

2010 EUROPEAN YEAR FOR COMBATING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In Brief

2010 is the *European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion* (EY2010). Member States have organised activities at national, regional and local levels to increase public awareness of poverty and social exclusion, how it affects people and societies, and how it can be eliminated.

The EU has provided a budget of €17 million which should rise to €26 million through contributions from Member States and other sponsors. The UK budget for the *Year* is approximately £1.2 million. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for coordinating the *Year* in the UK. Each of the UK devolved regions is running events.

Why a “European Year”?

The first *European Year* was established in 1983. In nearly every year since then the EU has chosen a priority theme with the aim of raising public awareness of that specific issue.

2010 is a significant date. It marks the 10th anniversary of the Lisbon Council which made a commitment to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010. However, this objective is far from being met - it is estimated that 16% of the European Union's population - 79 million people live below the poverty line.

What does the Year hope to achieve?

Fighting poverty and social exclusion is vital to the EU's goals of improving social cohesion, achieving economic growth and improving employment opportunities. With the sharp rise in unemployment that many countries are facing, there are more people than ever at risk of falling into poverty, so the *Year* takes place at a significant point in time.

In designating this *European Year* the EU aims to reaffirm the importance of collective responsibility in combating poverty, bring together people working in this area and give a voice to those who are experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

What will be happening?

The 27 EU countries as well as Norway and Iceland are taking part. A variety of activities are planned at EU, and at national, regional and local level in Member States. These include meetings, discussions and conferences, awareness campaigns, innovative schemes to promote social inclusion, and competitions highlighting success stories.

How was funding obtained?

Regional activities:

Each of the nine Government Office Regions of England and each of the devolved administrations were invited by DWP to submit proposals for regional activities. A maximum budget of £30,000 was available for any regional activity.

Thematic programmes:

Proposals were also sought in respect of the delivery of four UK-wide programmes of activity that would be delivered at a local or grassroots level. The activity had to be aligned to one of the Year's key thematic challenges – child poverty, severe multiple deprivation and those at most risk of social exclusion, working age adults (that is, overcoming barriers to participation in the labour market) and Older People and poverty or social exclusion. A maximum of £125,000 was available for each of these thematic programmes.

What is the UK doing?

- The UK is running a mixed programme of local and national activities which aim to:
 - Involve people experiencing poverty and/or those experiencing social exclusion
 - Include workshops, seminars, focus groups for people who use services to see what's working and what's not
 - Bring together people experiencing poverty and the policy makers
 - Give a voice to children and young people
- The UK launch for the European Year will be held in Bristol on 16 March¹.
- A key UK event will be the Eurocities in-depth review seminar on child poverty in September. This two day international conference will bring together practitioners, academics, experts, and key stakeholders to improve knowledge, skills and insights into the problems and solutions of child poverty. The particular themes will be; the contribution of cities; the roles of local partners and the role of national and international leadership legislation and resources in tackling the child poverty challenge².

¹ The Programme is available at:

<http://www.southwestuk.eu/system/files/documents/doc/Draft%20programme%20EY%20Combating%20Poverty%20and%20Social%20Exclusion%20final%20%282%29.doc>

² <http://www.eurocities.eu/main.php>

What is Northern Ireland doing?

- As part of the *European Year*, CSV Media are hosting a talk in Belfast on the theme of combating poverty on Monday 1 March. The speakers are Richard Wilkinson (co-author of *The Spirit Level*), Paddy Hilliard and Gerry Mulligan (OFMDFM)³.
- The Northern Ireland launch of the *European Year* will be held on 24 March in Belfast City Hall. This event aims to showcase the work taking place at both a local and regional level to tackle social exclusion and seeks to raise awareness of the initiatives currently in place to tackle poverty and social exclusion. It is anticipated that around 200 people will attend the event.
- Save the Children Northern Ireland has won its bid for funding of a regional 2010 European Year activity. The project will involve participatory research with family members and young people with findings feeding into a conference designed to engage policymakers and decision-makers. Outcomes will constitute a *World Apart* exhibition touring Northern Ireland during the autumn. Over 100 people will be directly involved, many of them children.⁴
- Save the Children has also been successful in winning its bid for funding of a thematic 2010 European Year programme of activity: *Speaking Out Against Poverty* (SOAP). Save the Children alongside partner organisations will deliver a series of workshops to build understanding of poverty and its effects on young people and their communities. These communities in Belfast, Derry and Dungannon will be among the poorest in our society and dealing with issues such as high unemployment, health issues, poor educational attainment and debt. Young people will take part in a series of community based initiatives to tackle these poverty related issues, they shall record evidence of poverty and demonstrate opportunities to improve their community and shall challenge decision makers at local and national level to take action to eradicate poverty by 2010.

