

## International Anti-Poverty Policies<sup>1</sup>

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## **Introduction**

This brief article will examine the anti-poverty policies currently being advocated by the two leading international policy making bodies – the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). These two organisations are pursuing very different anti-poverty policy solutions. The EU is committed to eradicating poverty and increasing social inclusion using a combination of welfare state mechanisms (including progressive taxation and redistribution) and active labour market interventions, to help create jobs and improve working conditions. By contrast, the World Bank, the leading UN policy-making organisation with respect to anti-poverty policy, has advocated a very different set of policy prescriptions based on neo-liberal economic theory.

## **The Idea of Ending Poverty**

The idea that it is possible to end poverty is over 200 years old. The French Enlightenment philosopher, Marie Jean Antonine Nicolas de Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, argued in *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (published posthumously in 1794 by the Government of the new French Republic) that poverty was not a result of natural laws or divine will but was caused by “*the present imperfections of the social arts*” (Steadman Jones, 2004). He argued that poverty could be ended by the universal provision of pensions, grants to the young, sickness benefits and state education. Similar ‘welfare state’ solutions for poverty can also be found in Thomas Paine’s *Agrarian Justice* (1785) and *Rights of Man* (1791) which argued for progressive taxation and death duties to fund child benefits, pensions and education. The ending of poverty was seen as necessary to reduce social and economic polarisation which, if allowed to persist, would undermine the stability and unity of the democratic Republic.

The possibility of ending world poverty during the 21st Century has gained increasing public support over the past decade. In 1985, Live Aid demonstrated the strength of public concern in the face of an inadequate and hostile response from Margaret Thatcher’s government to poverty and starvation in Africa. In the early 1990s, Martin Dent and Bill Peters and 40 of Martin’s students helped to found the Jubilee 2000 Campaign to try to win remission of the unpayable debts of the world's 50 or so low-income countries. The idea was to revive and link the Jubilee concept - based on the old Judaic tradition of a jubilee year every fifty years when debts were cancelled - with the celebration of the new millennium. From these humble academic beginnings in the Politics department of Keele University, the campaign went on to amass 26 million supporters in 60 countries and put the issue of international

debt firmly on the political agenda<sup>2</sup>.

In 1995, the World Social Summit in Copenhagen (followed by the 1997 launch of the United Nations First Decade for the Eradication of Poverty) helped to raise international public awareness and lend political legitimacy and credibility to the anti-poverty campaigns of many NGOs.

There appears to be growing international support for increased aid to help achieve the Millennium Development Goal<sup>3</sup> targets to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. During 2005, the Make Poverty History campaign received worldwide media coverage for its demands that the G8 Summit<sup>4</sup> should deliver a new ‘Marshall Plan’ of a doubling of aid (to £55bn a year), debt reduction for the poorest countries and fairer international trade.

However, even if all the members of the G8 were to sign up to and deliver on a new ‘Marshall Plan’ for developing countries, there would still be considerable grounds for concern that the Millennium Development Goals would not be met. A major problem is that the World Bank has effectively been pursuing the same broad set of anti-poverty policies for the past 40 years – despite a long history of failure. These policies have three main elements:

- Broad based economic growth.
- Development of human capital through education and health interventions.
- Minimum social safety nets for the poor.

The World Bank (1990, 2001) implements these policies by adhering to neo-liberal economic orthodoxy which Joseph Stiglitz (1998, 2000), who used to be Chief Economist of the World Bank, has described as:

- privatisation, which tends to raise prices for the poor;
- capital market liberalization, which can allow speculators to destabilise countries’ economies;
- market based pricing, which is a way of cutting subsidies for basic food stuffs and fuel and has sometimes resulted in rioting, particularly in South America, eg Bolivia, Ecuador and, recently,

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.new-politics.net/publications/interviews/martin-dent>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.g8.gov.uk>

Argentina (economists should not be provoking riots around the world);

- free trade, which sometimes helps countries' economies but does not always help the poor.

### **Growth is Good for the Poor ?**

The World Bank took a lot of criticism<sup>5</sup>, particularly in the run up to the year 2000, when it produced its Decennial Report on Poverty. Just before the report was released, the Head Economist of the Bank, David Dollar, with one of his colleagues, Aart Kraay, released a paper which purported to prove that growth was good for the poor, that the World Bank's policies worked and were the most effective ones<sup>6</sup>. They looked at data over 40 years from 118 countries and published their findings in the *Journal of Economic Growth*<sup>7</sup>, a prestigious peer-refereed journal. Their report shows that, as average income increases, so does the income of the poorest 20% of the population. Their graph shows virtually a 45° line - it has a slope of 1 (see Figure 1 below from Dollar and Kraay, 2002). As average income increases, so does the income of the poorest.

