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THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

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FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce this Report on the theme of The Fight Against Poverty. The special team assembled to produce this volume has approached this key challenge of our times from a Maltese, European Union and global perspective. The central objective was to make our own contribution in terms of what we saw as the key Values and Principles underlying what needs to be done to address this abiding cause of shame for 21st century man. It is the fourth report produced by the Civil Society Project, a multi-disciplinary project coordinated by the European Documentation and Research Centre as a Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence. The focus of the Project as a whole is on Malta's experience as a Member State of the Union. The Project has been instrumental in creating the Maltese debates on major issues relating to the current and future European Union and its relations with its Member States and with its Neighbours. This includes as a main component the response and experience of civil society in this context, and the framing of the debate in Malta, and the siting of it, within the wider European and indeed universal debates.

The list of contributors indicates the names of the authors of each of the several contributions. Of course, my thanks are due in a special way to them, for making available their time and expertise, gratis and most generously. However, I emphasise that very often the work involved was the result of group work, and of meetings in which several other experts and players in the fields covered by the project participated. Also, many of the participants could only take part with the support of their organizations, public and private, and this must also be recorded.

The 2005 Report addressed the issues of discrimination, inclusion and equality. The 2006 Report studied the case-example of family values and the Union and its policies. The third report took as its subject business ethics and the role of religion. The present report takes forward many of the ideas already mooted in these previous reports. It follows a natural progression on their themes. The eradication of poverty is possibly the single most urgent challenge of our world and a most necessary one to meet if we are to make our world a secure world through justice.

The Project was part-funded by the European Commission for the first three years of its five-year duration. This means that the EDRC has to raise the balance of the funds from public interest-minded public and private sources, and is dependent for the last two years of the Project on these sources. We would be very grateful for any support offered. I thank the University for such support as it has been able to grant.

As in previous years, this Report will form the backdrop to public discussion and debate in a National Conference organised by the EDRC and to be held in September of this year. The Conference is aimed at civil society in general, but also at policy-makers and decision-makers in all spheres, and at the citizen directly. An international cast of speakers will address the Maltese public.

My thanks once again to the University of Malta and to the European Commission, to the expert authors of the various reports, and to all participants in the work of this Project. My thanks, and an open invitation, also to all future participants in the Civil Society Project, including the attendees at the National Conference in September - for you too will, through your participation, become part of the ongoing Project. Last but certainly not least, my thanks to the EDRC staff, and especially Ms. Doris Mangion, Ms. Romina Zammit, Ms. Joanne Muscat, and Ms. Amanda Cardona, whose unstinting efforts underlie all results of each EDRC project.

PETER G. XUEREB
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THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY - WHAT PRINCIPLES APPLY?

PETER G. XUEREB

Introduction

The subject of this collection of papers is Poverty. The main focus is the core issues, and the principles that should apply to addressing them, in the fight against poverty at EU and at national, Malta, level as well as in our relations with the EU's neighbours on the one hand; and on the other hand the major debates that inform the backdrop of global policymaking as it evolves.

Among the latter are the role of the United Nations, new thinking about global and personal security, the notion of human rights and its universalism and the content of the right to personal security and to development of peoples and states.

This raises issues about the world order. We increasingly think not of nation states or even of groupings of states but in global terms. Poverty is a global challenge. This has implications for the disciplines of law, economics, international relations, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, theology and so on. Poverty is also a multi-dimensional challenge; it can only be addressed by a coherent, comprehensive strategy that is rooted in principle and driven by the common will. The fight against poverty remains essentially a moral issue, however. If we truly (increasingly) not only are but also feel morally responsible for each other across borders, then law also, in the sense of universal rights and institutions that recognise such, must also follow to this practical utopia.[1] The international regimes of international trade are under scrutiny. The UN framework, institutional and political is under review. The policies of the World Bank and of the IMF are constantly questioned. The role of the EU in the world is a matter of debate, and the Lisbon Treaty holds forth the promise of a European Union that will play out its true vocation on the world stage as a beacon of practical solidarity, although at the time of writing the Treaty's survival is in doubt due to the outcome of the Irish referendum of 12th June 2008.

Some see the possibility of 'the end of poverty' beyond achieving the Millenium Development Goals, through the use, with or without adaptation and with or without further development, of already existing mechanisms. Others quite simply do not see it ("the poor will always be with us"), and throw up their hands in defeat, whether through scepticism about the possibility of reform or about the reforms proposed.

Malta is of course one case example of how membership of a regional organisation, the EU in this case, can impact on the domestic fight against exclusion and poverty. Membership of a regional grouping with the mechanisms of the EU can be one answer, attacking the entire raft of problems through one new national strategic leap into such membership. A network of such groupings operating in this way and creating synergies between themselves and their members can be the next step. The possibilities offered to each individual state from operating within such a framework as combined with membership of the body of nations that make up the global community and fall under the umbrella of actions by global bodies, such as the UN, the OECD, IMF, World Bank and so on, are as exciting a prospect for the eradication of poverty, through *integration with diversity* into the global economic and political and social order, as the author has as yet been able to imagine. The proviso is that all these regional and global bodies operate in synergy on the basis of shared values and in accordance with *the principle of Solidarity* in particular.

The full picture would be given by:
- a study of each society or state, its poverty characteristics, its action plans and so on;
- a study of the benefits of EU membership or association, or similar;
- a study of other existing and emerging regional 'groupings of states';
- a study of the added value derivable from co-operation/integration as between/of such groupings and their members;
- a study of the efficacy of the regional and global initiatives in this regard;

[1] Mary Midgley, 'Towards an Ethic of Global Responsibility', Chapter 5 in Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler (eds.) *Human Rights in Global Politics*, Cambridge, CUP, 1999, pp.160-165.

and all this against the backdrop of the study of medium to long-term trends in politics, economics, international law, with due attention to the fundamental human rights issues.[2]

It was not possible to be comprehensive on these points in this study. The aim has been to bring to the forefront of the mind of the Maltese citizen the key issues, and to propose solutions by way of *principle*. What we advance are what we as a group of researchers feel must be the *Core Principles* guiding real action in this field. We all need to keep in mind the following questions: what *kind* of economics, law, international relations, politics do we need for the 21st century quest for Order with Justice. These are the big questions. But they may have surprisingly obvious and not nearly so daunting answers. The answer may simply be "not so much new as better", meaning taking our economics, law, politics and so on, and the way we put them all together around key principles, to the next step. And what is that next step? Our work suggests it is the step indicated by our more recent experience at national, regional and global level, and so well highlighted in this volume; that is, we need *'Solidarity' Economics, Law and Politics*, all rooted in sovereignty retained, but principled by multilateralism and the rule of law. Is this achievable? It is and it must be.

Lest this be dismissed as simplistic fantasy, simplistic it is not…let us say we need to evolve our 'complexity order', an order based on unity in diversity, on the making of rules after full intercultural dialogue, and then maintaining the rule of law. Surely that will appeal to the sophisticated homo sapiens of the 21st Century as a challenge worthy of his attention. Its actioning will be a daily exercise in pragmatism and as far removed from fantasy as it is possible to get, but only mechanisms that deal with the complex realities that are diverse peoples', but single humanity's, aspirations can possibly command legitimacy and support from the citizens of all states and peoples throughout the globe. Equality and inclusion of peoples in decision-making, with due regard to subsidiarity but otherwise with rule of law must be the formula. The universal acceptance that this is what we must do is the most crucial and difficult step for humanity to take on the road to this new order. I think humanity began to take this step post 9/11. The psychological leap has in large part been made. We recognise that we have to find solutions together, for the problems and challenges are common and shared; failure in one corner is failure everywhere.

This volume of papers overlaps with the first three studies carried out in the context of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence Civil Society Project run by this Centre over the last four years, and namely with the earlier reports on *Anti-Discrimination, Inclusion and Equality in Malta* (2005)[3], on *The Family, Law, Religion and Society in the EU and Malta* (2006)[4] and that on *Business Ethics and Religious Values in the EU and Malta* (2007)[5]. It takes us beyond the third report, with that study's focus on fair trade, corporate social responsibility and corporate governance; this volume extends further into the macro-picture of trade policy and development policy and many facets of our responsibility towards the poor. As with the previous studies, a key element is that of *Values* that inform policy, action and implementation.

We asked the following questions: what are the values that should inform policy making at all levels? Do these differ according to level and scope of the initiative in question? Are new values emerging to inform policy making in the area of poverty? Has experience given new insight into the definition, the causes, the sufferers (the 'faces of the poor'), the manifestations, the symptoms or results (immigration), our understanding of the way in which the poor see themselves and are perceived in turn, thus causing a change in the values applied to the categorisation and judgement of the situation of the poor by the policy maker and his or her electorate? What have we learned in the last few years about how we do trade, how we do aid, how we do business, how we work with others (or fail to) in the search for prosperity and security? Have we learned the lessons, often hard, of an often unrestrained 'short-termism', and what mechanisms can be employed to keep free the entrepreneurial spirit while curbing the excesses of the short-term pursuit of wealth on the individual, corporate and even national planes?

Of course, it is implicit that it is vital that we all work from the same values. Do such universal values exist, or do we need to discover them through intensive inter-cultural dialogue? Bhikhu Parekh, for one, thinks the

[2] See Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Human Rights in Global Politics*, *op.cit.*
[3] Peter G. Xuereb, (ed.), *Anti-Discrimination, Inclusion and Equality in Malta*, Malta, EDRC, 2005.
[4] Peter G. Xuereb (ed.), *The Family, Law, Religion and Society in the European Union and Malta,* Malta, EDRC, 2006.
[5]Peter G. Xuereb (ed.), *Business Ethics and Religious Values in the European Union and Malta- For a Level Moral Playing Field*, Malta, EDRC 2007.

latter.[6] In this sense the call is for a full and frank dialogue in institutional and other fora that guarantee it, and this series of Reports have repeatedly emphasised this vital challenge of our times. I return to this theme below.

Such are the *main themes* of this Report. *Solidarity* is the key *value* at play. It is assumed, of course, that we want a solidary world rather than one at war, that we want security rather than insecurity, and that we want equality and justice rather than inequality and injustice. 'We' in this are the ordinary citizens, rather than the profit-seekers and exploiters, those politicians who crave power above all else, and all those who would put their own personal power and wealth before the good of mankind, however much they may protest that they are acting in the interests of the economy, of prosperity, of progress and on with the list.

It is further assumed that 'government' - local, national, regional, global - has the political will to create solidarity, to move to transnational governance in the common interest. In any context, this means integration. The degree of integration is vital to the sense of solidarity that brings real solidarity. So that global solidarity through integration must be as much an aim and a reality as regional and national solidarity. Nothing less will reduce the poverty gap that harms all, and threatens our peaceful co-existence. Anthony Giddens, speaking of present day society, wrote that 'we-feeling' can no longer be taken for granted - it has to be actively created and re-created as a more or less continuous process[7]. This is even more true if we aspire to regional and global 'we-feeling', the only guarantee for peace and prosperity for each and every one of us. It is argued here that this is the very core question for global 'we-feeling'. Do we wait for 'we-feeling' before we show solidarity or do we build up we-feeling by showing and practising solidarity together? I argue the latter. Nations and peoples must come in practice to mean global society[8], and the 'space' of solidarity must grow until it covers the planet.

For this to happen, the scope of morality and responsibility must be accepted as covering all our fellow human beings. 'Practicability' will forever be a constraint on idealism and utopia, but inertia in the face of the ideal will only serve the self-serving and only do so in the short run at that. Nobody wins. Hence the cruciality of discourse on universal values, with universal human rights as one way through to that. The minimalist approach has yielded results in the past (UN Declarations, European Conventions), but statements of values need to be supplemented by the setting out of agreed norms articulated in the language of rights or duties, and diversity must be respected as to prioritisation or resolution of conflicts of values and institutional implementation, a balance being struck that respects the minimum while opening a dialogue to work towards that or go beyond that[9].

On these bases, the questions become ones of an instrumental nature. What instruments are available to address the key causes of poverty? What are the obstacles to their mobilisation or implementation? Not all states can (or wish to) join the EU, but the EU should wish them to wish to join, and global solidarity should find in the EU something of a model for its own ordering. This must be done around agreed values as based on the dignity of the human person. Of these, the principal one is *Equality*, implying equal access to opportunity, to the resources of security and economic independence. The right to freedom from fear and insecurity, freedom from want, is the first right of the human being.

The current internal EU model for 'eradicating poverty' is based largely on the open method of co-ordination, with peer pressure supplementing the 'will to learn from the best practices of others'. Yet the Lisbon Process is accused of focusing on growth and employment and not enough on social justice and the environment. Losers need to be identified and assisted.[10] Because it matters not just for what we can expect the EU to do, but also for what can be expected of the EU, I set out here Giddens' notion of what the EU is and should be, I add even after the Lisbon Treaty (if it happens), for this is important for all interlocutors of

[6] Bhikhu Parekh, 'Non-Ethnocentric Universalism', in Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler (eds.), *Human Rights in Global Politics*, cit., at pp.128-160 especially at p. 139.
[7] Anthony Giddens, *Europe in the Global Age*, Polity Press, 2007, p.114.
[8] Mary Midgley, *cit.* at p. 163.
[9] See Bhikhu Parekh, *cit.*, pp.152 *et seq*., who, however, does not see the minima as a floor or threshold subject to which different societies may organise themselves as they please but as a body of regulative principles that inform and structure all aspects of their moral lives (p.158).
[10] Giddens A., *Europe in the Global Age, cit.*, p.170. For Giddens' view of what the EU is or should be in terms of social solidarity, a new type of cosmopolitan project, see pp. 211 *et seq*.

the EU to grasp, lest there be accusations of lack of will or commitment to the values so proudly espoused by the Union. He and Ulrich Beck describe the EU not as an 'unfinished nation' or 'an incomplete federal state' but as a new type of cosmopolitan project.[11] The other description of the EU is that of a Cosmo-polis, a world city [12], or as I prefer a model for the world city. I share this vision of unity in diversity, of co-operation and even integration with solidarity.

However, even the EU has its problems with identifying its optimal model. It cannot simply be taken and offered to the rest of the world. We all need to learn from the EU experience and think in ever-increasing circles. It is increasingly agreed that a multilateral approach is required, covering the EU member states and their neighbours. I have argued for this before and have suggested that the EU model of evolution of relations should guide us in devising the model for these relations, not least for the Euro-Mediterranean Area but also for the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Area and beyond.[13] We should not be in too much of a hurry, but nor can we afford to dally. This will require institutions that have the capacity to act as institutions for the common good.

Just as capitalism owes its origins to economic development and the political reforms that led to the emergence of the nation states of Europe, the financial scandals of the last century and of this one are testimony to greed, the herd instinct and the opportunities presented by globalisation to render all operations, including those predicated by greed and speculation, global. They are testimony to the failure to regulate or re-regulate at national, regional or global levels to dampen such behaviour and foster responsible and moral behaviour. To regard religion as irrelevant, especially because it is seen as the main 'culprit', is to assist in the transmutation of the positive conception of individualism into the negative one associated with selfishness and greed, and to erode the sense of community, responsibility and the common good, which are all crucial to real humanism; it is to distort the message of all religion. Two contributions in this volume make this point (Joseph Ellul and George Grima). What is worse, though, is to embrace the negative individualism as the 'ruling ethic' for this is ultimately to prefer *anomia*[14] to '*eunomia*'[15].

Values, and especially the key value of solidarity, expressed through practical solidarity at every level of society, from local to regional to world society, through institutions that lead and implement this practical solidarity via good governance, democracy and justice, are indispensable for the creation of a just world order.

Underlying everything is the Value of Solidarity

In truth then[16], the project of Development is about emancipation, about the freedom of the individual, the empowerment of the individual. But we must not let distorted ideas of individual freedom, with all its implications for normative ideas and institutional development, cloud the issue and further exacerbate the divides which plague us at all levels. Freedom is not total independence. That is anomie and amorality. At all loci, we speak here of the Durkheimian freedom[17] as liberating dependence premised on society and man as a social being, and states as part of the society of states or World Society. We urgently need to devise an agenda for the common good, including the shaping of institutions for the common good.

The Papers in this Volume

The papers in this volume point to the main axes of such an agenda for the common good. The search has been for the truth as to the causes, indicated by the symptoms, of poverty - whether at national (Malta),

[11] Giddens A., *cit*., p.233.
[12] Mary Midgley, *cit*., p. 162.
[13] Peter G. Xuereb, 'Pan-Euro-Med Co-operation and Integration – Looking Ahead to Infusing the Euro-Med Partnership and the European Neighbourhood Policy with the Supranational Dynamic', in Erwan Lannon (ed.), *The European Neighbourhood Policy Challenges*, Brussels, Berlin, Frankfurt, New York, Oxford, Vienna, Peter Lang 2008 (forthcoming).
[14] See, for example, Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, Cambridge University Press 1971.
[15] See, for example, Philip Allot, *Eunomia: New Order for a New World Order*, Oxford, OUP, 1991.
[16] See also Craig N.Murphy, 'The Promise of Critical IR, Partially Kept', in Nicholas Rengger and Ben Thirkell-White, *Critical International Relations Theory After 25 Years*, CUP 2007 at p.117.
[17] See Giddens A. *op. cit*. p.117.

Mediterranean, European or even global level - establishing the main truth that we are all connected, that your poverty is my poverty, if not also my doing. Without covering the whole range of human misery or the whole range of human greed and failing, enough is said by the various authors to lead us into the principles that offer us hope.

Setting the Scene - The World, the European Union and the Mediterranean.

A first group of papers sets the scene across the globe, across the EU and across the Mediterranean, and explores the formal and informal relations between these overlapping worlds. *Neila Akrimi* asks: What role for the European Union? How to fit the EU's Development Policy in the context of the multilateralism and the need for global governance? She cites the Commission Communication on the EU and the United Nations, thus: ' the putting in place and the maintenance of global institutions represents a difficult task, the success of which depends on the determination of States to respect the rules that they fix upon and to convince others to do so'.[18] The EU can be seen as a model of integration, of soft power and of governance. The EU must pay attention to the impact of its policies on third countries, and must promote a positive vision of co-operation. Bilateral agreements must be made to serve a hierarchically superior multilateral agreement. This mirrors what the editor has argued for also, the element of bindingness of agreed rules as set in a binding, if flexible, framework.[19] Integration of developing countries into the global economy must proceed apace, with special and differentiated treatment, flexibility and subsidiarity, and new or clearer rules in various areas of the WTO system. While pointing to the potential of current EU policy, Akrimi also points out certain deficits. Above all she calls for institutional and policy co-ordination, including institutionalised multilateralism.

Deniz Ilgaz examines the two main external policy initiatives of the EU, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and the European Neighbourhood Policy, and the link between them. She questions how far the eradication of poverty is explicitly included or implicitly excluded as one of the aims of the EMP and the ENP. She asks big questions and attempts to answer many of them. They include: Does the EMP recognise the need for an objective and scientific core meaning of poverty for every country composing the region, and also try to find common cross-cutting similarities? Is there an effort in the EMP and the ENP to set common aims regarding basic needs, education, employment, social protection for the individual and the family, exploitation of women and children, measures taken to help persons with a disability and the elderly, concern with the promotion of citizenship for the poor, comprising civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights? What measures are taken for the participation of the poor in society, and what provision made for good governance? We now know that we cannot rely on the so-called 'trickle down effect' to bring the benefits of development to the poor. It has been noticed that the rich are getting richer while the poor are….for many it is too late! Ideas need to be updated. The weak regulation of international trade needs to be bolstered. Free trade needs to be reconciled with the principles of democracy and human rights. The Universality of Human rights should be taken as a basis. The relative (rather than any absolute) concept of poverty needs to be upheld, utilising the broader concept of social disadvantage commonly referred to as social exclusion in Europe. She calls for an objective and scientific 'core meaning of poverty' to guide us in achieving our common goals, and for the eradication of poverty to be treated not as en economic or social policy matter but as a human rights issue for the whole world. Ilgaz finds both the EMP and the ENP sadly lacking. In particular, 'Solidarity' and 'the Mediterranean' might be reconciled through stronger citizenship rights and the development of an intelligent and 'socially friendly' institutional framework. Structural factors, such as gender discrimination and poor access to quality education must be addressed urgently if poverty is not to be transmitted from generation to generation. Life chances, and access to them on the basis of equality, are key. Her paper ends with a section on Turkey, her homeland, and a conclusion advocating the rights-based approach to tackling poverty.

The final paper in this group, by *Doreen Micallef and Doris Bingley*, raises an issue that features in several of the papers in this volume and even emerges as key in contexts such as that of the Mediterranean, although here we see the question approached in the main from a Western, developed country/EU perspective. The issue is that of Women and Poverty. The reader is invited to contrast the position with that painted, for example, by *Fatiha Sahli*, who writes about the position of women in her native Morocco. Micallef and

[18] COM (2003) 526 final.
[19] See also Peter G. Xuereb, cit., note 13.

Bingley make the point that the application of gender analysis to a wide range of policies and programmes is critical to poverty reduction strategies.

The Faces of the Poor

The second group of papers, while not comprehensive in issue or geographical reach, fill in the picture on the ground in the EU, Malta, the Mediterranean and show us the faces of the families, the women, the children and even of whole populations. They present the Faces of the Poor and the Faces of Poverty. The papers hold these faces up to us.

Angele Deguara has carried out a remarkable survey of poverty in contemporary Europe and Malta. Her study carries us through definitions of poverty, through to the many faces of the disadvantaged in Europe as a whole and Malta in particular, through to conclusions and recommendations. It sets the scene very well for thinking, actions, and solutions in advance of the proposed European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, in 2010. As she writes, the problem of poverty is multi-dimensional. The policy approach has to be equally multi-dimensional. Although the proportion of people at risk of poverty in Malta is relatively low, this does not mean that there are not categories or groups or individuals who are socially excluded. The involvement of the poor themselves, the giving of voice to the poor, is part of the solution, she writes.

As if to flesh out the general story depicted by Deguara, the next paper by *Damian Spiteri* and *Leonid Mckay* takes us almost literally into the homes of the poor in a particular locality in Malta. We hear first hand the voice of the poor in Malta. Through this study and its presentation, our poor are literally among us. As the authors describe it, their study is intrinsically a study of such issues as people's identity and even of their reflexivity as they try to fashion out their life-course in a way that suits them despite any structural constraints that impinge on their sense of agency. It is the story of people seeking dignity and keeping hope alive in the face of disadvantage, not as tragic as the stories of many outside these shores but poignant in the Maltese context.

Of course, while employment is not the whole answer to poverty, it is key to alleviating much of it. The informal economy is a phenomenon that might appear to at least partially alleviate poverty but is for most the very poverty trap itself. The paper by *Necdet Saglam* draws a picture of the informal economy in the Mediterranean and in her native Turkey in particular. The theme of Women and Poverty is then taken up by *Fatiha Sahli*, who presents the findings of a study carried out in her native Morocco, which she places in the context of gender policy at United Nations level, and of the UN recommendations. The great need for education and empowerment is tangible.

The next two papers highlight the plight, and for the EU and its Member States (not least Malta) the dilemma, of the illegal immigrant. Rather than addressing the issue of appropriate policies for stemming the tide of illegal immigration, a matter of the gravest concern, *Audrey Gatt* examines the political, social and legal issues that arise from the reality of the presence in various Member States of the illegal immigrant, and she argues forcefully for the empowerment of the immigrant, who is otherwise condemned to perpetual second (or 'no') class status, perpetually exploited by the unscrupulous and with no prospect of contributing according to actual potential to the society in which he or she finds himself or herself. She advocates an education policy, even if coupled with a return policy. In the absence of a working and efficient return policy, legalisation or regularisation, as opposed to amnesty, makes sense in the best interests of the host nation. *Daniela Debono* goes further in questioning the label of 'mere economic migrant' (she herself uses a multidimensional definition of poverty), a label that seems in the public consciousness to lead inexorably to outright condemnation and harshness of treatment and to exclusion from the protection of the international refugee regime. Yet most often 'economic' migrants are people who have made the Hobson's choice between migration and starvation. It is forgotten that very often it is inequality that has driven them from their homeland. Debono seeks not to propose policies or put forward a list of recommendations, but rather to expose certain inconsistencies or misperceptions as they emerge in the discourse about people who migrate due to poverty. While the indivisibility or interdependence of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights is one of the fundamental principles of human rights protection, it is precisely this principle that is not given importance, she argues. A rights-based approach should militate in favour of recognition of the human right to 'freedom from want' and this requires from us a re-evaluation of our moral responsibility in this area, Debono argues.

Readers will be stimulated into new thought also by the paper by *Adrian Grima*, who brings us face to face with a kind of 'Mediterranean precariousness' that is real but that we would very much like to ignore in favour of a virtual European reality. Another reality we are prone to ignore is the history of Maltese migration and the harsh reality of the life of the migrant. Grima also reminds us of the constructs of the Mediterranean and of Europe in our collective Maltese mind. He asks us to think of where 'we stand' as an island Member State of the European Union in the Mediterranean.

Guiding Principles in the Fight Against Poverty

The next group of papers turn to the concepts, principles and institutions that currently shape our response to the phenomena considered in the preceding papers, and others besides. One main question asked is whether the international trade regime has had untoward effects, now in an era of globalisation, and whether it can serve in the fight against poverty. Is the World Trade Organisation (WTO) overall an agent for good or is it a culprit? *Bassem Karray* opens the debate by asking whether differential treatment rules suffice to alleviate poverty in the Least Developed Countries, or whether it is necessary to strengthen them by trade-related technical assistance mechanisms. He reminds us that "Trade is a Carrier of Peace……Unless it is Inequitable", and the WTO has a key role to play here.

Then, in the context of globalisation, *Ivan Sammut* asks whether increasing openness in international trade is leading to an increase in world poverty. He highlights the crucial importance of good governance internally in the Least Developed Countries, while arguing that it is precisely inequality that makes international trade less successful in reducing world poverty. The benefits of international trade are not necessarily directed properly, nor shared in an equal way. Foreign investment can play a positive role here. The protectionism of the rich countries in the face of exports from those that are poor must end. For policy-makers interested in poverty reduction, what matters is the interaction of two factors, the rate of growth and the proportion of any increment to growth captured by the poor. What is required is Fair Multilateralism, with as one component the safeguarding and promotion of human rights by the international community, a key task of the international community being that of bringing effective pressure to bear in this regard. Certainly unfettered global capitalism will tend to cause fragmentation and chaos, so that the answer is to 'work together' for cooperative goals which address directly the needs of the poor and the excluded.

Paul Turner appeals to mankind's 'innate attraction to fairness' in his paper on free trade, rationality, and future generations. His 'intergenerational justice' approach presages that of *Jean-Paul De Lucca*. But for Turner, the WTO 'tries to limit selflessness and promote selfishness', and so he makes a case for 'reciprocal altruism'. He argues that strategies may include forgoing sustainable development for short-term development goals in order to relieve extreme poverty and grow to a better position for foreign direct investment attraction, thus providing benefit for the future generation. This kind of argument shows how complex and even variegated or differentiated the policy-making process is or needs to be.

Jean-Paul De Lucca picks up in the present context the issue of short-termism that was so strongly attacked in the previous volume in this series.[20] In his paper on the 'Time-Horizon: institutionalising intergenerational justice and solidarity in the fight against poverty', he fastens on two key concepts and explores their value as principles guided in turn by the concept of balancing the short and the long term. This puts concepts such as 'sustainability' and 'needs' in context. As he says, 'the concept of sustainability….provides a framework aimed precisely at addressing the problem of global justice versus intergenerational justice'. Of course, this goes once again to showing how complex a challenge we face, for 'when analysing how we deal with poverty today, one has also to factor in how methods of dealing with poverty today will affect future generations'. He aims to show how we can transcend 'short-termism', described as the tendency of policy-setters and decision-makers to plan for the very immediate future without taking into consideration the long-term effects of their decisions and actions. He speaks of 'today's inability to control appetites' and of 'legitimising the claims for restraint in today's decisions'. Future generations have no voice, so it is at democratic structures that we should look if we hope to replace short-termism with the future-oriented approach of a 'time-horizon'. De Lucca then examines the possibilities in terms of institutionalising inter-

[20] Peter G. Xuereb (ed), *Business Ethics and Religious Values in the European Union and Malta- For a Level Moral Playing Field*, Malta, EDRC, 2007.

generational solidarity, not forgetting the role of civil society. He ends by recalling Maltese efforts at promoting the idea of a supranational Guardian for Future Generations.

