Introduction

Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK

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Third Peter Townsend Memorial Conference
Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK
The government’s draft child poverty strategy is a missed opportunity. The farce of ministers proving unable to agree on how to measure poverty after rubbishing existing measures is particularly lamentable.

The government’s approach falls far short of what is needed to reduce, yet alone end child poverty in our country. Our new research shows that the gap between the objective of making child poverty history and the reality is becoming ever wider.

This is not just an issue for the current government. Politicians from all parties say they are committed to the 2020 targets. Willing the ends without the means today merely becomes a broken promise tomorrow.”

Alan Milburn – Chair of the independent Social Mobility and Child Poverty (SMCP) Commission (9th June 2014)

Third Peter Townsend Memorial Conference
Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK

Programme

Thursday 19th June
10.00 Registration and Tea/Coffee

First Session: Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK: Advancing the State of the Art
10:30 Introduction: Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK
David Gordon

Eldin Fahmy

11:10 Life on a Low Income in Austerne Times: Precarious budgets and diminishing services
Simon Pemberton, Eileen Sutton

11:40 Tea/Coffee

Second Session: The Necessities of Life in the UK
12.10 The Changing Necessities of Life: 1983 to 2012
Stewart Lansley and Joanna Mack

12:35 What do Children Need?
Gill Main

13:00 Lunch

Third Session: The Extent of Poverty in the UK
14.00 How Many People are Poor and Deprived and How Do We Know?
David Gordon

14:20 Social Exclusion in the UK
Ruth Levitas

14:40 How Many Poor and Deprived Children are there in the UK?
Jonathan Bradshaw

15.00 Poverty and Exclusion in Scotland
Nick Bailey, Glen Bramley and Maria Garmon

15.20 Poverty and Exclusion in Northern Ireland
Mike Tomlinson

15.45 Tea/Coffee

Fourth Session: How bad is poverty for your health?
16.15 Poverty, Exclusion and Health and Disability in the UK
Pauline Heslop

16.40 Concluding Remarks

17.00 Finish
Friday 20th June

9.30  Arrival and Tea/Coffee

9.50  Welcome

**Fifth Session: Why Don't People Just Stop Being Poor?**

10:00  Every Penny Counts: Family Life on a Low Income  Mary Daly and Grace Kelly

10:20  Life on a Low Income in Austerity Times: Impact on relationships  Simon Pemberton, Karen Bell, Eldin Fahmy and Eileen Sutton

10:40  Explaining Poverty to the Public  Joanna Mack

11:00  Community Engagement in Challenging Times  Gabi Kent

11:20  Tea/Coffee

**Sixth Session: Living Standards in the UK**

11:50  A UK Living Standards Index  Demi Patsios, Paddy Hillyard and Marco Pomati

12.10  Poverty and Services, Neighbourhoods & Housing  Glen Bramley and Kirsten Bessnet

12.30  Poverty, Employment and Working Conditions  Nick Bailey

12.50  Lunch

**Seventh Session: Family Poverty**

13.40  Poverty and Gender  Esther Dermott and Christina Pantazis

14:00  Poverty and Parenting  Esther Dermott and Marco Pomati

**Eighth Session: Demography of Poverty**

14:20  Poverty and Ethnicity  Christina Pantazis and Saffron Karlsen

14:40  Poverty and Youth  Eldin Fahmy

15:00  Poverty and Older People  Demi Patsios

15:20  Tea/Coffee

**Ninth Session: Key Issues**

16.00  Rural Poverty in Scotland  Maria Gannon, Nick Bailey and Glen Bramley

16.20  Poverty, Debt and Financial Exclusion  Kirsten Bessnet and Glen Bramley

16.40  Fuel Poverty  David Gordon

17:00  Concluding Remarks
Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK
Many people have worked on the PSE Project

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The research grant

- Funded by the ESRC
- The UK’s largest ever research project on poverty, social exclusion and living standards
- Started April 2010
- Ended March 2014
The research aims

1. To improve the measurement of poverty, deprivation, social exclusion and standard of living.

2. To measure the change in the nature and extent of poverty and social exclusion over the past ten years.

3. To produce policy-relevant results about the causes and outcomes of poverty and social exclusion.
Every decade since the late 1960s, UK social scientists have attempted to carry out an independent poverty survey to test out new ideas and incorporate current state of the art methods into UK poverty research.

• 1968-69 *Poverty in the UK* survey (Peter Townsend and colleagues),

• 1983 *Poor Britain* survey (Joanna Mack, Stewart Lansley)

• 1990 *Breadline Britain* survey (Joanna Mack, Stewart Lansley)

• 1999 *Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey* (Jonathan Bradshaw and colleagues) and its 2002 counterpart in Northern Ireland (Paddy Hillyard and colleagues)

• 2012 *Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK*
Omnibus Survey: Necessities of Life – A systematic random achieved sample of adults (16+) of over 1,900 interviews in Britain and Northern Ireland.

Main Survey: Poverty & Social Exclusion – A follow-up survey to the 2010/11 Family Resources Survey (circa 47,000 households). The main survey in Britain has an achieved sample of over 4,000 households and 9,500 individuals – with approximately 1,000 households in the ‘ethnic’ strata and 1,000 households in Scotland. In Northern Ireland, the achieved sample was just under be 1,000 households and over 2,000 individuals.

The survey was divided into a household questionnaire which was answered by the Household Reference Person (HRP) and an individual questionnaire which was answered by all adult household members (aged 18 and over).
British Impoverishment Study, The qualitative study, Life on a Low Income in Austere times sought to provide insights into the experiences of poverty during the recent recession and ongoing programme of austerity. The project collected 62 video/audio testimonies during 2012-2013, in Birmingham, Glasgow and Gloucestershire.

Northern Ireland Family Solidarity Study, a qualitative survey of 50 parents to explore the role of family in coping with poverty.

The study had a material focus – examining the extent to which resources are transferred among family members (both nuclear and extended) - and it also explores family cultures and relationships as factors affecting poverty and social exclusion. This helps to understand the extent and limits of family solidarity.
A major website – www.poverty.ac.uk

Full results of the 2012 Survey

Comparisons with the earlier surveys in 1983, 1990 and 1999

Development of new graphic visualisation tools enabling access to more complex datasets and richer comparisons between datasets across time

Video clips of what it means to live in poverty for key groups in 2012 (e.g. young, elderly, unemployed, disabled) and comparisons from the two broadcast documentary series accompanying the 1983 and 1990 surveys (Breadline Britain and Breadline Britain in the 1990s) to illustrate changing circumstances and attitudes
Survey Development

Rigorous qualitative & quantitative methods were used in developing and analysing the survey questionnaire;

1) Systematic literature reviews

2) Focus groups

3) Expert review

4) Cognitive interviews

5) Survey pilots

6) Behaviour coding

As far as possible comparability was maintained with UK & EU official poverty measures.