

**11th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty
Homelessness in Greece
Greek Delegation
May 2012**



Homeless and the Crisis



Significant increase in the number of homeless people in urban centers.

Athens - in a state of "Humanitarian crisis".

NGOs are dealing with an increasing demand for their services and limited funds.



The Debt...

- The Greek Debt increased from 120% of GDP in 2009 to 166% in 2011.
- It is expected that Greece will still own 120% of its debt in 2020 – even after 10 years of austerity, the debt will be huge.







Crisis effect on poverty and homelessness

According to Matsaganis M. (Sept 2011, ETUI), as a result of the austerity and the wider recession, 5% of the Greek population saw their 2010 incomes fall below the 2009 poverty line. The crisis has raised the demand for social protection, but the supply of social benefits has been reduced rather than increased.

He states "To prevent the economic crisis from turning into a social catastrophe, a concerted effort is needed to tighten the social safety net and to shield the weakest groups from its adverse effects." And he continues "we can conclude that, in relative terms, the poor contributed a clearly greater proportion of their income than the rich to the government's fiscal consolidation effort."



Table 2: Poverty rates, in %

	2009	2010	
		standard	anchored
all	20.06	20.88	25.45
gender			
men	19.04	20.01	24.52
women	21.02	21.70	26.34
age			
0-15	21.41	22.31	27.87
16-29	19.02	20.12	25.27
30-44	16.44	17.93	22.04
45-64	19.02	19.81	23.53
65+	24.61	24.53	29.39
household head is:			
unemployed	51.09	60.14	63.71
employee (public sector or banking)	0.31	0.42	1.40
employee (private sector excl. banking)	12.69	12.31	16.36
liberal profession	3.79	3.72	3.72
own account worker	16.63	17.39	21.32
farmer	46.88	45.56	50.87
pensioner	24.74	24.72	29.06
other	20.65	20.56	28.57

The sharp rise in unemployment and the fall in earnings of those who still have a (paid) job have resulted in significant income loss.

The total number of Greeks out of work came up to 811,340 in March 2012.

Housing benefit was suspended in 2010. A number of other benefits was cut as well.

Pensions- Benefits

- Reduction of Pensions (in order to save money. €750m - € b only from pensions)
- 25% cuts to main pensions and 20% to pension aid schemes
- Severe reductions to early retirement pension schemes for those under 60 (up to 35%)
- Severe cuts to all benefits.





Greek Social Security Cuts – Cuts in Millions

Homelessness-some facts...

- **There has been a 15% increase of people looking for food and shelter since the beginning 2012 in Athens.**
- **35% increase of the number of people looking for housing/shelter.**
- **Vast increase of the number of neo-homeless and of those with precarious roof.**
- **Homeless population consists of people of different economic and social status and age groups.**
- **Big immigrant groups live in small apartments with minimum hygienic standards.**
- **Increase of the number of people abandoning urban areas and moving to rural areas and of people going back to their parents' house.**