Rights having been mentioned often in previous papers, *Omar Grech*'s paper comes at an apposite point. Grech seeks to examine some of the ways in which human rights and development 'impact upon each other'. Another aim is to consider the extent to which the Millenium Development Goals have incorporated human rights principles and frameworks. He cites Mohammed Bedjaoui, who said that 'the satisfaction of the needs of the people should be perceived as a right and not an act of charity. It is a right which should be made effective by norms and institutions'. Grech in fact argues for more Law, and a rights-based approach to development and the eradication of poverty. This links up with the earlier call for good governance in the poorer countries, made by Sammut, for Grech writes that 'developing states themselves need to comprehend that the notions of accountability, transparency and democratic legitimacy are crucial components of their development strategy'. Yet he does not spare us either, when he says that 'the role of human rights' is also about reminding 'the developed world of the massive denial of…..rights of people in the developing world'. Unfortunately, he says, the development community at large still seems to eschew normative language and displays a continuing preference for non-normative terminology. There seems to be a preference for terms such as 'good governance' and 'local participation', which although closely connected to human rights avoid the 'rights-duties' language which must lie at the heart of any legal process. Without enforcement, ultimately, the Millenium Development Goals seem in jeopardy. The participatory approach is equally key, and the poor need to be seen as partners rather than passive recipients.

This last idea of course requires us to see the poor, and their countries, as partners, as moral equals and as future material equals. Are we up to this challenge? What appears to be demanded of us is a new concept of where we stand in relation to one another and the world. *Vince Caruana* introduces into the debate and into our psyche the concept of the 'Global Citizen'. Are we up to accepting this - more than a concept - this identity and responsibility, a responsibility that may yet save us? Are we able to get *personally* involved in the fight against poverty, even where it means fighting within our own systems, or even fighting our own systems? Development education is sorely needed, he argues. We all need to move 'from basic awareness, through understanding…to personal involvement and informed action'. Global citizenship is a conscious choice; it means acknowledging our personal responsibilities to each other and to the earth itself. This anticipates George Grima's message of commitment. For those of us who have already left school other ways must be found; for the young among us the 'whole school' approach is recommended, among others. In any event, Caruana strongly argues that a strong space must be carved for global citizenship education, under its various forms.

The last two papers in this group are those by the Reverend Professors Joseph Ellul and George Grima. *Joseph Ellul* asserts that our European societies have lost faith in the power of reason. Yet lest we think that he be advocating some secular humanistic view of Reason, he reminds us that we must beware the fundamentalisms of secularism and of religious fundamentalism. For one of Christianity's contributions to Europe at this moment should be belief in reason, belief that we are called to seek the truth. In the present context, the role of the Christian, who 'remains' relevant therefore to the construction of European societies, is to listen to the cries of anguish around him, and to ensure that the human being is not reduced to what he or she shows or produces. *George Grima* takes up the point, arguing that for us all the eradication of poverty is a moral commitment. Indeed, he sees something wrong with the way in which society is organising itself on the political and civil as well as on the local and global level to eradicate poverty, for seeking to do this in a more or less established time-frame is in a sense prejudicial to a fuller understanding of the moral dimension of the fight against poverty. Goals and Strategies themselves depend on moral resources that come from the *vision* that we have and the *freedom* that we enjoy in embarking on a course of action. Behind markets and business organisations there are people who are or can be sensitive to certain values and who are or can be able to act in accordance with certain principles. We should not see the struggle against poverty as a struggle against 'the abusive power of a free-market global economy', although we should by all means expose and condemn abuse. The fight against poverty can (only) be won if it is motivated by a common vision of a truly human society. With that thought I end my introduction.

GOUVERNANCE EUROPEENNE VERSUS GOUVERNANCE GLOBALE: QUEL IMPACT POUR LE PARTENARIAT EURO-MEDITERRANEEN?

NEILA AKRIMI

The current debate on regionalism and globalization, unveiled and massively studied recently, represents the context of reference to the Euro-Mediterranean (Euromed) Partnership. The Barcelona Declaration is likely to present the Mediterranean as a project of regional integration setting up a typical model of cooperation for development which protracted the principles that the EU applies to itself. The Euromed initiative is at a discursive level an expression of EU policy seeking to promote its own model of governance. However, pledging to promote a new political model capable of alleviating the challenge of development is also embodied in a universal vision of economic success, expanding world-wide through a prevailing economic analysis arguing for global governance. This article confronts the two tendencies in order to point out the levels of interaction and to pave the way for possible cohesion and coordination, to further enhance the Region's development efforts, in the Mediterranean context.

Introduction

La politique de coopération au développement de l'UE a l'objectif de promouvoir « l'insertion harmonieuse et progressive des pays en développement dans l'économie mondiale ». En se mettant en situation de concurrence sur les marchés régionaux les pays en développement peuvent améliorer leur compétitivité pour mieux s'intégrer dans l'économie mondiale. «Cependant la question des liens entre globalisation et développement est l'une des plus controversées qui soit, parce qu'elle oppose des visions simplistes au gré desquelles l'insertion internationale serait la garantie du développement »[1].

La réalité est plus nuancée. Elle est surtout plus complexe. Le système multilatéral fait l'objet d'une critique globale. Ces critiques ont poussé les Institutions Financières Mondiales (IMF) à coordonner leurs stratégies de développement avec d'autres bailleurs de fond afin de rendre leurs actions plus significatives, notamment avec l'UE. En effet, l'échelon multilatéral n'est pas toujours optimal. « La recherche d'une gouvernance globale efficace doit laisser beaucoup de place à l'impératif de subsidiarité: prendre les décisions au niveau le plus décentralisé dès lors que le passage à un niveau supérieur ne s'impose pas. La mise en œuvre de ce principe suppose aussi de renforcer le cadre multilatéral qui en fournirait l'assise - évitant ainsi que le développement du régionalisme ne soit envisagé comme une alternative à l'échelon multilatéral - et de veiller à l'articulation entre les différents niveaux de décision: État, région, groupe de pays, institutions multilatérales »[2].

Face à ces difficultés et à l'apparition de nouveaux besoins, l'UE aspire jouer un rôle actif pour relever les défis mondiaux et contribuer à la gouvernance globale. D'où une certaine complémentarité entre l'action européenne du développement et la gouvernance mondiale. L'objet de cet article est de mettre en lumière la gouvernance européenne dans sa manière de définir sa contribution aux questions mondiales et de présenter les implications pour la région méditerranéenne.

Chapitre 1: Une complémentarité justifiée par l'unité des objectifs

Considérant la coopération internationale comme un préalable pour relever les nombreux défis auxquels le monde est confronté, l'UE est persuadé de son intérêt à encourager la progression et l'amélioration constantes des outils de gouvernance mondiale.

C'est ainsi que dans la Communication de la commission sur Union européenne et Nations unies: le choix du multilatéralisme, on souligne que « La mise en place et le maintien d'institutions mondiales représentent une tâche difficile, dont le succès repose sur la détermination des États à respecter les règles qu'ils se sont fixées

[1] J-L. BIANCO et J-M SEVERINO, « Un autre monde est possible. Globalisation, gouvernance, développement », Notes de la Fondation Jean Jaurès, n° 20, 2001.
[2] M-C. SMOUTS. Organisations internationales et théories de la régulation: quelques éléments de réflexion, *op. cit.*, p. 520.

et sur leur volonté de convaincre les autres de les respecter lorsqu'ils sont tentés de s'y soustraire. Nos institutions élargissant peu à peu leur champ d'action, nous devons nous attendre à ce qu'au lieu de se raréfier, les occasions de mettre cette détermination et cette volonté à l'épreuve se multiplient à l'avenir »[3].

L'attachement de l'Europe au multilatéralisme et au « rôle de pivot » du système multilatéral permettra de déterminer, au cours des prochaines années, si et à quelles conditions l'architecture institutionnelle pouvait continuer à servir de socle au système international. Cette conviction européenne trouve une profonde application dans les relations de l'UE avec ses partenaires du sud et de l'est de la Méditerranée. Les PMSE, étant engagés dans une démarche de développement avec l'UE et aussi avec les IFM, ils se trouvent dans un espace de croisement entre les politiques de développement proposés par ces deux bailleurs de fond.

Avant de se pencher sur la question primordiale de saisir le contour et la portée du rapport entre l'action de développement de l'UE envers les PMSE et l'action parallèle des IFM, il sera opportun de voir d'emblée les types et modèles de relation entre entité régionale et globale. Ce point de vue analytique avancera des outils de réflexions.

§ 1. Les types de relations entre entités régionales et globales

Si on se place d'un point de vue analytique, les rapports entre entités régionales et les entités mondiales multilatérales peuvent être examinés à trois points de vue: celui des finalités, celui des principes et celui des moyens[4].

Tout d'abord, la finalité des entités régionales est le renforcement de la coopération entre ses membres, dans le but de réaliser des intérêts qu'ils estiment avoir en commun et, par conséquent, l'intensification de la solidarité qui les lie[5]. Dans cette perspective, évidemment limitée au groupe particulier qu'elles réunissent, les entités régionales peuvent concevoir leurs relations avec le reste de la société internationale, ainsi qu'avec les organisations mondiales, de deux attitudes différentes.

Une première attitude consiste à chercher à promouvoir les intérêts du groupe régional dans les instances universelles. Le but poursuivi est donc de renforcer le poids des Etats en provenance de la région dans ces instances et, si possible, de faire triompher les thèses qu'ils défendent, en leur permettant de se présenter plus unis et mieux assurés de leurs objectifs. Dans ce cas, la finalité du groupe régional est extravertie. C'est une finalité d'ouverture.

L'entité régionale peut, au contraire, vouloir protéger les intérêts de ses membres contre toute intervention extérieure. Elle contribue alors à séparer le groupe qu'ils constituent du reste à la société internationale. On peut alors parler de finalité introvertie ou de fermeture.

Quant aux principes, il faut rappeler que la plupart des actes constitutifs d'entité régionales ne se contentent pas de créer des organes et de définir des buts, ils énoncent aussi un certain nombre de principes destinés à régir l'action du groupe et le comportement de ses Etats. La question classique est la comptabilité formelle des énoncés de principes figurant dans des actes constitutifs des organisations régionales avec celle de l'organisation mondiale [6].

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[3] Union européenne et Nations unies: le choix du multilatéralisme, Communication de la commission, Bruxelles, le 10.9.2003 COM (2003) 526 final. Dans cette communication, la commission entend par « système des Nations unies » les principaux organes de l'Organisation des Nations unies, notamment l'Assemblée générale et le Conseil économique et social, y compris leurs organes subsidiaires, le Conseil de sécurité, le Secrétariat, ainsi que les programmes, fonds et institutions spécialisées des Nations unies, notamment les institutions de Bretton Woods.

[4] Voir Société française pour le droit international, Régionalisme et Universalisme dans le Droit international contemporain, Colloque de Bordeaux, Edition Alain Pedone, Paris 1977, 355 p.

[5] Voir Organisation de coopération et de développement économique. Mondialisation: enjeux et possibilités pour les pouvoirs publics. Paris, OCDE, 1996, 18 p.

[6] Voir C. SCHREUER, « *Regionalism v. Universalism*», European Journal of law Vol. 6 No. 3, 1995. Accessible via: http://www.ejil.org/journal/Vol6/No3/art10.html.

Enfin, s'agissant des moyens, il importe de signaler que l'inégalité des moyens entre les Etats constitue aujourd'hui un problème mondial. Elle concerne des Etats dispersés par une géographie de développement (ou du sous développement). L'insuffisance des moyens (moyens financiers, administratifs et techniques) risque évidemment de limiter sévèrement l'activité de certaines organisations régionales, contraintes d'abandonner certains champs d'action aux organisations mondiales, mieux pourvues, ou de les amener à tenter de réaliser leurs objectifs par l'exercice de pression sur ces dernières, plutôt que par une action directe, qui nécessiterait la mise en œuvre de ressources qui leur manquent[7].

Comment alors se place l'intégration régionale euro-méditerranéenne face à ce schéma analytique des relations entre entité régionale et organisation multilatérales mondiales?

§ 2. Contribution de L'UE à la gouvernance mondiale

« Constituée d'États distincts, L'UE est d'abord un laboratoire d'intégration et de gestion de l'interdépendance porteur d'une expérience spécifique des relations internationales. Gouvernée en son sein par des règles - la Communauté est d'abord une Europe du droit - elle a naturellement tendance à promouvoir une gouvernance par les règles » comme le dit Zaki Laïdi[8]. Elle est fondamentalement un soft power et porte une culture non hégémonique des rapports mondiaux[9]. En effet, la construction européenne est un processus en cours. Il s'agit aussi d'un processus spécifique qui « confère à la gouvernance européenne ce trait unique: une intégration non-hégémonique, pacifique, sans contrainte, sans violence. A la fois voulue, définie et organisée »[10]. La construction européenne est alors considérée « comme laboratoire d'une gouvernance différente »[11]. Elle est aussi l'expérience de gouvernance supranationale la plus ambitieuse qui ait été tentée depuis le siècle dernier dont le but et de gérer les interdépendances.

Une interdépendance, donc, voulue, définie et organisée qui réunit les trois ingrédients: le premier, la volonté politique d'intégration; le second, un accord sur l'objectif à atteindre et le troisième une machinerie de procédures ou d'institutions capables de produire et d'assurer la gouvernance des résultats escomptés. C'est dans cette lignée que la Commission européenne a adopté le « Livre blanc » de la gouvernance européenne en juillet 2001[12]. Ce document contient une série de recommandations sur les moyens de renforcer la démocratie en Europe et d'accroître la légitimité des institutions. « Il s'agit de moderniser l'action publique européenne dans le sens d'une responsabilité accrue de ses exécutifs face aux assemblées élues et d'une ouverture du processus décisionnel de l'Union à la participation des citoyens aux décisions qui les concernent »[13].

Par ailleurs, le « Livre blanc » adopté par la Commission élargit la perspective au-delà de l'Europe et contribue au débat sur la gouvernance mondiale. Il soutient que l'Union doit chercher à « appliquer les principes de bonne gouvernance à ses responsabilités mondiales et qu'elle devrait chercher à accroître l'efficacité et les compétences d'exécution des institutions internationales »[14].

Lors de la préparation du « Livre blanc » de la gouvernance, un rapport[15] élaboré par les services de la Commission avait soumis des recommandations sur le renforcement de la contribution de l'Union

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[7] Voir « *Secretary general's message to Gransmontana Forum: new regionalism is a complement to globalization*». United Nations Press release United Nations Office at Geneva DG/01/20 28 June 2001.
[8] Voir Z. LAIDI, Le Sacre du présent, Paris, Flammarion, 2000, p. 37.
[9] Voir P. LAMY, « Bilan et perspectives après Seattle », CDC, Rapport sur l'argent dans le monde, Paris, Montchrestien, 2001.
[10] P. LAMY, « Gouvernance globale: Leçon d'Europe ». Conférence GUNNAR MYRDAL. Commission Economique des Nations Unies pour l'Europe. Genève, 22 avril 2005. Disponible sur: http://www.unece.org/ead/myrd/Lamy_2005.pdf.
[11] *Ibid*.
[12] Communication de la commission sur un livre blanc de la gouvernance européenne. COM (2001) 428 final. Bruxelles, le 25.7.2001. Disponible sur: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/fr/com/2001/com2001_0428fr01.pdf.
[13] *Ibid*.
[14] *Ibidem.*
[15] Rapport du groupe de travail « Renforcement de la contribution de l'Europe à la gouvernance mondiale », mai 2001. Disponible sur: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/group11/report_fr.pdf.

européenne à la gouvernance mondiale. Ce rapport se fonde sur la conviction selon laquelle, « les structures et la qualité de la gouvernance sont des facteurs déterminants de la cohésion sociale ou des conflits sociaux, du succès ou de l'échec du développement économique, de la préservation ou de la dégradation de l'environnement naturel et du respect ou de la violation des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales. Ces liens sont largement reconnus par la communauté internationale et montrent en quoi la gouvernance exerce une influence sur le développement »[16].

La toile de fond de ce rapport est la « Déclaration du Millénaire des Nations Unies »[17]. Cette déclaration proclame que la création d'un environnement propice au développement et à l'éradication de la pauvreté dépend, entre autres choses, d'une bonne gouvernance dans chaque pays, d'une bonne gouvernance à l'échelle internationale et de la transparence des systèmes financiers, monétaires et commerciaux. Une autre référence dans les esprits des rédacteurs du rapport est le consensus issu du Sommet de l'ONU sur le financement du développement organisé en mars 2002 à Monterrey au Mexique. Le Consensus de Monterrey a souligné qu'une bonne gouvernance à tous les niveaux était essentielle pour atteindre un développement durable, une croissance économique soutenue et l'éradication de la pauvreté.

La gouvernance, la démocratisation et le développement se rejoignent alors dans les objectifs généraux de l'UE définis dans les traités, dans le «Livre blanc sur la gouvernance»[18] et dans les conclusions du Conseil de mai 2002. Par ailleurs, plusieurs communications et documents stratégiques liés au thème de la gouvernance ont été publiés par la Commission ces dernières années[19]. La Commission européenne a adopté le 20 octobre 2003 une communication sur la gouvernance et le développement[20], qui offre une nouvelle vision, plus pragmatique, sur l'efficacité des Etats à l'heure d'éradiquer la pauvreté et promouvoir le développement soutenable dans le monde.

Sous l'éclairage de cette documentation, les défis qu'il faut relever pour améliorer la gouvernance « par-delà des frontières » de l'UE sont les suivants: améliorer la gouvernance européenne sur les décisions ayant un impact en dehors de ses frontières; prêter attention à la gouvernance dans d'autres régions où l'action européenne pourrait faire une différence et agir sur la gouvernance au niveau global. Afin de répondre à ces défis, le rapport sur le renforcement de la contribution de l'Europe à la gouvernance mondiale soumet les recommandations suivantes. D'abord « l'UE doit renforcer de façon significative sa représentation internationale et veiller à parler d'une seule voix dans les forums internationaux et régionaux. À court terme, l'UE doit s'efforcer de promouvoir une plus grande cohérence entre les organisations internationales existantes. L'UE doit également prendre fait et cause pour une ouverture et une transparence plus grandes dans les organisations internationales »[21].

L'objectif de l'UE est de garantir que tous les membres des organisations internationales puissent jouer pleinement leur rôle, que les institutions soient ouvertes à la contribution des acteurs extérieurs. L'UE puise la légitimité de cette requête dans la carence du système du développement des institutions internationales multilatérales et qui leur en value des critiques ardues. Afin de pallier le déficit du système global quant à la rigidité du modèle du développement, l'UE, pour sa politique internationale, « oeuvre en faveur de progrès constants, d'une volonté de tolérer ceux qui avancent plus lentement et d'un engagement à veiller à ce que les politiques communes soient élaborées aux niveaux global et régional appropriés, et à ce que tous les acteurs partie prenante aient la capacité, le savoir-faire et les moyens de les appliquer »[22].

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[16] *Ibid*.

[17] Adoptés par le Sommet du Millénaire de l'Onu à New York en septembre 2000, les ODM visent à réduire de moitié l'extrême pauvreté dans le monde d'ici à 2015, à assurer l'éducation pour tous, à améliorer l'accès aux services de santé et à protéger l'environnement.

[18] COM (2001) 428 final, du 25.07.2001. Rapport de la Commission sur la gouvernance européenne (COM (2002) 705, du 11.12.2002).

[19] Par exemple, communication sur les politiques de proximité de l'UE vis-à-vis de ses voisins «Europe élargie» COM(2003) 104 final, du 11 mars 2003 et communication sur les droits de l'homme dans la région méditerranéenne COM (2003) 294 final du 21 mai 2003).

[20] Communication de la Commission européenne sur la gouvernance et le développement, COM (2003) 615 du 20 octobre 2003.

[21] Rapport du groupe de travail « Renforcement de la contribution de l'Europe à la gouvernance mondiale », *op cit.*

[22] *Ibid*.

Conformément à sa responsabilité globale, « l'UE doit porter une plus grande attention à l'impact des politiques européennes sur ses partenaires des pays tiers ». Elle doit aussi promouvoir une vision positive du champ de coopération possible avec ses partenaires aux niveaux global et régional »[23]. Telle est la justification positive de la contribution de l'UE en faveur d'une action vers une meilleure gouvernance globale.

§ 3. La politique extérieure de l'Union européenne en faveur du multilatéralisme

« Dans le monde pluriel, complexe et interdépendant d'aujourd'hui, le multilatéralisme ou la gestion collective des affaires mondiales demeure pertinent, voire nécessaire »[24]. Le niveau régional semble aujourd'hui celui qui est recherché en premier. Toutefois, ce niveau, encore à structurer dans la plupart des continents, espère répondre aux exigences du contexte multilatéral. Les deux niveaux se complètent d'ailleurs fort bien, le dialogue régional permettant souvent d'arriver plus facilement au dialogue international.

L'exemple le plus probant est celui de l'UE. Son intégration régionale s'inscrit dans la perspective du respect des normes multilatérales. En outre, dans son action extérieure de coopération au développement, où le commerce occupe une place importante, l'UE cible une intégration progressive de ses partenaires en développement dans l'économie mondiale et le système commercial multilatéral.

Deux raisons expliquent l'inscription de l'UE de son action extérieure dans le contexte multilatéral. En premier lieu, « le respect du système multilatéral » joue le rôle de principe premier, ou de dogme majeur, qui vient d'être souligné. En deuxième lieu, parce que, comme nous allons voir tout de suite, la violation des règles de l'OMC peut avoir pour la Communauté des conséquences économiques et pratiques très négatives. C'est ainsi que l'UE s'est efforcée d'inclure la clause explicite de « mise en conformité » des législations nationales dans le cadre de l'OMC et l'insérer dans les accords bilatéraux.

I. Le principe de « mise en conformité » des législations nationales dans le cadre de l'OMC

Il convient de rappeler tout d'abord qu'un des objectifs essentiels affichés par la Communauté et les Etats membres lors de leur participation aux négociations du Cycle d'Uruguay était celui du renforcement du système multilatéral des échanges par la création d'une Organisation mondiale du Commerce dotée d'un mécanisme efficace de règlement de différends.

Dans ce contexte, l'Union européenne s'est efforcée de corriger l'un des défauts unanimement critiqués du système « GATT 1947 »: celui de ne pas pouvoir assurer que toutes ses parties contractantes mettent en conformité leurs législations avec les dispositions du GATT[25]. En effet, dans ce système, une partie contractante pouvait maintenir une législation non conforme à ses obligations au titre du GATT: il appartenait aux autres parties contractantes de déclencher une procédure aux fins d'obtenir des concessions alternatives ou, *in fine*, d'appliquer des mesures de rétorsion[26].

Les négociateurs de l'Union européenne insistèrent donc pour qu'une clause explicite de « mise en conformité » fût introduite dans l'accord instituant l'OMC. L'introduction d'une telle clause a été obtenue; elle figure dans l'article XVI paragraphe 4 de l'accord: « chaque membre assurera la conformité de ses lois, réglementations et procédures administratives avec ses obligations telles qu'elles sont énoncées dans les Accords figurant en annexe ». Cette disposition fut évaluée, par la Communauté et ses Etats membres, comme l'un des grands succès obtenus par l'Union européenne dans la phase finale des négociations et

[23] *Ibidem*.
[24] A. NOVOSSELOFF, « La coopération entre l'Organisation des Nations Unies et les institutions européennes de sécurité: principes et perspectives », Annuaire français de relations internationales, 2001, volume 2, pp. 594-612.
[25] L'Union européenne et l'organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC). Parlement européen: Fiches techniques. Disponible sur: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts/6_2_2_fr.htm.
[26] Voir J. BIZET, OMC: sortir de l'impasse par la réforme. Rapport d'information n° 423, 2005-2006. Sénat, Commission des affaires économiques. Sénat: 28 juin 2006. Disponible sur: http://www.senat.fr/rap/r05-423/r05-423.html.

comme l'un des résultats le plus positifs de l'ensemble des négociations du Cycle d'Uruguay[27]. Il existe désormais une obligation juridique de « mise en conformité » avec les dispositions des accords OMC des mesures déclarées non conformes aux dites dispositions par les organes de l'OMC, parmi lesquelles pourront figurer les accords bilatéraux conclus entre la Communauté et un autre membre de l'OMC. Par ailleurs, depuis l'entrée en vigueur des accords du cycle d'Uruguay, les institutions communautaires, et en particulier le Conseil de l'Union européenne, ont insisté de manière répétée, dans toutes ses prises de positions publiques, sur la nécessité d'un renforcement et d'un respect accru des règles de l'OMC[28].

II. La « clause de conformité » avec les accords OMC à insérer dans les accords bilatéraux

L'absence de hiérarchie entre l'accord bilatéral et l'accord multilatéral engendre un risque. Les obligations découlant de l'accord bilatéral demeurent même si elles sont incompatibles avec les règles multilatérales. Le problème est insoluble aussi longtemps que cette absence de hiérarchie soit maintenue. En d'autres termes, le problème n'est soluble que si une vraie subordination juridique de l'accord bilatéral à l'accord multilatéral est créée; c'est le but d'une « clause de conformité »: L'accord bilatéral devrait inclure une clause en vertu de laquelle l'accord se conforme aux dispositions de l'OMC. Suivant cette ligne de pensée, touts les accords de partenariat conclus entre l'UE et les PMSE prévoit la conformité de la coopération économique et commerciale avec les dispositions de l'OMC.

L'idée de l'introduction dans les accords bilatéraux d'une clause de conformité avec les règles OMC apparaît si simple et si cohérente avec la volonté affichée de donner une primauté aux règles multilatérales[29]. « L'Union européenne doit faire de ses partenaires des interlocuteurs constitués. Le renforcement des processus d'intégration des pays tiers méditerranéens permettra à ces entités de peser davantage à l'OMC. Il facilitera par ailleurs la négociation des accords de libre-échange avec l'Union. Enfin, contribuera à l'émergence d'un monde multipolaire »[30].

Cependant, les règles du régionalisme, telles qu'elles sont fixées par le GATT, doivent évoluer. S'agissant des conditions de fond, l'article XXIV 8) b) du GATT stipule que « les droits de douane que les autres réglementations commerciales » devront être éliminés entre les territoires constitutifs de la zone de libre-échange, mais seulement pour « l'essentiel des échanges commerciaux ». L'expression « l'essentiel des échanges commerciaux » n'a jamais fait l'objet des clarifications souhaitables de la part de l'OMC. « Ce vide juridique est regrettable, car il rend difficile une libéralisation commerciale maîtrisée, qui tienne compte de la sensibilité de certains produits et de l'impact social du libre échange »[31]. En effet: la Commission européenne estime que l'essentiel des échanges signifie 90 % des échanges. Mais le fait de libéraliser 90 % des échanges pour un pays en développement peut entraîner des conséquences économiques et sociales redoutables, comme on va le voir pour les accords d'association avec les pays tiers méditerranéens[32].