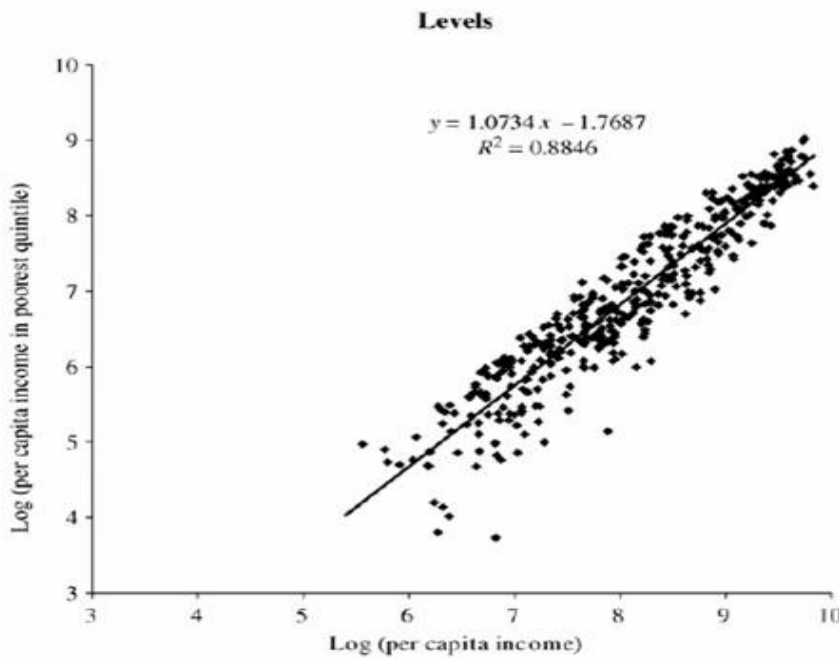
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<sup>5</sup> In pursuit of economic growth, the World Bank has been the main promoter of Structural Adjustment Programmes in developing countries. These usually consist of reducing public spending, reducing inflation, opening local markets to global competition and following other 'neo-liberal' economic policies. These programmes were often met with antagonism in most of the countries they were supposed to help and resulted in considerable animosity against the Bank. According to Professor Else Øyen (President of the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty) this was "*partly due to the harshness of the programme implementation, the failure to obtain the promised results, and the wide spread view that the Bank was on the side of the non-poor, not the poor.*"

<sup>6</sup> The World Bank published a 'preliminary' paper by David Dollar and Aart Kraay called 'Growth is Good for the Poor'. This paper, marked 'Preliminary and Incomplete', was widely distributed and given a huge fanfare of publicity. For example, *The Financial Times* said that the paper "*provides what appears to be incontestable evidence*" that sustained growth raises the real incomes of the poor and that growth is "*helped along by just the policies many of the demonstrators oppose: by macro-economic stability and openness to trade*". Even *The Guardian* joined in. Mark Atkinson wrote on the economic pages that the report illustrated "*the harm that would be inflicted on the poor if governments were to listen too hard to the protesters at Seattle and retreat from open markets*". (for the preliminary paper go to <http://www.worldbank.org/research/growth/pdfiles/growthgoodforpoor.pdf>).

<sup>7</sup> A modified version of the original 'Growth is good for the poor' paper was eventually published two years later; Dollar, D. and Kraay, A. (2002) Growth is good for the poor. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 7, 195-225.

**Figure 1: Growth is Good for the Poor?**



In social science, if you get a very high correlation and a 45° line, you have either discovered a new law of nature or you have made some sort of statistical error. Dollar and Kraay concluded from their analyses the following:

In a large sample of countries spanning the past four decades, average incomes of the poorest fifth of a country on average rise and fall at the same rate as average incomes. This relationship holds across regions and income levels and in normal times as well as during crises. This supports the view that a basic policy package of private property rights, fiscal discipline, macroeconomic stability and openness to trade on average increases the income of the poor to the same extent that it increases the income of the other households in society. On the other hand, we find little evidence that formal democratic institutions or a large degree of government spending on social services systematically affect incomes of the poor.

