



On **17 October 2022 at 9:30 am at the French Institute in Bulgaria** Doctors of the world together with the European antipoverty network Bulgaria and with the support of the French embassy in Bulgaria organize a conference on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

The 30th anniversary of the day is celebrated around the world under the theme "Dignity for All in Practice". **Human dignity** is not only a fundamental right in itself, but is also the foundation of all other fundamental rights. It is not **an abstract concept** but belongs to all people.

Inequalities in opportunities, including access to key care, and gender inequalities persist, while income inequalities are rising sharply and the gap between rich and poor is widening every year.

**But poverty and inequality are not inevitable.** They are the result of deliberate decisions or inaction that disenfranchise the poorest and most marginalised in our societies and violate their fundamental rights. The silent and prolonged violence of poverty - social exclusion, structural discrimination and disempowerment - makes it difficult for people trapped in poverty to escape it and denies their humanity.

Poverty is not just an economic problem, but a **multidimensional phenomenon** that includes the lack of both income and basic opportunities for a decent life, reinforcing a range of deprivations:

- hazardous working conditions
- uninhabitable housing
- lack of nutritious food
- unequal access to justice
- lack of political power
- limited access to health care

In Bulgaria, 31.7% of the population, or 2 193 000 people, lives at risk of poverty and social exclusion, second in the EU. One in three children is affected. Bulgaria has the highest levels of income inequality in the EU, with a gap between rich and poor of 7.45 times. 23.7% of households cannot keep their homes warm enough - the highest percentage in the whole EU. 10.2% of children live in homes without a bathroom, second only to Romania. 37.9% of the population lives in overcrowded housing. All these indicators will undoubtedly worsen with the coming winter and given the uncertain international situation.

The conference will be attended by Bulgarian and foreign experts who will share their experience and recommendations.