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Session A:

Poverty and Social Exclusion in the European Union



Analysis of Social Inclusion in the EU

- Congratulations to the Atkinson team - good and important document – especially
 - ➔ Emphasis on children
 - ➔ Emphasis on **comparative** analysis of social inclusion indicators – NAP process not really comparative
 - ➔ Timely reinforcement of the importance of the social dimensions

Chapter 3

- Congratulations to Bea Cantillon and other authors of chapter 3. Very interesting – especially
 - ➔ Differences in rankings between risk of poverty relative income measure and other indicators
 - ➔ Showed us Kok wrong; Jobs (and growth) not enough – high levels of employment not closely related to poverty
 - ➔ Social expenditure/welfare state effort/redistribution much more closely associated with poverty

HOWEVER

- Report expresses disappointment at the extent to which common social indicators were utilised in the NAP process.
- Good reasons for this in the **process**
 - NAPs were **national** reports
 - National expert commentaries also **national**
 - Commission's Joint Reports critical syntheses + descriptive statistical annex - **no comparative data analysis**
- But also common social indicators not good enough-
- National indicators much better – in the UK

Common social indicators

- Too income based. Serious problems with
 - Threshold – arbitrary
 - Equivalence – arbitrary
 - Relative measure – 9% below circa 3,800 pps in HU 21% below circa 8000 pps in IE – need for a less relative measure
- Many dimensions missing – no sense of well-being
- Very limited elaboration for sub-groups – children, elderly...
- Very out of date – 2000 for income!

National indicators

(in the UK and ?elsewhere) much better

- Much more up to date 2003/4 or later
- Multi-dimensional and covering children, working age, elderly, and communities (*Opportunities for All*)
- Much better income data (and analysis) than ECHP (HBAI) – deprivation indicators now being added
- Much better regional and spatial analysis (Index of Neighbourhood Deprivation)
- Very active critical environment!

Official vs Independent approaches

- Statistical subgroup of the Social Protection Committee and chapter 5 of this report seem rather dogged!
 - Belief that comparability more important than multi-dimensionality. The best the enemy of the good?
 - Unreasonable faith in income indicators but distrustful of indicators for other domains.
 - Must have data for all countries

- Underexploited potential in utilising
 - More from ECHP (and SILC)
 - OECD method of gathering data from national sources
 - Many other comparable sources/surveys

Example: child well-being

- **No Government doing this well – opportunity for EU**
- **Poverty:** ECHP, LIS, OECD but more recent national data (UK 2003/4)
- **Health:** Infant and child mortality. Blow birth weights, Breastfeeding, WHO/UNICEF. Self reported child health (HBSC)
- **Employment (ESS)**
- **Education (PISA)**
- **Housing (ECHP/FEANTSA)**
- **Environment?**
- **Time (Time budget surveys)**
- **Deprivation (ECHP)**
- **Subjective well-being (HBSC)**
- **Etc.....**
- **Micro and macro input studies**

Chapter 3 affirmed the value of multi-dimensional indicators

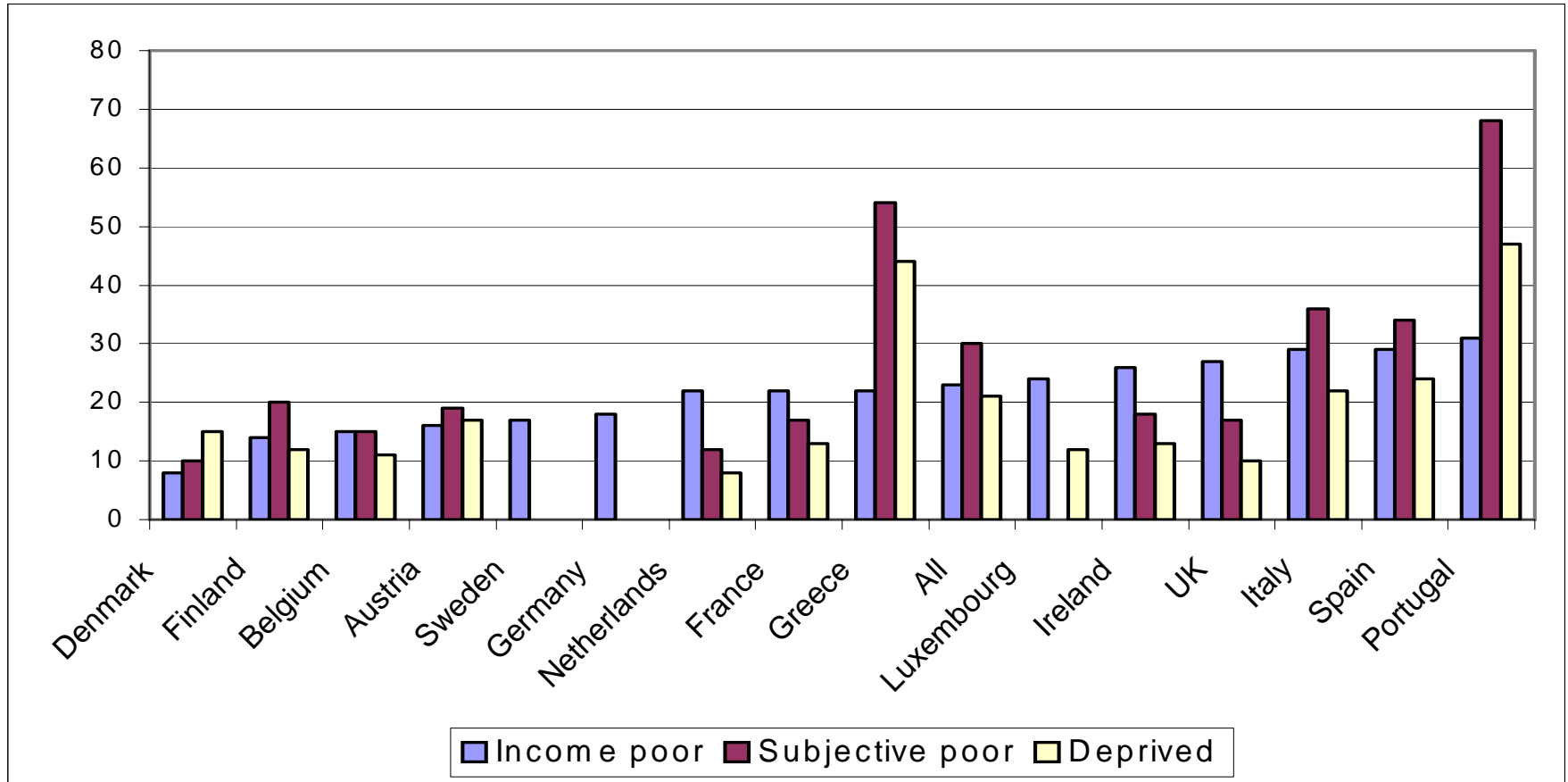
- But analysis macro and not very multi-dimensional
- To get at the reality we need more valid and reliable constructs
- **Overlaps analysis** – viz Ireland and UK
- ECHP analysis of child poverty – three dimensions
 - Income poverty (60% median)
 - Deprivation (lack of 3 or more)
 - Subjective poverty (managing with great difficulty)
- Not just technical but substantive attempt to get at core/real/severe child poverty. Not all 15.

TAKING FORWARD THE EU SOCIAL INCLUSION PROCESS

Poverty and Social Exclusion in the European Union

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Child poverty by dimension: ECHP 2001



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Children poor on two or more dimensions