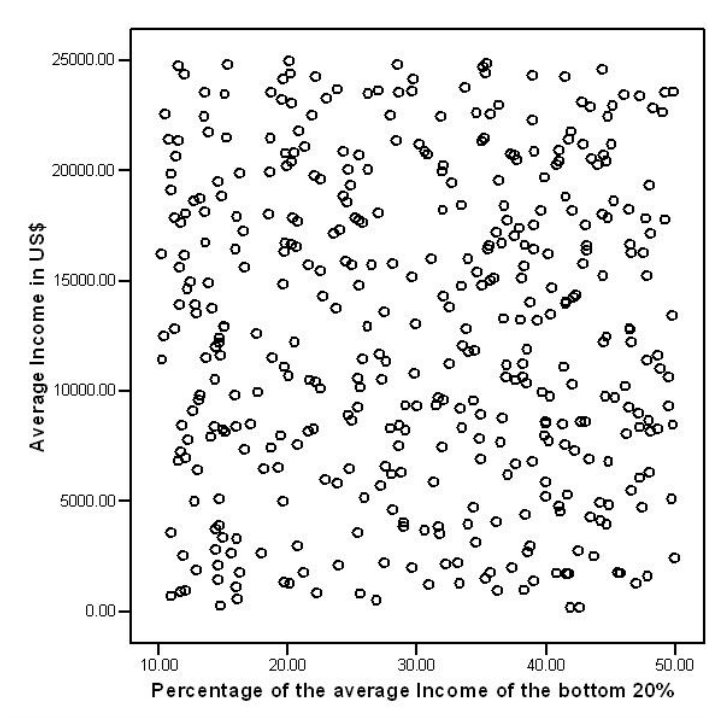
Basically, what they argued was that the World Bank's policy on broad-based economic growth was correct. As the economy grew, average incomes would rise - it didn't matter whether you lived in a rich or poor country or if there were good times or bad, crises or not, the incomes of the poor would also

go up. Government policies on social spending aimed at the poor had no effect, democracy had no effect, neo-liberal policies which would result in economic growth were the answer<sup>8</sup>.

### Are Random Numbers Good for the Poor ?

However, after the release of the World Bank draft paper, two senior researchers working for UNICEF produced an internal UN briefing arguing that there may be fundamental statistical errors in this analysis. Instead of using 418 data sets collected at great expense, two sets of 418 random numbers were generated. There is, of course, zero correlation between these two sets of numbers (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Random Average Income Vs Random Income Share of the Poor**

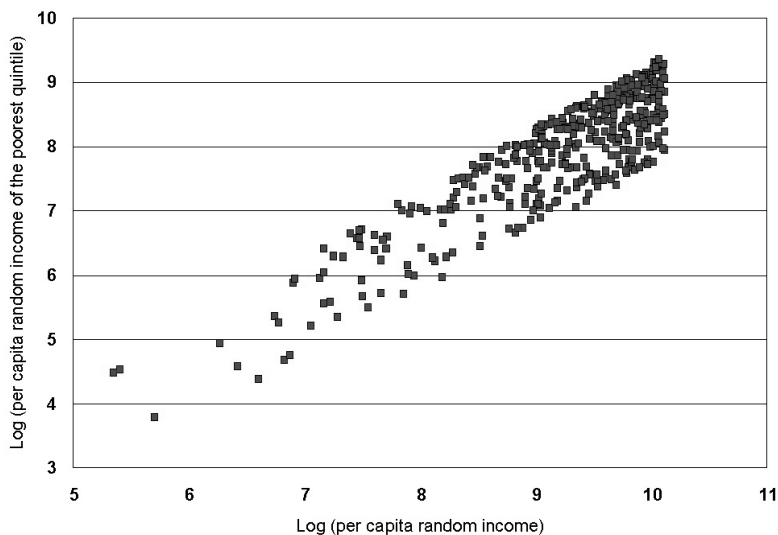


If the analysis method used by Dollar & Kraay (2002) is applied to this data, it shows that, apparently, random numbers are also good for the poor (Figure 3).

<sup>8</sup> *The Guardian* newspapers reported that “the... remarkable conclusions have been greeted with glee by economic fundamentalists”. (Richard Douthwaite, Wednesday June 14, 2000 – <http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardiansociety/story/0,,331543,00.html>)

**Figure 3: Are Random Numbers Good for the Poor ?**

(The same set of random numbers analysed using the methodology of Dollar & Kraay)



Head Economists at the World Bank often win the Nobel Prize - they are not stupid. How on earth could they make this kind of mistake? Well, they were under a lot of pressure but they also are working in a milieu in economics at present which thinks it has found a universal solution to poverty.

