

Conference on Poverty between Reality and Perceptions: the Communication Challenge Brussels - 29 October

From Maeve McGoldrick: Community Links

Overview of perceptions of poverty

Delegates from the UK were invited to attend the conference in Brussels on the 29 October which brought together NGOs, decision makers, activists and 150 journalists from across Europe to discuss different perceptions of poverty in each EU member state and potential communications challenges for 2010. The conference began with an overview of Europeans perception of poverty and exclusion in the context of the crisis, developing trends; feelings of vulnerability, isolation and fear, the varying perceptions of inequality in each country, what category is considered most at risk (over half of Europeans, 56% believe that the unemployed are most at risk) and who is considered primarily responsible for tackling poverty (53% said National Government).

Role of the media

The role of the media, including social media (twitter, facebook) was compared to concrete action; how it can have a multiplier effect for public support. Fintan Farrell drew on the importance of clarity about **what** we communicate for the potential to create action on top of raising awareness. Elise Williame stressed the value of capturing personal stories and local action in communicating positive images that do not make people feel guilty for being poor. To end the conference journalists and activists discussed stereotypes and myth-busting techniques; asking people about their experiences but also, importantly, **why** they are poor; revealing the structural failures that need to be addressed.

The Communications Challenge

There was optimism that 2010 could be the tipping point for communications; where poverty will have a place in the media and an impact within society, that combating poverty is not just a leadership challenge; it is also a communications challenge. It was felt that 2010 should be an opportunity to communicate the real situation about poverty in Europe. It should be an opportunity to communicate in the media in a way that will lead to action and will enable the hardest to reach voices to get heard; an act to combat poverty and exclusion in itself.

Inside this issue

- Conference on Poverty 1
- Current News 1
- Upcoming Events 2

Editorial Team: Sharon Cooper & George Bell

Current News

In the previous edition of "Eyes on EY2010", we provided a brief overview of the 'Tackling Social Exclusion in the Economic Downturn: The Way Forward' event which took place on Thursday 22 October in London.

We have now received copies of the presentations from a few of the speakers:

- David Morris, University of Central Lancashire and The King's Fund
- Ann Watt, Cabinet Office
- Timothy Bird, North East Mental Health Development Unit.

The presentations are available for download from our website: www.dwp.gov.uk/european-year-2010.

EY2010 Logo

If you are arranging an event that is not funded as part of our programmes but wish to use the logo, you can download a '**Request to use the EY2010 Logo**' form from our website.

We will consider all requests fairly and respond within 5 working days.

Next issue

The next issue of this newsletter will be published on **20 November**. If you wish to submit articles or details of events please submit by **noon on 18 November** via email.

Upcoming Events

November 2009

- 6 November – ‘We’re stronger together – A celebration of the GenderWorks project’:** Oxfam are running a series of roadshows in November to mark the end of GenderWorks which is a project that has explored the problems faced by women in poverty. The first of which is at The Victorian Bar, Tron Theatre, 63 Trongate, G1 5HB, Glasgow between 11.00 – 15.00. A chance for women to come together and celebrate their achievements – to book your free place in Glasgow e-mail Jmoir@oxfam.org.uk.

This is followed by **18, 19 and 24th November** meetings where Oxfam will launch the GenderWorks DVD and Toolkit. To book your free place in Cardiff, London or Manchester, please email hcortbawi@oxfam.org.uk
- 19 November – ‘No Going Back – Empowering Single Parents out of Poverty’** Single Parent Action Network conference at 34 Great Smith Street, Westminster, London. Confirmed speakers include:

Yvette Cooper MP – Secretary of State, Department for Works & Pensions

Caroline Kelham – Head of Child Poverty Unit, Dept for Works & Pensions

For further information tel 0117 951 4231 fax 0117 935 5208 or e-mail lsobel@spanuk.org.uk
- 24 & 25 November – ‘Rights, Indicators and Outcomes: Measuring the Well-being of Children and Young People in Wales’.** 2 day conference at the Christchurch Centre in Newport, South Wales. Confirmed speakers include:

Angela Eagle MP – DWP Minister with responsibility for European Union issues and Minister of State for Pensions and the Ageing Society

Dr. Brian Gibbons AM – Minister for Social Justice and Local Government (with a lead on poverty).

Jane Hutt AM – Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning (with a lead on Children & Young people).

Richard Thurston & Dr Beverley Morgan – Office of the Chief Social Research Officer, Welsh Assembly Government.

Catriona Williams – Chief Executive Children In Wales (and President of Eurochild)

Tracey Lee – Managing Director, Newport City Council

For further information: please contact Ms Sarah Thomas: email sarah.thomas@childreninwales.org.uk

Upcoming Events

(cont)

- 30 November – European Cities Against Child Poverty** - final conference & policy workshop 9.30 – 16.00 Glaziers Hall, London Bridge, London The European Cities Against Child Poverty network will meet for the final time on Tuesday 1 December. Confirmed speakers include:

Helen Goodman MP – Parliamentary Under Secretary for Work and Pensions.

Representatives of local and regional governments and front-line organisations are invited to attend to meet delegates from other European cities and the European Commission.

For further information on the network, please visit www.againstchildpoverty.com.

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