What's happening in Scotland?

- For the *European Year* the Poverty Alliance is running a series of 10 seminars entitled "*Fighting Poverty in Scotland – Achievements and Possibilities*" throughout Scotland starting in March with the aim of raising the profile of the debate about how best to tackle poverty.
- A key event for the *Year* is a conference; "*Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe through education for Democratic citizenship /Human Rights education*" in Glasgow on 3 and 4 March. The program consists of country reports and case studies from all over Europe to highlight the effects of poverty and social exclusion for democratic citizenship and human rights education – and vice versa.

³ <http://www.communityni.org/event/ey2010-combating-poverty-social-exclusion-event>

⁴ For a list of all UK Thematic programmes see DWP's latest newsletter "Eyes on EY2010"
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/european-year-2010/>

What's happening in Wales?

- Actions taken by the Assembly Government, the executive body of the National Assembly for Wales, to raise the profile of the *European Year* include:
 - Making information about the *Year* available through the Assembly Government's website
 - Making information available to Assembly Government departments and asking them to circulate it to relevant stakeholders
 - Liaising with stakeholders such as the End Poverty Network, the Welsh Local government Association, the Anti-Poverty Network Cymru and Children in Wales
 - Advertising calls for proposals
 - A news page article to Assembly Government staff to raise awareness internally

- Towards the end of 2009 the European and External Affairs Committee in the National Assembly for Wales carried out a short inquiry into the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion⁵. The Terms of Reference for the inquiry were:
 - To understand the relevance to Wales of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion
 - To ascertain how the Welsh Government proposes to engage with the *European Year* including its involvement in the UK National Implementing body, details of any events or campaigns it proposes to organise and any additional funding it proposes to make available to the third sector to support activities across Wales during the *Year*.
 - To understand what (if any) strategy the Welsh Government has towards "European Years" in general, to ensure Wales is engaging as effectively as possible for the opportunities these present
 - To explore how the National Assembly for Wales can support initiatives such as the 2010 European Year and future European Years
 - To hear from Welsh and European Stakeholders about how best practice is being shared and the actions they have planned to maximise the opportunities presented by the 2010 European Year.

The main emerging issues from the inquiry were:

- The overarching aim of EY2010 is to raise awareness of poverty and social exclusion
- It's an opportunity for exchange of best practice at EU and international level

⁵ http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-committees/bus-committees-other-committees/bus-committees-third-eur-home/bus-committees-third-eur-agendas/eur_3_-03-10-p1-e_-mrs100361_key_issues_paper_ey2010_inquiry.pdf?langoption=3&ttl=EUR%283%29-03-10%20%3A%20Paper%201%20%3A%20European%20Year%20for%20Combating%20Poverty%20and%20Social%20Exclusion%202010%3A%20Consideration%20of%20Key%20Issues%20%28PDF%2C%20153KB%29

- Third sector and organisations and networks are the primary target of the European Year
 - Child poverty and child well being are areas in need of attention during EY2010, including calls for more concerted action on these issues at EU level
 - EY2010 can be part of a wider lobbying strategy to create a “lasting political legacy”
 - It is an opportunity to clarify how Wales compares on EU-wide common indicators of poverty, both in an “absolute” sense and in terms of the “relative measures” of poverty
- A key event in Wales EY2010 programme will be “*Tackling poverty and social exclusion in Wales*”, a conference to encourage the exchange of solutions to poverty, and to give a voice to those most affected. The Bevan Foundation, a Welsh think-tank and research charity is organising the event.