### **Faith in the Market**

Some critics have argued that there is a faith in neo-liberal economics that is almost religious<sup>9</sup>. Edward Luttwak (1999) said:

*“at present almost all elite Americans, with corporate chiefs and fashionable economists in the lead, are utterly convinced that they have discovered the winning formula for economic success – the only formula – good for every country, rich or poor; good for all individuals willing and able to heed the message, and of course, good for elite Americans.*

*Privatisation + Deregulation + Globalisation = Turbo – Capitalism = Prosperity”*

<sup>9</sup> For example, see Frank, T. (2001) *One Market Under God: extreme capitalism, market populism and the end of economic democracy*. London, Secker & Warburg.

George Gilder (Ronald Reagan's favourite economist and the man he quoted the most in his speeches) wrote a very influential book in 1981, entitled *Wealth and Poverty*. He argued that spending on poor people just made them dependent on benefits and that the problem with poverty was that the world is plagued not so much by poverty but by a rampant "*suspicion of wealth...everywhere these ideas prevail...poverty persists and spreads*".

In 1984, in *The Spirit of Enterprise*, he added:

*"It is the entrepreneurs who know the rules of the world and the laws of God"*.

A recent editorial from the Economist (13/03/2004) argues exactly the same message as Gilder made in the 1980s:

*"towards the end of the century, many developing countries – China and India among them – finally threw off this victim's mantle and began to embrace wicked capitalism, both in the way they organised their domestic economies and in their approach to international trade. All of a sudden, they are a lot less poor, and it hasn't cost the West a cent."*

This is, of course, nonsense. China is not a capitalist country and the five year economic plan of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in China is not a model of neo-liberal capitalist economics<sup>10</sup>.

Faith is a good thing in religion but in social science you have to treat it in the same way as Mark Twain advised, when he said:

*"your faith is what you believe, not what you know"*

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<sup>10</sup> Strangely enough, the Guardian (27th May 2004) reported that James Wolfensohn (President of the World Bank), found himself in the unusual position of praising the Communist party's five-year economic plans: "*Shanghai is the obvious place to start in considering ways to reduce poverty. There is something here we need to learn about constancy and good management,*" he said, "*This is not a conference for teaching the Washington consensus. The Washington consensus has been dead for years. Today there is no consensus. We are not here to teach doctrines but to exchange ideas.*"  
(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/china/story/0,7369,1225686,00.html>)

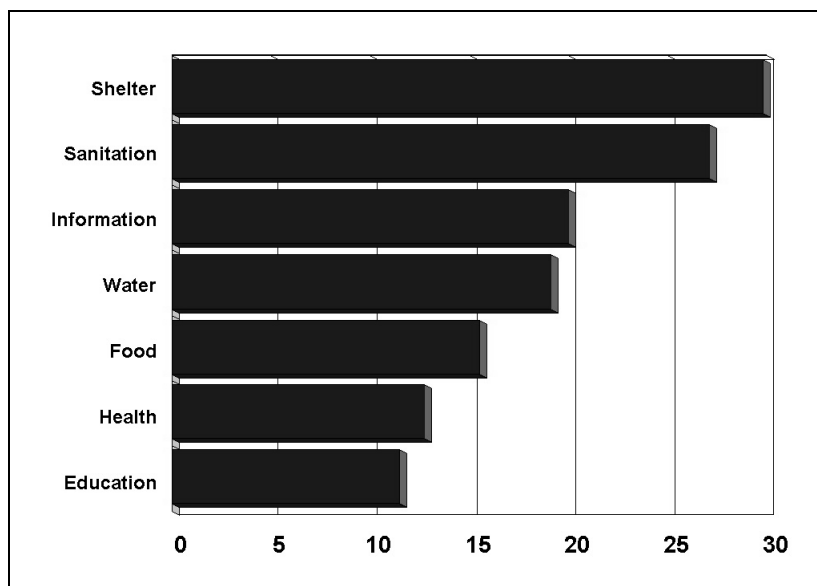


### Is Human Capital Development the answer to poverty ?

If the first plank of the World Bank’s anti-poverty policies are built on sand what about the second plank? This is Human Capital Development through education and health interventions and school-based food and nutrition programmes. Recent UNICEF and the Department for International Development (DFID) funded research at the Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research at Bristol University has produced the first scientific estimates on the extent and nature of absolute poverty and severe deprivation of basic human needs suffered by the world’s children<sup>11</sup>. Over one billion children – about half the world’s children - suffer from severe deprivations of basic human need and 30% (650 million) suffer from absolute poverty (two or more severe deprivations).