C'est dan ce sens que cette lacune fait planer une menace sur la sécurité juridique des accords de libre-échange associant des pays industrialisés et des pays en développement, relevée par Jean-Claude LEFORT dans son rapport d'information « L'OMC a-t-elle perdu le Sud? »[33]. En effet, ces accords négociés dans une

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[27] L'Union européenne et l'organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC). Parlement européen: Fiches techniques, *op. cit.*

[28] Les conclusions du Conseil de l'Union européenne du 26 octobre 1999. Disponible sur: http://www.missioneco.org/omc/documents/mandat.pdf.

[29] Il faut souligner que le terme « primauté », avec toutes ses connotations juridiques (qui vont au-delà d'une simple « priorité » politique), est celui retenu par le Conseil (avec l'accord de la Commission) lorsqu'il a arrêté les 30 et 31 mars 1998 et les 27 et 28 avril la stratégie de l'Union en vue de la conférence multilatérale de l'OMC de mai 1998.

[30] Rapport d'information sur les relations entre l'Union européenne et les entités régionales. Délégation de l'Assemblée nationale pour l'union européenne, 28 juin 2001. Disponible sur: http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/europe/c-rendus/c0150.asp#TopOfPage.

[31] Rapport d'information sur les relations entre l'Union européenne et les entités régionales. Délégation de l'Assemblée nationale pour l'union européenne, 28 juin 2001, *op. cit.*

[32] J-C LEFORT, Rapport d'information sur la place des pays en développement dans le système commercial multilatéral: l'OMC a-t-elle perdu le Sud? Pour une économie internationale équitable assurant le développement des pays pauvres. Assemblée nationale, Délégation pour l'Union européenne. Assemblée nationale, 2000, 145 p.

[33] Rapport d'information n° 2750, « L'OMC a-t-elle perdu le Sud? Pour une économie internationale équitable assurant le développement des pays pauvres », *op. cit.*

optique de libéralisation de 90 % des échanges commerciaux peuvent être contestés devant un panel de l'OMC, qui estimera que « l'essentiel » signifie 95% des échanges.

Dans ces conditions, il est urgent de clarifier les règles du GATT relatives à la constitution de zones de libre-échange. Le Conseil de l'Union européenne a déjà souligné l'importance d'une telle clarification dans ses conclusions du 29 octobre 1996. Un rapport du Conseil « Affaires générales » du 29 avril 1997, allant dans le même sens, a été approuvé par le Conseil européen d'Amsterdam de juin 1997.

L'intégration des pays en développement dans le système du commerce multilatéral doit constituer un élément essentiel des nouveaux cycles de négociations de l'OMC, dans la mesure où elle accroîtra la capacité de ces pays de lutter contre la pauvreté et parvenir à un développement durable, une des priorités de l'UE. « Au cours de l'année 2000, l'UE est parvenue à un consensus sur le lancement d'un nouveau cycle de négociations visant non seulement à poursuivre la libéralisation des échanges mais aussi à mettre en place un cadre réglementaire plus solide, à favoriser le développement durable et à aider les pays en développement »[34]. L'objectif du nouveau cycle de négociation ressort clairement de son nom: le programme de Doha pour le développement.

Les principaux objectifs de l'UE sont les suivants[35]: d'abord, un traitement spécial et différencié pour les pays en développement: l'UE prône une approche favorisant une flexibilité accrue vis-à-vis des pays en développement. Loin d'entraîner l'émergence d'une OMC à deux vitesses, cette approche permettra aux pays en développement de mieux appliquer les nouvelles règles adoptées durant les négociations et, partant, de mieux s'intégrer à l'économie mondiale.

Ensuite, un accès au marché et des possibilités commerciales nettement améliorés: les propositions présentées par la CE dans le cadre des négociations de Doha concernant l'accès au marché industriel envisagent la suppression des crêtes tarifaires et des droits élevés, notamment dans les secteurs stratégiques pour les exportations des pays en développement, ce qui favorisera aussi les échanges entre ces pays. Dans le domaine de l'agriculture, l'UE a proposé une réduction ambitieuse des tarifs. De plus, elle a accepté une réforme fondamentale de sa politique agricole commune en juin 2003, qui dissociera largement les subsides de la production, réorientant la politique agricole de l'UE vers le marché et réduisant les distorsions du commerce international. La réforme prévoit également des mesures de soutien aux communautés agricoles en Europe et dans le monde. La position de négociation de l'UE dans les discussions en cours concernant Doha en sera renforcée. En ce qui concerne les services, la CE a fait l'offre la plus ambitieuse de tous les membres de l'OMC, notamment dans le domaine crucial de la circulation des personnes, une priorité des pays en développement.

En outre, la promotion des nouvelles règles de l'OMC dans les domaines de la concurrence, des investissements, de la transparence des marchés publics et de la facilitation des échanges commerciaux. L'élaboration de ces nouvelles règles, favorables par essence au commerce et au développement, tiendra compte des contraintes auxquelles sont soumis les pays en développement. La conférence de Doha a aussi préconisé l'objectif d'aide à la mise en oeuvre des accords de l'OMC pour les membres de l'Organisation éprouvant de réelles difficultés ainsi qu'une aide accrue en vue de créer des capacités humaines et institutionnelles et de traiter les contraintes de l'offre.

Après la conférence de Doha, l'UE s'est imposée au premier rang pour les initiatives visant à garantir le succès du nouveau cycle de négociations lancé fin 2001. « Tout en maintenant ses objectifs - poursuite de la libéralisation, renforcement des règles, promotion du développement durable, - elle s'est consacrée en particulier à l'assistance technique aux pays en développement pour la mise en œuvre des règles et la participation au système commercial multilatéral »[36].

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[34] L'Union européenne et l'organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC). Parlement européen: Fiches techniques, *op. cit.*

[35] UE-ONU: commerce et développement. Commission Européenne, Ref. EU-UNBrochure-9/EN. 1/5/2004 Disponible sur: http://europa-eu-un.org/documents/infopack/fr/EU-UNBrochure-9_fr.pdf.

[36] La communication de la Commission de septembre 2002: « Concurrence et développement. Comment aider les pays en développement à bénéficier du commerce ouvert». COM (2002) 513/2 du 11/09/2002.

Chapitre 2: Une Coordination des stratégies pour le développement en Méditerranée

Les économies méditerranéennes des Etats de la rive sud sont engagées depuis plusieurs années dans des programmes de réformes structurelles, résultat de négociations avec les IFM. Certains obstacles ont entravé ces réformes, mais ils n'ont pas empêché pour le moins d'aboutir à des approches différenciées[37]. «La contrainte du financement de la dette extérieure a fait prendre conscience aux dirigeants (...) de la nécessité d'un changement de stratégie économique afin de stabiliser leurs déséquilibres internes (inflation, budget) et externes (balance et dette extérieures) »[38].

L'UE, de son côté a toujours réitéré que l'évolution des enveloppes finacières MEDA ou l'Instrument financier de voisinage ne pourra porter toutefois tous ses fruits que si l'Europe donne une prime aux partenaires engagés dans la voie des réformes. La Commission a d'ailleurs précisé dans sa communication intitulée « Un nouvel élan pour le processus de Barcelone » que l'aide serait modulée pour récompenser les meilleurs élèves, indiquant que l'aide aux Pays Tiers Méditerranées (PTM) devait être consacrée en priorité à l'accompagnement social des réformes économiques. De facto, l'Union européenne vient confirmer les politiques d'ajustement structurel, menées, par le biais des IFM, dans ces pays. Ainsi, les pratiques instituées au niveau international sont avalisées par les accords financiers euro-méditerranéens.

Pour avoir un impact significatif, l'UE s'engagent de nouer des partenariats effectifs avec d'autres bailleurs de fonds. Il s'agit d'intensifier les actions au moyen de partenariats avec les IFM, en mettant en place plus précisément un partenariat stratégique avec la BM pour coordonner leurs stratégies de développement envers la région méditerranéenne. La coordination entre l'UE et les IFM se place au niveau du choix des politiques d'ajustement structurel comme l'Instrument phare du développement et aussi au niveau de la collaboration institutionnelle dans des domaines d'actions concertés.

§ 1. Apports financiers européens vers les PTM: une confirmation des politiques d'ajustement structurel

« L'intégration des PED dans les marchés mondiaux y compris nombre de P.T.M. signataire des Accords de Barcelone prévoyant à l'horizon 2010 la création d'une zone de prospérité partagée sur la base d'une zone euro-méditarranéenne de libre-échange - montre que l'ouverture tout azimut forcée dans le cadre des programmes d'ajustement structurel du mécanisme de Barcelone constitue de plus en plus la norme »[39].

Il faut tout de même signaler que les politiques d'ajustements structurels adoptées par l'UE sont antérieures au processus de Barcelone. La Politique Méditerranéenne Rénovée a également introduit un appui aux réformes économiques des PTM. Les PAS, mis en œuvre dans les PTM au cours des années 1980, nécessitaient en effet un appui européen aux réformes économiques. Cet instrument de coopération financière et technique est toutefois, cette fois ci, de nature bilatérale, ses principes, critères d'attribution, et modalités de mise en œuvre étant stipulés dans le cadre de chaque protocole.

L'Union européenne a l'intention de développer des relations bilatérales avec les pays de la région dans un cadre favorisant la démocratie, l'État de droit, des normes plus élevées en matière de droits de l'homme et de droits des minorités, le passage à une économie de marché et une coopération accrue entre ces pays. Dans ce contexte, une importance particulière est attachée aux principes de conditionnalité qui régiront le développement des relations de l'Union avec les PMSE. La stratégie de l'Union européenne devrait encourager les pays concernés à remplir ces conditions, et non les en empêcher.

En outre, l'UE est convenue de définir, dans le cadre de l'approche régionale, les conditions politiques et économiques qui constitueront le fondement d'une politique cohérente et transparente en ce qui concerne le développement des relations bilatérales dans le domaine des échanges commerciaux, de l'aide financière et

[37]Consulter le site Internet du FMI, particulièrement la rubrique country info, les différents arrangements et relations entre le FMI et chacun de ses Etats membres y sont répertoriés et commentés, (http://www.imf.org/).
[38] « Maghreb: des trajectoires divergentes », Conjoncture-Paribas, in Problèmes économiques, nº 2.361, 2 février 1994, p. 27.
[39] A. SID AHMED, Globalisation Raccourci au développement de la Région méditerranéenne au facteur de marginalisation: enseignements et perspectives à la lumière de la littérature récente, *op. cit*., p. 12.

de la coopération économique, ainsi que les relations contractuelles, en tenant compte du degré de souplesse qui s'impose.

À ce titre, un volet financier supplémentaire a été débloqué par la Communauté, le règlement financier d'application afférent aux protocoles financiers[40]. Cette enveloppe budgétaire se situe en dehors du cadre contractuel des actions traditionnelles programmées par pays et inscrites dans les protocoles financiers.

Selon ce règlement, des «actions relatives à l'appui à un programme d'ajustement structurel sont mises en œuvre »[41] dans les PTM, suivant certains principes respectant la situation particulière de chaque Etat, les besoins essentiels des populations et en décaissant rapidement les financements.

D'autre part, certains critères d'éligibilité doivent être satisfaits pour accéder au financement relatif aux PAS. « Le pays concerné doit entreprendre un programme de réformes agréé par les institutions de Bretton Woods ou mettre en œuvre des programmes reconnus comme analogues, en concertation avec ces institutions, mais non nécessairement soutenus financièrement par elles, en fonction de l'ampleur et de l'efficacité des réformes au plan macro-économique. »[42]

Il importe de noter que l'attribution des fonds financiers aux PMSE est soumise à une conditionnalité économique « classique » semblable à celle du FMI reliée aux efforts fournis pour en venir à une libre économie de marché. Les politiques économiques menées par le biais du FMI ou de la Banque Mondiale, dans les PED, sont regardées comme une référence, et une garantie d'une gestion plus ou moins équilibrée du pays sous ajustement structurel.

Toutefois, les carences relevées dans la réalisation des PAS, et les critiques adressées aux IFM, ont ouvert au sein des institutions de l'Union européenne une réflexion approfondie sur les conditions de l'ajustement. C'est à partir de cette réflexion que des directions spécifiques ont été déterminées, pour établir les bases d'un nouvel ajustement, résultant d'une conditionnalité plus différenciée et suivant une approche progressive. Dans ce contexte, les préférences commerciales, l'octroi d'une aide financière et la coopération économique, ainsi que l'établissement des relations contractuelles, sont soumis à des degrés différents de conditionnalité. En effet, « il est tenu compte de la situation économique du pays, et en particulier du niveau d'endettement et des charges du service de la dette, de la situation de la balance des paiements et de la disponibilité de devises, de la situation budgétaire, de la situation monétaire, du niveau du produit intérieur brut par habitant et du niveau du chômage »[43].

En outre, on prévoit une évaluation du respect des conditions de l'approche régionale par ces pays, c'est-à-dire de la volonté du pays bénéficiaire d'engager une coopération transfrontière et d'accorder, le cas échéant, des avantages analogues à d'autres pays de la région, sera effectuée à tous les stades du développement des relations.

Par ailleurs, étant donné que les effets négatifs des programmes d'ajustement sur la population ont été constatés dans la plupart des pays méditerranéens, à des échelles différentes[44]; «la dimension sociale doit être intégrée aux programmes de réformes de leur conception, de manière à assurer leur cohérence et leur faisabilité. Pour cela, elle doit simultanément rester sous la responsabilité des gouvernements des pays plutôt que sous celle des bailleurs de fonds»[45]. C'est ainsi que les programmes d'appui « prévoient des mesures visant notamment à pallier les effets négatifs que le processus d'ajustement structurel peut avoir sur le plan social et de l'emploi, notamment pour des groupes défavorisés de la population»[46].

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[40] Règlement 1762/92 du Conseil du 29 juin 1992 « concernant l'application des protocoles relatifs à la coopération financière et technique conclus par la Communauté avec les pays tiers méditerranéens », JOCE n° L 181 du 1er juillet 1992, p. 1.
[41] Voir article 3§1 du règlement N° 1762/92. *op. cit.*
[42] Voir article 3§2 a.1 du règlement N° 1762/92, *op. cit.*
[43] Art.3§2a.2, règlement 1762/92, *op. cit.*
[44] B. KHADER, Le grand Maghreb et l'Europe. Ed. Publisud, Paris, 1992, p. 44
[45] P. et S. GUILLAUMONT, « Orientation pour une réforme de l'aide a l'ajustement, » in Ajustement et développement: l'expérience des pays ACP, Ed. Economica, Paris, 1994, p. 98.
[46] art.3§ la1.2, règlement 1762/92, *op. cit.*

L'originalité de ces principes régissant l'appui aux réformes économiques réside dans le fait qu'il s'agit avant tout de pallier les effets négatifs de l'ajustement en complétant les PAS proprement dits. Il s'agit en effet d'éviter une rupture du processus d'ajustement en fournissant une aide financière supplémentaire et d'infléchir certaines politiques ne prenant pas suffisamment en compte la dimension sociale de l'ajustement[47], d'aider ponctuellement certains partenaires dans leurs négociations avec les institutions de Bretton Woods et de fournir une assistance technique afin d'améliorer les méthodes et l'efficacité de gestion des finances publiques.

L'Union européenne suit donc la démarche internationale d'aide au développement propre aux IFM. Néanmoins, elle s'efforce d'adapter la conditionnalité relative à l'appui aux réformes économiques. Autrement dit, la Communauté essaye de « tracer une voie européenne de l'ajustement structurel qui lui permette de s'interposer comme interface entre les PAS de Bretton Woods et les pays bénéficiaires »[48]. Toutefois, L'Union européenne conditionne toujours ses concours financiers dans des cadres Programmes MEDA (Barcelone) au respect des PAS et aux privatisations sans pour autant consacrer la place que se doit le volet social. Tout au contraire, les PAS ont eu un effet négatif sur le niveau social à travers les éléments suivants notamment: la réduction des dépenses sociales, la tarification des services de santé et d'éducation et la réduction ou l'annulation des subventions en faveur de l'alimentation, des transports et autres. Ainsi les coûts à court terme de la libéralisation économique rapide et de l'ajustement structurel sont négatifs pour la population. « Ceci d'autant plus que les programmes d'ajustement structurels s'ils ont connu des résultats mitigés en matière de rétablissement des grands équilibres macro-économiques n'ont pas créé les conditions d'opportunités d'investissements nouveaux et de croissance »[49].

Si le modèle d'ajustement européen s'oriente vers un sens plus conforme à la justice sociale, au développement durable et à l'habilitation des peuples, des carences persistent et remettent en cause la singularité et la pertinence d'un tel modèle.

§ 2. Action conjointe de l'UE et de la banque mondiale en Méditerranée

On peut d'ores et déjà constater l'existence d'une panoplie de projets qui lient l'UE et les IFM dans le cadre de leurs actions du développement envers les PMSE[50]. On note à titre d'exemple un projet de facilitation du commerce pour les « pays méditerranées non-membres de l'UE » (Non-European-Union Mediterranean countries) lancé en juin 2002 par les Nations Unies dont le budget s'élève à 600,000 $ EU. L'instance responsable de ce projet est la commission économique des Nations Unies pour l'Europe. C'est un projet qui s'étale sur deux ans visant à aider les PMSE à devenir plus compétitif dans le marché régional et global. Les moyens pour atteindre cet objectif sont la simplification des procédures d'échanges commerciaux et le développement de leur usage du commerce électronique[51].

La commission européenne est impliquée dans ce projet au même titre que la commission économique et sociale pour l'Asie de l'Ouest, la commission économique pour l'Afrique, le centre international du commerce UNCTAD/WTO et la banque mondiale. Cette démarche part de l'idée que chaque institution spécialisée, par définition, est incomplète, et doit de plus en plus élargir son champ d'intérêt et d'interventions à d'autres sujets. Cela fait apparaître le problème de la coordination entre institutions multilatérales. Ce problème semble être présent dans le contexte méditerranéen. On souligne un manque de coordination systématique qui entrave une meilleure exploitation des complémentarités entre les différentes instances régionales et globales impliquées.

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[47] Ces principes, fondés sur une approche critique des premiers programmes d'ajustement structurel sont similaires à ceux des actions menées dans le cadre de la quatrième Convention de Lomé. Voir B. PETIT, « L'ajustement structurel et la position de la Communauté européenne », in Revue Tiers Monde, T. XXXIV, n° 136, octobre-décembre 1993, pp. 827-859.

[48] Rapport de la commission du développement et de la coopération sur l'ajustement structurel dans les pays en voie de développement, 4 février 1992, A3-OO59/92, rapporteur: M. MELANDRI, p. 5, point G.

[49] A. SID AHMED, Globalisation Raccourci au développement de la Région méditerranéenne au facteur de marginalisation: enseignements et perspectives à la lumière de la littérature récente, *op. cit*. p. 17.

[50] Interview avec Mme Gonzalo Castellanos, Chef d'unité Coordination géographique Méditerranée, le mardi 2 décembre 2004.

[51] United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Press Release, Geneva, 28 June 2002, Ref: ECE/TRADE/02/05.

Conscientes de ce déficit, et dans le but de coordonner leur activité dans la région méditerranéenne, la Commission européenne, la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) et la Banque mondiale ont signé un protocole d'accord visant à renforcer la coordination des bailleurs de fonds au Moyen-Orient, en Afrique du Nord et dans le sud du bassin méditerranéen[52]. L'accord signé à Bruxelles en mai 2004, par des hauts fonctionnaires des trois institutions permettra une approche plus ciblée et complémentaire à tous les niveaux, qu'il s'agisse de la mise en œuvre des programmes, de la programmation de l'aide ou des politiques globales.

L'étude de ce protocole d'accord est d'intérêt particulier puisqu'il est l'expression de la volonté de ces institutions d'être complémentaire dans leur politique de développement envers la région MENA. Il s'agit d'une illustration pratique de l'approche d'intégration de la région euro-méditerranéenne dans la globalisation.

La Commission européenne, la BEI et la BM estiment que leur action conjointe sera bénéfique à leur égard dans la mesure ou elle sert à éviter les duplicata inutiles et aussi elle permet à se concentrer sur les points forts respectifs de chaque partenaire afin de fournir une meilleure articulation entre les politiques et les initiatives d'investissement. « *A coordinated approach linking EC grant assistant operations, EIB project financing and World Bank loans and technical capacity may enhance the flexibility of each partner in responding to the region's needs and offers significant promise for improving development outcomes* »[53].

Les objectifs fixés par ce partenariat stratégique sont de l'ordre de trois[54]. En premier lieu, renforcer des institutions de coordination entre les partenaires, garantir la complémentarité, la cohésion et la coordination et promouvoir les activités communes. En second lieu, promouvoir le travail technique commun et la politique de dialogue et améliorer le rapport entre l'analyse, le politique et les initiatives d'investissement sur tous les niveaux. Et enfin, promouvoir les mécanismes nécessaires pour un financement commun des projets et programmes.

Afin de réaliser ces objectifs les partenaires se sont mis d'accord sur la mise en place d'une coordination institutionnelle, un travail technique et un financement conjoint renforcé. L'évolution de la mise en œuvre de ce partenariat sera révisée de façon régulière suivant les dispositions de ce mémorandum qui pourrait être réformés avec l'accord des partenaires.

I. Coordination institutionnelle

En effet, face aux difficultés, aux crises, et à l'apparition de nouveaux besoins, le système de gouvernance réagit dans la continuité institutionnelle: il s'adapte et ne se réforme pas. Chaque institution répond aux enjeux émergents sur les questions qui relèvent de son mandat. L'inertie institutionnelle limite l'étendue des réponses aux enjeux de la gouvernance. Comme le dit Charles Wyplosz dans sa contribution, « l'économie est en avance sur les institutions »[55].

L'idée d'adaptation et de continuité institutionnelle justifie la coordination institutionnelle entre entités internationales dans la mesure où leurs mandats se recoupent. Tel est le cas de la BM, la BEI et la commission européenne.

Ces partenaires se sont mis d'accord de mettre en place un engagement institutionnel global pour la coordination au niveau des bureaux centraux et les offices des délégations résidant la région. La coordination va se concentrer particulièrement sur les politiques et la programmation des projets afin d'identifier les objectifs et les priorités des politiques conjointes tout en prenant en considération les politiques des partenaires respectifs afin d'éviter les duplicates inutiles des efforts de coordination.

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[52] *Memorandum of understanding (MoU) for a strategic Partnership between the European Commission, the European investment Bank (EIB) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in the Middle East and Southern Mediterranean/North African Region. Under the paragraph on "Motivation for the Strategic Partnership"*. Disponible sur: http://www.eib.org/Attachments/memorandum_of_understanding_040504.pdf.
[53] *Ibid*.
[54] *Ibidem.*
[55] Charles Wyplosz, « L'économie en avance sur les institutions », in JAQUET Pierre, PISANI-FERRY Jean et TUBIANA Laurence, Gouvernance mondiale, Conseil d'analyse économique, Paris, 2001, pp. 271-290.

Les partenaires s'engagent d'échanger des informations relatives à leurs stratégies par pays, de même pour les politiques pertinentes, les travaux sectoriels et les programmes et projets. Cet échange d'information devra être conforme aux accords confidentiels existants[56].

II. Travail technique conjoint

Dans le but de développer des actions coordonnées, les partenaires se sont mis d'accord de coordonner leur politique de dialogue avec les pays de la région et d'engager un dialogue conjoint[57].

Etant donné les différences dans les cycles de programmation par pays, les partenaires ont exprimé leur besoin de discuter des priorités des pays et des programmes régulièrement. Le moyen de réaliser cet objectif est la mise en place de groupes de travail conjoints. Les partenaires s'engagent ainsi dans un dialogue sectoriel et technique conjoint. Ils vont s'efforcer d'avancer des stratégies sectorielles et développer des liens forts entre politique et initiatives d'investissement. La coopération va aussi couvrir le domaine du « *monitoring* » des programmes et des projets en cours. Un travail d'évaluation des opérations cofinancées est recommandé.

Les partenaires se sont aussi mis d'accord et dans la mesure du possible de mener un travail d'analyse conjoint dans des domaines de priorités déterminés par le HLSG (*High Level Steering Group*) (Haut comité de pilotage). Les thèmes de priorités couvrent l'intégration régionale et mondiale, la bonne gouvernance, le développement du secteur privé, l'infrastructure; le développement humain, y compris la question du genre et de parité homme femme et le développement durable.

Toutes ces modalités aspirent une plus grande efficacité de l'action multilatérale qui ne se réduit pas à celle de chacune des institutions mais qui devra être plutôt collective. Le dialogue et le suivi de la mise en œuvre de programmes arêtes suivant une liste de priorité traduisent un raisonnement d'équilibre général entre les différentes fonctions des institutions concernées.

III. Co-financement

Il ne suffit pas que les résultats d'une action spécifique paraissent satisfaisants, il faut aussi que les résultats globaux de l'action collective internationale le soient, c'est-à-dire que les ressources nécessairement limitées dépensées dans le cadre multilatéral soient employées à bon escient.

C'est dans cet esprit qu'un nombre de projets financés conjointement existe déjà entre les partenaires. En particulier dans le cadre de l'accord de novembre 2001 entre la banque mondiale et la commission européenne sur le cofinancement et le fond de confiance «*Trust Funds and Cofinancing Framework Agreement between the World Bank and the European Commission*»[58]. En outre on met en exergue la convention BEI- Commission sur la gestion de l'assistance financière (*EIB - Commission Convention on the management of financial assistance*) signé le 17 décembre 1992 et subséquemment amendé le 20 janvier 1997 et le 23 octobre 2003. Ce genre d'arrangements est encouragé par le mémorandum d'entente[59].

Conclusion

La dernière décennie a montré un mouvement de balancier entre les institutions multilatérales et les organisations régionales, un rééquilibrage entre leurs rôles respectifs. Il apparaît aujourd'hui que la structuration du régionalisme ne nuit pas forcément au multilatéralisme. Cependant, la coopération entre les instances multilatérales et les organisations régionales n'est pas pour autant linéaire. Elle se construit au gré de projets ou d'opérations bien spécifiques, de consultations pragmatiques et informelles au niveau des responsables, de séminaires de travail conjoints, etc.

[56] Disponible sur: http://www.eib.org/Attachments/memorandum_of_understanding_040504.pdf.
[57] *Ibid*.
[58] Disponible sur: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid/tender/gestion/cont_typ/wb/index_en.htm.
[59] Disponible sur: http://www.eib.org/Attachments/memorandum_of_understanding_040504.pdf.

Cette façon de procéder est avantageuse dans la mesure où elle permet aux Etats de s'entendre progressivement sur des concepts et des méthodes de travail commun, de développer des capacités d'agir en commun, d'aller dans le sens d'un rapprochement des politiques nationales. Les Etats «mutualisent» ainsi leur politique et trouvent un intérêt de plus en plus grand à les élaborer de concert. Bien que l'UE s'efforce de faire profiter ces Etats membres de cet avantage, elle demeure freinée par une construction inachevée. Tant que l'Union européenne ne sera pas en mesure de conduire une politique étrangère et de sécurité commune lui permettant de peser sur les affaires du monde, elle ne pourra pas contrebalancer la montée en puissance de certaines IFM.

Ce phénomène a en effet engendré un grand déséquilibre entre institutions, l'une des caractéristiques marquantes du régime actuel de gouvernance comme le constate Thomas Boisson[60]. Par ailleurs, les Etats membres préfèrent souvent au multilatéralisme institutionnel le multilatéralisme *ad hoc* représenté par les groupes informels de négociation et les coalitions d'Etats pour mener une opération[61]. Cependant c'est à travers le multilatéral institutionnalisé que l'Union pourra, du moins au départ, donner une légalité aux actions qu'elle engagera à ses frontières, notamment en Méditerranée.

Suivant cette conviction, la commission européenne a noué des rapports de coopération avec les IFM. Cette coopération qui passe par un échange d'informations à tous les niveaux et par une répartition des responsabilités de chacune des organisations. Chaque organisation apportant à l'autre son expérience, son savoir-faire et ses leçons apprises au bénéfice d'une région méditerranéenne développée. Le but visé est de participer à la promotion et à la contribution d'une gouvernance globale « maîtrisée »[62].

