Moreover, targeting also implies providing information to potential recipients ; thus it implies an important work of communication, which is not only costly *per se*, but can increase the pool of beneficiaries while not necessarily avoiding the stigmatisation process.

Having said this, targeting has some virtues that should be underlined for their potentiality (in addition to the usually stressed and controversial one – the concentration of resources on the most needy) :

- Targeting may help identify problem areas, orient resources, reappraise critically existing policies, compel governments to be monitored and assessed on their own terms.

- Targeting may involve not stigmatisation but highly effective intervention. Within a universal approach, loose targeting may operate as a kind of awareness of individual specific needs and social differences and it can avoid standardised policies, which may not solve real problems of disadvantaged people. Abstract universalism may be blind and insensitive to specific circumstances and to social and biographical differences in capabilities. Thus, for instance, in many countries, including the most universal in approach, there is an increasing awareness that in social assistance one needs to be sensitive to the cultural outlook of immigrants. In addition, the universalistic approach of public schools has had to accommodate some degree of cultural diversity.

To conclude, it is important in the policy making process not to focus only on the micro level but to articulate the macro, the meso and the micro level. Whatever the efficiency of targeted policies, any successful social policy to fight poverty and exclusion must combine two main elements : firstly, a universal social protection system with income related benefits as main ingredients ; secondly, an economic policy based on full employment as one of the most important goals.

The European Social Charter – 40 years of existence

The European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty signed in 1961. It protects human rights and in particular guarantees social and economic rights. Three protocols were added to the Charter : the additional Protocol in 1988, the Amendment Protocol in 1991, which considerably improved the control mechanism of the Charter, and the Protocol of 1995 concerning collective complaints.

Finally, in 1996, the **revised Social Charter** was opened for signature. It entered into force on 1 July 1999 and will progressively replace the first Charter. It includes new rights and, in particular, the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion.

Guaranteed rights according to the European social charter and the revised Social Charter

The right to housing

The **Charter** requires states to carry out housing policies adapted to the needs of families The **revised Charter** invites states to reduce homelessness and to provide everyone with access to decent housing at a reasonable price.

The right to health

Under the **Charter**, states must have an effective health care structure for the whole population and implement policies for the prevention of illness. States must also take measures to ensure health and safety at work and supervise their application. The **revised Charter** lays emphasis on occupational risk and accident prevention.

The right to education

The **Charter** prohibits work for children under 15 years of age, particularly in order for them to complete their education. It obliges states to provide free guidance services and a system of both initial and further training and to make sure these programmes are designed to give everyone access to the labour market. The Charter also states that individual aptitude should be the only condition for access to higher and university education. The **revised Charter** requires states to guarantee free primary and secondary education.

The right to employment

Neither the **Charter** nor the **revised Charter** obliges states to aim to achieve full employment, but it stressed the right to work for everyone. They both also oblige the states to ensure just conditions of employment in relation to remuneration, working hours and health and safety.

In the field of professional relations, the charters guarantee the freedom to form trade unions and employers' organisations to protect their economic and social interests. In certain circumstances professional disputes may still arise and the charters recognise the right of the social partners to lead them, in particular through the right to strike.

The right to social protection

Under the **Charter**, states must guarantee the right to the protection of health, social security, social assistance and social services. It lists the special measures which must be taken for the elderly. The **revised Charter** guarantees the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion.

The right to non-discrimination

The **Charter** prohibits discrimination in the implementation of the rights it protects. It underlines in the various articles concerned, that these rights must be ensured without distinction as to sex, age, colour, language, religion, opinions, social origin, health, association with a national minority, etc. A specific article on non-discrimination in the **revised Charter** strengthens this prohibition.

States which have ratified the revised European Social Charter

On 18 October 2001, the fortieth anniversary of the Social Charter, all forty-three member states signed the European Social Charter or the revised Charter :

The **Charter** has been ratified by Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

The **revised Charter** has been ratified by Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden.

The **Charter** or the **revised Charter** has been signed but not yet ratified by Albania, Andorra, Croatia, Georgia, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Moldova, Russian Federation, San Marino, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Ukraine.

Supervision of the application of the European Social Charter

After the reports submitted by the states to the Council of Europe are examined, the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) assesses whether the states have respected their undertakings. The conclusions of the ECSR are transmitted to the Governmental Committee. The committee examines and points out the situations that must be subject to recommendations to states that they change the legislation, regulations or practice not in conformity with the Charter's obligations.