Severe shelter and severe sanitation deprivation are the problems affecting the greatest number of children in the world, with about 640 million children living in dwellings with more than five people per room or which have mud flooring. Over half a billion children (27%) have no toilet facilities whatsoever (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Percent of the world’s children severely deprived of basic human needs**



See – Gordon et al (2003) for details

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bris.ac.uk/poverty/child%20poverty.html>

This research shows that considerably more emphasis needs to be placed on improving basic infrastructure and social services for families with children, particularly with regards to shelter, sanitation and water in rural areas. The severe deprivations of basic human need which affect the greatest number of children are ‘physical capital’ problems - deprivation of shelter, water and sanitation. Fewer children suffer from deprivations of ‘human capital’ – health, education and nutrition. However, most of the World Bank’s and bilateral donors’ anti-poverty policies are aimed at improving human capital, particularly in urban areas.

There are very few policies at the moment which deal with the ‘physical capital’ problems and virtually no large scale programmes to improve rural housing in developing countries. There is a real political problem here - politicians are much keener to open schools and hospitals than they are to open public toilet facilities or sewerage treatment plants or water plants or to build social housing in rural areas, yet we know from the history of Europe - and the reduction in death rates and improvement in living conditions - that getting these basics right - shelter, sanitation and water - are what have the big impact on peoples’ lives. What stops children from dying prematurely are improvements to water, sanitation and housing.

### **Minimum Social Safety Nets for the Poor**

The World Bank’s pursuit of minimum social safety nets for the poor is based on the superficially attractive idea that, since ‘poor’ countries do not have sufficient resources to pay for comprehensive welfare benefits, then minimum social safety nets will allow these limited resources to be targeted at those most in need. However, social policy research over the past hundred years has shown that minimum social safety net schemes are an ineffective means for ending poverty as they are invariably complex and costly to administer, socially divisive, stigmatising, plagued by problems of non-take up and often result in the creation of poverty traps. Targeting by means of universal benefits and services (e.g. pensions, child benefit, student grants, etc.) is a very effective mechanism for eradicating poverty. By contrast, ‘targeting’ by means-testing is an expensive, inefficient and ineffective method of combating poverty.

In the 1950s, Richard Titmus argued that welfare services should not be perceived as a stigmatizing ‘benefit’ the use of which involves a loss of status, dignity and/or self-respect. They should be

universal, available and accessible to the whole population through channels that would not involve a shame, stigma or a sense of inferiority, preferably as social or welfare rights of all citizens. The problem with minimum social safety nets and other benefits and services for the poor is that they invariably become poor services. To maintain good services and benefits the majority need to benefit from them otherwise they will lack political legitimacy and widespread support.

Many social scientists (and policy makers) believe that the World Bank and IMF would have had much greater successes at reducing poverty if they had required that countries seeking aid complied with the ILO's (1952) Convention on Minimum Standards of Social Security<sup>12</sup>, which is concerned with minimum standards for the population as a whole, rather than pursuing the neo-liberal 'Washington consensus' policies already described above.

### **European Union Anti-Poverty and Social Exclusion Initiatives**

European Union anti-poverty and social inclusion policies are very different to those being pursued by the World Bank. In 1961, the Council of Europe adopted a Social Charter which provided a European dimension to the provisions in the United Nations International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), such as the right to social security and protection. Although the Social Charter was not legally binding, it did influence subsequent European Union social policies (Hantrais, 1995).

In 1974, a Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the European Community established a Social Action Programme which stated that economic growth should not be seen as an end in itself but should result in improvements in the quality of life of European citizens.

As part of the negotiations around the establishment of the Social Action Programme, a proposal for an anti-poverty programme received support (Shanks, 1977) and the first of three European Union Poverty Programmes was agreed by an unanimous vote of the Council of Ministers of the European Community in 1975 (Council Decision 75/458/EEC). The first Poverty Programme ran from 1975-80, the second from 1980-1989 and the third from 1990-1994. All three poverty programmes were relatively small scale (Kleinman, 2002). The first programme consisted of just 21 pilot and action

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C102>

projects and the second consisted of 65 action research projects and received 29 million ECUs of funding. The Poverty 3 programme received increased funding of 55 million ECUs and had a more formal structure which included the establishment of an Observatory on National Policies to Combat Social Exclusion (Hantrais, 1995). The Observatory reported annually to the European Commission and its role was to promote social policy analysis and information exchange. The Observatory adopted a rights-based approach which defined social exclusion in terms of access and barriers to the fulfilment of the right to employment, housing and health care (Andersen et al, 1994). The work of the Observatory and the Poverty 3 programme was influential in promoting the concept of social exclusion (Duffy, 1998).