Le partenariat euro-méditerranéen comme projet régional s'inscrit ainsi dans un projet plus large d'insertion des partenaires méditerranéens dans la globalisation. Bien qu'original dans sa conception, il vise à permettre aux partenaires d'atteindre des niveaux de compétitivité qui les placent en position favorable vis-à-vis de leurs concurrents des autres régions du monde. « C'est une condition nécessaire pour que ne se fassent pas concurrence sur cet espace l'approche des organisations internationales telle que définie dans le consensus de Washington, celle de l'OMC, les différentes approches bilatérales centrées sur le Maghreb et le Machrek, celle de l'Union Européenne »[63].

Pour que le projet régional de Barcelone réussisse il est nécessaire que soit adoptée une régulation Euro-Méditerranéenne adéquate, capable d'assurer le développement. Mais elle dépend aussi des messages que cette approche régionale sera capable d'envoyer au monde: La logique même de ce partenariat est-elle en mesure de corriger progressivement les asymétries entre l'Europe et les pays du sud de la Méditerranée, en dépit des limites internes et externes qui leurs sont inhérentes?

[60] T. BOISSON, « Panorama analytique de quelques institutions de gouvernance », in P. JAQUET, J. PISANI-FERRY et L. TUBIANA, Gouvernance mondiale, Conseil d'analyse économique, Paris, 2001, pp. 145-192.
[61] Interview avec Mme Gonzalo Castellanos, Chef d'unité Coordination géographique Méditerranée, le mardi 2 décembre 2004.
[62] Voir. Assemblée Nationale, Rapport d'information N° 3211 de l'Assemblée nationale sur « Les relations entre l'Union européenne et les entités régionales », le 28 juin 2001, 90 p.
[63] Le partenariat euro-méditerranéen en l'an 2000. Deuxième Rapport FEMISE sur le Partenariat Euro-Méditerranéen, Juillet 2000.

THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP AND THE EU NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY: POVERTY POLICY STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

DENIZ ILGAZ

> "Poverty has a face and that face is the face of man."
>
> "Poverty is pain; it feels like a disease. It attacks a person not only materially but also morally. It eats away at one's dignity and drives one into total despair." *Voices of the Poor.* Volume I, Can Anyone Hear Us? World Bank, 1999.
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> Poverty is said to be "not only wicked in itself, but immeasurably damaging to the fabric of society for everyone else." Polly Toynbee, *Making Welfare Work*, 111.

I. Introduction

As we near the end of the first decade of the 21st century, about twenty percent of the world's population (1.3 billion people) lives in absolute poverty, constituting the most devastating socio-economic problem of the least developed and developing countries.[1] The dramatic growth in global poverty especially over the last two decades implies a loss of freedom, both in the sense of 'freedom from' (disease, hunger, need, housing, etc.) and 'freedom to' (participate in public life, travel, have hobbies, express one's opinions). Thus, far beyond its major economic dimension, poverty has various implications of wasted human potential. A United Nations report has commented that poverty is about the lack of human capabilities, and 'is almost synonymous with powerlessness.'[2]

This study refers first to some concepts and understandings of measurement of poverty on the international scale. The study emphasizes the contemporary validity of 'relative poverty' as differentiated from 'absolute poverty,' and substantiates the relatively new concept of 'social exclusion.' The study concentrates more specifically on the Mediterranean, a special region which constitutes an important part of the European Union's (EU) near abroad. Historic achievements and failures of the European welfare state model are presented as a likely model/lesson for the vulnerable populations of the Mediterranean. Some light is shed upon the conditions of poverty in Turkey, with an effort to find similarities in the quality, scope, and historic background of deprivation in the region.

Lack of political will globally parallels the lack of a common Euro-Mediterranean strategy to combat poverty. This study questions how far the eradication of poverty is explicitly included or implicitly excluded as one of the aims of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the New/European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). The extension of these policies from the EU, leads to the assumption that it would be helpful to look at the general welfare policies of high-income, high human-development EU member countries, and their approach to poverty so far.

The EU member states have realized to various degrees the redistributive transfer schemes that have greatly reduced poverty and enhanced social stability in their history. Their relatively favourable position with respect to poverty can be attributed mostly to the convergence policies of the EU. How then do EU policies compare to the EMP launched in Barcelona in 1995 and to ENP which falls in the frame of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)?[3]

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[1] 1. Mesut Çakır, Şansel Aldemir, "Yoksulluğun Küresel Boyutları", Marmara Journal of European Studies, 9, 2. Marmara University: European Community Institute, 2001, Istanbul.

[2] UNDP 2002: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2002, New York: UNDP, 96.

[3] Regulation (EC) No.1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, OJ. L310, 9.11.2006;

Countries bordering the south and east of the Mediterranean display an extraordinary range of conditions. Therefore exact comparisons between different countries regarding the severity of the poverty condition cannot be drawn easily, and thus it is equally difficult for any international agency to discern and demonstrate strategic and policy priorities. Does the EMP recognize the need for an objective and scientific core meaning of poverty for every country composing the region, and also try to find common cross-cutting similarities? Is there an effort in EMP and ENP to set common aims regarding basic needs, education, employment, social protection for the individual and the family, exploitation of women and children, measures taken to help persons with disability and the elderly, concern with the promotion of citizenship of the poor, comprising the civil and political rights as well as the economic, social and cultural rights? What measures are taken for effective participation of the poor in society, as well as provision of examples of good governance?

What is done in order to overcome over-centralization, the informal economy, corruption, and lack of transparency in the interaction between public and private actors? The development of a dynamic organised civil society, freedom of association, and tolerance for pluralism are also important factors in combatting poverty. Is the EMP capable of establishing a human rights framework for developing anti-poverty agreements among the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries (SEMCs), drawing on the historically successful social transfers of EU Member States?

II. A General Overview of Poverty

Poverty is a relative concept; there are different conceptions of poverty. Definitions and methodologies abound. There is no universally accepted definition of poverty. Poverty has both subjective and objective dimensions. One concept relates this phenomenon to subsistence; it may mean hunger and death.[4] Is there an irreducible absolutist core in the idea of poverty? Is it a state of hunger when one has nothing to eat except what is thrown out by others? From the point of view of subsistence needs, Sen moves to a freedom-centered view of poverty. Individuals' having self respect is as important as the satisfaction of their hunger, and they need to be given a chance to shape their own destiny and help each other.[5]

There is on the one hand an absolutist concept of poverty, which is a condition characterized by hunger and deprivation.[6] On the other hand, poverty may also be interpreted according to disproportionate levels of wealth and income. In the 1990 World Development Report, the World Bank defined poverty as 'the inability to attain a minimal standard of living.' This minimal standard consisted of 'two elements: the expenditure necessary to buy a minimum standard of nutrition and other basic necessities and a future amount that varies from country to country, reflecting the cost of participating in the everyday life of society.'[7] The UN Committee on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, defines poverty as "a human condition characterized by sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights."[8]

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proposal for the Regulation: COM (2004)628 final (29.9.2004); Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1762/92 of 29 June 1992 on the implementation of the Protocols of financial and technical cooperation with Mediterranean non-member countries, OJ L. 181, 1.7.1992, as last amended by Regulation (EC) No. 2112/2005 (OJ. 344, 27.12.2005); Egidio Canciani, *ENPI: European Financial Perspective and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument,* 148 Med 2007, Panorama, www.iemed.org/anuari/2007/aarticles/aCanciani.pdf, including Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldava, Morocco, Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine.

[4] Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlements and Deprivation*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981.

[5] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Knopf, 2000.

[6] United Nations, World Summit for Social Development, The Copenhagen Declaration, 1995, www.un.org/documents/ga/conf166/aconf166-9.htm.

[7] "Poverty - World Bank's 'World Development Report - 1990' - Special Section - Future of the Global Economy: Challenges of the 90s," World Bank 1990, findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1309/is_n3_v27/ai_8915024.

[8] Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, Paula Braveman and Sofia Gruskin, "Poverty, equity, human rights and health," Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 81, no.7, Genebra 2003.

UNDP's research work serves one general purpose in relation to poverty: to help countries expand capacities for development that is inclusive, and that advances people's options to create better lives.[9] The World Bank however reduces poverty to a meaningless empirical measurement of one or two dollars of daily expenditure. This is to ignore the political economy analysis of the processes that generate poverty. Absolute poverty is measured roughly as subsistence on an income of less than US $ 1 per day. Survival on less than US $ 2 per day is a reality also for almost half the people on the planet. Just as the World Bank measures poverty as a Dollar or two a day per person, in the European Union poverty is defined as the line of 50 percent of median household income. Both figures are objects of criticism. Poverty to such an extent means exclusion from many of the benefits of economic development, new technologies and advances in human health that have occurred in the twentieth century.

Eradicating poverty implies implementing a programme of social security for all citizens, in accordance with the basic human rights approach. With the addition of 'social exclusion,' 'social deprivation,' and 'social inequality' perspective, poverty is seen in a multi-dimensional framework. Definition of poverty then can no more be static, as merely 'lack of income and expenditure,' but involves a search for forms, causes and processes of social exclusion. Such an effort links economic and social aspects of disadvantage and marginalization to political ones, such as political rights and citizenship. A relationship is thus formed between individuals, the state, government and the civil society.[10]

Some indicators and measures of absolute poverty commonly used are income differences and related levels of food/caloric intake or the sectoral distribution of employment. Duration of poverty among different groups may also be measured; whether poverty is experienced as chronic or transitory. Special programs may be devised for women who are a specific risk group with regard to many social issues related to poverty. Socio-demographic profiles of poor households may be drawn, but the concept of a 'culture of poverty' cannot be captured quantitatively. 'Culture of poverty' claims that people are poor because their work ethic is not adjusted realistically to the contemporary requirements; that they cannot develop coping strategies on account of their life views, attitudes and belief systems about work; thus, they end up in chronic poverty. There are also some social and cultural dimensions of poverty that cannot easily be measured; such as equality of life chances and human rights.[11]

On the international scale, poverty is seen as an issue closely related with development. The Vienna Declaration (World Conference on Human Rights, 1993) declared development as an inalienable human right. Thus poverty, which is the root cause of many social problems in the world, turns into a violation of human rights when ignored by governments. It is an issue intertwined with national growth, economic development strategies, quality of life, health status of the people, literacy rate, gender discrimination, use of improved water resources, and loss of other kinds of environmental resources. Moreover, peace cannot be sustainable and just in a context of poverty and exclusion.

Poverty reduction has climbed up on the agenda of sustainable and equitable development schemes, as part of the major shift in the perception of development which had been equated only with economic growth figures until quite recently. It was assumed that growth would benefit the poor strata of the population and translate into well-being for all. However, benefits of economic growth do not trickle down "to the poor, as it was generally assumed within the framework of the modern free-market economy. Now we realize that economic growth must be complemented by policies aimed at distribution and sustainable 'human development,' defined as "the process of enlarging the range of people's choices; increasing their opportunities for education, health care, income and employment, and covering the full range of human choices from a sound physical environment to economic and political freedoms."[12]

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[9] UNDP, Human Development Report 2007/2008, hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global.

[10] Ayşe Öncü, "The Political and Cultural Dynamics of Exclusion and Poverty: The Visible and the Invisible Divides of Turkish Society," *Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Mediterranean Area*, Eds., K. Korayem and M. Petmesidou, Bergen: CROP, 1998.

[11] Öncü, A. And P. Weyland, *Space, Culture and Power; New Identities in Globalizing Cities,* Atlantic Heights, N.J., London:Zed Books, 1997.

[12] UNDP Annual Human Development Report 1992, Overview, 2, www.worldrevolution.org/projects/globalissuesoverview/overview2/BriefPeace.htm.

There needs to be specific programs devised for the delivery of welfare to the poor in the forms of improvements in health and livelihood, social services, and benevolent governance. This major shift in perception is reflected in the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the United Nations with the target of halving by 2015 the proportion of the population living in extreme forms of poverty. MDGs, an expression of humanitarian concern and a call for investment in health and human well-being, were adopted unanimously by all countries of the world in September 2000. Resolution of poverty is foremost among the eight Millenium Development Goals 2000-2015 (MDGs). The first of the eight MDGs is to "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger."[13] October 17 was originally proclaimed in 1996 as the 'International Annual Day for the Eradication of Poverty' by the UN when it urged all governments, international community, and all other stakeholders in society, to seriously address and pursue the main objectives of the decade of the 1990s: "to achieve the goal of eradicating poverty."[14]

The subject of poverty on the international scale first needs political recognition and it should enter the fields of scientific research and discourse. There should be concerted effort on how to combat poverty and approach its structural character and historically rooted causes. Studies have been carried on, analyzing the dynamics of the state of poverty. Among the main findings is the fact that poverty is often an impermanent situation. The majority of poor people are poor for relatively short periods that may be termed as 'poverty spells.'[15] The deprivations which people experience in poverty are not constant or consistent: vulnerability to poverty has been expressed in the idea of a "web of deprivation."[16] "This is a changing set of conditions, in which people may solve one problem or escape from another only to find themselves enmeshed in yet another." However, the few people who end up with very long spells of poverty account for the bulk of all poverty and represent the majority of the poor at any given time.[17]

The weak regulation of international trade worldwide is one of the issues that trigger poverty, due to the increasing debt spiral less developed countries fall prey to. The international law fails in regulating relations between creditor and debtor countries. "The problem is not with globalization, but with how it has been managed."[18] Foreign debt should not be considered solely in technical-financial terms. The coordination of financial, commercial and cooperation policies and their effective implementation is needed, in order to relieve debtor countries from the vicious circle which they find themselves trapped in. Debtor countries fail to provide the fundamental social services for their peoples since they have to use most of their GNP to pay a debt that never extinguishes. In this way, fundamental human rights, the rights to life, to economic, social and cultural rights are jeopardized, and human solidarity is destroyed.

The concept of "sustainable development" has added new concepts into the traditional economic policy-making, in the areas of environment protection, poverty alleviation and reduction of revenue inequalities. The general aim should be the well-being of humanity and its promotion. However, the economic positions taken by governments are not always subject to evaluation by national parliaments with respect to dependency. Free trade needs to be reconciled with the principles of democracy and human rights. There should be agreements on the "social clause," with the involvement of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the IMF, on the minimum social conditions to be implemented in the cycles of manufacture or production, distribution, and sale.

The "Social clause" is not related to the worldwide equality of wages or working conditions, but to the rights of association for all the social partners, which must be guaranteed in all countries, including the principle of collective bargaining. There is also the need for prohibition of forced and/or compulsory labour, child labour and any forms of discrimination. The universality of human rights should be taken as the basis. A training

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[13] United Nations Millenium Declaration, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, UN, September 2000, 89 nations. http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

[14] http://topics.developmentgateway.org/poverty/discussions/defaults/showDiscussion.do~id=2711.

[15] Ubaldo Martinez Veiga, "Absolute Poverty of Illegal Immigrants in Spain: A Growing Problem," 142-165, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium*, Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Paptheodorou, International Studies in Poverty Research, Zed Books, CROP, 2006, 156.

[16] Spicker, P., "Definitions of Poverty: Eleven Clusters of Meaning," Eds., D. Gordon and P. Spicker, *The International Glossary of Poverty*, London: Zed Books, 1999.

[17] Bane, M.J. and D.T. Ellwood method: Ann Huff Stevens, *The American Economic Review*, 84, 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Hundred and Sixth Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (May, 1994), 34-37.

[18] Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, Penguin Books, 2002, 214.

system capable of corresponding to the new demands of the labour markets should be put into place in the less developed countries. Combating poverty needs to address the different aspects of the problem and involves the participation of different sectors and interest groups. Poverty can be eliminated only with an eye to economic, social and human development.[19]

The relative concept of poverty needs to be upheld, which refers to "individuals, families and groups" that are excluded from various domains of daily life and activities.[20] Within the relative poverty framework, existing norms and values of life standards, comfort and the extent and nature of social and political participation in the particular society should be taken into consideration. Townsend's definition of relative poverty is "the lack of material resources of a certain duration and to such an extent that participation in normal activities and possession of amenities and living conditions which are customary or at least widely encouraged or approved in society, becomes impossible or very limited."[21] The Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research at the University of Bristol, carries on poverty-related research and shows that poverty, inequality and social exclusion remain the most fundamental problems that people face in the 21st century.

Social assistance in social protection systems should include both the poverty-oriented component, i.e., incomes below a given threshold should not be politically acceptable; and the social-exclusion-oriented component, i.e., the right to receive the social benefit as accompanied by the right to social integration. The latter component should be specified as a guiding principle of social policy analysis and action. It should focus on the social rights of citizenship, and be geared towards identifying the factors that facilitate and constrain the exercise of such rights as they are defined by universal policies. Whenever there is need, such policies need to be centred on specific groups or 'categorical' areas.

The non-monetary dimensions of disadvantage and the multi-dimensional scope of such disadvantage, as well as the relational aspects of such disadvantage, namely the role that local community, neighbourhood and family relations play in such dimensions, need to be tackled. The dynamic approach to poverty should be adopted, focusing on the process rather than on the static nature of poverty. Importance must be placed on the role of the rights of citizenship as a guiding principle of social action, and the recognition of the role of institutions to guarantee the exercise of such rights. It must be taken into consideration that the workings of some social institutions may also be the origin of constraints to effective social citizenship.

The evidence of several levels of factors such as social, political, territorial, that impact on the explanation of poverty and social exclusion must be accounted. The recognition and identification of problems such as supranational, national, regional, local, community, family and individual levels are necessary as well as the policy action available for each level.

Such new orientation of poverty analysis and of anti-poverty policies on the international scale is intended to focus on a broader concept of social disadvantage, which is commonly referred to as 'social exclusion' in Europe.

Scientific research conducted in this subject should be undertaken in close relation with the process of development and evaluation of social policies as well as the human rights agenda with the participation of government bodies, or in response to the needs of the policy-makers.

There should be the creation of trans-national networks for research and comparison of policy experiences; regional and local studies need to be included with a concentration on the specificities of the causes, profiles and characteristics of welfare. Next to public and private social actors, NGOs should be involved in territorial and trans-national experimental and innovative partnership projects. Targeted populations need to be actively included in various social programmes.

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[19] Townsend, P., "Concluding Commentary: Poverty in the Mediterranean region: Applying a human rights strategy." 374-398, *Poverty and social deprivation in the Mediterranean: Trends, policies and welfare prospects in the new millenium*. Eds Petmesidou, M. and Papatheodorou, C., CROP, 2006.

[20] Townsend, P., "Poverty, Social Exclusion and Social Polarisation: The Need to Construct an International Welfare State." In *Social Policy for the 21st Century: Justice and Responsibility*, Centre for Social Policy Research, 1999.

[21] Oyen, E., "Some basic issues in comparative poverty research," *International Social Science Journal*, 134, 1992, 615-626.

There is also the 'fuzzy approach' to the study of poverty, which allows one to take a multi-dimensional view of poverty and has taken various forms in the literature. The theory of 'fuzzy sets' was first developed by Zadeh.[22] Cerioli, A. and S. Zani then applied the concept of fuzzy sets to the measurement of multi-dimensional poverty, and called their approach the "Totally Fuzzy Absolute Approach (TFA).[23] They were followed by Cheli and Lemmi in 1995.[24] An individual (or household) level of poverty is computed first for each indicator of poverty.

What is needed is the design and implementation, at the national level, of new forms of policy coordination addressed to specific population groups and social problems, also involving the coordinated participation of a broad set of social actors in their design and implementation.

If the indicator was a "specific durable good," then those individuals who owned this good were defined as 'non-poor' and those who did not as 'poor.' In case of the subject of health, individuals may come up with subjective terms and evaluate the state of their health as very good, quite good, medium, quite bad, bad and very bad. People are thus located along two thresholds, one on the upper and the other on the lower levels. "Quite good, medium or quite bad" health designations then cannot be classified as "non-poor" or "poor." They fall somewherre along the seven-level scale between the two levels.

What is needed to advance the study of poverty phenomena worldwide is a cross-national approach, and a scientific operational definition. European social scientists have published a statement on the need for an international approach to defining and measuring poverty, so that political parties to be chosen would be capable of yielding results in the struggle against global poverty.

Neo-liberal strategies for growth and development on the international scene over the last two decades have led to the rising of mass poverty and the deepening of social polarization within and between states, and the deterioration of living conditions for a significant part of the world's population.[25]

If joint goals are to be served, there is the need for an objective or scientific core meaning of poverty which would be applicable for every country in the world, as well as in the Mediterranean region. This would be possible only by measuring objectively different types of material and social deprivation and developing "cross-national social and economic indicators" and "looking at the correlation between multiple deprivation and a threshold of income." Moreover, poverty elimination needs to be not just an economic or social policy but a human rights issue for the whole world, whatever level of development has been reached by a country. The main argument in this paper is to approach poverty in general from a vigorous application of the instruments of human rights, as suggested by Peter Townsend.[26]

III. The European Mediterranean Policy and the New/European Neighborhood Policy

An analysis of poverty in a specific region, such as the Mediterranean, implies an effort to reach meaningful global solutions, since this is an area where countries range from very rich to very poor, those that are securely nested in European Union membership and others that are torn apart by war and conflict, and a variety of cultures of great diversity in family, custom, tribal commitments, ethnicity or religion. What are the structural causes of poverty in this shared geopolitical and historical basin which is yet characterized by a great deal of variation of socio-economic conditions, political structures, levels of inequality and deprivation, and policy practice? Is there a possibility of any common ways of eradicating poverty in this area? Are there

[22] Zadeh, L.A., "Fuzzy Sets," 338-353, *Information and Control*, 8, 1965.
[23] Cerioli, A. and S. Zani, "A Fuzzy Approach to the Measurement of Poverty," in Eds. C. Dagum and M. Zenga, *Income and Wealth Distribution, Inequality and Poverty*, Berlin: Springer, 1990.
[24] Cheli and Lemmi, "Totally" Fuzzy and Relative Approach to the Multi-Dimensional Analysis of Poverty,' 115-134, Economic Notes, 24, No.1.
[25] Townsend, P., **"**Concluding Commentary: Poverty in the Mediterranean Region - applying a human rights strategy," 374-398, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium*, Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, CROP, Zed Books, 2006.
[26] *Ibid.* Townsend, P., **"**Concluding Commentary: Poverty in the Mediterranean Region - applying a human rights strategy," P. Townsend, 374-398, Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium, Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, CROP, Zed Books, 2006.

any cross-national social and economic indicators? Does the EMP and/or the ENP have a definition for poverty in the SEMCs? Do such initiatives recognize the need for an objective and scientific core meaning of poverty for every country composing the region?

There should exist a common Euro-Mediterranean strategy to overcome poverty; yet it does not appear as a mainstream concern of the economic and social overall strategy. The EMP does not give special accent to the fight against poverty in the Euro-Mediterranean region, which has serious implications in the SEMCs, where attention with respect to extent and severity of poverty is urgently needed.[27]

There needs to be political will first at the level of governmental decision-makers and secondly at the European Council level. A set of common aims should be established regarding basic needs, education, decent work, social protection and guidance to those who look for a job; protection of the family, persons with disability, and the elderly; there should be concern for the modern forms of exploitation and human trafficking. Underlying these aims, there should be concern with the promotion of citizenship of the poor, comprising of the civil and political rights, the economic, social and cultural rights, including the possibilities of effective participation in society.

The following questions seem pertinent: How can poverty be defined in the Mediterranean context? What are its indicators and what individuals or groups are at risk? What are the roles of the family and social networks vis-à-vis the role of the state in alleviating poverty? Is there poverty awareness, raised and disseminated among the public and within the state? Is there a consensus on the indicators of poverty? Such indicators may vary in time and space, but the major political actors within society need to agree on certain measurements. Are there measureable facets of poverty?

Is there an effort to set common aims regarding basic needs, education, employment, social protection for the individual and the family, exploitation of women and children, measures taken to help persons with disability and the elderly, concern with the promotion of citizenship of the poor, comprising the civil and political rights, and the economic, social and cultural rights? What measures are taken for effective participation of the poor in the society, as well as provision of examples of good governance? Again I ask: what is done in order to overcome over-centralization, informal economy, corruption and lack of transparency in the interaction between public and private actors? The development of a dynamic organised civil society, freedom of association, and tolerance for pluralism are also important factors in combatting poverty. How realistic is the rush towards full trade liberalisation in the EMP by 2010? A European Parliament report by Kader Arif has estimated that 35 million new jobs are needed in the Mediterranean between 2000 and 2015, just to prevent unemployment levels from rising above their present levels.[28]

Even though a coordinated strategy by the EU is needed to provide the impetus, each SEMC should be responsible for finding its own course of action for overcoming poverty. Countries bordering the Mediterranean display an extraordinary range of conditions. Exact comparions regarding the severity of the poverty condition cannot be drawn, and thus it is very difficult for any international agency both to discern and demonstrate strategic and policy priorities.

There are a number of key areas each SEMC need to take into consideration: Good governance on the national scale is very important, comprising of efforts to deal with the phenomena of over-centralization, informal economy, lack of transparency in the interaction between public and private actors; and above all, corruption. There should be a fine balance set up between the role of government, the role of the private sector, and the role of the organized civil society. The development of a dynamic organized civil society, employing peaceful means to reach common and beneficial ends should be encouraged. The freedoms of expression and association require concrete legal guarantees; pluralism is a prerequisite of such freedoms. Equity and justice in the society should be guaranteed by appropriate legal tools.

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[27] "Combating Poverty in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries," September 2006, *Conselho Económico E Social*. www.ces.es/TRESMED/docum/Ljubljana06/A_F_CES6575-2006_DOC-INT_en.pdf. This Report emerged as a follow up of the Valencia Euro-Mediterranean Summit, November 2004. Working Group: Economic and Social Councils of Portugal, France, Greece, Italy, Tunisia, Turkish Delegation to the EU-Turkey JCC.

[28] David Cronin, "EUROPE: Trade Rope around Mediterranean Nears," Brussels, Nov 16, 2007. http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=40096.

III a. The Barcelona Process (EMP)

The European Union wishes to see the Mediterranean and the Middle East progressively transformed into a zone of peace, stability and prosperity. The EU's priority of regional security also comprises the objective of reduction of poverty as a factor of human rights and higher standards of living. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s and the ideological failure of communism in Europe created a strategic and moral void which was soon filled in by debates and actions around rights to sovereignty and on building of a Western European model of civil society based on the ideals of liberal democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. The aim was to promote social-democratic principles such as equality, social solidarity, sustainable development, and good governance in its own territory and the neighbouring areas such as the Mediterranean. The effort to build and to make triumph the liberal democratic values thus spread its force not only into the eastern periphery of Europe, but also into all domains of life in the south and east of the Mediterranean.[29]

In addition to promoting these normative principles, the EU has undertaken to encourage the creation of institutions which ensure the attainment of these principles. However, the liberal-democratic values and the welfare state model of Western Europe started to be challenged mainly by economic hardships, poverty and its effects, environmental degradation, uncontrolled population growth, a veritable possible "clash of civilizations" due to growing anti-Western tendencies, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Muslim world, and the problematic re-emergence of xenophobia and Islamophobia in the West.[30] Immigration flows from North Africa and the Middle East into the EU, as a factor of poverty and deprivation in the home countries, forces the EU to take measures and to initiate new strategies such as the EMP in order to alleviate the economic, social and cultural maladies as well as to meet the security concerns in the area.[31]

In the Euro-Mediterranean region and particularly in the SEMCs, however, the Barcelona Process does not place any emphasis on the fight against poverty *per se.* Poverty does not appear as a mainstream concern of the economic and social overall strategy. Some initiatives of the Barcelona process may have an indirect positive effect on poverty, but the Report of 2006 underlines that the problem needs to be placed at the centre of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. This lack is evident in the fact that, while employment is included, poverty and exclusion have been excluded from the original list of priorities of the Lisbon Strategy.

