
REPORT OF THE MEETING OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION 2015

"We are all equally important"

The 4th Meeting of Meeting of People experiencing Poverty was held on 03.06.2015 in Skopje on the topic "We are all equally important".

Organised outdoors like the EAPN Pep Conference in 2013, 300 people experiencing poverty took active participation in the event and presented their experience of poverty themselves.

Governmental and non-governmental representatives took part in a democratic debate on solutions for better quality of life for all citizens.

The conference was held in three parts

- 1. Opening of the conference and revision of the Declaration of poor and socially excluded people adopted in 2013, which was sent to the Government of Macedonia.
- 2. Workshops

Participants were divided into four workshops, to identify the problems they face daily, the causes of poverty and solutions to overcome them:

1. Youth Poverty
2. Health and social care
3. Employees and poor
4. dignified old age

- 3. Developing democratic debate amongst stakeholders and between people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and representatives of legislative and executive power.

While representatives from the whole political spectrum were invited, only one Member of Parliament from the opposition party participated.

The conference was well covered by the media and people passing by showed great interest as well, asking to receive information about the event and about the work of MAPP.

The Declaration of People experiencing poverty and exclusion from the Meeting will be sent to members of the Parliament of Macedonia.

The Meeting received the technical and financial support from the Foundation Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

See:

- video: https://youtu.be/OpBnde09_ul
- Pictures: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mpps/sets/72157656642742355>
- Conclusions of the Working Groups here below.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKSHOPS

1. WORKSHOP ON YOUTH POVERTY

Conclusions

1. Lack of trust in local institutions
2. No information about the services offered by the institutions and their work
3. They are not involved in decision-making.
4. Youth lacks will for life and an increased level of discontent
5. A high percentage of unemployed young people
6. Lack of sports clubs and sports facilities for all sports
7. Missing subsidies for public transport for young people
8. Leaving the small cities and Macedonia as country looking for better live.
9. Lack of good leaving conditions offered by the local government or state
10. Young people have no social benefits (eg. Discounts in cultural institutions, public transport, services)
11. Young people have difficulties to afford their own place to live
12. Lack of conditions for promotion of handicrafts
13. Low wages and inadequate working conditions
14. Working on the black market
15. Introduction of a youth guarantee
16. Very difficult conditions for use of subsidies for self-employment
17. Providing conditions and inclusion of young Roma in the educational processes and recognition of non-formal education on the labor market
18. Lack of youth centers at local level

Recommendations

1. Cooperation between young people and local institutions (through youth councils, forums, debates)
2. Greater transparency and placing information on the services offered by the institutions and their work through the media, web pages formula.
3. Promoting participation and inclusion of youth in the decision-making processes
4. Promoting, encouraging employers to have more working places to reduce the percentage of youth unemployment
5. Opening of sports clubs and sports facilities for all sports at local level and their proper utilization
6. Subsidy's by the state for public transport
7. Improving the climate for quality of life and provide appropriate conditions that will meet the needs of young people for their stay in the country.
8. Discounts in cultural institutions
9. Better conditions and larger subsidies from the state for own leaving place.
10. Promoting crafts and hand work.
11. Provision of adequate working conditions and increasing the amount of minimum income
12. Eradication of grey economy.
13. Making a conditions for introducing of youth guarantee.
14. More funding for self-employment.
15. Accepting non formal education in Roma community

16. Opening youth centers at local level and create

local politics.

2. WORKSHOP ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Conclusions

Social care

1. Delays in the payment of social transverse .
2. Abolition of social transverse payments in respect of money transfers through Western Union;
3. Corruption by government in time of elections by giving lump sum ;
4. Needed advocacy when applying for social protection rights;
5. Long and complicated procedures for obtaining identification documents of "phantom persons." These conditions lead to the violation of fundamental human rights, among them health and social rights;

Recommendations

Social Protection

1. Regular and prompt payment of the social protection money and increase the social benefit money (people that live on social benefit have 20 denari per day or less than ½ euro)
2. To prolong / stop the law for fast transfer of money and prevent its retroactive application (cash transfers from family and friends from abroad are usually used for domestic needs, food, health and bills) .
3. To give priority to the employment rights of users of social protection money;

Health care

7. Recruitment of Roma health workers (locally);
8. To employ doctors full-time in rural areas;
9. Cancer patients to be completely free of medical participation;
10. Exemption from health co-payment for recipients of social assistance;

Health care

6. Lack of health workers (Roma);
7. No doctors full-time in rural areas (for example village Mogorje Debar);
8. People with cancer are not completely free from health participation;
9. Recipients of social assistance are unable to pay for their health services;
10. In the municipality of Suto Orizari (Roma community) without gynecologist;
11. Difficult and complex access to specialist in the health services ("my term");
12. Reforms in the health system OVER NIGHT.

4. Ministry for social care to stop having a access to the information from transaction accounts of users of social protection money.
5. Consistent use of the law for a single social assistance (change of rules who and when will get this help) example'sust before political elections the most vulnerable categories get this single social assistance.
6. Obtaining personal documents free of charge for most vulnerable groups.

11. Urgent opening gynecological clinic in Suto Orizari (large Roma community);
12. Return to the previous system for doctors appointment or when new system is complete then to be implemented in the health system.
13. To check and improve legislation for the cancer patients and their right for disability pension .

14. Facilitating the procedures for obtaining personal documents for "phantom people" by

providing free services;

3. WORKSHOP ON WORKING POOR

Conclusions

1. Low minimum wage
2. Exploitation of labor
3. Work on the black market and undeclared workers by employers
4. Inadequate working conditions
5. Breaking of all basic human rights and labor law
6. Low funding and subsidies for self-employment and inadequate support from the state

Recommendations

1. Increase the minimum wage to ensuring a quality and normal life
2. Payment of per diem and proper respect for working hours.
3. Increase the Labor Inspection.
4. Providing adequate work conditions and compliance of labor law.
5. Increase the amount of self-employment subsidy and support by the state for persons who use the self-employment subsidies in the first two years.

4. WORKSHOP ON DIGNIFIED OLD AGE

Conclusions

1. Transparency in the Associations of Pensioners.
2. Pensioners have solidarity fund (30 den - ½ a euro, Macedonia has 300.000 pensioners), transparency in using the finances from the solidarity fund.
3. Pensioners pay association fee (120 den - 2euro), transparency in using the finances from the association fee.
4. Opening more Nursing Homes (only 1000 beds in the Nursing homes)
5. Lack of home care services.

Recommendations

1. Best way to be informed is through newspapers specialized for pensioners.
2. The money from solidarity fund and association fee to be used for opening Nursing homes and services.