Possibilities of appeal

Trade unions, employers' organisations and NGOs may appeal to the ECSR where they consider that the Charter is not respected in a state. The ECSR examines the appeal according to a certain number of criteria and decides firstly whether it is admissible and then whether or not the provision in question is respected. In the case of a breach of the Charter, the Committee of Ministers recommends that the state concerned take measures to remedy the situation.

This is an optional procedure. To date, Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden have accepted it.

New partnerships in the fight against social exclusion: towards a new redefinition of the role between the state, the private sector, the civil society and the citizens

The notion of insertion path *(parcours d'insertion)* is multidimensional. It is referring to multiple needs, multi-actors measures and partnerships, and multilevel actions, not only in the professional sphere but also in the family, housing or education ones. The socio-professional insertion policies are more and more important in the political answer to the unemployment problem in the European Union. There is a large consensus on a sequential conception of the insertion path, which can be divided in four distinct stages, each one aiming at improving the capability of the individuals trapped into precariousness. Stage 1 is targeting those individuals most affected by social exclusion. It is about the (re)socialisation of the individual as a necessary basis to the following stages; stage 2 aimed at giving the core education to the individuals to allow them to get in fruitfully into the training process; stage 3 is about professional training, and stage 4 is about the transition to employment through, for example, some assistance from personal advisers for contacting employers or preparing a curriculum vitae.

With their experience, insight and commitment, the voluntary and community sector organisations that get close to poverty and exclusion ought to be seen as government's natural allies in a strategy for social inclusion. In practice, however, their effectiveness is constrained by a series of problems. Some of these are to do with the finances available for service provision. Others stem from a failure to recognise the value of organisations, which act as advocates and campaigners, pressing the interests of the poor and excluded groups they work with and for.

At least three kinds of mechanisms are needed if we try to get the poor and excluded to become more involved. These are (i) more grassroots, soft and tacit knowledge for policy shaping and assessment; (ii) more information and participation about the coming and ongoing plans and reforms for the target population enabling a process of ownership; and finally (iii) prerequisites for "shadowing", that is providing space for pressuring and organising special hearings and consultations in public bodies during the formal preparatory procedures.

It seems that local partnerships are relatively successive tools in fighting social exclusion especially in countries where social policy is relatively regionalised or even localised (decentralised). In a country like Finland where the public dominance is still a very central feature of social policy, the local partnerships are mostly formations between local authorities and NGOs. Trade unions and employers' organisations are less active on a local level. On the national level things have developed slightly differently. Before the last parliamentary elections a relatively loose but powerful formation or network of political and trade union actors and employer's organisations plus NGOs provided their own analysis of poverty and exclusion in the country and, based on this, advocated a stronger political commitment from the government to tackle poverty. This partnership was indeed quite successful with this aim and it still works as a kind of shadow body to monitor the political development. The network was established and chaired by the Evangelic Lutheran Church of the country. The European Anti-Poverty Network Finland (EAPN-Fin) is also a kind of partnership organisation that now has a clear position *vis-à-vis* the state authorities.

In Denmark, for example, two – interrelated – main lines of social and labour market policy have been launched to increase employment among marginalised groups. The Activation Line – which involves the mobilisation of public authority, employers, trade unions and associations – aims at getting all unemployed and all people on social assistance into work or – if necessary – to be activated, that is, to participate in training/education or publicly supported work. Activation is both a right and an obligation for the person. Increasingly the Activation line is implemented in relation to other groups without work, for example persons on sickness benefit and disability pension. The policy is that everyone with at least some working capacity should have a job and work in order to develop and make use of human resources to the assumed benefit of both the persons themselves and society.

Policies stressing both individual and social responsibilities seem to work to some extent, but there are limits. The social responsibility of the companies is already there for the insiders. It is more difficult to appeal for a responsibility towards outsiders with reduced working capacity unless wage subsidies are part of the package. Even then the attitudes of already employed seems to be very important. Urban renewal programs have had some success in including the housing companies and social housing associations in social interventions. Again they have an interest in improving the situation for the residents already there – the insiders – but they are less eager to take upon themselves a responsibility for the problems of the wider society, meaning problematic newcomers.