The core of the EMP is economic and financial, which also has great implications for security in the Mediterranean. Through its political basket, the Partnership aims to create a common area of peace and stability; through its social, cultural, and human basket, the Partnership tries to promote communication among cultures as well as exchanges among civil societies in the region.[32] In the political and security issues, EU member states can reach agreement with some difficulty, similar to the social and cultural issues, where there is often divergence in national foreign policy concerns and historic links with the individual countries in the south and east of the Mediterranean. The Barcelona Process should provide the strong regional organization needed in parallel to collaborative economic and social development; in the countries of the SEMCs where people are drastically impoverished by insecurity, conflict or terror, systematized anti-poverty policies need to be implemented. All such measures are to be placed within the framework of analysis and action plans of human rights, if the target is to achieve lasting results.

One major source of poverty in the region has been the long-standing conflict and violence between Israel and the now-divided Palestinian Authority in particular, and Israel and the Arab world in general. The Barcelona Process was not able so far to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict; yet it contributes by placing Israel and Arab countries in the same institutional platform, within the EMP framework, and provides them with the possiblity of freely discussing their differences. The populations of the SEMCs however do not believe that the European Union member states can eliminate the domestic or local conflicts of the area and neither

[29] May Chartouni-Dubarry, "Politics, Economics and the Search for Mediterranean Stability," Ed. Stefania Bazzoni (ISPI), Italy, 2002, http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/politics.pdf.

[30] Nas, Çiğdem, "Turkey's International Role as a Democratic Model in the Middle East", *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies*, Annual 2005, Istanbul, 223.

[31] Smith, Karen E. (2003). *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 192.

[32] Euromed, Meda I and Meda II Programs, respectively, for the periods 1995-1999 and 2000-2006. http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/meda.htm.

are they readily optimistic about the EMP which is largely perceived as a project which offers little guarantee of any solution to the social, political and economic problems, including the conditions of poverty.[33]

The EMP is an EU policy which bears characteristics of a civilian power model. "The Civilian power approach is at the heart of European integration."[34] The civilian means and mechanisms used by the EU in order to spread its values and principles are mainly shaped by "contagion; informational, overt and procedural diffusion; transference; and the cultural filter.[35] The EU also uses its civilian capacity to prevent conflicts; by using civilian instruments the EU took common positions on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa in October 1997. Thus, on the international conceptual category, the EU is designated as the 'civilian power' Europe. Stabilizing the wider European region through the European Neighbourhood Policy, and spreading prosperity and peace across the EU's near abroad is the primary foreign policy priority.

The Community has steadily progressed towards a considerable presence in the world since the late 1970s. The EU relies predominantly on trade, aid and non-military diplomacy to exercise influence on international affairs, primarily over its near-abroad.[36] Thus, there have been rising perceptions and expectations for the fulfillment of certain functions from Europe's international role. The EU is expected to be the principal voice of the developed countries in relations with the less developed countries; while the EU is looked upon as regional pacifier and mediator of conflicts, it is expected to bridge the gap between rich and poor. Hill argues that these demands pose a serious challenge to the actual capabilities of the EU, in terms of its ability, its resources and the instruments at its disposal.

III b. The New European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)

The Mediterranean Basin which is emerging as an entity in its own right (including southern Europe, the Balkans, Turkey, North Africa and the Near East), is a region showing a microcosmic view of the global economy. It comprises a range of countries from the very poor to the rich, countries torn by war and conflict but also those that are peaceful and prosperous. Different cultures in this area exhibit the most diverse mixture of family types, ethnic groups and tradition. The region is taking its special place as a region in a range of scholarly works dealing with global issues.[37] In parallel, the Barcelona process should be regionally extended to face the problems countries generally experience in dealing with poverty. The EU member states should review seriously the commercial exchanges with the SEMCs and should try to increase foreign direct investments. Yet it is useless to treat poverty just as an economic and social policy issue; it should be treated as a subject that involves all aspects of human life and human rights. A just and cohesive development program, as well as sustainable growth is needed for progressively overcoming poverty.

Southern Europe, the Balkans, Turkey, North Africa and the Western Middle East share a great deal in common in poverty and social deprivation as well as in the larger picture of socio-cultural trends in general. What are the similarities and differences in public policies and civil responses to the miseries of poverty and social inequality in this area? Is it possible to find regional solutions to poverty in the Mediterranean area, as

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[33] Derisbourg, Jean-Pierre, 'The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership since Barcelona' in Ed. Richard Gillespie, *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Political and Economic Perspectives*, London, Portland, or: Frank Cass Publishers, 1997, 28.

[34] Whitman, Richard, 'The Fall and Rise of Civilian Power Europe', retrieved July 15, 2007 http://fesportal.fes.de/pls/portal30/docs/Folder/Politikanalyse/paxamericana/whitman.pdf.

[35] Manners, Ian, 'Normative Power Europe Reconsidered,' CIDEL Workshop, Oslo 22-23 October 2004, From Civilian to Military Power: The European Union at a Crossroads?, Retrieved July 20, 2007 http://www.arena.uio.no/cidel/WorkshopOsloSecurity/Manners.pdf.

[36] Stephan Keukeleire, "The European Union as a Diplomatic Actor: Internal, Traditional, and Structural Diplomacy," 31-56, *Diplomacy and Statecraft,* 14, 3, September 2003, Frank Cass, London, URL: http://soc.kuleuven.be/iieb/docs/03-SK=eudiplomatic.pdf.

[37] *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium*, Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, CROP, Zed Books, 2006; *Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Mediterranean Area*, Eds. Korayem, K. and M. Petmesidou, Bergen:CROP, 1998; *Euro-Mediterranean Relations after September 11: International, Regional and Domestic Dynamics*, Ed. Annette Jünemann, London & Portland: Frank Cass, 2004; *The European Union and the Mediterranean: The Mediterranean Challenge*, V, Ed. Peter G. Xuereb, Malta: University of Malta, 2004; Habeeb, Hani, *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Pros and Cons: An Arab View*, USA: Universal Publishers, 2002.

a specific geographic unit? There is an expectation that the EMP should be related to EU enlargement and the mutual economic and social interest of countries bordering the Mediterranean.[38]

The EU developed a general strategy, called "European/New Neighborhood Policy" for its neighbors which cannot be a member of the EU according to the rules of the founding Treaty. The EMP is now part of the ENP, which offers everything but membership to countries in the East and South of the EU member countries. Through the ENP, the EU offers its neighbors a 'privileged partnership,' building upon a mutual commitment to common values such as democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development. Deep political relationship and economic integration through a customs union may be other aspects of privileged partnership. The main aim of the ENP is avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbors, by land or sea, and strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all the adjoining regions.

The ENP, in addition to the other EU neighbours to the east, concerns the countries of the Mediterranean basin who became members of the political framework of the Barcelona Process and whose Euro-Mediterranean Asociation Agreement is in force. As a member in the EMP, Turkey is eligible to regional and cross-border programs, but is not entitled to participate in the ENP since it is a candidate country in the negotiation phase for membership in the EU ('pre-accession proceedings'). Associated countries of the Mediterranean have already committed themselves to the founding values of the EU, by their membership in the EMP.

The ENP emanates from European institutions and falls in the frame of the CFSP. The ENP has been originally designed to offer a reinforced partnership to the eastern European countries with the objective of preventing the emergence of new dividing lines between an enlarged EU and neighbour countries and has been extended to the SEMCs as a result of the latter's weaknesses, and then to the southern Caucasus countries. Almost all the countries of the EMP suffer from greatly unequal development conditions compared to the EU member states. The ENP thus aims at "creating a common area of stability, security, and prosperity, with a high level of economic cooperation and political integration." It is stipulated that, "Regarding Mediterranean partners, assistance and cooperation in the framework of the ENP should be coherent with the EMP (...) and based on the concluded agreement in this framework on a free-trade area for merchandise and launching an asymmetric liberalization process."[39]

The ENP is intended to palliate the deficiency of the EMP in matters of bilateral cooperation where results are estimated to be weak. Moreover, the ENP provides a more concrete political approach than the Euro-Med Association Agreements by enhancing negotiation and arbitrage allowing the ownership of the process by all parties. The adaptability of the ENP and notably of the Action Plans, frequently re-evaluated, allows a larger political follow-up which will necessarily lead to a higher feeling of ownership among all parties.

For the SEMCs, the Barcelona Process is an obligatory path to access the ENP. The ENP is not obligatory for these countries; Algeria has declared its non-interest.

How does the ENP operate? The Euro-Med Association Agreements constitute the framework of the implementation of Neighbourhood Action Plans. The thematic Sub-committees working in the framework of the Action Plans report to the Euro-Med Association Committee (high officials level) and present an annual report to the Euro-Med Association Council (ministerial level) which does not participate in the preparation of the Action Plans. The EMP will develop only if a strong coherence is established between the Euro-Med Association Agreements and the ENP Action Plans; and if all the political and financial mechanisms necessary to finalizing the regional and multilateral integration project are mobilized, notably towards strengthening South-South relations. In a historically rich basin and in close proximity to the European continent, the ENP, relying on the EMP, considers transnational and regional cooperation as

[38] Peter Townsend, "Concluding Commentary: Poverty in the Mediterranean region - Applying a human rights strategy," 374-398, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, New York: Zed Books, 2006, 384.

[39] COM(2004)628 final(29.09.2004) ec.europa.eu/financial_perspective/documents_commission/index_en.htm; Aprodev, Karin Sohet, "Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 and EU as a global actor. What does the proposal mean for the future? Fight against poverty or terrorism?" December 2004, www.developmentportal.eu/wcm/subsite/snv1/content/view/33/92.

priorities. The question is, is there an Action Plan that illustrates the shared will to act jointly on a multilateral level on the issue of poverty, since the financial instrument of the ENP could possibly provide the means for implementation?

The ENP establishes a close linkage between political, economic and social reforms which the EMP has so far called upon. There is free-trade policy, implemented through bilateral agreements with North African, Middle and Near Eastern countries, not neglecting the social dimensions of democratization and development. The principles of implementation are differentiation, conditionality, and contracting: The ENP considers that countries have different rates of progress which are attributed to the economic, political, social and cultural situations of each country. The EU proposes to regulate the Partnership according to the partner's request. If the partner wishes to advance quickly in the country's reforms then the Partnership will become closer with a more ambitious content. If the country is not very enthusiastic about change, the Partnership will be loose, less demanding and more general. The first specificity of the ENP is the differentiation it makes between objectives according to the country which impels officials in charge of this policy to talk about a 'customized approach.'

The second specificity of the ENP is that the Partnership relation is conditioned with the results or the relative situation of each partner country. This conditionality does not concern only financial support but also technical assistance (twinning, transfer of know-how, etc.) and participation in European programs. The contractual dimension is structural to the ENP. The contract is the result of discussion and negotiation through the established work mechanisms. It induces the principle of shared responsibility. A European Commission survey (Country Report) precedes the preparation of Action Plans. This assessment serves as a basis for the Action Plan's elaboration. The duration of Action Plans is five years, as evaluations are started in autumn 2006.

It is stipulated that "Participation in the ENP project should be accompanied by active policies aiming at fighting poverty and inequality."[40] The political dialogue to be built with the SEMCs is expected to pass through the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, democracy, good governance (which assumes the development of civil society, gender equality, fight against corruption, etc), as well as the principles of market economy, free-trade, sustainable development and fighting poverty.[41]

An initiative on the possible structuring of a new 'Mediterranean citizenship,' and the social rights of this new citizenship potentially will lead the way to depicting the problems of poverty and possibly create hopes for solutions to the human suffering in the region.[42] The institution of citizenship, with its various components, can play a role in constituting and consolidating the spatial entity called the Mediterranean, and for the establishment of satisfactory standards of legitimacy and performance in some areas of social protection. The social rights of citizenship are crucial for the formation of 'collectivities of redistribution.' Such rights help to enhance citizen loyalties to public institutions, and promote a sharing of material resources throughout the social structure. They strengthen civic and political cohesion. Social components of citizenship are as important as its civil and political components. 'Solidarity' and 'the Mediterranean' might be reconciled through stronger citizenship rights and the development of an intelligent and 'socially friendly' institutional framework.

The ENP is not obligatory; yet for the SEMCs, the Barcelona Process is an obligatory path to access the ENP. For the SEMCs, assistance and cooperation should be coherent with the EMP, based on concluded Association Agreements. The ENP provides "a more concrete political approach than the Euromed Association Agreements "by enhancing negotiation and arbitrage allowing the ownership of the process by all parties".[43]

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[40] COM(2004)373final.
[41] COM(2004)628 final.
[42] Deniz Ilgaz, "Citizenship Rights in the Turkish Republic: A Re-Evaluation in the Euro-Mediterranean Area," 333-379, *The European Union and the Mediterranean; The Mediterranean's European Challenge*, V, Ed. Peter. G. Xuereb, University of Malta, European Documentation and Research Centre, Malta, 2005.
[43] Civil Forum Euromed, Marrakech 2006, The European Neighborhood Policy, Preparatory Document for the 2006 Euromed Civil Forum, revised on 21 October 2006, Prepared by Ghislaine Glasson Deschaumes, www.statewatch.org/news/2006/apr/euro-med-2003-2006.pdf.

Poverty in the region is to a great extent a problem of insufficient resources asociated with age (low security pensions, or total lack), gender (discrimination against women) and education (low skills, low wages and weak mobility) which reflect the effect of structural factors and the imbalances in the economy. Structural factors are persistent over time, and they are likely to be transferred to further generations and can be reduced in a consistent way only through policy measures with effective long-term results. The EU enlargement and the EMP should somewhat be connected so that the programs and mutual benefits in economic and social issues extended to acceding states should cover also the countries of the south and east Mediterranean. The EMP should further show some capacity for establishing a human rights framework for developing successful anti-poverty agreements among the Mediterranean countries, drawing on the historically efficient social transfers of the EU member states.

Analysis of poverty in the SEMCs shows that, in general, the incidence of poverty in the region is higher in the rural areas compared to urban areas. However, urban poverty is also increasing since "poverty pockets" or "slums" emerge and expand especially in the big metropolis. Poverty is also affected by mutually reinforcing migration, urbanization, globalization and the expansion of the informal economy. In the SEMCs, due to the traditional clientelistic use of welfare state resources by political parties, the 'category' approach used in social assistance programmes, with its fragmentation of measures and hierarchization of the needy, usher in fraud or cheating quite easily. Moreover, the meagre benefits, unable to provide proper sustenance, need to be pieced together with additional income from jobs in the informal economy.

Moreover, due to gender discrimination coupled with poverty, women are denied access to health services, educational opportunities, legal rights and other opportunities enjoyed by men. How can women become equal partners in society? It is a global fact that female poverty rates turn out to be higher than male rates in all countries. Roughly half of the world's population are women, however, women comprise seventy percent of the poor in the world. Women are more vulnerable to household accidents due to domestic violence, pregnancy, childbirth and reproductive health problems, mental health problems, and diseases of poverty, such as tuberculosis and avoidable blindness. The improvement of the status of women, including their education, training, empowerment and participation in decision-making, is essential to the social, environmental and economic dimensions of development.

There is also great inequality among women in different geographical regions, social classes and ethnic groups. A gender sensitive approach to health should take into account biological and social factors in the exposure of men and women to vulnerability and risk for disease and ill health, with respect to the different roles they play in the society.

Besides the 'traditional forms' of poverty, there are also 'new forms' of poverty, such as the 'working poor,' who are employed but with low and/or irregular payments, often in the informal sector of the economy. Younger children are poorer. The elderly are poorer than active-aged adults, but not as poor as children. This reality has pertinence for all the SEMCs in the fact that having great numbers of children increases the risk of poverty more than having elderly members in the family. A related factor affecting poverty in the region is jobless growth and sluggish economic performance, which mutually reinforce migration. The result is a decline in the living standards of the households and increase in poverty. The expansion of the informal economy often follows, coupling with unplanned urbanization.

IV. The Welfare State in the European Union

Poverty is quite varied across the EU, which has multiplied in differences with the enlargements in the new millenium. Poverty alleviation, as a necessary factor of the welfare state, is an indispensible aspect of the European Social Model. EU member states have the objective of social cohesion and there is high consensus that it should be ensured by all governments that "nobody who is poor, sick, disabled, unemployed and old is left deprived." Yet, in recent years the European welfare state has come under increasing attack, and held responsible for a decline in economic performance. Demographic, economic and social changes in the EU recently, such as the ageing of the population, the decreasing employment rate, the change in the gender

balance, the increase in the demand for support services, and the "increasing opportunism of all the economic players," all these factors together had some implications for the welfare states.[44]

When the issue of income distribution in the EU is viewed from the viewpoint of poverty, the picture is not at all satisfactory. Equity considerations should be taken into account, as well as economic efficiency. What is the performance of the European welfare state with regard to fighting poverty? Should market forces be given priority over any considerations, be they social, cultural or political, or should objectives of poverty concern have precedence over the aims of economic efficiency and growth.

IV a. Responsible Capitalism

Post-war Beveridge reforms were started first in Britain after World War II and spread to Europe and then the whole world. Lord William Beveridge, Director of the London School of Economics (1919-1937), published a report in December 1942, right after the allied victories in North Africa. It was the promise, in wartime Britain, of a better tomorrow. *The Express* announced on its front page that 'Beveridge Tells How to Abolish Want.' The Beveridge Report's focus was on families and individuals, not neighbourhoods.[45] *The Times* said that the Report was "a masterly exposition of the ways and means whereby the fact and fear of involuntary poverty can be speedily abolished altogether."[46] More than half a century later, on 18 March 1999, British Prime Minister Tony Blair made a 'Beveridge Lecture' at Toynbee Hall on the occasion of the 750th anniversary of University College, Oxford, and added a further twenty years to the forecast of poverty reduction, especially to end child poverty. In the lecture, Blair set out his own vision of a welfare state for the twenty first century.[47]

The reforms Beveridge initiated were to lay the foundation for welfare in the second half of the twentieth century. Earlier versions of welfare institutions had been set up even as early as the last decades of the nineteenth century, within the classical "state building" efforts. The 'welfare state' consists of a number of programs through which the government pursues the goal of social protection on behalf of citizens against certain categories or risk, or social assistance for the needy, and of encouraging the consumption of certain services such as education, housing and child care. One important objective is to relieve poverty and to provide a sense of security. Even though great many social changes have reshaped modern society over the last fifty years, welfare policies have failed to respond sufficiently to prevent the expansion of poverty, social deterioration and miseries of exclusion. If society changes faster than policy, then radical reform is necessary. There is always the need for adequate agreement about the objectives of serious and comprehensive reform.

The welfare state was essentially an insurance or risk management system. The main aim of Beveridge's welfare state was also to provide security. Beveridge's five giants on the road to reconstruction were, Want, Ignorance, Squalor, Idleness and Disease, all negatives. Whereas Anthony Giddens, again of the LSE, says that policy goals should be positive: Autonomy, Active Health, Education, Well-being, and Initiative. It should be possible to promote a culture of responsible capitalism, by the reduction of inequalities in the society. There should be increased development of honorary civil organisations providing high-quality services, through public-private partnerships, putting an emphasis upon reforming and modernising public sector institutions. In "a culture of responsible capitalism," social justice means redistribution and the reduction of inequalities. If inequalities grow too large, the integrity, solidarity and continuity of a society is threatened. The result would be a great increase in social ailments such as "high levels of crime, the deterioration of neighbourhoods, lowered life expectancy, etc."[48]

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[44] Pierre Pestieau, *The Welfare State in the European Union; Economic and Social Perspectives*, Oxford University Press, 2006.
[45] Beveridge, Lord William 1942, Social Insurance and Allied Services, Cmnd 6404, London: HMSO.
[46] *The Times,* 2 December 1942, 5.
[47] Tony Blair, "Beveridge Revisited: a Welfare State for the 21st Century," 7-18, *Ending Child Poverty; Popular Welfare for the 21st Century*? Ed. Robert Walker, The Policy Press, UK, 1999.
[48] Anthony Giddens, "Notes on Social Justice and the Welfare State," 51-53, *Ending Child Poverty; Popular Welfare for the 21st Century*? Ed. Robert Walker, The Policy Press, UK, 1999.

IV b. Mutualism and Equality

"Redistribution" in the present-day society means much more than just spending money for the poor, but it needs to encompass the improvement of the life chances of those at the bottom. Enhancing life chances means the creation of the means for a decent life. It means providing all the possibilities for individuals to realise their potential, such as in education and in the labour market. There should be special programs to provide protection for the vulnerable. The idea is "mutual responsibility" as expressed by the journalist Kellner.[49]

Keeping in mind the five giants of Beveridge, the idea of "new mutualism" attributes the greatest importance to the role of government with respect to meeting the objectives of welfare policy. People, including all strata of the poor, should take whatever responsibility they can for their own lives. Responsibility can be exercised effectively only with a healthy social and economic framework. Among the roles of government listed, the first is to maximise the capacity of people to take responsibility for themselves. Second is to help create and support a healthy economic and social environment. Third is to ensure that provision exists to help people surmount obstacles they cannot tackle on their own. And fourth is to ensure that a regulated market delivers the services.

"New mutualism," which is about the basic relationships between citizens, communities, employers and governments, exhibits the characteristics of a model of corporatism. Kellner presents his philosophy of welfare in seven principles. The first one of the pillars upon which his mutualism rests is the exercise of individual liberty. The acknowledgement of mutual responsibility is necessary for the flourishing of a free society. Laws only lay down what people must do; but coercion is not effective when applied arbitrarily. Mutualism can thrive only when it is rooted in culture and free choice. It is important to determine how legitimate economic/political power is to be used, checked and dispersed. Markets should both offer rights to and demand obligations from those who seek financial gain. However, it is government's duty to promote responsible market behaviour; government should not attempt to be a market competitor. Mutualism requires an inclusive society in which all have equal access to the means to participate in it to the full. Independent institutions should be allowed to exercise their mutual responsibility in the delivery of services; government should only make sure that basic equality of access is guaranteed.

Equality of Access means that the principle of equality should apply to everyone at all times: to rich and poor, to men and women, to young and old, without any discrimination. Moreover, the principle of equality should count for its own sake; not "as a stepping stone to some wider social objectives," not even money. Some forms of inequality have nothing to do with money. Equality is ultimately about humanity, and not only in ownership of money. Equality of access has a very wide area that includes everything a citizen needs: information, skills, material means, security, health, justice, freedom to be without any fear, rights at work, or power of different kinds. It means equal membership rights for all the citizens. Everyone should have equality of access to live in a safe and peaceful neighbourhood, in reasonable and affordable housing; to fresh and healthy food in easy reach; to prompt and appropriate medical treatment; to fair treatment by the police and courts; to the ballot box; to possession of the information that enables people to hold to account those who wield power, public and private, in their lives; and to competent and affordable representation when in agreement or dispute with those who wield power.

Children and young adults need education that will enable them later in life to achieve their full potential. When they become adults, they need employment that does not violate their dignity or health.

The Equality of access principle is not the enemy of wealth; it is not a rigid ideology. It does not demand a particular form of organisation, or ownership of industry or a specific tax regime. In other words, capitalism may remain in place. However, there is one requirement and that is, "all plans need to be measured against equality of access criteria." Otherwise, the basic principles of flexible and efficient capital and labour markets, or the use of incentives, stays in place.

[49] Kellner, P., *The New Mutualism*, London: Co-operative Party, 1998.

IV c. Social Security and Social Assistance

The welfare state was popular in Beveridge's day; the reforms were comprehensive social security (National Insurance) and universal assistance (National Assistance). Society's safety net was felt to be very effective, but social insurance benefits later turned low.[50] However welfare, though not the concept of the welfare state, later became associated with fraud, abuse, laziness, a dependency culture and social irresponsibility encouraged by welfare dependency. Today the general view is that activities need to arise from within the areas, as local community projects, rather than coming from elsewhere. Residents in neighbourhoods should control and run these projects. Examples may be food co-ops, credit unions, youth clubs, community cafes, play schemes, second-hand clothes and furniture stores, community transport, etc. When there is no aim of profit nor any bureaucracy to handicap welfare, staff and volunteers who are themselves the low income people from the neighbourhood "get to feel strong and confident in their own power." It is a new welfare idea, run by needy people for needy people.

Social security enables economic and social progress to be achieved that benefits the whole of the community while it tries to minimize the personal distress which individuals may experience. Often economic and social changes occur with immediate consequences that may be temporarily detrimental to the incomes and rights of some individuals. Social security provides such individuals with the time and resources to adjust to new circumstances; also to plan and save for the future, to create personal security and financial independence. Mutual obligation and sharing in the society lead to social bonding; thus the extremes of poverty and wealth are avoided. By providing risk-pooling and sharing, individuals are led to feel much more protected in their community. Emphasis should be on positive opportunities as citizen rights to adequate benefits and quality service; not concentrating only on obligations on welfare recipients. Moreover, benefit recipients can acquire self-esteem and feel socially integrated if they are sure of receiving effective service delivery.

The sense of shared interest should not be weakened or lost in social security. Focus should not be on the cost of social security in isolation from either its purpose or achievements. Social security means social justice in action and rejection of social security can result in the rejection of those who are its beneficiaries. There are good examples of social security reforms in Britain that have enhanced social justice. The development of social assistance in 1943 and 1966 are such initiatives. Nationally uniform scale rates, based on regulation, enhanced territorial justice, thus promoted national cohesion. The principle of universalism provided benefits made available to all people solely on the basis of need. While the system was made more flexible and adaptable in coping with new social risks, discrimination of any kind was mostly eliminated. Family allowances and child benefits of 1946 and 1979 lessened the risk of childhood poverty. While work incentives were promoted, costs of social reproduction were shared by all.

The years 1972/73 brought unification of housing benefits. Rent subsidy schemes were unified in 1972. Whereas earlier, Beveridge had failed to take adequate account of geographical variations in housing costs. In 1975, there was the development of non-contributory disability and carers benefits. Rights for disabled people and public recognition of the social contributions made by carers are important targets in social security systems, since meeting the costs of disability can lower living standards. Carers, especially women carers, had also been part of the socially excluded groups and subject to discrimination before 1987. Financial assistance to low-income families in work came in 1972, 1988 and 1999 with the introduction of family income supplement and family credit and working families tax credit. Together with the national minimum wage, effort was rewarded and work incentives were enhanced. Creation of executive agencies, committed to enhancing customer services in the public sector in the 1990s, helped to get rid of the maxim that 'the poor get poor services.' Social justice for pensioners was brought in in 1998.

There were also counter examples that have undermined popular faith in the legitimacy and effectiveness of social security. While social security needed to serve the purpose of extending social justice, its power of unification was eroded. Rather than being the bond of the society, it was made to appear as an instrument of injustice. Commitment to social insurance among wide sections of the populace could not develop since social security was perceived as a refuge for society's failures. There had always been the need to make

[50] Erdley, T., *Social Assistance in OECD Countries*, Synthesis Report, DSS Research Report 46, London: HMSO, 1996.

social security part of the wider concept of community and justice; however, only the "subsistence-level social security" prevailed since 1948. Communities, trade unions, social entrepreneurs or industry had been excluded from participation in the design and implementation of social security.