What’s happening in the Republic of Ireland ⁶

- Minister Mary Hannifin TD launched the Irish programme for *EY 2010* on 5th February 2010. The programme involves a range of events and activities throughout the country organised by Government departments, and agencies, local authorities, expert organisations, social partners, and national and local and community organisations:
 - Regional seminars covering topics including child poverty, access to quality work and learning opportunities, access to services for older people and people with disabilities
 - Workshops to explore specific themes reflecting the ‘communities’ dimension of the National Action Plan for social Inclusion. Topics include groups who are marginalised in society, urban and rural disadvantage, migration and traveller issues.
 - Two social inclusion weeks in May and October to highlight best practice and showcase locally-based social inclusion initiatives and activities.
 - Other events throughout the country to promote awareness of poverty and social inclusion. These include one-off events and initiatives, organised by groups in the community and voluntary sector, the statutory sector, and sporting and cultural organisations.
- A key event is the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) International Conference in Dublin on 19th February entitled “*Building Social Europe – From Crisis to Opportunity*”. ⁷

⁶ See www.welfare.ie/en/eu2010

⁷ <http://www.eapn.org/>

ANNEXE - EY2010 International Events ⁸

	Date	Location	Event
January	21	Madrid, Spain	Official launch of the 2010 European Year: Opening Conference. ⁹
	26-28	Belgium	Conference "Grundtvig", a decade of European innovation in adult learning
	27	Brussels, Belgium	Launch of the Caritas Europa "ZERO POVERTY-ACT NOW" campaign in the European Parliament
February	3	Malta	Opening conference of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in <u>Malta</u>
	4	Utrecht, Netherlands	Opening conference of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in the <u>Netherlands</u>
	5	Dublin, Ireland	Launch of the Irish National Programme
	9	Cardiff, Wales	"Wales, Europe and the World." A conference to promote global links and give young people the opportunity to find out about working, studying and travelling abroad.
	12	Ljubljana, Slovenia	"STOP POVERTY NOW!" European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion Opening Event 2010 in <u>Slovenia</u> .
	13	Leuven, Belgium	INCLUSO 2010 An international conference on Inclusion of Youth at Risk (YAR), gathering international specialists on social software use & social inclusion for YAR. Delegates are expected from decision makers such as governments & the EU-Commission.
	18	Kemi, Finland	Opening ceremony of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in <u>Finland</u>
	18	Paris, France	Opening conference of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in <u>France</u>
	19	Bucharest, Romania	Launch of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in <u>Romania</u>

⁸ <http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu/calendarofevents/index.html?pageNum=16&langid=en>

⁹ <http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu/news/news/news10.html?langid=en>

	19	Dublin, Ireland	EAPN Ireland International Conference "Building Social Europe – From Crisis to Opportunity"
	22	London, England	Integrating Cities conference: towards a shared vision for migrant integration in European cities
	22	Austria	Opening conference of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in <u>Austria</u>
	23	Brussels, Belgium	Launch Event of the 2010 Social Inclusion Regional Group in the European Parliament This event will present the thematic priorities of each of the 2010 Social Inclusion Regional Group's working groups & showcase a series of local case studies demonstrating the innovative role that can be played by local & regional actors to combat poverty & social exclusion.
	24-26	Rotterdam, Netherlands	"Confronting the crisis collectively, working together to end poverty" UNDP/WACAP Forum - world alliance of cities against poverty
	24-26	Greece	"INVISIBLE WOUNDS - Dignity & Vulnerability : migrants integration through active participation & inclusive solidarity"
	25	Berlin, Germany	Opening conference of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in <u>Germany</u>
	25	Athens, Greece	European SMES Seminar : Invisible wounds - Dignity and Vulnerability - Migrants integration through active participation and inclusive solidarity
	26-28	Malahide, Ireland	European studies international teacher planning conferences This series of 3 conferences will inform teachers about social inclusion as part of their learning about the international dimension in education.
March	1-5	Brussels, Belgium	European e-skills week This campaign seeks to inform students, young professionals & SMEs about the vast range of opportunities that ICT-related jobs present. It highlights the growing demand for skilled ICT users & professionals to drive a competitive & innovative Europe.
	3-4	Glasgow, Scotland	European Conference – Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion with Education for Democratic citizenship & human rights in Adult Learning

