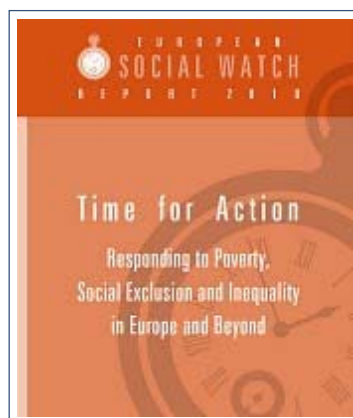




SATURDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2011

## New European Social Watch Report: Time for Action



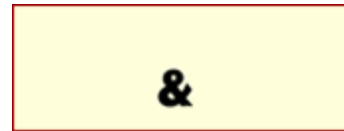
The second **European Social Watch Report** was launched in Brussels with a roundtable discussion at the European Parliament. The event was chaired by Irish MEP Proinsias De Rossa, who was labour minister and head of country delegation to the Social Summit in 1995, when Social Watch was created. From its mere title, “Time for Action: Responding to

Poverty, Social Exclusion and Inequality in Europe and Beyond”, the European Social Watch report reflects the Egyptian political crisis as a true demonstration of its findings.

The report points out that 17% of people in the European Union live below the poverty line. Social Watch looks at Europe's approaches to addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality both inside the EU and in the wider world. The report examines the issues from different angles, including employment, healthcare, housing and financial exclusion. Since “one child in five is born and grows up with economic and social deprivation” and “twenty per cent of young people are currently living at risk of poverty in the EU”, Mirjam van Reisen argues in the report summary that the policies in place to address poverty and social exclusion are “weak” and “have come under pressure in the aftermath of the financial crisis”.

“The fiscal constraints that developing countries have experienced in previous decades resulting from IMF policies are now confronting European countries” says the report, and as a consequence “the ability of governments to implement their national and international obligation to guarantee social security has been compromised”. Social Watch Europe analyses the reality for groups of people particularly vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion, such as migrants and the Roma. Special attention is given to gender and poverty, as well as the young and old who are more vulnerable to social exclusion. It concludes by calling for a universal standard for

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