From the 1940s onward, social security was seen as "the government's problem to resolve, rather than society's creation to be nurtured." The British government could not respond efficiently to youth unemployment in the 1980s and 1990s. Poorly qualified school drop-outs could have hardly any job opportunities starting from the 1970s. Wage inequalities started to grow in the labour market in the 1980s and 1990s. This necessitated benefit systems that serve as wage subsidies. While casual and part-time work became less and less available, most people found themselves in prolonged worklessness, or caught in the informal economy. The 1980s and 1990s were the years when social security could not be sustained due to high expenditure. The phase "Welfare dependency" emerged as a pejorative word to indicate activities of fraud and abuse. The Social Fund of 1988 replaced the rights-based system "by discretionary cash-limited loans and grants."[51]

Social security is said to be the "people's bank," providing for them information, advice, advocacy, access, support and service provision to address any impediment to self-sufficiency, and help the truly helpless. The social security system is expected to give those who genuinely cannot earn their living a decent life. Its excellent response in every way helps people to help themselves. On the other hand, in the equation of social exclusion, we find poor housing, ill-health, joblessness, family problems, learning difficulties or substance abuse. "Welfare to work" should be accompanied by "welfare in work." This will foster employment security and financial self-sufficiency. Training and advisory opportunities should be open for people who are in insecure employment or 'low-paying' jobs. Social security should be a community service, resulting from collective support of the neighbourhood. Local responsibility need to be matched by adequate resources and support to ensure continuity and quality.

IV d. Social Exclusion

Originally, poverty and social exclusion were two distinct concepts used for different purposes in science. They have been brought together since the late 1980s under the same umbrella to denote social disadvantage in Europe. 'Social exclusion' is the concept or metaphor widely used in Europe in order to denote the multi-dimensional and relational nature of the experience of being poor. European Social Policy texts make extensive use of 'social exclusion' and it is often a reference concept for the analysis of social problems.

The concept of social exclusion "emerges as more dynamic, actor-oriented, multi-faceted and methodologically plural than the concept of poverty."[52]

National social assistance budgets all over the EU member states are in a process of erosion due to the growing numbers of the unemployed, increasing migrations and weakening of traditional family and kinship relations. This condition is threatening not only the 'fabric of communities,' but also social cohesion. There had been a 1992 recommendation on the Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) which has been incompletely met by four of the earlier fifteen member countries: Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain. The aim for social integration has been the main characteristic of the GMI which has a distinctive view of poverty as a social policy focus. Thus, the GMI incorporates both the monetary and the social exclusion concepts of poverty and tries to address itself to "a multi-dimensional range of rights; economic, cultural, civil and social."[53]

The debate has recently shifted from "the minimum income guarantee to that of activation, from welfare to welfare work." The reason behind this change has been the concern over growing unemployment and job insecurity. Furthermore, "focusing simply on social assistance may lift responsibility from governments and

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[51] Huby, M. And Dix. G., *Evaluating the Social Fund,* Department Research Report, London: HMSO, 1992.

[52] Chiara Saraceno, "Poverty and Poverty Discourses in Italy in Comparative Perspective," 95-116, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. Maria Petmesidou and Christos Paptheodorou, International Studies in Poverty Research, CROP, Zed Books, 2006, 96.

[53] José Pereirinha, "Poverty and Anti-Poverty Policies in Portugal: The Experience of the Guaranteed Minimum Income," 117-141, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium*, Eds. Maria Petmesidou and Christos Paptheodorou, International Studies in Poverty Research, CROP, Zed Books, 2006, 117.

communities with regard to the long-term unemployed and the poor, thus becoming a form of social exclusion."[54] Saraceno suggests that the SEMCs may better use this shift away from advocacy for a minimum resources guarantee, and introduce some form of minimum income with an activation approach. Social policy, in coordination with employment and economic policies would play an important role in combating poverty and social exclusion.

IV e. Measurement of Poverty

Poverty can be measured by using an indirect method based on the one-dimensional criterion of income/expenditure and following an absolute method of measurement, drawing upon a Household Budget Survey (HBS). A more refined measurement method would be to take the multi-dimensionality of poverty in terms of welfare indicators as they are obtained from the European Community Household Panel (ECHP). The EU's measurement of poverty is 50 or 60 percent of Median Household Income.(MHI) The World Bank, on the other hand, has come up with the measurement of a 1 $ a day per person in 1985 (the end of 1980s, as a convenient temporary standard).

ECHP analyses to what extent monetary poverty and deprivation are related. Any anti-poverty policy that is targeted at the poor population identified through monetary income may not be adequately focused if the relation between deprivation and monetary poverty is weak. The method consists of obtaining an aggregate index of deprivation. A set of indicators of deprivation may be constructed from the ECHP, including material deprivations (housing conditions, ownership of durable goods, basic needs, financial constraints) or social (relational) deprivation such as housing environment and social relations.

The World Bank's designation of a minimum of 1 $ per day taken at a certain year has been called a mistake. Long term measurements are not feasible since changes take place in time in the markets as well as "in fulfilling individual roles at work, in family and society, with consequences for nutritional and dietary requirements, as well as other consumables and services." All such changes affect the threshold of income required to meet minimum human needs. "The threshold of risk may have to be revised when there have been unanticipated changes in conditions."[55]

The World Bank has also been accused of making mistakes about the necessary elements in the measurement of poverty. The World Bank defined poverty in the 1990 World Development Report, as "the inability to attain a minimal standard of living." What is the minimal standard of living? First, it is to have the finances necessary to buy enough food and other basic necessities. Secondly, to provide for the cost of participating in the everyday life of society. The latter, which varies from country to country, has been interpreted as "fulfilling the obligations in serving the different roles of worker, parent, neighbour, friend, consumer, carer and so on, that govern the scale of resources and also the level of food and of other basic necessities of life that may be required."[56]

IV f. Challenges to Welfare in Europe; future of welfare

In Europe, recent developments in the nation-state system[57] have brought about the emergence of the "post-state" or "post-national territorial organization."[58] The effects of globalisation and customs union developments within the EU are challenging the capacity of the nation states in devising welfare schemes and operations; imposing new constraints on policy-makers, presenting new challenges to social sovereignty; new competitive imperatives are forced onto the national regimes. Such effects are limiting the capacity of

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[54] Chiara Saraceno, "Poverty and Poverty Discourses in Italy in Comparative Perspective," 95-116, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium*, Eds. Maria Petmesidou and Christos Paptheodorou, International Studies in Poverty Research, CROP, Zed Books, 2006, 98.

[55] Peter Townsend, "Concluding Commentary: Poverty in the Mediterranean region - applying a human rights strategy," 374-398, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, New York: Zed Books, 2006, 375.

[56] *Ibid,* 376.

[57] Bartolini, S. *Restructuring Europe Centre Formation, System Building, and Political Structuring between the Nation State and the European Union*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005.

[58] Caporaso, James A., "The European Union and Forms of State: Westphalian, Regulatory or Post-Modern?" 29-52, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34, No. 1, March 1996.

states to prevent external authority structures from interfering with their own social spaces and jurisdictions; thus, their boundaries of welfare are strongly challenged.

Rokkan formulated state formation as a broad process of spatial (re)configuration. State-and nation-building are interpreted in terms of 'structuring.' A gradual establishment of a hierarhical order; building of a stable pattern of social interaction around a new territorial centre in a space confined by boundaries, which are lines of demarcation along the physical/territorial dimension as well as the social and symbolic dimension. Boundaries are set of norms and rules that define the type and level of closure of a given collectivity vis-á-vis the exterior, facilitating bonding dynamics among insiders.[59] Boundaries are quintessential components of modern citizenship. Full members of a community enjoy a status bestowed upon them.[60] They have enforceable rights and obligations arising out of a person's specific relation to the state.[61] Social rights are 'institutional stabilizers' that bond individuals and groups both with each other and with the state as a distinct entity. Social rights stabilize cooperation in a polity; they provide the members of the said polity with predictable entitlements to material resources of the territory.

The process of European integration has significantly altered the spatial architecture of social citizenship. This change has impacted on the scope of solidarity along the territorial dimension and the membership dimension; has created the basis for the formation of new sharing collectivities (especially at the level of supplementary pensions), and has transferred to the EU certain important boundary-central prerogatives. The EU does not have its own social protection budget through collection of taxes. Nation states finance direct interpersonal flows of redistribution through taxes. But the EU has acquired regulatory competences which are able to discipline the sharing spaces of the member states and thus to orient their distributive outcomes.

Can the EU transform itself into an arena capable of eliciting forms of virtuous 'structuring' in the delicate field of social sharing; gradually 'Europeanizing' the sphere of social sharing?[62] In the EU, subnational territories (regions, municipalities, etc.) are increasingly structured as new, distinctive, and relatively autonomous 'bounded spaces' in certain areas of social protection. However, restructuring of welfare at the EU level is proceeding at a very low speed, due to institutional blockages and to the heavy resistance of national loyalties and identities.[63]

The EU has become an important source of external boundary-building, but the nation state still retains important prerogatives over who can put down roots within its territory. Member states are still in full control of the rules of residence on their own territory as these apply to third-country nationals. However in the EU, the boundaries of social citizenship have witnessed several changes with the passing of time. EC law has attenuated or eliminated many boundaries between the member states in the sphere of social protection. In many cases it has done so by invoking the existence of a new pan-European solidarity space.[64]

Moreover, the EU has started to perform an additional important function of spatial structuring: that of building a single boundary vis-à-vis third countries and their nationals. The Amsterdam Treaty has paved the way for a gradual communitarization of immigration and asylum policy within the EU. One of the main external objectives of communitarization is the containment or control of entry flows, and thus the construction of recognizable EU boundaries along both territorial and membership dimensions. Legal assimilation is one of the internal objectives: non-discrimination of third-country nationals in terms of rights, starting with social rights. Thus, the Charter of Fundamental Rights speaks of 'persons,' in addition to EU citizens.

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[59] Ferrera, Maurizio, *The Boundaries of Welfare; European Integration and the New Spatial Politics of Social Protection*, Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 2005.
[60] Marshall, T.H., "Citizenship and Social Class," Eds. T.H. Marshall and T. Bottomore, *Citizenship and Social Class*, London, Pluto Press, 1992.
[61] Tilly, Charles, *Citizenship, Identity and Social History*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, U.K. 1996.
[62] By 'Europeanization' with respect to social sharing, what is meant is the 'nesting' of the existing domestic arrangements in a wider, multi-level bounded space, within which the production of social security is not programmatically sacrificed to the advantage of market promotion and unfettered competititon.
[63] Ferrera, Maurisio, *The Boundaries of Welfare; European Integration and the New Spatial Politics of Social Protection,* Oxford University Press, 2005, 8.
[64] *Ibid.* Ferrera, 217.

A social action programme was adopted by the European Commission in 2000 for the years 2000-2005. It emphasized the role of the European Social Model, including social policy and social security. The Lisbon Summit Declaration in March 2000 brought agreement to include poverty and social exclusion among the issues that should be dealt with through the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). This was the culmination of various initiatives that started in the 1980s with a number of failed European anti-poverty programmes and recommendations, plus the support of EU-wide research projects. The OMC on poverty started with a National Action Plan and the development of common indicators.

After the Laeken Summit of December 2001, progress was made on social indicators; indicators for measuring poverty and social exclusion on a broader scale were developed in accordance with the multi-dimensionality of the issue.[65] The principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of social rights was introduced for third-country nationals in May 2003 through an amendment of Regulation 1408/71. As far as employment and social protection are concerned, third-country nationals who find themselves within the EU now enjoy the same rights and obligations as EU nationals, so long as they are legally resident in one of the member states. But third-country nationals do not enjoy the right of free movement; they cannot be discriminated against in the hosting country if they have entered it from another member state, but they cannot freely move for employment purposes from one member state to another as EU nationals can. Third country nationals largely remain second-class denizens.

An EU Directive of 2003 has initiated the formation of a pan-European market of 'institutions of retirement provision.'[66] A new Regulation[67] replaced the old Regulation 1408/7 and took into account all the amendments, court rulings, and changes in national legislation that had been introduced since 1971. The personal scope of Regulation 883/2004 is very wide; it covers all nationals of a member state, stateless persons, and refugees residing in a Member State who are or have been subject to the legislation of one or more Member States. The scope of the law extends to the members of their families as well and to their survivors (Art. 2, Paragraph 1). As for the national scope, the regulation applies to social security legislation, defined as all laws and regulations which establish obligatory cover or insurance for the whole range of social protection benefits; sickness benefits, maternity or equivalent paternity benefits, invalidity benefits, old-age benefits, survivors' benefits, benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational disease, death grants, unemployment benefits, pre-retirement benefits, family benefits. It includes new benefits on civil servants' benefits, such as pre-retirement benefits, long-term care benefits, and unemployment benefits.

A Directive[68] aims at eliminating the obstacles to the freedom to establish services and free movement of services, including health care services; it was updated on 10 July 2007. It has been one of the most-disputed pieces of EU legislation in recent years, with proponents arguing that it will boost european competitiveness and critics attacking it for producing 'social dumping.' In February 2006, the European Parliament voted through a watered-down version of the Commission's proposal. Council adopted its common position in July 2006 on the directive almost unanimously. Only Belgium and Lithuania abstained. When Parliament agreed to the text, the final legislative act was published in the Official Journal. 28 December 2009 is the deadline for member states to transpose the Directive into their national legislation.

Article 49 of the 1957 Treaty establishing the European Community stipulates that "restrictions on freedom to provide services within the Community shall be prohibited in respect of nationals of member states who are established in a State of the Community other than that of the person for whom the services are intended." But in reality, this principle is limited by a number of barriers that prevent service providers from setting up shop in another member state or providing their services there. The EU's internal market programme of the 1990s ensured that barriers to trade in goods were mostly freed up, but the services sector

[65] Atkinson, A., B. Cantillon, E. Marlier and B. Nolan, *Social Indicators: The EU and Social Inclusion*, Oxford University Press, UK 2002.

[66] Directive 2003/41/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 June 2003 on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision, Official Journal of the European Union, L 235/10, 23.09.2003, www.cbfa.be/ENG/bpv/wg/pdf/directive_2003_41_en.pdf.

[67] Regulation 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, Official Journal of the European Union L 166, 30/04/2004, 0001-0123.

[68] Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on Services in the Internal Market, 12.12.2006, Brussels, OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 36-68, ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/services-dir/proposal_en.htm.

was largely left out so that service providers, such as architects and lawyers, wishing to offer their services outside their home country, still face huge obstacles in the form of national standards and legislation. Removing such obstacles would provide a major boost to the European economy as the services sector accounts for 70% of jobs and GDP in the Union.

This was the aim of the Directive first presented by the Commission on 13 January 2004, which was later dubbed the 'Bolkestein Directive' after the then Internal Market Commissioner Frits Bolkestein. In the area of health services (at the level of basic compulsory insurance) a channel of exit/entry has been opened by recent case law of the ECJ, directly based on Treaty Provisions. Member States have allowed the Commission to establish a High Level Group on Health Services and Medical Care to outline policy proposals.[69] One of the supporting pillars of the overall achievement of poverty reduction and human development, starts with health improvements. Getting close to the ultimate goal of poverty reduction will not occur unless the important health target is met.

In southern European countries, pension systems are overwhelmingly centred on the first pillar which still provides the largest share of retirement income. During the 1990s, a series of reforms reduced the generosity of the pension formulas and tried to promote the development of a funded second pillar. South European reforms adopted regulatory frameworks geared towards choice and competition. Is this a gradual and soft transition from closure to openness, to a kind of Pan-European market for pension funds? Twenty five percent of the EU's population is covered by occupational schemes. The value of funded pension assets as percentage of the EU's GDP is also substantial: 30 percent for second pillar schemes and 15 percent for third pillar schemes.[70]

In the last decades, the aim had been to develop a big European space through the promotion of market-making and the upholding of competition rules. However, it is highly probable that pension funds will be uncoupled from the national political economies that they have traditionally served. The traditional mix of statutory and supplementary, mandatory and voluntary, collective and individual forms of provision are challenged, as foreign providers are in search of new consumers. And wealthier groups are looking for more individualized forms of protection. Occupational and private pensions are likely to be exposed in the near future to increasing destructuring challenges. European social protection on the whole seems to gradually veer towards the United States where the model rests more heavily on market forces and actors, and leaves almost no room for the 'social dialogue' between employers and trade unions.

Welfare state formation has been realized through a process of 'boundary-building.' Compulsory public social insurance was established in Europe between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. This allowed the pooling of risks among wide social collectivities and thus made possible redistribution towards the less fortunate. Compulsory insurance is a form of bounding that has a social and a territorial component. First, it rests on rules of affiliation linked to individual status (employee, unemployed, elderly). Second, such, rules are binding within a given (national) territory. Thus, it can be designated as 'defined membership' and territorial limitation.' Since the twentieth century witnessed the creation of national citizenship, social insurance has also become a component of the institution of citizenship. Especially in the 1950s and 1960s, social insurance became a major tool in the production and distribution of rights and the forging of cultural identities. Being a citizen of a nation state entitled one to a wide range of civic, political and social rights. But the space of national citizenship was not easy to enter for outsiders and not easy to exit for insiders. There were guaranteed rights but also the corresponding set of obligations and constraints. The welfare state was reinforced as a mechanism of redistribution and also "as an instrument of social integration, territorial cohesion, voice structuring and loyalty generation."[71]

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[69] Follow-up to the High Level Reflection Process on Patient Mobility and Healthcare Developments in the European Union, Communication from the Commission. Brussels, COM (2004), 301 final.

[70] Pickering, Alan, "Glancing Back at 20 Years of EFRP, Looking Ahead Towards the Next 20," EFRP European Federation for Retirement Provisions, 25 October 2001. Activities Report 2001, Brussels, www.efrp.org/downloads/pressReleases/PR11_2001-10-25.pdf.

[71] Sibel Kalaycıoglu, "Dynamics of poverty in Turkey; gender, rural/urban poverty, social networks and reciprocal survival strategies," 218-247, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, New York: Zed Books, 2006, 219.

In time, the process of European integration has gradually altered this relatively compact institutional configuration. Free circulation of goods, persons, capital and services brought redefinition of cross-system boundaries. Such boundaries were either differentiated, reduced or altogether cancelled. The EU competititon regime forbade national closure practices as market distortions. The traditional economic foundations of national redistributive arrangements were weakened. In short, the internal order of the pre-existing bounded space was challenged and destabilized.

As new forms of sharing alliances challenge the former redistributive national configurations, another powerful potential catalyst for the unfreezing of the original architecture of European social protection has been the immigration issue. Immigration allows penetration of non-natives into the national space; the presence and rapid increase of foreign immigrants in a national community tends to disturb the existing distribution of material resources and life chances among natives. The EU has gained increasing powers over the rights of immigrants once they have entered the EU territory. A great number of citizens from eastern Europe have also been transformed from third-country nationals into EU citizens, though with a transition period. The rules on social security coordination were extended to nationals of the eastern European countries soon after accession.

The immigration issue is highly politicized in the EU, and it is bound to result in the restructuring of sharing institutions. Kvist mentions "social raids," which have prompted forms of pre-emptive, defensive reform of national schemes on the part of many EU countries in anticipation of the flow of immigration they expected from central and eastern Europe.[72] Even if not formally assimilated as EU citizens, third-country nationals have come to enjoy virtually full access to social benefits in the member states where they legally reside. In fact, migration may play a positive and not a negative role for the longer-term sustainability of European welfare systems, due to adverse demographic trends in most of the EU member states. Moreover, in spite of some opportunistic behaviour, migrant workers themselves bear the burden of the benefits and services they consume.

In the EU, some core social rights such as pensions or health care rights have become portable, admitted into domestic sharing spaces, across the territory of the whole EU.

This is called the "new spatial configuration of social protection in the EU."[73] Obviously, one can see experiments in social policies with new transnational regional groupings. The EU presently consists of a bundle of member-state spaces, adding up to a wider space, which in its turn becomes an arena for a novel process of restructuring and system-building. State-national boundaries are redefined, or totally removed, within the EU space in respect of an increasing number of functional spheres and institutionalized practices, including social sharing. A number of the foundational properties of social insurance have been changed: first, the link between legal residence and the fruition of means-tested social assistance; second, the public monopoly over compulsory insurance; third, the right to impose compulsory affiliation to social sharing schemes.

Tensions build up as the European integration deepens, while nation-based forms of social protection continue with difficulty. The nation state in Europe no longer has 'exclusive sovereignty to bind' in the social sphere. The destabilizing potential of market liberalization in the insurance sector is becoming a highly sensitive issue. There is an EU-induced liberalization of the insurance market, which prompts in the nation state the dynamism of social and political mobilization on the part of certain collective actors who find benefit in changing the existing rules of social sharing. Private insurance companies, the self-employed or some employers create pressure for 'exit' from public social assistance. Private insurance companies, in their turn, 'voice for entry.' Some employers are interested in exempting themselves from the obligation to insure with public schemes. There are other actors that counter-mobilize in defence of traditional closure rules. These are often individuals in low-paying state-service jobs or collective groups such as trade-unions, or some political parties.

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[72] Kvist, J., "Does EU Enlargement Start a Race to the Bottom? Strategic Interactions Among EU Member States in Social Policy," *Journal of European Social Policy,* 14, 2004, 301-318.

[73] Ferrera, Maurisio, *The Boundaries of Welfare; European Integration and the New Spatial Politics of Social Protection*, Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 2005.

IV g. Human Rights and Poverty

There are links between the denial of human rights and the persistence of poverty. The rights-based approach to poverty-elimination stipulates that every human being on this earth has an equal right to live a life of dignity and to develop his/her full abilities and participate in his/her development. National constitutions of western European states guarantee the right to equality and liberty as part of the basic civil and political rights. The legal framework necessary in order to enforce these rights for all citizens irrespective of class, gender, or any other status is provided to some extent. The fundamental right to life is generally interpreted, again to varying degrees, to include social and economic rights through laws or progressive judicial decisions. The western European states are held responsible for promoting human rights and held accountable towards their citizens in guaranteeing basic service delivery. No class, social group or individual may be excluded "from access to the basic resources that sustain life, such as land, forests, water or government entitlements" of any kind.[74] The right to information is also the democratic right of every citizen to ensure better and transparent governance as well as to check corruption in public life. There should be support for "the rise of non-governmental organizations" and "civil society groups both at the meso- and micro-levels."[75] For example, an international NGO such as "Action Aid" has in recent years changed its analysis and understanding of poverty to one that sees it as a result of processes of marginalization and exclusion.

Sen says that individuals should "not be seen as passive recipients of the benefits of development programmes. With adequate social opportunities, individuals can effectively shape their own destiny and help each other."[76] By empowering the socially marginalized and vulnerable, a service delivery approach can be combined with a rights-based approach. "Village-level organizations" and "community-level volunteers" can work for the basic rights of the vulnerable. In the example of India, "grain bank support, emergency medical support, membership of credit groups and livelihood support" were given in this way.[77]

Children are recognized as active participants in society. Acceptance of their competencies and their social and economic contributions have opened new perspectives on children and their roles in society. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (adopted by the UN in 1989, and the most widely ratified human rights Convention in the world) brought this new thinking and research about children, asserted children's civil rights and created a profound impact on child welfare programmes and organizations. According to CRC, every child has the right to information, to express his/her views, be involved in decisions affecting him/her and form or join associations. Children have the right to participate in the family, in schools, child welfare institutions, orpanages, the media, in the community and at national and international levels. Participation is a process that builds new relationships between children and adults. All people, whether child or adult, "need to be active partners in all that the state and other agencies do in relation to people's lives."[78] The state is expected to involve first "the recognition, protection and effective enforcement of people's entitlements". Then the state would "acknowledge, create, nurture, provide resources for, and actively support, all efforts by the people and their organizations for the solution of their own problems."[79]

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[74] Supriya Akerkar, "Rights, development and democracy: a perspective from India," 144-155, *Reinventing Development; Translating Rights-Based Approaches from Theory into Practice*, Eds. Faul Gready and Jonathan Ensor, Zed Books, London, U.K., 2005, 144.
[75] *Ibid.* 145.
[76] Amartya Sen, "Development as Freedom," 661-674, *International Journal of Health Services*, 30, 2000, ije.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/30/4/907-a; Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York: Knopf, 1999, 11.
[77] Supriya Akerkar, "Rights, development and democracy: a perspective from India," 144-155, *Reinventing Development; Translating Rights-Based Approaches from Theory into Practice*, Eds. Faul Gready and Jonathan Ensor, Zed Books, London, U.K., 2005, 154.
[78] Harsh Mander, "Rights as Struggle - towards a more just and humane world," 233-253, *Reinventing Development; Translating Rights-Based Approaches from Theory into Practice*, Eds. Faul Gready and Jonathan Ensor, Zed Books, London, U.K., 2005, 251.
[79] *Ibid.*. 251.

V. Poverty in Turkey: an Example/Model in the Region

The Turkish Republic ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as recently as the beginning of 2003. Article 11 makes explicit reference to poverty as it speaks of the "right to an adequate standard of living, and to be free from hunger." It obliges state parties to provide "programmes to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food; disseminating knowledge of principles of nutrition; measures to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources; equitable distribution of world food supplies." Article 12 is on the "right to health; steps to be taken for the healthy development of the child, improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene; and Article 15 is on the "right to enjoyment of the benefits of scientific progress and its application." These all resound clearly as factors for eradicating poverty.[80]

According to Human Development Index estimates, Turkey ranks eigthy fourth (in "Medium Development") among the 177 countries, and exhibits a high level of economic inequality.[81] In alleviating poverty, there is a strong reliance on the family and inter-generational solidarity. The $ 1-a-day poverty line, an internationally accepted standard for absolute poverty, gives a very low poverty rate for Turkey, including a large number of 'working poor.'

As political tradition, statism is strong in Turkey and so are the particularistic-clientelistic forms of social organization. On the other hand, there is weakness in democratic governance, contractual relations, collective solidarity, and active civil society. These historical features significantly influence social stratification, inequalities, and poverty phenomena. Thus, implicit processes of revenue creation and distribution emerge. These constitute a deficient substitute for the welfare state; thus, poverty phenomena remain invisible.

In Turkey, thirty-five percent of the population lives in villages and gains its livelihood from agriculture. Poverty is most widespread in the rural areas. Public concern over poverty started only after the 1990s in Turkey, and the State Planning Organization conducted some research in 1996. Socio-economic causes of poverty in agrarian societies are quite similar for most of the SEMCs. Access to resources such as fertile and/or irrigated land and a well-established rural credit system is not adequate. Rural households are either small landowners whose produce is well below minimum subsistence level, or they are agricultural wage workers employed under inadequate and unhygienic conditions, often in places that are far from their homes. Households are crowded with many dependants. Size of plots are diminishing due to traditional inheritance rights (dividing land among married sons). There is lack of investment and unbalanced growth. Irrigation is not done properly and the agricultural production system depends upon weather conditions. There is also low productivity from exhausted land. Debts are increasing due to high interest rates paid to money-lenders. All these factors can lead to land alienation, proletarianization and urban migration.[82]

Predominantly, there is a lack of organizational initiatives by the poor: they are inefficient in the formation of associations to voice their concerns about their limited opportunities or life chances. Poverty is also a political participation problem in the rural areas. The agrarian poor cannot become an effective pressure group, due to limited communications and lack of information.

What is the level of social spending by government? What is the extent and nature of poverty alleviation programmes in the country? According to the World Bank Report of 2000, neither the state nor civil society or inter-family relations contribute to strong safety nets in Turkey. Intra-family support systems, due to predominance of extended families, play a greater role in poverty alleviation than the state or civil society contributions can provide for the reduction of poverty. Since family plays a significant role, patriarchal structures predominate in social life.[83] Highly structured, traditional extended families lead to dense patterns

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[80] U.N. 1966, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966, entry into force 3 January 1976, in accordance with article 27, www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_cescr.htm.

[81] United Nations Human Development Report 2007-2008, Table 1, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_en_indicator_tables.pdf.

[82] Das, R.J., "Poverty and Agrarian Social Structure - a Case Study in Rural India," *Dialectical Anthropology*, 20, 1995, 169-192.