In 1993, the European Commission proposed a much larger Poverty 4 programme with a total budget of 121 million ECUs. However, the objections of a number of ‘conservative’ governments, particularly that of the UK, resulted in the demise of the EU Poverty Programmes. The UK government’s position, at that time, was that poverty did not exist in the UK (or Europe?) and so there was no need for another European Poverty Programme. The argument that poverty no longer existed was set out by John Moore (then UK Secretary of State for Social Security) in a speech in May 1989 at St Stephen’s Club. He claimed that poverty, as most people understood it, had been abolished and that critics of the government’s policies were:

*“not concerned with the actual living standards of real people but with pursuing the political goal of equality ... We reject their claims about poverty in the UK, and we do so knowing that their motive is not compassion for the less well-off, it is an attempt to discredit our real economic achievement in protecting and improving the living standards of our people. Their purpose in calling ‘poverty’ what is in reality simply inequality, is so they can call western material capitalism a failure. We must expose this for what it is ... utterly false.*

*it is capitalism that has wiped out the stark want of Dickensian Britain.*

*it is capitalism that has caused the steady improvements in living standards this century.*

*and it is capitalism which is the only firm guarantee of still better living standards for our children and our grandchildren.”*

A senior Civil Servant, the Assistant Secretary for Policy on Family Benefits and Low Incomes at

the UK Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS), had made the same point more succinctly when he gave evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Social Services the previous June. He stated: *“The word poor is one the government actually disputes.”* (see Gordon and Pantazis, 1997 for discussion).

Veit-Wilson (2000) argues that these objections to the existence of poverty were influential for the adoption of the rather nebulous concept of social exclusion by European Union policy makers. He states:

*“The choice of ‘social exclusion’ as the preferred term for the problem was a deliberate political choice by European Union members to avoid any government having to admit to the existence of poverty (interview with European Commission official 1993). Stripped of redundant noise, this was a choice of politically acceptable terms, not between distinct concepts”* (Veit-Wilson, 2000, p24)

During the discussions on the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s, many EU Member States wanted the European Community to have a greater role in social policy. However, at that time, the UK Government objected to any increase in Community powers in this field. Consequently, the social provisions agreed at Maastricht did not become part of the main body of the Treaty but were incorporated as a protocol and an annexed agreement that applied to all Member States - except the UK.

In 1997, the Labour Party won the UK General Election and Tony Blair’s new government decided to end the British opt-out from the Agreement on Social Policy. It thus became possible to incorporate the agreement into the main text of the Amsterdam Treaty. Articles 136 and 137 of the Amsterdam Treaty<sup>13</sup>, effective since May 1999, have extended the European Union’s powers to combat poverty and social exclusion and this contributed to the launch of a European social inclusion strategy at the Lisbon Summit of the European Council in March 2000. The development of anti-poverty and social inclusion strategies was formalised at the December 2000 Nice Summit of the European Council as part of the European Social Agenda. The key objectives are set out in four main groups of aims, which include:

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<sup>13</sup> : <http://www.hrea.org/erc/Library/hrdocs/eu/Amsterdam-treaty.pdf>

Facilitating participation in employment and access by all to resources, rights, goods and services

Promoting access to stable employment for all those able to work.

Preventing exclusion from work by improving employability.

Guaranteeing everyone has the resources to live with human dignity.

Implementing policies that aim to provide access for all to decent housing with adequate basic services.

Providing access for all to appropriate healthcare.

Developing, for the benefit of those at risk of exclusion, services facilitating access to education, justice and services (eg. culture, sport, leisure).

Preventing the risk of social exclusion

Exploiting fully the potential of ICT and ensure that no-one is excluded.

Developing policies that seek to prevent life crises that can lead to social exclusion (eg. debt, homelessness, school exclusion).

Helping the most vulnerable

Promoting integration of those with particular integration problems (eg. people with disabilities).

Developing comprehensive actions in favour of areas of social exclusion.

Mobilising all relevant bodies

Promoting the participation of people experiencing exclusion.

Mainstreaming the fight against exclusion into overall policy.

Promoting dialogue and partnership between all relevant public and private bodies.

Given the varied legal frameworks and bureaucratic traditions of European Union countries, it was agreed at the Lisbon European Council (March 2000) that implementation of the strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion should operate via an “*open method of coordination*” (Ferrera, Matsaganis and Sacchi, 2002). This involves:

- setting objectives,
- implementing these objectives through national action plans,
- developing common quantitative and qualitative indicators,
- monitoring, evaluation and a peer review.

