

Decent Work, Quality Jobs and Poverty: The Missing Link in Europe 2020

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EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

RESEAU EUROPEEN DES ASSOCIATIONS

DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETE

ET L'EXCLUSION SOCIALE

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Outline of the Presentation

- Work as a social phenomenon
- EAPN Explainer on Quality of Work and Employment
- Impact of low quality work and employment on poverty and social exclusion
- Conclusions & Recommendations

Work as a social phenomenon

- The importance of the historical perspective
- The context of the Explainer

- Mantra of European and national discourse:
EMPLOYMENT IS THE ONLY ROUTE OUT OF POVERTY

- EAPN position:
**QUALITY EMPLOYMENT IS ONE ROUTE OUT OF POVERTY
FOR THOSE WHO CAN WORK**

EAPN Explainer on Quality of Work and Employment



- Wish and need of EAPN members to develop **consensual standards and a common position**
- Building on **existing publications** and **specific survey**, enriched by **group discussions**
- **Direct quotes** from people experiencing poverty, decision makers and international organisations

QUALITY OF WORK – *intrinsic characteristics of a specific job.*
QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT – *engagement with the labour market throughout the lifecycle, including transitions.*

QUALITY OF WORK AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE EU



EAPN EXPLAINER #5

2014



Download full Explainer [here](#),
and a Summary [here](#).

Impact of low quality work and employment on poverty and social exclusion



Individual level

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- **In-work poverty** (EAPN's [position paper](#))
 - **Multiple jobs** – mental and physical toll
 - Precariousness – **inability to plan a future**
 - No / reduced employment rights (**poverty trap**)
 - **Reduced social security entitlements** (due to effects on the contributive career)
 - Poor quality employment = no investment in the worker, **no access to lifelong learning and training opportunities**, no **progression in work**
 - **Poor or no reconciliation** between private and professional life
 - **Reduced or no job satisfaction** and feeling of accomplishment

People want to feel valued and want to contribute – low quality jobs and employment lead to **poverty, uncertainty, stress, depression, demotivation, isolation, low self-esteem, low participation, low inclusion => LONG TERM SCARRING EFFECT**

Impact of low quality work and employment on poverty and social exclusion

Family and community level



FOR FAMILIES:

- Higher incidence of **early school leaving** and **low educational attainment**
- Intergenerational **transfer of poverty**
- **Breakdown of relationships**, domestic violence, depression
- **Poor living conditions**, over-crowdedness, material deprivation
- **Inability to meet household needs**, to support a family
- **Low or no access to maternity & parental leave**

FOR COMMUNITIES:

- Low purchasing power **threatens local economy and local demand**
- **Less time and resources to be engaged** and to participate
- **Higher incidence of violence and crime**
- **Vicious circle of poverty and exclusion**, deeply rooted

Impact of low quality work and employment on poverty and social exclusion

Society and State level



FOR THE STATE:

- **Shrinking tax base**, meaning low public revenues, and, in turn, defaulting on social service provision and social security
- **Lack of domestic demand**, which undermines the economy as a whole
- Erosion of the **European Social Model**
- **Poor economic performance**, demotivated workforce, reduced GDP
- **Long-term costs** of untackled poverty and social exclusion

FOR SOCIETY AS A WHOLE:

- **Weakening of the middle class**
- Increasing **inequality gap** between the rich and poor
- Income inequalities leading to a **lack of de facto equal opportunities**
- **Poor economic outcomes** overall, reduced prosperity and well being for all

Conclusions

- The focus at national and EU level is about unemployment but **the line between being in-work and out of work is increasingly blurred!**
- **In-work poverty and out-of-work poverty** are rampant (revolving door, “cycling”, poverty trap).
- Zero-hour contracts, bogus self-employment and other similar tricks **do not solve the problem.**
- **Compulsive, punitive activation** – of older people, of women, of people with disabilities – is a numbers’ game, not a sustainable model.
- Low wages, precarious employment, weakened employment rights and collective bargaining have **serious long-term effects and real costs** on the individual, on the economy and on the whole society.

Urgent investment in the creation of quality and sustainable jobs and in building inclusive labour markets is crucial and imperative.



Recommendations

EAPN 10 Principles on Quality Work

EAPN believes that people have the right to a job which:

- Provides **adequate / living wages**.
- Provides a **sustainable contract** and **adequate employment rights**.
- Entitles the worker to **appropriate social security protection**.
- Ensures **quality working conditions** and working environment.
- Allows for the **reconciliation of private and professional life**.
- Respects the right to participate in **collective bargaining and social dialogue**.
- Protects the worker **against discrimination on all grounds**.
- Guarantees **access to training** and personal development.
- Allows for **progression in work**.
- Nurtures **job satisfaction**.

Download full list of principles [here](#).

Recommendations for the national level



- 1. Start from a rights-based approach** - the right to decent, sustainable employment and other employment rights.
- 2. Give political visibility to the quality dimension**, support research to prove the added-value of quality of work and employment.
- 3. Develop quality frameworks**, as quality is a subjective notion, and relativism can lead to unstable, insecure, low-quality jobs be interpreted as “suitable”.
- 4. Ensure that minimum wages are living wages**, following a positive hierarchy, which first sets benefits such as minimum income above the poverty line, and then sets wages at a higher level.
- 5. Stop precariousness**, stem the tide of short-term contracts, atypical forms of employment, precarious jobs and involuntary part.-time, with low rights and contributions.
- 6. Support positive activation practices**, which focus on individual, through tailored pathways providing holistic support and integrated services and fighting discrimination.
- 7. Combat in-work poverty**, as pushing people into low-quality, unsustainable jobs only increases their chances of experiencing hardship and deprivation.
- 8. Safeguard employment rights**, including the links with social protection systems, coupled with respect and encouragement of collective bargaining practices and social & civil dialogue.
- 9. Prioritise the inclusive function of employment**, as a vehicle for better personal, social and societal inclusion, a means of contributing meaningfully and in a rewarding way.
- 10. Embed meaningful participation**, based on correct needs assessment, and engaging all relevant stakeholders, including people experiencing poverty and the unemployed.



Thank you for your attention!

For more information, please consult

www.eapn.eu

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