[83] Deniz Kandiyoti, "Poverty in Transition: An Ethnographic Critique of Household Surveys in Post-Soviet Central Asia," 1998. http://books.google.com.

of kin relationships. The family is a major unit for the socialization of the individual. The family determines the individual's educational, occupational, and marital attainment. Family is bounding and restricts opportunities, creativity, and ways of expressing individuality. Family loyalty is important. Family is the basis of guaranteed social status within society. Open conflict between generations is not tolerated, even within the urban nuclear family of the present day. The city poses great dangers especially for the member of the recently immigrated rural family. Reciprocal survival strategies between individuals and families is an important means of coping with poverty in Turkey. The volume of family/kin transfers is larger than welfare state provisions.

The majority of the poor are not covered by medical insurance schemes; nor are they covered by any pension schemes, since health care and pension programmes depend on having a job in the formal sector. Old-age assistance and the 'Green Card' scheme are two major government programmes that are directed towards the poor, by the Turkish Ministry of Health. But these programs have had a minimal effect on the reduction of poverty.[84]

Approximately fifty-five percent of the population (about 23 million) is employed in the formal sectors and pays contributions to schemes such as Civil Servants Retirement Fund, Social Insurance Institution for workers and employees, and 'Bağ-Kur' which covers the self-employed. These schemes have been providing both retirement benefits and health care coverage for their members over the last 60, 50 and 40 years respectively. Recently, an overhaul of the formerly divided social assistance organization has taken place, so that a single Social Aid and Service Institution has been created and covers all employed persons and their families, though with a great deal of yet unsolved legal and practical problems. One such problem emanates from a clause in the Turkish Constitution that stipulates a separate social protection scheme for civil servants.

From the beginning of the Turkish Republic in the early 1920s, the state was assumed to be responsible for the provision of social and health services for civil servants and military personnel. It was counted among the main responsibilities of the state to develop Western-type institutional and legal frameworks for welfare, which included health insurance, pensions, annual paid holiday leave of up to a month, and job security. Even the first Constitution of the Republic, enacted in 1924, had provisions on the social responsibilities of the state. There had been policies started in the late Ottoman Empire which brought coverage and help for orphans ('Darülşafaka'), widows, the disabled, senior citizens ('Darülaceze'), nursing home residents and victims of natural disasters. 'Undeserving poor' were excluded from social policy. These institutions continue to the present day.

In the mid-1940s, there was a reorganization in the implementation of social security measures. The Social Insurance Institution ('SSK') was established in 1945 for wage workers in the formal sector. Social security schemes are based on the payment of contributions by both employers and employees, which are then paid back as retirment pensions and helth coverage for employees and dependent family members throughout their lives. The system was highly fragmented in terms of coverage, as there was great variation according to employment status.[85] Behind the social policy schemes, the ultimate aim of social policy regulation initially was to create social solidarity and to eliminate class differences. It was the idea of a classless society and the creation of a powerful central authority.

From the 1950s on, due to economic transformations in agriculture, Turkish society experienced massive rural-to-urban migration. It was the re-ordering of both the international and domestic economic systems under the principles of market liberalization. Introduction of new technologies and mechanization caused the movement of labour to towns and cities in search for new means of survival. Thus, in addition to the rural areas, absolute and relative poverty prevails primarily in the squatter housing areas ('gecekondu') surrounding the urban centres. Roughly seventy percent of the population of the metropolitan areas of Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir (or thirty four percent of the whole urban population in Turkey) lives in

[84] Sibel Kalaycıoglu, "Dynamics of poverty in Turkey; gender, rural/urban poverty, social networks and reciprocal survival strategies," 218-247, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, New York: Zed Books, CROP, 2006, 221-222.

[85] Sibel Kalaycıoglu, "Dynamics of poverty in Turkey; gender, rural/urban poverty, social networks and reciprocal survival strategies," 218-247, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, New York: Zed Books, 2006, 231.

'gecekondu' areas.[86] Squatter housing areas are densely populated and have limited access to major infrastructural facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, sewerage, public transportation, roads, electricity and gas pipelines. Municipalities with limited funds are unable to cope with the problems of these areas.

The Turkish economy and administration entered a 'Planned Period' after 1960, with the establishment of the State Planning Organisation. Welfare policies started to take place in five-year plans, with the goal of increasing the quality of life and welfare of those employed in the formal sectors. The social security system was reformed through three planning periods in order to realize fair distribution of income in the country. The self-employed had not been included in the welfare policies of the state; thus, a social insurance scheme was created for the self-employed with the establishment of the social insurance fund, 'Bağkur,' in 1972. The 'deserving poor' under the five-year plans included children without parents, elderly people, prisoners, disabled people, and children with learning difficulties.

The 1960's plan aimed to put an end to fragmentation; however, state assistance to the poor remained at a very unsatisfactory level. Moreover, rural-to-urban migration kept accentuating severely the social inequalities lived in the metropolis. The needs of elderly people increased in time, due to increasing industrialization, urbanization and changes in the extended family structure. For the first time in 1977, the state introduced a social assistance scheme for the elderly poor, including a small benefit payment and free health coverage for those over sixty-five years old, who did not have any kind of social security or family support.

The 1980s in Turkey started with a military intervention, which soon ushered in a new political regime that concentrated on the creation of a 'regulating' state, rather than a 'responsible' state with respect to the social security of its citizens. The new Constitution, which was prepared under the auspices of the military, established the priority of the state over that of civil society or the individual. Structural adjustment programmes accompanied neo-liberal policy principles. A fund was created to provide free medical care for the poor ('Fak Fuk Fonu'). It took nearly a decade before the 'Green Card Programme' could come to life in 1991. It provided the poor with some degree of access to health care.

Another assistance fund for the 'deserving poor' was created in 1986 and administered by the prime minister's department. The Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Fund (SSF) for the first time took the family as the basic unit and the object of social assistance. The World Bank in the late 1990s financed the Fund's restructured social assistance package, and reached over four million beneficiaries.[87] This initiative also constituted the first attempt at governance of welfare assistance at the local level, as there were regional SSF offices and local councils were formed at each sub-province.

The Turkish welfare system is still limited to those who are in the formal job market. Those working in agriculture have a special scheme under 'Bağkur'; however, in casual and seasonal jobs, marginal or informal sector jobs and in homeworking and pieceworking, there is no coverage of welfare. Unemployment benefits for permanent workers have recently been introduced, but this scheme includes too many restrictive clauses.

Household Budget Research Results show income inequalities in the population, with the lowest twenty percent of the population receiving five percent of the total income; and the 'highest' twenty percent receiving more than fifty percent of the total income. This is a very clear indicator of poverty. The State Institute of Statistics published a report, "Poverty Research Results 2002," which contained official figures for the 'poverty line' and the 'hunger line' and defined some major indicators of absolute and relative poverty. According to this report, the percentage of the population below the poverty line (defined as not being able to obtain food and non-food necessities) was twenty-seven percent, while the proportion of the population below the hunger line (defined as not being able to obtain basic food needs) was 1.4 percent. The report defined 'poverty' as not having access to basic human needs. The factors found to affect poverty were

[86] Alpar, İ.and S.Yener 1991, *Gecekondu Araştırması* [*Gecekondu Research*], Ankara: State Planning Organization, 1991; Erman, Tahire, "Gecekondu Çalışmalarında 'Öteki' Olarak Gecekondulu Kurguları", *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, Thematic Issue N°1, No. 1, 2004. Gecekondu, URL: http://www.ejts.org/document85.html.

[87] World Bank 2000. Turkey: Economic Reforms, Living Standards and Social Welfare Study, Washington, DC: World Bank.

household size (poverty ratio increases in parallel with household size); educational attainment (the higher the level of education, the less is poverty risk, both in urban and rural areas); and employment status.

There are other studies that determine absolute poverty lines for each of Turkey's seven geographic regions.[88] Erdogan took the lowest consumption spending on food and calorie intake as the poverty line. By using these criteria, he calculated inter-regional and intra-regional differences in poverty in Turkey.

In 2001, the SPO evaluated for the first time all these studies and poverty scales in the Eighth 5-year Development Plan.[89] The evaluation study of SPO stated that eight percent of the total population lives below the poverty line; twenty-four percent lives at risk of poverty. A warning was issued: the proportion of those at risk of poverty was increasing dramatically, due to growing urbanization, high inflation, migration, unequal distribution of income, and the extended family's decreasing capacity to act as the main welfare provider.

Despite admitting increased demand for social assistance programmes, the Five-Year Plan failed to trigger effective assistance mechanisms; it only helped to raise awareness on poverty.

Among the concepts over which poverty is being discussed, 'relative poverty' as a primary concept has gained good ground in time on the basis of its human rights approach. There is a 'culture of poverty' which points to some sections of the population who may be suffering social and cultural discrimination, resulting in their exclusion from work or hindering access to welfare benefits as well as the enjoyment of social rights. 'Poverty cycle of households' is yet another concept, similar to culture of poverty. It claims that there is a close association between various forms of deprivation and poverty; vicious cycle of deprived households; unemployment or employment of a household's main breadwinner in a low-wage job brings about unstabe family relations and problems with child-raising conditions; this creates obstacles for children to gain a good-quality education. Household poverty is thus transmitted on to the next generation.

VI. In Conclusion: Rights-Based Approach to Poverty

Mediterranean countries must strengthen their regional affiliations independently, as well as in relation to the EU, and try to adopt anti-poverty measures and redistributive social transfer schemes from the welfare model in the EU. "This model would be one introducing substantial redistributive social services and social security, complemented by public employment creation schemes and, through regional association and international development programmes, much higher levels of overseas aid."[90]

A regional commitment to social policy, as in the *White Paper on European Social Policy: A Way Forward for the Union*, would help the Mediterranean region to share the core values such as 'democracy and individual rights, free collective bargaining, the market economy, equal opportunity for all and social welfare, and solidarity.'[91] There should be efforts like in the EU to develop a job replacement and creation strategy in both the public and the private sectors; an expansion strategy for small businesses; a basic income strategy to bring together a minimum wage and a minimum level of benefit in coordinated form; an NGO strategy to promote volunteer public service and environmental conservation, and improvement activities for particular groups of the population.[92]

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[88] Erdoğan, G., "*The Poverty Line among Different Regions of Turkey,"* Study on poverty conducted by the SPO and the SIS, Türkiye'de Bölge Ayrımında Yoksulluk Sınırı Üzerine bir Çalışma, Ankara: State Institute of Statistics, 1996; Dansuk, E., "*Türkiye'de Yoksulluğun ölçülmesi ve Sosyo-Ekonomik Yapılarla İlişkisi (Measurement of Poverty in Turkey and its Relation with Socio-Economic Structures*), Publication No. 2472, Ankara: DPT (SIS), 1997.

[89] SPO 2001, Gelir Dağılımının İyileştirilmesi ve Yoksullukla Mücadele [Improving Income Distribution and the Fight Against Poverty], Special Commission Report, Ankara: SPO.

[90] Peter Townsend, "Concluding Commentary: Poverty in the Mediterranean region - Applying a human rights strategy," 374-398, *Poverty and Social Deprivation in the Mediterranean; Trends, Policies and Welfare Prospects in the New Millennium,* Eds. M. Petmesidou and C. Papatheodorou, New York: Zed Books, 2006, 384.

[91] European Commission 1999, A Concerted Strategy for Modernising Social Protection, Brussels [COM(1999)347 final], ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_protection/docs/com99-347_en.pdf;europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c10618.htm.

[92] Townsend, P., "The Future World of Work," Proceedings of the European Social Policy Forum 98, 24-26 June, Brussels: European Commission, 1998.

We have seen how the European integration can be understood as a large-scale operation of boundary redrawing. European integration has redrawn the territorial boundaries of national welfare states, and imposed new direct and indirect constraints on its internal membership boundaries. Bounding for social interaction and political production takes a long time to unfold. Boundary formations are "slow moving causal processes."[93]

The concept of 'space' can be used to designate not only a geographical area but also a membership area; a sphere of social interaction in which insiders share some common traits or are subject to a common set of norms and rules. Welfare functional schemes could be extended over such a similar membership space in the SEMCs, or a bundle of membership spaces, with pensions, health care, unemployment, and social assistance as different 'layers,' 'tiers,' or 'pillars' of provision. In this case, national actors such as workers, employers, insurance companies can complain against their governments on some issues of social security.

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[93] Pierson, P., *Politics in Time, History, Institutions and Social Analysis*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 2004.

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WOMEN AND POVERTY

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Introduction

Poverty is not just the absence of income and physical resources, but it is also exclusion from participation in society, lack of power, and unequal distribution of resources. Poverty can be described as the impossibility of meeting a person's minimum biological, social, spiritual and cultural requirements. It may also be defined as the share of persons with an income below 60% of national median income while income is defined as the household's total disposable income divided and attributed to each household member. This latter definition should be revisited as it only highlights the overt causes of poverty and underestimates the level of poverty of women and the impact of that poverty. The definition assumes that household resources are shared equally within the family but it can be argued that poverty is experienced at an individual level and should be analysed at that level if the gender dimension is to be understood. There is an implicit assumption that women have a man's income to fall back on. This assumption, which is out of touch with the reality of today's society, is a key reason for the greater risk of poverty faced by women.

Poverty has various causes, including structural ones. Poverty is a complex, multidimensional problem, with origins in both the national and international domains. Poverty can also be caused by violations of human rights, particularly women's human right to non-discrimination.

More than 1 billion people in the world today, the great majority of whom are women, live in unacceptable conditions of poverty, mostly in the developing countries. As Malta faces an influx of immigrants mostly from Africa, we must be aware of situations affecting these people in their country, their traditions and culture, and so on etc., so that we may not make the same mistakes that other countries have committed. A large number of migrants have fallen victim to poverty for several reasons (e.g. the language barrier which prevents them from accessing well-paid jobs, discrimination, low levels of education, various causes leading them to take up illegal or low-wage jobs, etc.). Most of these are women, a large number of whom have children and may have lost their spouse or have their husband trapped in another country. Hence this paper will also refer to the African situation in some instances.

Women may face difficult situations in which they are particularly exposed to poverty, for instance when they are young and pregnant or lacking a professional qualification, or divorced or at retirement age, when their contribution in terms of housework is not recognised.

The risk and possibility for households led by women to be in poverty are by one third greater than for other households. In fact, large families and single mothers appear to be in the same situation. One significant trend has been the increased poverty of women, the extent of which varies from region to region. The gender disparities in economic power-sharing are also an important contributing factor to the poverty of women.

Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure a sustainable livelihood; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increasing morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterised by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social and cultural life.

Poverty occurs in all countries - as mass poverty in many developing countries, and as pockets of poverty amidst wealth in developed countries. Poverty may be caused by an economic recession which results in loss of livelihood or by disaster or conflict. There is also the poverty of low-wage workers and the utter destitution of people who fall outside family support systems, social institutions and safety nets. Poverty rates vary by age group among women, with the youngest women aged 18 to 24 years reporting a poverty rate of 19.7%. The lowest poverty rate, 8.9%, was found among women aged 45 to 64. The poverty rate increases to 10.6% for women aged 65 to 74 and to 14.3% for women aged 75 years and older.

1. Social Exclusion

Research shows that women who face multiple discrimination, e.g. older women, women belonging to ethnic minorities or migrant groups, women with disabilities, and other such, are at even higher risk of social exclusion and poverty. According to a Eurobarometer Report on discrimination in the EU in January 2007, discrimination on the basis of gender is perceived by an average of 40% of the population ranging from 56%n in Italy to 21% in Germany and Latvia and 26% in Ireland.

A major solution to this problem would be to tackle social exclusion and poverty together. The EU looks at four dimensions of social inclusion - financial means, employment, health and education. Equality between women and men is not included as an overarching objective of its strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion.

There are two approaches to social inclusion: the EU approach, which was mainly aimed at co-ordinating member states' social policies, and the Council of Europe approach, which seeks to influence grassroots action through ethical and solidarity-based initiatives. Social protection is one of the important means of fighting poverty and social exclusion. The EU strategy focuses on three themes - social inclusion policies, reform of the pension system and reform of healthcare systems; gender equality is not included. Gender inequality hinders poverty reduction and endangers the prospects of economic and human development. The problems may be divided into three main groups: gender division of labour (resulting in higher paid jobs for men), inequality in resource access and disposal and women's limited powers in defence.

Most policies addressing poverty and social exclusion remain within the competence of each EU state but under Articles 136 and 137 EC of the Treaty, the EU has an active role in supporting and complementing the activities of Member States in order to combat social exclusion. Article 13 of the Treaty gives the EU competence to take actions, to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

In 2001, 15% of the EU population were living at risk of poverty[1], 9% of whom lived persistently on low relative income. Generally speaking, this affects women to a significantly greater degree.

2. Demographic Changes and their Effects

Developments in household structures are changing. There are fewer and later marriages, more marital breakdowns and also a fall in the number of couples with children. These developments have led to a trend towards smaller households, across all age ranges.

2.1 Poor Households

Women have a higher incidence of poverty than men and their poverty is on the increase. Women are generally at greater risk of living in a poor household: in 2001, 16% of women aged 16 and over had an income below the threshold (when compared to 14% in the case of their male counterparts[2]). The risk of poverty is highest among single parent households (85% of which are headed by women) especially if they are females aged 18 or under.

2.2 Social Welfare and Pensioners

In too many countries, social welfare systems do not take sufficient account of the specific conditions of women living in poverty, and there is a tendency to scale back the services provided by such systems. The risk of falling into poverty is greater for women than for men, particularly in old age, where social security systems are based on the principle of continuous remunerated employment. In some cases, women do not fulfil this requirement because of interruptions in their work, due to the unbalanced distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work. Moreover, older women also face greater obstacles to labour-market re-entry.

[1] Indicators of poverty risk derived from European Community Household Survey.
[2] Eurostat 2001.

People aged 65 and over represent 16% of the total population and life expectancy is growing; over the next 12 years, the number of people aged over 80 will rise by almost 50%[3]. People aged 65 and over (two-thirds of whom are women) suffer from relatively high risk of poverty. Single female pensioners, especially those over 80 or without an occupational pension, have a much higher poverty rate. A key reason for this is that the older a pensioner becomes, the greater are his/her expenses, mainly relating to increased healthcare costs with regards to disability and mobility needs. Poor health can be both a consequence of and a reason for poverty. The poor people lack means to make contributions (medical services, food, clean water, sufficient sanitary and hygienic conditions).

Women's disadvantages in the labour market and the resultant pay gap extend into retirement. The pension model was, in many countries, developed from a male perspective, discriminating against women since many take career breaks, work in non-standard employment or have periods of unpaid work. Hence many face disadvantages in building up the necessary rights and savings to enjoy security in older age. Two-thirds of pensioners are women and their average income is 53% that of a man. Therefore, older women, including widows and divorcees, make up the poorest pensioners. This can have an impact on their health, housing and quality of life.

The old-age pension system is crucial for poverty reduction and hence it is important to ensure that the conditions of entitlement to old-age pension schemes enable women to have sufficient retirement pensions, especially by compensating for career breaks due to childcare and the care of elderly people. This may be done by the introduction of a minimum retirement pension for persons aged over 60 who have paid insufficient or no contributions. There should also be the elimination of sanctions which are applied by many pension schemes towards employees with working activity in the so-called ' flexible jobs' such as part-time, temporary or agency, domestic or distance work. The long-term goal should be the individualisation of pensions, hence ensuring gender quality.

3. Employment

Employment is seen as a key factor for social inclusion and is considered the single most effective route out of poverty, not only because it generates income but also because it can promote social participation and personal development. The participation of women in the labour market is seen as essential for a more competitive and dynamic European economy. In fact, the objective is to have a female employment rate of 60% by 2010. Malta is, till 2007, far from reaching this target.

This does not mean that women in paid labour will not be free from the risk of poverty. This is because the participation of women is accompanied by important difficulties, such as high unemployment rates, difficulties in balancing domestic and work responsibilities, the prevalence of precarious forms of employment with limited social protection and the gender pay gap.

Part-time manual work is the most disadvantaged employment category for women, more so than other part-time and manual full-time jobs, because these women have very low levels of education. Over thirty years after the 1975 Directive on Equal Pay was established, European women still earn, on average, 15% less than men[4]. This discrepancy is much wider in certain countries, reaching up to 33% in some cases. According to Eurofound, the gender pay gap in the EU in 2004/2005 was 82.2 (i.e. women's pay on average was 82.2% of men's for the same work). The gap for women in Ireland was 86.7 in 2005 and more than half of those earning less than the minimum wage were women.

Lack of childcare facilities and financial support to pay for childcare is one of the biggest barriers to women's participation in employment, education and training. Due to the barriers they face in entering the labour market, women encounter additional obstacles in exiting poverty and are then faced with social welfare dependency or living on low pay.

Those with poor educational qualifications, undeclared workers, minorities or migrants with little or no independent legal status are particularly at risk of poverty since the jobs they have tend to be low paying and

[3] Joint report by the Commission and the Council on social inclusion - 5 March 2004.
[4] Eurostat 2007.

low status with no job security and are non-pensionable. In extreme cases, women falling into these categories face the risk of trafficking, prostitution and violence.

3.1 The Cost of Childbearing and Domestic Responsibilities to Women

According to Becker and Posner[5], the changes happening in household structures can largely be explained in economic terms. The increase in women's financial independence through gainful employment means that there is a move from the type of marriage where the male is the breadwinner and the woman is the dependant to marriages in which there is more partnership.

There is also an increase in the opportunity costs of childbearing: the higher a woman's income and job status is, the more she gives up, in terms of potential career progression and income, if she leaves the labour force, whether temporarily or permanently, to have children. Women spend disproportionately more time than men in caring for their children, hence breaking from work for some part of their life. In the case of men, however, the pattern has generally been a continuous and full-time labour market attachment from leaving school till retirement. The break from work can have a detrimental effect on earnings, pension entitlement and may mean shorter job tenure, less accumulated experience and less access to training. Pay increases are often given only to those in long-term, continuous employment.

Women remain unpaid for their work in the home. Even for the enormous number of women who are in paid employment, shopping, care of the elderly and childcare is still perceived as their responsibility as men do less than 40% of all domestic work and only 25 - 35% of childcare work[6]. This unpaid work is not systematically recorded in national statistics, which means it is invisible to policy makers.

While poverty affects households as a whole, because of the gender division of labour and responsibilities for household welfare, women bear a disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity. Poverty is particularly acute for women living in rural households.

3.2 Level of Education of Women

Despite progress in education, girls still face discrimination because of ingrained cultural attitudes, early marriages, pregnancies, and inadequate gender-biased educational materials.

Two-thirds of the 960 million illiterate adults in the world are women and their numbers are on the increase even in some developed countries. The relationship between women's education and such areas as personal and family health, nutrition and even child survival has been demonstrated by several studies.

Lengthy breaks for childcare reasons are more likely in women with low educational qualifications. Female graduates are more likely to take only their maternity leave and pay for childcare; women with qualifications are more likely to go back to work when their child returns to school. Hence there is a direct link between the level of education of women and the socio-economic conditions of their life. Hence there should be more promotion of the enlargement of women's opportunities through education, giving a boomerang effect of women's education on healthcare and the upbringing of future generations.

However, in many developed countries, where the level of general education and professional training of women and men are similar and where systems of protection against discrimination are available, in some sectors the economic transformations of the past decade have strongly increased either the unemployment of women or the precarious nature of their employment. The proportion of women among the poor has consequently increased. In countries with a high level of school enrolment of girls, those who leave the educational system the earliest, without any qualification, are amongst the most vulnerable in the labour market.

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[5] "The Sexual Revolution", Gary Becker and Richard Posner, 10 April 2005. http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/archives/2005/04/index.html.

[6] How Europeans spend their time, Eurostat 1998-2002.

3.3 Single Parents

In recent years, there has been a phenomenal rise in the number of children aged 0 to 14 living with one parent (6% in 1990 compared with 10% in 2000), resulting from the rise in the number of marital and relationship breakdowns and in unplanned pregnancies. Data shows that single parents have a particular risk of suffering from poverty.

Women in female-headed households with no spouse experience higher rates of poverty (24.4%) than women in married-couple families (5.2%) and men in male-headed households (8.8%). 85% of single parents are women and hence this can be considered as a gender-specific risk of poverty. This is mostly attributable to low participation in the work force (50% of single mothers are employed compared with 68% of married women[7]). Studies have suggested that lack of affordable childcare is not the only barrier to work for single parents. Other barriers are a lack of marketable qualifications[8], living in areas lacking labour demand, ill-health or disability of someone in their household and low morale due to severe hardship.

Many single parents must look after children themselves and hence seek jobs with hours which coincide with those of their children's schooling to enable them to spend as much time with their children as possible. As a result, many settle for precarious, low-paid jobs with a lower level of social protection.

Migration and consequent changes in family structures have placed additional burdens on women, especially those who provide for several dependants.

Teenage parents are more likely than their peers to be living in poverty and unemployment and have difficulty escaping mainly due to lack of education. 90% of teenage parents receive welfare support and teenage mothers are more likely than other single mothers to rely on benefits alone and to be on benefits for longer spells.

4. Criminal Justice

Women are a minority of those accused or convicted or criminal offences, representing around one in five known offenders and only 6% of the prison population. Research indicates[9] that a high proportion of women sent to prison have no financial security prior to their imprisonment, have either never worked or have only worked in low-paid jobs with no job security, have no secure accommodation, have very little education and have been victims of either physical and/or sexual violence from family members or non-family male perpetrators. Hence women's imprisonment further excludes those who are already socially excluded. Research shows that it is difficult for prisons alone to be expected to provide the majority of prisoners with effective training, sustainable drugs rehabilitation, emotional support or marketable skills.

Foreign women and women from minority groups are doubly discriminated against and, as a result, there is a disproportionately high ratio of them within the criminal justice system.

5. Abuse against Women

5.1 Trafficking and Prostitution of Women and Children

Trafficking in women and children is a consequence of structured gender inequality and is a form of violence. Trafficking thrives on poverty and victims suffer from multiple forms of poverty resulting in forced labour, sex slavery, physical and mental health problems, social exclusion among others. The root causes of trafficking include poverty, discrimination, racism, patriarchal structures, violence against women, fundamentalisms, gender inequality, money laundering, corruption, political instability, conflict and uncontrolled zones, barriers and disparities between countries.

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[7] Eurostat 2003.

[8] Finch et al. (1999): New Deal for Lone Parents: Learning From the Prototype Areas. DSS Research Report 92. Leeds: CDS.

[9] Comparative Report based on National Reports' Fieldwork Findings prepared by the Central European University Team.

In many countries, prostitution is forced underground. As a consequence, organised crime becomes involved; prostitutes become dependent on pimps and procurers and are at the total mercy of their clients who may demand unsafe sexual practices. This is important from a public health point of view in an era of resurging STDs and HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In many countries, having paid sex itself is not prohibited, but offering paid sex is. What is particularly hypocritical is that, even where prostitutes are sanctioned, clients often are not. This prosecution is hence gender-specific as the victims are mostly female prostitutes.

Prostitution is, in some countries, considered as acceptable if the person is offering his/her services of their own free choice. However, child prostitution can never be voluntary, as children do not have the capacity to consent to prostitution. Following the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are defined as anyone under the age of eighteen. A zero-tolerance approach is recommended based on prevention, protection of victims, and prosecution of clients.

5.2 Violence against Women

Gender-based violence is a major health and human rights concern and exists in a culture of silence and denial of the seriousness of the health consequences of abuse at every level of society.

In all societies, to a greater or lesser degree, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cuts across lines of income, class and culture. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms[10].

Violence against women is increasingly recognized by the international community as a violation of women's rights as human beings. Women's lives and potential continue to be endangered by violence that is directed at them simply because they are women. Violence against women exists across all socio-economic groups throughout the world, and includes a wide range of violations of women's human rights, such as trafficking in women and girls, rape, wife abuse, sexual abuse of children and harmful practices and traditions that irreparably damage girls' and women's reproductive and sexual health.

