

Brussels, 12 December 2007

## **2010 to be the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion**

***The European Commission has today designated 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The € 17 million campaign aims to reaffirm the EU's commitment to making a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010.***

"The fight against poverty and social exclusion is one of the EU's central objectives and our shared approach has been an important tool to guide and support action in the Member States," said Social Affairs Commissioner Vladimír Špidla. "The European Year will take this even further, by raising public awareness of the way poverty continues to blight the daily lives of so many Europeans."

78 million people in the EU – or 16% of the population – currently live at risk of poverty.

The 2010 European Year aims to reach EU citizens and all public, social and economic stakeholders. Its four specific objectives are:

- Recognition of the right of people in poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and to play a full part in society;
- An increase in the public ownership of social inclusion policies, emphasising everyone's responsibility in tackling poverty and marginalisation;
- A more cohesive society, where no one doubts that society as a whole benefits from the eradication of poverty;
- Commitment of all actors, because real progress requires a long-term effort that involves all levels of governance.

Recent Eurobarometer data show that Europeans see poverty as a widespread problem. Across the EU, citizens feel that around 1 in 3 people (29%) in their area live in poverty and that 1 in 10 suffers extreme poverty. In all Member States, part of the population is subject to exclusion and deprivation, often facing limited access to basic services. 19% of children are at risk of poverty across the EU and 1 in 10 live in households where nobody works.

Solidarity is a hallmark of the European Union. It is an intrinsic goal of European models of society and welfare that people should not be prevented from benefiting from and contributing to economic and social progress. Building a more inclusive Europe is vital to achieving the European Union's goals of sustained economic growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.

The European process for social protection and social inclusion supports Member States in their drive for greater social cohesion in Europe through an open method of coordination. And over the period 2007-2013 some € 75 billion will be distributed from the European Social Fund to Member States and regions.

The 2010 European Year will coincide with the conclusion of the EU's ten year strategy for growth and jobs. The actions undertaken during this European Year will reaffirm the initial political commitment of the EU at the start of the Lisbon strategy, in 2000, to making "a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" by 2010. The European Year also launches a process that had been announced in the Social Agenda 2005-2010.

In 2007, the EU has been celebrating the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. 2008 will be the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

### **Further information**

Proposal for a Decision on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010):

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/news/2007/dec/antipoverty\\_1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2007/dec/antipoverty_1_en.pdf)

A Commission Staff Working Document – Annex to the Proposal – Impact assessment:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/news/2007/dec/antipoverty\\_2\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2007/dec/antipoverty_2_en.pdf)

A more cohesive society for a stronger Europe / The European process for social protection and social inclusion:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/spsi/poverty\\_social\\_exclusion\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/poverty_social_exclusion_en.htm)

Special Euro barometer 279 - Poverty and exclusion - September 2007 (What the European citizens think about poverty and exclusion):

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/social\\_inclusion/studies\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/studies_en.htm)

Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2007 (Key figures):

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/07/66&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>