

Eighth ESPAnet Conference 2010

Stream 2: Poverty and Social Exclusion

A rights-based approach towards eliminating poverty in Europe

This paper will provide an outline of a rights-based approach towards poverty eradication in Europe. It will show that such an approach is an effective policy for social protection and social investment, including during times of crisis. The paper will start with reviewing some key comparative indicators on the various dimensions of poverty and social exclusion in Europe. It will then discuss some of the recent thinking on the rights-based approach to poverty that has been developed within the context of the UN Human Rights Council, and in particular within the context of the draft Guidelines on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. It will then examine some key obstacles to the full enjoyment of (some civil and political, as well as a variety of economic and social) human rights by people living in poverty, in particular in Europe. It will also examine under what conditions people living in poverty would be able to claim their rights. The paper will conclude with some recommendations for European, national and local social and economic policy-making. It will also provide some thoughts as to how a rights-based approach can be integrated into the current architecture of European welfare states, with particular reference to financing and governance.

Wouter van Ginneken
ISSA Consultant
497, chemin de Chané
F-01220 Divonne-les-Bains
FRANCE
Tel: +33 450 20 08 56
E-mail: van.ginn@orange.fr