In January 2005, the European Union Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion<sup>14</sup> outlined seven key policy priorities:

1. increase labour market participation by expanding active policies and ensuring a better linkage between social protection, education and lifelong learning;
2. modernise social protection systems to ensure they are sustainable, adequate and accessible to all;
3. tackle disadvantages in education and training by investing more in human capital at all ages and focusing particularly on the most disadvantaged groups;
4. eliminate child poverty by guaranteeing their education, increasing the assistance given to their families and ensuring that their rights are protected;
5. ensure decent accommodation for vulnerable groups and develop integrated approaches to tackling homelessness;
6. improve access to quality services in the fields of health, social services, transport and the new information and communication technologies;
7. eliminate sex discrimination and increase the social integration of people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and immigrants.

## **Conclusion**

Poverty is the world's most ruthless killer and the greatest cause of suffering on earth. The 1995 World Health Organisation report argued that:

*“Poverty is the main reason why babies are not vaccinated, clean water and sanitation are not provided, and curative drugs and other treatments are unavailable and why mothers die in childbirth. Poverty is the main cause of reduced life expectancy, of*

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<sup>14</sup> : <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c10622.htm>

*handicap and disability, and of starvation. Poverty is a major contributor to mental illness, stress, suicide, family disintegration and substance abuse.”*

Yet the costs of meeting the basic needs of every person in the world are relatively small compared with the vast wealth available. The practical policies and institutional mechanisms needed to end world poverty are well known and widely understood. No scientific breakthroughs are required to provide everybody with a safe water supply, a nutritious diet, adequate housing and basic health care. No new knowledge is needed to provide all children with an education. A wide range of comprehensive welfare state models in European countries have been proven to be effective mechanism for delivering social security and welfare (Gordon and Townsend, 2000).

Unfortunately, the World Bank has been pursuing the same basic set of anti-poverty policies and practices for over 40 years. These policies have proved to be an ineffective and inefficient mechanism for reducing world poverty – there are more poor people living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century than there were in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This increase in global poverty is partly a result of rapid global population growth since the 1950’s – there are more people and thus more poor people.

However population increases are not the cause of the increase in global poverty since economic growth has outstripped population growth for the past 50 years. The World is much richer today, in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per person, than it was at any time in the past. However, this economic growth has often not benefited poor people in many developing countries, it is mainly people in the ‘rich’ countries or the elites and sometimes the middle classes in ‘poor’ countries who have benefited.

The anti-poverty policies being pursued by the European Union are very different from those advocated by the World Bank. These EU policies include a substantial element of redistribution of income and wealth via welfare state mechanisms and active labour market interventions. These redistributive policies combined with investments in basic public infrastructure and job creation programmes are known to be effective mechanisms for alleviating poverty and social exclusion. There is a growing evidence base on which anti-poverty policies are effective and cost efficient (see Townsend and Gordon, 2002). These are:



**Progressive tax and income policies** with income redistribution from ‘rich’ to ‘poor’ and from men to women. As well as redistribution of income across an individual’s life span by taxing and reducing income levels in middle age balanced with then paying social benefits to increase income during childhood and old age

**Active labour market interventions** to create high quality jobs. Enforcement of minimum standards on wages and working conditions of the low paid within an international framework.

**Universal social insurance and public social services** - the ‘basic needs services’. Introduction of internationally agreed minimum levels of benefit – such as in International Labour Convention No. 102 concerning Minimum Standards of Social Security

**Greater accountability** and increased social and democratic control over trans-national corporations and international agencies, to remedy the ‘democratic deficit’.

The eradication of poverty during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will require the pursuit of these and similar policies. The ‘Washington Consensus’ policies advocated by the World Bank during the 20<sup>th</sup> century have not worked and need to be abandoned.

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## 社会科学研究所 定例研究会 報告要旨

日 時 : 2006年7月8日(土) 13:30~16:30

場 所 : 専修大学神田校舎1号館301教室

全体テーマ:「憲法改正国民投票法案の検討」

報告者 : 飯島 滋明(専修大学法学部非常勤講師)

「与党案について」

内藤 光博(所員・専修大学法学部教授)

「民主党案について」

司 会 : 古川 純(所員・専修大学法学部教授)