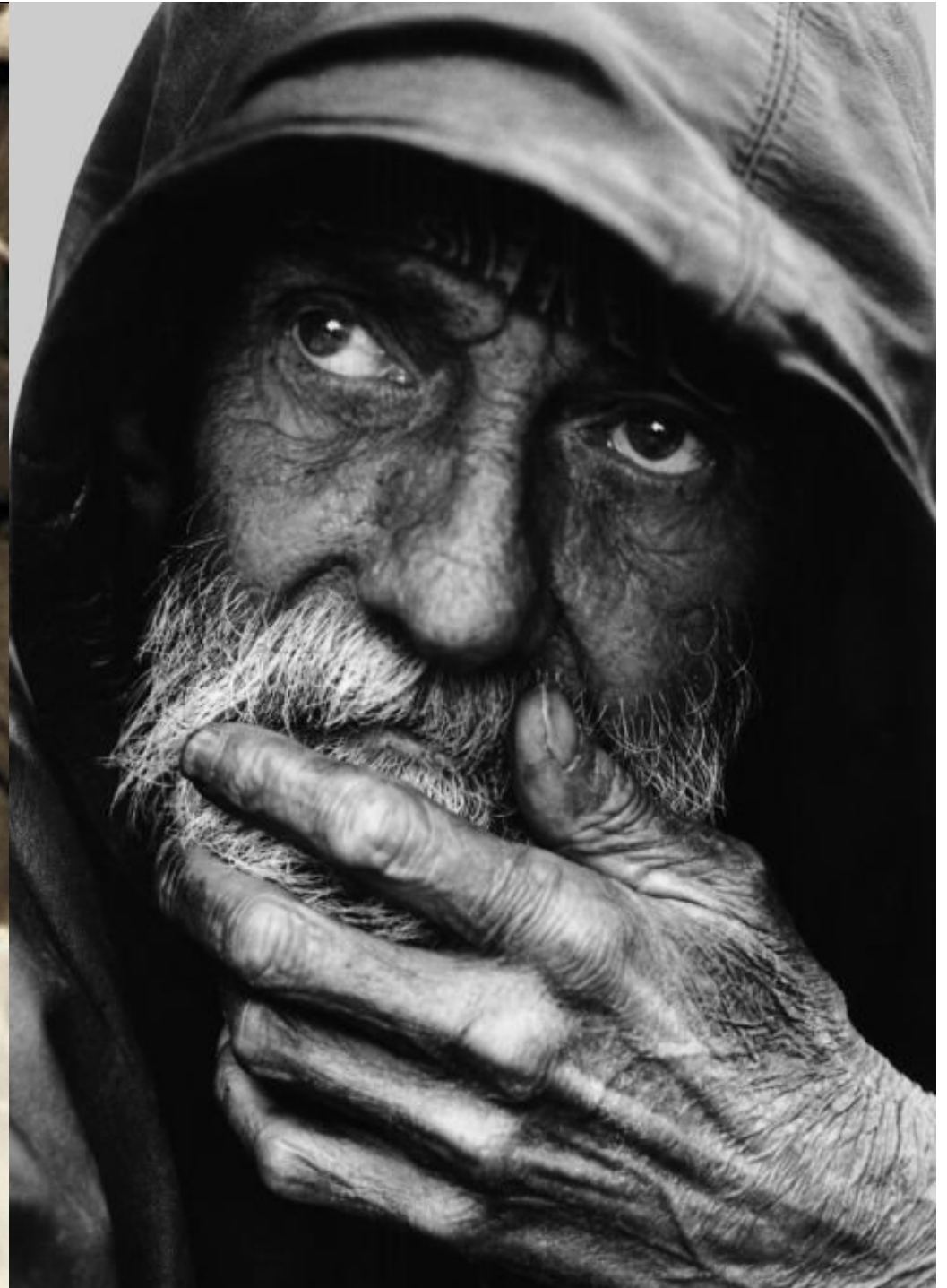


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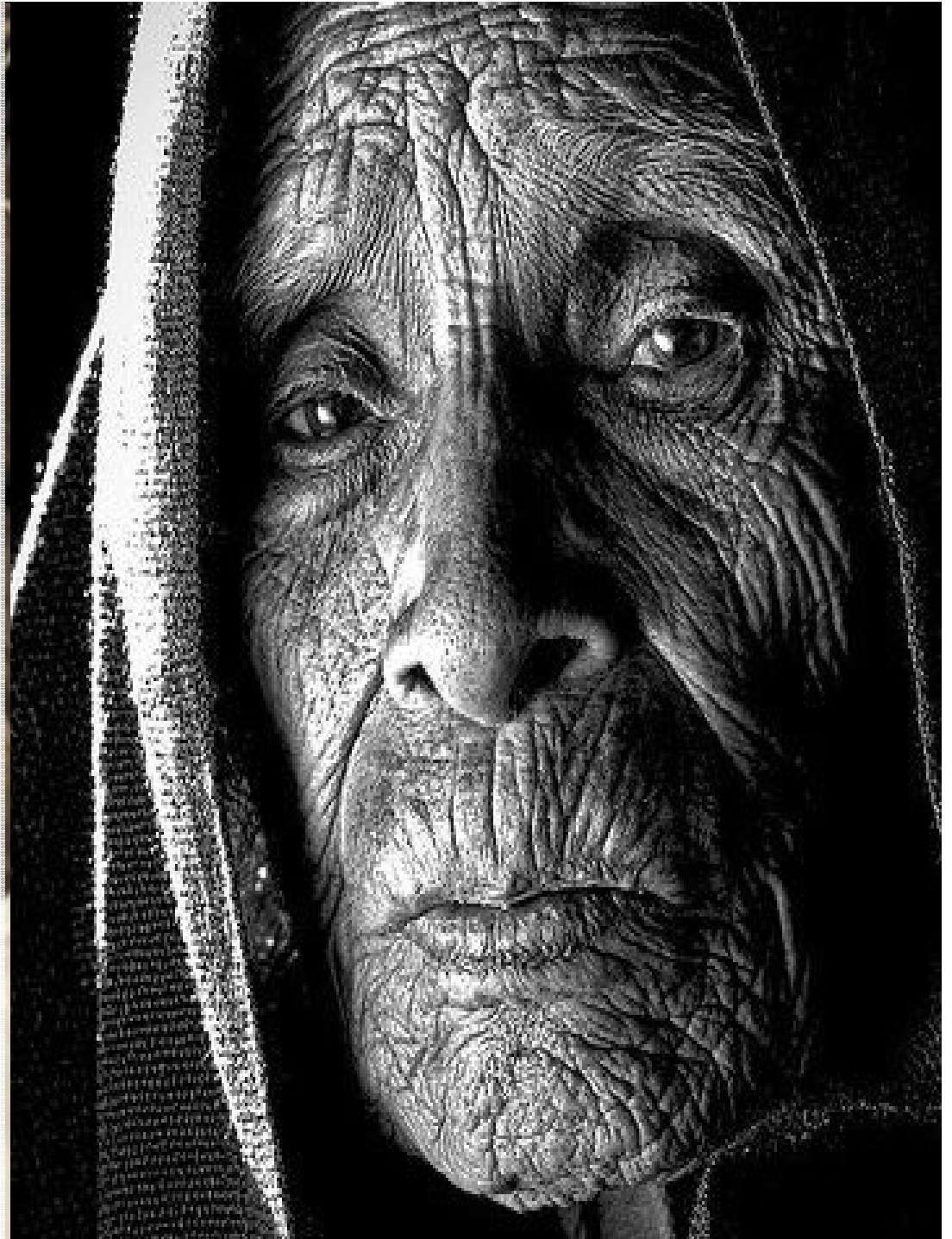


Homeless abandoned...

- Symptomatic address of the problem and lack of consistent, effective measures of the state apparatus.
- Lack of statistical evidence and data which do not permit focusing on the problem accordingly to the point of significance.



- **Lack of coordination of the various agencies (state, local administration)**
- **Inability of the various NGOs to address the problem (in spite their vast experience, know-how and familiarity with the issue) due to lack of funds and human resources.**





In search of a future...

The global neo-liberal model has exhausted its legitimacy, its myths, even its compromises. It is now a predator of human livelihoods. Greece is the 'new social laboratory'. The European Social Model is the 'target'.

The new ECB President Mario Draghi says: "SOCIAL EUROPE IS GONE"

From the age of optimism to the age of anxiety, from the win-win to the zero-sum world, from global democracy to the triumph of markets.

We need a new developmental model:

- Sustainable**
- Ecological**
- Participative**
- Social Justice**
- Solidarity**

Where all people can exercise their rights and live with dignity.

We thank you!