The second line aims at the demand side of the labour market and may be subsumed under the headline "The Open Labour Market". As part of this line a campaign was launched in Denmark in 1994 to increase the social responsibility of the enterprises, directed at both the public sector and private companies. The theory is that the problems of unemployment and social problems cannot be solved solely by public authorities (the welfare state). Enterprises must also play an active role in a new partnership for social cohesion. The campaign includes activities like local partnerships, seminars, issuing awards to the most socially responsible company, newsletters, and development of social accounting and regional networks of managers. The line is backed by legislation, for example on wage subsidies to employers hiring persons with a reduced capacity for work, and most recently the law on disability pension has been changed in order to further the possibilities of some kind of affiliation to working life.

Main issues regarding monitoring and assessing social policy to fight exclusion

There is a crucial need for evaluations of resource demanding activities. It is naturally important to be able to assess whether social policy measures are cost effective, although this task is not at all easy. In complex societies such as ours it is usually difficult to isolate the effects of one measure from all other simultaneous changes. And the task is not made easier when the aims of the policy or program are vague and are in general terms about social integration. However, this is not a reason for not trying to evaluate on effects as far as possible. In fact, the social research community is responsible for this situation, as they give up far too soon. Even when the outcome of a policy is relatively well defined – for example, employment in the case of activation measures – effects are rarely assessed in a systematic way. And the interventions are not designed in a way which allows for such an assessment, partly because of the lack of interest from social researchers.

In the Netherlands, the evaluation of the Urban Committee Program shares the characteristics of the many evaluations and studies, which have been worked out on measures and interventions implemented within the social policy field. Only very few studies are actually able to answer questions about effects of the interventions. Knowledge about what works or what works better is not accumulated in any systematic way, although studies and evaluation reports are worked out on almost all programs, projects and experiments. Of course experience is an outcome for the persons and agencies involved. And the reports may serve as catalogues for ideas to follow or be elaborated on for other project makers. But real evidence on effects of policies almost does not exist, and policymakers are free to design policies without having to take into consideration experiences of previous programmes.

But evaluating the impact of social policies to fight social exclusion is by itself very demanding regarding both resources and data. It requires a multidimensional set of indicators including quantitative and qualitative indicators related to material and immaterial aspects of life and longitudinal studies to follow the effectiveness of the policies in the time.

Moreover, policy measures often have unintended consequences, such as in the Swedish housing program during the 1970s, when one million

apartments were built in a decade. As a result, a number of previously homeless persons has access to housing, but one unintended consequence was that the number of evictions rose very rapidly. For most people the housing program meant a substantial improvement in living conditions, but sufficient housing was not the answer to everyone's problems. The growing group of evicted persons was mainly composed of the previously homeless. The problems of homelessness could not be solved by simply providing housing – their needs were more complex and vast than that.

Finally, a general but often neglected, problem of measuring poverty and social exclusion is that the poor and excluded may be under-represented in social surveys: "Non-respondents typically are less educated than respondents, hold lower occupational status, and are likely to have low incomes. In many investigations, non-response has also been proved to be higher among the unemployed and the elderly than the workers and the young." And one might add: geographic concentrations of non-response – such as we find in the larger cities of the Netherlands – may very well correlate with concentrations of the poor and excluded. Thus all the target groups for the current programs on social cohesion and social exclusion are prone to non-response, which may lead to unwarranted favourable conclusions.

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Social cohesion thus also implies the capacity of societies to manage social change peacefully, inclusively, and with a view to enhancing individual and group freedoms. The paper continues in section 2 to examine a range of issues which bear on the analysis of causal pathways between jobs and social cohesion. The significance of context is emphasized, and possible positive pathways from (plentiful, good quality) jobs to enhanced social cohesion are examined in four major areas: socialization, participation, social justice and aspiration.Â In order to address social cohesion as a policy goal some key issues need to be addressed. The first concerns values. Social cohesion as a concept cannot really be separated from the generation of shared values, identities and norms. Multiculturalism, Social Cohesion, and Immigrant Integration. How much do ideologies and policies of multiculturalism matter?Â Do multicultural policies increase their sense of social inclusion or political cohesion with immigrant-origin minorities? Even if multiculturalism increases immigrants' civic attachment and sense of inclusion, the negative perception of multiculturalism by certain politicians and right-wing parties in various European countries suggests that some people are very alarmed about diversity.Â 2010. Comparative Analyses of Public Attitudes Toward Immigrants and Immigration Using Multinational Survey Data: A Review of Theories and Research. Annual Review of Sociology 36: 309-328. Joppke, C. 2004.