

Title of paper: Social policy for the fight against social exclusion: conceptual, measurement and analysis aspects

Author: Olympia Kaminioti, Ph.D.

Affiliation/position: National Institute of Labour and Human Resources/ Director of Labour Market Analysis and Labour Relations

Address: K. Palama 6-8, Athens, 11141, Greece

E-mail: olympiakaminioti@gmail.com

Tel: 6937303236

Social policy for the fight against social exclusion: conceptual, measurement and analysis aspects

Abstract

The concepts of social inclusion and exclusion are often used in the rational of employment, economic, and social policy. One of the headline indicators of the European Strategy “Europe 2020”: “people at risk of poverty or social exclusion” is used to evaluate progress towards the targets of this multi-dimensional strategy. Current Greek social policy attempts to lower social exclusion are based on a Strategic Plan that identifies policy priorities and vulnerable groups. These efforts are often based on weak/partial evidence or controversial evidence or they are not based on scientific evidence about the problems they claim to overcome and the characteristics of the groups they aim to protect. Starting with the conceptual difficulties connected with the concept of ‘social exclusion’, its multidimensionality, its dynamic rather than static character, and other characteristics, we propose a strategy for the operationalization of this concept that addresses these conceptual difficulties. At the same time the proposed strategy deals with the necessity of providing reliable evidence at a short notice on which social policy can be based. In the process of development of a reliable tool for measuring social exclusion, the interplay between different dimensions in the making of social exclusion becomes evident. This leads to the requirement of holistic strategies not only for measuring but also for fighting social exclusion. In the first part of this paper we focus on the conceptual and measurement issues involved in the development of a reliable tool for social exclusion. In the second part we examine the interaction of social and economic variables involved in skill development in Greece. The analysis verifies the multidimensionality of social inclusion/exclusion as well as the necessity of systemic thinking both for understanding social issues as well as for the designing of appropriate policies.