共 催 : けんぼう市民フォーラム

2006年5月26日に、与党(自民・公明)と民主党により、それぞれ衆議院に提出された「憲法改正国民投票法案」について、シンポジウムの形で定例研究会が開催された。

第1報告者である飯島滋明氏は、総論として、国民投票のプレシット性の危険性に言及し、実際の国民意志とは異なるのに、あたかも国民が決定したかのような結果を生み出す危険性、反民主主義的な政治運営をもたらす危険性を指摘した。次に、「与党案」と「民主党案」の比較を行ったうえで、国民投票法の制定の真の意図は、海外で戦争のできる国家にし、国民や地方公共団体を法的に国家=中央政府の法的拘束のもとに置くことのできる体制(=国家総動員体制)を確立できるような憲法に改悪するための外堀を埋める行為であること、「国民投票の過半数」を「有効投票数の過半数」とすることで、国民意思の歪曲をもたらすこと、投票方式としての「関連事項区分方式」は新たな「一括投票方式」であること、国民投票運動の規制の問題性、「組織的多数人買収罪」(109条)の不明確性、「国民投票広報」(14条1項)の問題点などを指摘した。

第2報告者では、「民主党案について」、第1に、国政問題国民投票制度を含む民主党案について、プレシットの可能性を指摘した上で、「関連事項区分方式」の問題点、発議から投票までの期間は短すぎる点、最低投票率制度を導入しない「国民の過半数の賛成」の基準は民意を反映できない点が指摘された。第2に、メディアの報道の自由化に関連して、国民投票についてのメディアの原則自由な報道とすることは、財力の多寡による言論の不正を招くこと、政党等の放送による意見広告の無料化(公営化)について、何故に政党のみに意見広告が無料とされるのか、またその細則について所属議員「数を踏まえて」憲法改正広報協議会がテレビ放送や新聞の意見広告の回数や時間、紙面の広さ(面積)を決定するが、これは改正反対政党に圧倒的に不利になることなどが指摘された。

文責: 専修大学法学部教授 内藤光博

2006年7月8日(土) 定例研究会報告

テーマ： コウホート分析研究会

報告者： 森 宏 研究参与ほか

時間： 14:00 から 17:45 まで

場所： 神田校舎 7A

報告内容概略：

本研究会では3件の報告と討論セッションが行われた。まず早稲田大学の稲葉敏夫教授から「社会科学研究のためのコウホート分析」と題して、コウホート分析のフレームワークや概念の説明が行われ、文献サーヴェイに基づいて「人口・世帯別消費」や「広義の年齢要因を補正した時代効果の意味内容」などについて研究成果が発表された。稲葉教授の発表に対し元西友フーズ社長の蜂巢賢一氏が自身の経験などを交えながら、コメントした。

次いで、中央農業総合研究センターマーケティング研究グループの石橋喜美子氏により「生鮮魚介の家庭内消費量の変化について」と題し、家計調査の個票分析に基づいた発表が行われた。また、本研究所の森宏研究参与により、石橋氏の発表に補足する形でコウホート分析を用いた報告がなされた。石橋氏および森参与の発表については埼玉大学名誉教授の秋谷重男氏より長きに渡る自身の研究を交えながらコメントがなされた。

最後に駒澤大学の田中正光講師によって「コウホート分析による果物消費の予測」が発表され、2015年および2025年の消費予測をした。これに対し、農林水産省果樹花き課の西嶋英樹課長補佐が行政の担当者の立場からコメントされた。

小休止をはさみ、京都大学大学院農学研究科の小田滋晃教授の司会によって討論セッションが行われた。

記：専修大学経営学部・佐藤康一郎

### 〈編集後記〉

2006年度前期に経済学部客員教授として専修大学で教鞭をとられたデヴィッド・ゴードン先生の論文です。6月に行われた定例研究会での発表の内容が、コンパクトにまとまっています。ゴードンさんは現在、英国貧困研究の泰斗ピーター・タウンゼントの名を冠したブリストル大学の「タウンゼント国際貧困研究所」で所長を務められており、本論文は同研究所における研究のエッセンスを知る上で有益です。

なかでも興味深いのは、「経済成長と貧困削減の正の相関関係」を立証したとする世界銀行のエコノミストたちの分析を批判しているくだりです。周知のように日本でも昨今、成長と格差の問題が新たな論議をよんでいます。統計データをどう使うか・どう読むかに関し、社会科学に共通する面白さと難しさについて改めて考えさせられた次第です。

海外交流協定校からの客員の先生方には、学生への教育を第一義的にお願いしているわけですが、今回社研という場をつうじて、教員が研究上のお話を伺う機会ももてたことは有意義だったと思います。お忙しいなか報告・寄稿して下さったゴードンさんに改めて感謝申し上げます。

(永島 剛)

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