

European Parliament Intergroup Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

The increase in poverty and inequality cannot be tolerated in a Europe that was created to improve the living conditions of the European peoples. The fight against extreme poverty and social exclusion is more topical than ever.

That is why the Intergroup - chaired between 2009 and 2014 by Sylvie Goulard (The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) FR) - works to draw policy makers' attention to the importance and urgency of this struggle.

Transcending political boundaries, it brought together more than 40 Members of the European Parliament from different backgrounds like Jürgen Klute, representing the Unified European Left Group (GUE), DE, Verónica Lope Fontagné, from the European People's Party (PPE), ES, Silvia Costa, from the Socialist and Democrat Group (S&D), IT, and also Jean Lambert, from the Green party, UK. It collaborates with the International Movement ATD Fourth World (who led to his creation during #EP2 30 years ago) and other anti-poverty networks and NGOs.

MEP members of the Intergroup consider poverty to be an attack on human dignity and on fundamental rights and believes that a global approach to poverty - taking the experience of those living in poverty into account - is essential. In fact, the consideration of the concerns of the most deprived people is essential in a democratic Europe. The Intergroup has the objective of introducing these concerns into the work of the European Parliament and analysing the different proposals with these concerns in mind.

Every year an event is organised on 17 October to UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty. In 2013, the event was centred around the theme of "*Working together towards a world without discrimination: building on the experience and knowledge of people in extreme poverty*" and brought together several figures including Mrs Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. The year before the Intergroup's conference-debate welcomed Abhijit Banerjee, co-author with Esther Duflo of "Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty" who came to share his knowledge of the subject and his experiences with the participants. Other events have also been organised including a meeting with Magdalena Sepúlveda, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, and also a session about the future of the European aid fund for the most deprived people.

The Intergroup does not however limit itself to the organisation of events but actively contributes to legislative proposals, aiming to protect the dignity of the most deprived people. As a result amendments to these texts are regularly tabled. Submitted by members of different political groups, these carry more weight when they are discussed by the appropriate commission.

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17 October Human Rights and Poverty Stone in front of the European Parliament in Brussels

More on 17 October at www.17october.ie