	4-7	Leuven, Belgium	European studies international teacher planning conference with EU year theme This conference will provide in-service training for secondary level teachers on the international dimension in education within the theme of the EU year.
	10	Brussels, Belgium	2010 Social Inclusion Regional Group: Meeting of the Working Group on Equalities and Non-Discrimination This event will focus on the question of gender equality & will contribute to the debate on relieving women of poverty, their full participation as economic subjects & to the issue of burden sharing in the family sphere & the organisation of working life in order for society to achieve a good work-life balance.
	10-11	Brussels, Belgium	EU projects in favour of the Roma Community A conference to discuss the involvement of EU programmes with the Roma minority.
	16	Bristol, England	Opening event for the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in the <u>UK</u>
	18	Swansea, Wales	Launch of the 2010 European Year in <u>Wales</u>
	19	Malahide, Ireland	European studies international teacher planning conference with EU year theme. This conference will gather 100 teachers to inform them of international dimension in education within theme of EU year.
	25-26	Warsaw, Poland	2010 International Conference on Comparative EU statistics on Income and Living Conditions
	26	Brussels, Belgium	Coface Seminar "The role of social protection in the fight against poverty & social exclusion: which safety net for families?" Policy seminar aiming at debating the role of social protection in the fight against poverty & social exclusion of families, including main challenges for the future of social protection systems in the EU. It will gather representatives of EU institutions, EU social NGOs, academics, & national family organisations from all over the EU.
April	6-	Berlin, Germany	World Congress of Inclusion International 2010 "Inclusion- Transforming Rights into Reality" This congress will gather an expected 1300 participants from all over the world, to talk about the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Social Inclusion.
	8-9	La Granja (Segovia), Spain	Science against Poverty - Conference

	21-22	Ghent, Belgium	EUROCITIES European Year 2010 to combat poverty & social exclusion: In-depth review seminar-Poverty & exclusion – <u>health inequalities</u>
May	10-11	Katowice, Poland	EUROCITIES European Year 2010 to combat poverty & social exclusion: In-depth review seminar - Poverty and exclusion - <u>unemployment</u> The seminar will look at how cities can tackle long term unemployment and how they can work with clients facing multiple problems.
June	14-15	Budapest, Hungary	EUROCITIES European Year 2010 to combat poverty & social exclusion: In-depth review seminar - Poverty & exclusion - <u>Area-based approaches to social exclusion.</u> The two-day event aims to acknowledge the problems of urban slums & the role of cities in tackling them.
	21-23	Barcelona, Spain	“Challenges and Opportunities for Social Services in Europe: Promoting care & inclusion in a difficult economic & social environment” 18th European Social Services Conference This conference, held in partnership with the Spanish Presidency of the European Union opens a crucial & timely debate about the future of social services in Europe.
	24-25	London, England	7 th EMN Annual Conference
	24-25	Brussels, Belgium	Meeting of people experiencing Poverty at the European Parliament
July	13	Spain, Pamplona	The fight against poverty & social exclusion: the challenge of European local administrations
September	16	Lisbon, Portugal	EFQUEL’s Conference on Open Education
	23-25	Portorož, Slovenia	3rd EMUNI Conference on Higher Education & Research Entrepreneurial Learning & the Role of Universities This conference will focus on Entrepreneurial learning & the role of universities.
	30	Valencia, Spain	Conference: “Family, Minors & Actions to fight against Poverty & Social Exclusion”

	30-1 Oct	Newcastle, England	<p>EUROCITIES European Year 2010 to combat poverty & social exclusion: In-depth review seminar - Poverty & exclusion - <u>child poverty</u></p> <p>This two day international conference will bring together practitioners, academics, experts, & key stakeholders to improve knowledge, skills & insights into the problems & solutions of child poverty. The particular themes will be; the contribution of cities; the roles of local partners & the role of national & international leadership legislation & resources in tackling the child poverty challenge.</p>
October	22- 23	Brussels, Belgium	<p>Mental Health Europe Conference “Challenging Poverty – Creating Hope. Breaking the Cycle of Poverty & Mental Health”</p> <p>This conference will discuss the link between poverty & mental health. Experts from various European countries will present & exchange their experiences & good practices on how to overcome the vicious cycle of poverty & mental health.</p>

February 2010