

Submission to Stream 16

Perceptions of and attitudes to poverty and social exclusion and the role of the European Union in the context of the Economic Crisis

This paper will draw on a study which aims to answer the following overarching research questions: How do macro-social factors such as age, gender, education and socio-economic background relate to perceptions of and attitudes towards poverty and social exclusion and the role of the EU in key social policy areas and in particular poverty and social exclusion? Does this vary across states depending on openness of the economy, as defined by dependence on external trade; welfare regime characteristics and stage of the economic cycle? These questions will be addressed through a broad comparative analysis incorporating Eurobarometer (EB) survey data on perceptions of and attitudes to poverty and social exclusion and the role of the EU in social policy from March 2007 and December 2009 and data from two EB surveys on monitoring the social impact of the crisis conducted in July and December 2009. The broad comparative analysis will be supplemented by reference to comparative case studies of Ireland and Belgium as small open economies and the UK and France as large relatively closed economies. The theoretical context within which these questions will be addressed encompasses the macro-forces contributing to poverty and social exclusion and how these are filtered through supra-national institutional structures and national political and economic configurations and the intensified globalisation of trade and financial transactions associated with economic and financial crisis.

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