6. Women and Economy

In the past decade, the number of women living in poverty has increased disproportionately to the number of men, particularly in the developing countries. The feminization of poverty has also recently become a significant problem in the countries with economies in transition as a short-term consequence of the process of political, economic and social transformation. In addition to economic factors, the rigidity of socially ascribed gender roles and women's limited access to power, education, training and productive resources as well as other emerging factors that may lead to insecurity for families are also responsible. The failure to adequately mainstream a gender perspective in all economic analysis and planning and to address the structural causes of poverty is also a contributing factor.

Women contribute to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace. The empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty.

Women's poverty is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources, including credit, land ownership and inheritance, lack of access to education and support services and their minimal participation in the decision-making process. Poverty can also force women into situations in which they are vulnerable to sexual exploitation. The release of women's productive potential is pivotal to breaking the cycle of poverty so that women can share fully in the benefits of development and in the products of their own labour.
Not only do women bear a disproportionate burden of the world's poverty, but in some cases, globalization has widened the gap, with women losing more than their share of jobs, benefits and labour rights. From tax

[10] Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 112.

systems to trade regimes, however, economic policies and institutions still mostly fail to take gender disparities into account. Too few seats at the tables where economic decisions are made, women themselves have little chance of rectifying the deepening of existing inequalities.

7. Health

Women have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Good health is essential to leading a productive and fulfilling life, and the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment. However, health and well-being elude the majority of women.[11]

Tackling female health would not only save millions of lives but reduce global poverty. If women are healthy then they can jump-start the life of their family and the economy. When women are educated, healthy and employed, and able to make decisions about childbearing and reproductive life, everyone benefits. Improving access to and availability of quality services is imperative to the reproductive and sexual health and rights of women. In no other area of health are the disparities between rich and poor so wide and the tragic consequences so utterly immoral as in women's reproductive health.

7.1 Women and Reproductive Health

Women bear the burden of ill-health from reproductive causes much more than men, and maternal mortality rates are still unacceptably high in many regions of the world. Yet most of these tragedies can be avoided if women and men have access to good-quality, affordable reproductive health services.

Experts agree that the majority of maternal deaths are preventable through family planning to reduce unintended pregnancies, skilled attendance at all deliveries and timely emergency obstetric care in all cases where complications arise. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 99% of maternal deaths are preventable yet every minute a woman dies from pregnancy-related causes. An estimated 529,000 women died from complications of pregnancy and childbirth in 2000, virtually all in developing countries. For every woman who dies, roughly 20 more suffer serious injury or disability - between 8 million and 20 million a year. This loss impacts not only on the family and society, but also on the economy.

One of the eight Millennium Development Goals set by world experts in 2000 was to reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio by 2015. The World Health Organization has already warned that unless concerted efforts are undertaken to meet global healthcare goals, the 2015 deadline set by the governments of the world will be missed. Its World Health Report 2005 said that being poor or being a woman was often a reason for being discriminated against. In some developed countries, whether you are covered by health insurance or not determines whether you actually receive prompt and adequate healthcare or not. UNFPA states that investment in reproductive health and gender equality could spur growth and sustainable development. Since the high levels of maternal morbidity and mortality are to a great extent due to existing inequalities between men and women, the empowerment of women is a necessary key to addressing this problem.

It is important to improve each nation's ability to deliver and manage good-quality reproductive health information and services by increasing adults' and youth's access to these services, training service providers, standardizing guidelines, providing basic medical equipment and upgrading existing facilities.

Pregnancy must be seen in the context of a woman's entire existence, and reducing maternal mortality demands an integrated approach - including increasing society's commitment to safe motherhood, improving health care and women's access to it and committing to meeting the special needs of girls and women throughout their lives. Death from pregnancy or childbirth is a violation of reproductive rights and a social injustice that should be addressed through legal, political and health systems in all countries.

The international community is recognizing more and more that young people, especially girls, are vulnerable and at risk for reproductive and sexual health problems. Ignorance, lack of power in gender

[11] Beijing Platform for Action, paragraphs 89 and 92.

relations, the scarcity of reproductive health services due to societal disapproval and lack of financing, negative provider attitudes and vulnerability to sexual abuse and violence are common dangers. Teenage mothers and their babies are likelier to get sick or die than mature women and their children. And adolescent pregnancies, childbearing and abortions can short-circuit young women's economic and educational opportunities.

Men play an important role in safeguarding the sexual and reproductive health of the women in their lives. They also have reproductive health needs of their own that should be met. The partnership of women and men in all areas of family responsibility should be promoted, especially men's shared responsibility for, and active involvement in responsible parenthood, sexual and reproductive health, the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, shared control of and contribution to family income, children's education and health and valuing children of both sexes equally.

7.2 HIV/AIDS

Worldwide, young women aged 15 to 24 are 1.6 times as likely as young men to be HIV positive. Women are rapidly reaching and surpassing the numbers of men infected with HIV. Of the 32.4 million adults infected as of 1999, 14.8 million were women. In Africa, HIV-positive women now outnumber infected men by two million. Part of the problem is that developing countries are facing critical shortfalls of contraceptives and condoms. Women are unfortunately more at risk of HIV/AIDS infection than men, due to both biological and cultural factors. The solution to the HIV problem is a combination of sex education, abstinence, couples remaining faithful to their partners and greater use of condoms or contraceptive methods that can protect them against infection.

7.3 Female Genital Mutilation

The practice of female genital mutilation is, fortunately, not part of our culture. However, as more Africans become part of our community, we must face the fact that female genital mutilation will eventually become a practice we may encounter. We must address this practice not only because of its harmful impact on the reproductive and sexual health of women, but also because it is a violation of women's fundamental human rights. Practices can change, e.g. by promoting ceremonies that mark the passage into adulthood with dancing and symbolic gift giving, but without the actual cutting, without compromising cultural values.

8. Conclusions

The application of gender analysis to a wide range of policies and programmes is critical to poverty reduction strategies. In order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, women and men must participate fully and equally in the formulation of macroeconomic and social policies and strategies for the eradication of poverty. The eradication of poverty cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programmes alone but will require democratic participation and changes in economic structures in order to ensure access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services.

FEMMES, DROITS ET PAUVRETE[1]

FATIHA SAHLI

Introduction

I- L'approche du « Genre »

Les Nations Unies ont joué un rôle majeur dans la transformation de la question de la femme en problème universel. Et l'intérêt de l'organisation universelle pour la condition de la femme est aussi ancien que l'organisation elle-même. Dès février 1946, le Conseil économique et social dote la commission des droits de l'homme d'une sous-commission chargée du suivi de la condition de la femme. Et dès juin de la même année, elle fut érigée en commission dont la mission est de présenter des recommandations et des rapports sur le développement des droits de la femme dans les domaines politiques, économique, social et de l'instruction (Résolution 11(II) du CESNU).

La commission dont les membres sont au nombre de 45 se réunit une fois par an. Elle s'occupe du suivi de l'action des NU dans le domaine de la condition de la femme, notamment de faire l'évaluation et de présenter de rapports sur l'état d'application par les Etats des résolutions et recommandations prises ou faites dans le cadre des NU ou de conférences internationales sur la question.

Les conférences organisées par les Nations Unies sur la question de la femme sont au nombre de quatre, la première à Mexico en 1975, la seconde à Copenhague en 1980, la troisième à Nairobi en 1985 et la quatrième à Beijing en 1995.

Dès 1975, l'Assemblée Générale fixa trois objectifs devant servir de cadre du travail des Nations Unies relatif à la femme: une égalité complète entre les hommes et les femmes et l'élimination de la discrimination fondée sur le sexe; l'intégration et la pleine participation des femmes au développement et enfin une contribution de plus en plus importante des femmes à la paix internationale.

La conférence de Mexico a adopté un programme d'action conforme auxdits objectifs, devant permettre de garantir un accès égal aux femmes dans des domaines tels que l'éducation, les opportunités d'emploi, la participation à la vie politique, les services de santé, le logement, la nutrition et le planning familial.

Lors de la conférence de Copenhague, bien que les représentants des 145 Etats participants aient été d'accord pour constater que des progrès avaient été faits, surtout avec l'adoption, par l'Assemblée générale en décembre 1979, de la Convention sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes comme l'un des instruments les plus puissants pour assurer l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes, ils notèrent la différence existante entre la déclaration théorique des droits de la femme et leur mise en oeuvre réelle sur le terrain; des progrès devaient être faits, selon la conférence, dans trois domaines précis : un accès similaire à celui des hommes à l'éducation, aux opportunités d'emploi et à des services de soins médicaux appropriés. La conférence retenait pour cause de ce fossé notamment:

- le manque d'engagement suffisant de la part des hommes pour améliorer le rôle de la femme dans la société; une volonté politique insuffisante;
- le manque de reconnaissance de la valeur des contributions des femmes à la société;
- le manque d'attention portée aux besoins particuliers des femmes au niveau de la planification;
- la rareté des femmes aux postes de décision; l'insuffisance de services tels que les coopératives, les centres de soins journaliers et les organismes de prêts destinés à soutenir le rôle de la femme dans la vie nationale;
- un manque général de ressources financières; et une faible prise de conscience des femmes en ce qui concerne les opportunités disponibles;

[1] Ce travail a été réalisé dans le cadre d'une enquête financée par le CNRT (PARS 03 P): ont participé à ce travail, S.Agrib, F. Chaouki, A .El Ouazzani, A.Ghellou., O.Ibourk et Fatiha Sahli.

- Mais il faut surtout noter que la conférence de Mexico a débouché sur la proclamation de la décennie des Nations Unies pour la femme : égalité, développement et paix (1976-1985);

La conférence de Nairobi, elle, affirma le principe de la nécessité de la participation des femmes au processus de décision et à la gestion de toutes les affaires humaines; cette nécessité fut reconnue non seulement comme un droit légitime mais comme une nécessité politique et sociale dont le respect devait être incorporé dans toutes les institutions de la société;

La conférence de Beijing, enfin, adopta de manière unanime une déclaration et un Programme d'action qui définissait douze domaines représentatifs des obstacles principaux à la promotion de la femme et pour lesquels une action concrète des gouvernements et de la société civile devait être entreprise:

- les femmes et la pauvreté;
- l'éducation et la formation des femmes;
- les femmes et la santé;
- la violence à l'égard des femmes;
- les femmes et les conflits armés;
- les femmes et l'économie;
- les femmes, le pouvoir et la prise de décision;
- les mécanismes institutionnels pour la promotion des femmes;
- les droits humains des femmes;
- les femmes et les médias;
- les femmes et l'environnement;
- les fillettes.

Le programme de Beijing, adopté par 189 Etats membres de l'ONU, est donc un programme de travail mondial en faveur des droits fondamentaux des femmes, de l'égalité des sexes et du renforcement du pouvoir d'action (autonomisation) des femmes[2].

La portée du programme de Beijing a été grande; l'approche du « Genre » est, depuis bientôt plus d'une décennie, considérée, aussi bien par les ONG que par les organisations internationales, comme le PNUD ou la Banque Mondiale ou encore par les chercheurs en sciences sociales comme une des plus prometteuses dans la problématique du développement.

Au niveau des analyses et des méthodes de recherche des solutions, il s'est enfin avéré que les approches anciennes avaient en effet oublié d'intégrer dans leurs réflexions et leurs projets un acteur important: la femme.

Mais, les obstacles à la promotion du statut de la femme ont montré les limites de l'action de l'ONU, en dehors d'une véritable volonté politique, voire en l'absence d'un changement dans les mentalités.

En effet, la place de la femme dans les pays en développement a rarement été considérée à sa juste valeur. Le poids des traditions a toujours pesé lourd dans ce sens en dépit de la modernisation relative de certains pans de l'économie desdits pays. Le rôle de la femme dans l'activité sociale a presque toujours été considéré dans le cadre de l'économie domestique; l'image de la femme mère au foyer a presque toujours relégué au second plan la femme travailleuse, celle qui, dans le monde rural, par exemple, accomplit les tâches les plus ingrates et se charge de la partie la plus difficile du travail , du labour à la récolte, en passant par le ramassage et la coupe du bois, la traite des bêtes, en plus de l'éducation des enfants.

La lacune des approches classiques résidait donc dans la non reconnaissance du travail de la femme, rurale surtout. Le travail de la femme a ainsi été « invisible », considéré comme faisant partie de l'économie informelle. Pire, il n'était souvent même pas reconnu comme « travail » puisque rentrant dans les activités traditionnelles, « naturelle » de la femme.

[2] Cf. Rapport du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies à quarante neuvième session de la commission de la condition de la femme consacrée au suivi du programme de Beijing et de la session extraordinaire de l'Assemblée Générale intitulée « Les femmes en l'an 2000 : égalité entre les sexes, développement et paix au XXIè siècle ». Documents CESNU, E/CN.6/2005/2.

Cette situation n'est pas le propre d'une société ou d'un groupe de sociétés; elle est générale, à des degrés divers, à toutes les sociétés dites en développement.

Pourtant la logique de l'insertion desdites sociétés aurait voulu que la vision du concept « travail » évolue et que la place de l'activité de la moitié de la société soit reconnue. De cette reconnaissance dépendent beaucoup de notions considérées comme des préalables au développement et à la démocratisation.**

« La structure même du marché serait en fait modifiée si toutes les activités s'inséraient dans le marché. Si les activités non rémunérées étaient, comme des opérations commerciales, payées en fonction des salaires en vigueur, elles représenteraient une valeur monétaire énorme : la somme incroyable de 16 000 milliards de dollars ou environ 70% de plus que l'estimation officielle de 23 000 milliards de dollars donnée pour la production mondiale. Cette estimation inclut la valeur du travail non rémunéré des hommes et des femmes, ainsi que la valeur sous-payée des femmes par rapport aux salaires en vigueur sur le marché. La contribution "invisible" et non monétarisé des femmes représente 11 000 milliards de dollars sur les 16 000 milliards de dollars mentionnés plus haut »[3]. Une telle situation provient du fait que *« Cette production invisible est dangereuse: elle ne produit souvent rien de matériel, de comptable; elle repose sur des systèmes de solidarité qui vont contre l'archétype qu'est l'entreprise hiérarchisée, de type libérale. Les femmes produisent, mais leur économie ne correspond pas aux modèles qui structurent et régulent le marché »*[4].

En Afrique, principalement, dans les sociétés agricoles et même pastorales, où les femmes bien que détenant l'essentiel des leviers de commande de la production des subsistances, subissent ce qu'on n'est pas loin de considérer comme un esclavage. *Dans la plupart des pays et de sociétés, elles deviennent même de plus en plus chefs de famille sans que cela conduise à une véritable reconsidération des présupposés et des préjugés à leur égard. S'il y a ainsi comme une faible mutation dans la vision sociale de la femme, c'est parce que les symboles et leur profond ancrage dans les interrelations sociales semblent rester en marge des actions théoriques et pratiques en vue d'une pleine autonomisation de la femme*[5].

En Occident, d'une manière générale, les femmes sont sorties de la sphère domestique où elles étaient cantonnées; elles sont plus ou moins arrivées à se faire reconnaître comme travailleuses et productrices et à avoir des responsabilités[6] mais elles n'ont pas encore réussi à se faire reconnaître comme acteurs politiques à part entière. D'où l'importance acquise par le thème de la parité et de celui de la discrimination positive.

Au Maroc, cette non reconnaissance, qui est le produit des conditions socio - culturelles, de la mentalité et des traditions qui ont forgé l'image de la femme, engendre une marginalisation de celle-ci et perpétue sa domination par l'homme.

Bien que le droit consacre le principe de l'égalité des droits et des obligations et bien que les pouvoirs publics aient cherché d'améliorer la situation matérielle de la femme, rurale surtout, celle-ci reste toujours précaire.

Le promoteur du plan d'intégration de la femme au développement[7], M. Said Saadi exprime de manière très claire les données du problème:

« L'échec des politiques publiques de promotion de la femme est perceptible à plus d'un niveau. Il se reflète d'abord dans les limites de l'approche strictement sociale et « caritative » ou « humanitaire » de la

[3] Cf.Rabia Abdelkrim Chikh, « Les femmes, ménagères du nouvel ordre économique mondial? African Gender in the Millenium, Symposium, CODESRIA, Cairo, 7-10 avril 2002.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Naffet Keita, « Vers une anthropologie des mécanismes sociologiques de construction des lieux de légitimation de la domination des sexes en Afrique de l'Ouest », in African Gender, op. cit,, CODESRIA, p.2.
[6] Cf. Jean Vogel, « La parité et les nouvelles figures de la citoyenneté », in La parité: enjeux et mise en œuvre, S/s direction Jacqueline Martin, Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1998, p.43.
[7] Plan qui avait mobilisé des acteurs et foules pour ou contre lui; le fait qu'une manifestation de plusieurs milliers de personnes ait été organisée pour que ce plan ne voie pas le jour montre à quel point la question de la reconnaissance de la femme dans la société marocaine reste problématique; faut-il rappeler que parmi les manifestants contre, il y a avait un grand nombre de femmes.

condition féminine qui valorise uniquement le rôle reproductif et procréateur de la femme. Les programmes adoptés ciblent la femme seule et mettent l'accent sur les activités d'entraide sociale, de scolarisation, de planification familiale, promotion des coopératives féminines et des activités génératrices de revenu …). Jamais la question féminine n'est abordée en tant que priorité politique et stratégique pour le développement et la modernisation du pays. Cette approche se traduit sur le plan institutionnel par « la sectorisation quant aux aspects économiques et techniques, par la marginalisation quant à la dimension sociale et par l'ajournement quant au volet politique et social ». Les principales entités organisationnelles chargées de la promotion féminine étaient domiciliées au ministère de la santé et au ministère de la jeunesse et des sports et disposaient de peu de ressources humaines et financières. « Elles menaient souvent des programmes parcellaires, sans identification des besoins réels des femmes, sans suivi ni évaluation systématique de l'impact des actions menées ». Le même auteur remarque par ailleurs que « ces structures véhiculaient une vision officielle des rôles des femmes cantonnées dans le cercle familial (mère- épouse), sollicitées dans l'espace public (fonction publique) pour le marché du travail, sans protection juridique et égalité des droits. Elles participaient au renforcement de la discrimination sociale entre hommes et femmes ».
L'échec de ces politiques publiques est également le résultat des insuffisances de l'approche technocratique des problèmes du développement social, en dehors de toute implication des populations concernées et de la société civile.
Enfin, cet échec est du également aux effets pervers de la politique d'ajustement structurel appliquée par le Maroc à partir de 1983. Ces effets vont se traduire par une double féminisation: une féminisation de la production orientée vers l'exportation (emplois faiblement rémunérés, discrimination des salaires par sexe, etc.); une féminisation de la pauvreté tant humaine que monétaire (augmentation sensible du nombre de femmes pauvres et des ménages dirigés par des femmes[8]).

Il rappelle des chiffres alarmants quant à la situation de la femme : huit femmes sur dix étaient, en 1995 analphabètes; quatre fillettes de huit à seize ans n'étaient pas scolarisées; le taux de la mortalité maternelle restait élevé, surtout chez la femme rurale. Cette situation ne paraît pas avoir vraiment changé puisque le dernier rapport arabe de développement humain, consacré à la femme montre que le taux moyen de ladite mortalité se situe autour de 270 sur 100 000, comme il confirme la persistance de forts taux d'analphabétisme parmi les femmes.

L'enquête entend se situer dans le cadre global de l'approche du genre initiée par les Nations Unies, voir à quel point les recommandations auquel l'Etat marocain a souscrit en adhérant au même titre que les autres Etats aux différents programmes, notamment ceux ayant trait à la femme dans les zones rurales, dès lors que cette dernière vit dans une marginalisation totale et que son travail non rémunéré n'est pas reconnu. Or la reconnaissance du travail non rémunéré des femmes et des hommes aurait des répercussions considérables, en termes socio-économiques, ainsi que sur les normes et institutions sociales. (Les domaines retenus comme vitaux par l'AG lors de sa cinquante quatrième session sont l'accès: à l'eau, la terre, à la technologie, aux services de formation, en plus du rôle des femmes dans le secteur agricole[9]).

Ces travaux "invisibles" dans le sens où ils sont non reconnus et non rétribués sont dans leur majorité effectués par les femmes dans le monde entier.

Des recherches approfondies ont été menées à propos de la quantité du temps consacré par les hommes et par les femmes aux activités marchandes et non marchandes, et contrairement à ce qu'on apprend habituellement par les statistiques sur l'emploi et l'activité, ces études révèlent que les femmes travaillent davantage que les hommes dans tous les pays étudiés, et que ce déséquilibre est encore plus accentué dans les pays en développement et encore plus dans le milieu rural.[10]

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[8] Mohamed Said Saadi, « L'expérience marocaine d'intégration de la femme au développement », in African Gender, op. cit.
[9] Cf. Conseil Economique et Social, Doc. E/1999/66, A/54/123 du 7 juin 1999. Ces documents correspondent à la date où nous commencions à élaborer notre problématique.
[10] *Souad TRIKI :* Genre, activité économique et environnement Travail invisible des femmes rurales et budget temps des ménages ruraux en Tunisie, Colloque International « Genre, population et développement en Afrique », Session IV**,** *Abidjan, 16-21 juillet 2001.*

Ainsi ce travail vise à la fois appréhender le temps du travail effectué par la femme rurale à travers des enquêtes menées dans six communes rurales de Marrakech selon notamment et mieux cerner l'interdépendance qui existe entre la non reconnaissance du travail effectué et le statut social de cette dernière. Autrement dit, les effets de la non reconnaissance sur les droits économiques et sociaux de la femme.

L'Enquête: méthodologie et résultats

1: Considérations méthodologiques

Il est souvent, sinon toujours difficile de faire des enquêtes de terrain dans des sociétés non habituées aux techniques d'investigation des sciences sociales, auprès de populations qui n'ont jamais vu d'enquêteurs auparavant. Il est encore plus difficile de le faire dans des sociétés où la suspicion est l'attitude la plus commune à l'égard de l'enquête sociale. Cette difficulté se trouve doublée par le fait que la population cible est la femme.

Le poids des traditions et l'ensemble des images et des valeurs (tel que l'honneur) accolées à la femme dans le monde rural font qu'il est problématique pour un enquêteur mâle et étranger au village, de surcroît, de pouvoir approcher la femme et avoir un entretien serein avec elle.

Aussi, l'enquêteur est souvent assimilé à un « agent de Makhzen » dont la méfiance des populations à son égard demeure un obstacle majeur au travail de terrain.

Les jeunes étudiants et professeurs ayant participé à l'enquête ont du affronter ces difficultés et prouver leur bonne foi et le bien fondé de leur présence parmi le populations objet de l'enquête.

1-1: Définition de la population de référence

La population cible de l'étude est la population féminine rurale périurbaine de Marrakech. Il s'agira d'examiner les activités de la femme dans le ménage auquel elle appartient ainsi que sa perception et sa participation à la vie politique. Par conséquent, l'unité de l'échantillonnage sera le ménage quel que soit le nombre de femmes actives qui y vivent.

1-2: La base de sondage

C'est la liste des ménages localisés à partir de laquelle la sélection des unités d'échantillonnage sera opérée. Cette liste est basée sur le recensement général de la population de 1994. L'actualisation de cette liste peut être opérée avec l'aide des autorités locales (Chioukh et Moqadmine) qui connaissent parfaitement la situation des douars concernés.

La base de sondage se réfère explicitement à une famille de méthodes d'échantillonnage, notamment la méthode aléatoire ou la méthode probabiliste et la méthode empirique. Les méthodes aléatoires sont fondées sur un point commun: les éléments figurants dans l'échantillon sont choisis au hasard. Les méthodes empiriques reposent sur un choix orienté.

Disposant donc de listes exhaustives et quasi-certaines, la méthode probabiliste a utilisé, chaque élément de la population pouvant appartenir à l'échantillon avec une probabilité identique.

Plus précisément, il a été fait appel à la méthode de l'échantillonnage aléatoire stratifiée. Elle consiste à diviser la population en groupes mutuellement exclusifs et collectivement exhaustifs.

Comme les variables de stratification doivent répondre aux critères d'homogénéité (à l'intérieur des strates), d'hétérogénéité (entre strates) et de pertinence, nous avons retenu dans le cadre de cette étude la variable localisation géographique (commune rurale) et la variable âge.

Pour ce qui est de la variable localisation, nous considérons que l'activité économique est homogène au sein d'une commune (agriculture irriguée, bourg, forêt, montagne, etc..) en dépit des différences de revenu qui peuvent caractériser la commune.

Pour ce qui est de la variable âge, elle intervient également comme un élément de différenciation de l'implication de la femme. Les jeunes filles s'adonnent à des activités différentes de celles des femmes actives et de celles des vieilles femmes. Les tranches d'âge que nous allons adopter sont:

- 15-59;
- 60 et plus.

Quant à la variable résidence, elle portera sur six communes rurales relevant du grand Marrakech, en l'occurrence:

- Saada et Tassoultante relevant de la préfecture de Marrakech-Ménara;
- Harbil et Oulad Dlim relevant de la préfecture de Sidi Youssef Ben Ali;
- Sidi Abdellah Ghiat et Aït Faska relevant de la province d'Al Haouz.

I-3: Détermination de la taille de l'échantillon

La détermination de la taille de l'échantillon dépend de plusieurs variables : la nature de l'étude, le degré de précision et le budget alloué à l'étude.

La formule adoptée pour estimer une proportion est:

$$n = Z^2_{\alpha/2} \frac{P_s(1-P_s)}{e^2}$$

avec n = taille de l'échantillon
e = précision souhaitée
α = seuil de confiance (souvent fixé à 0,05)
P_s = proportion (fréquence) observée dans l'échantillon.
$Z_{\alpha/2}$ = valeur de la loi normale centrée réduite au seuil α

Pour ce qui nous concerne dans la présente étude, la fréquence de réponse est de 0,5 et en adoptant un degré de précision de 0,965 (marge d'erreur de 3,5%), la taille de notre échantillon s'élève à 1060 et nous retenons 1080.

Au niveau de la réalisation de l'enquête sur le terrain, et en respectant les quotas, nous avons rempli 180 questionnaires par commune selon les proportions des catégories d'âge.

II- L'environnement de l'étude

L'étude concerne, comme nous l'avons souligné plus haut, les communes rurales autour de Marrakech dont les principales caractéristiques sont comme suit:

Tableau 1: Population et densité

Commune	Densité	Population	Ménages	Douars
Saada	151	24 405	3 887	75
Tassoultante	126	15 089	2 564	46
Oulad Dlim	28	15 909	2 191	76
Harbil	50	13 209	2 067	22
Sidi Ghiat	144	16 298	2 413	62
Ait Faska	164	16 210	2 593	32

Tableau 2: Pyramide des âges de la population féminine:

Commune	0-14 ans	15-59	60 et plus	Total
Saada	19,25	27,64	3,35	50,25
Tassoultante	18,99	27,59	2,93	49,50
Oulad Dlim	19,80	26,70	3,38	49,89
Harbil	19,73	26,04	3,33	49,09
Sidi Ghiat	19,25	27,82	2,92	50,00
Ait Faska	19,11	27,63	4,35	51,10

Le total de la dernière colonne concerne la proportion des femmes dans la population totale. Comme celle-ci avoisine 50 %, elle y a lieu de multiplier par deux ces proportions pour trouver la part de chaque tranche d'âge dans la population féminine.

L'enquête ne s'intéresse pas à la tranche des moins de quinze ans du fait que ces jeunes sont inactives par définition d'une part, et pour l'intelligibilité des réponses d'autre part.

Tableau 3: Indicateurs d'activité des femmes:

Commune	Taux de scolarisation	analphabétisme	Taux d'activité	Taux de chômage
Saada	48,60	78,21	4,02	32,65
Tassoultante	46,78	78,03	4,96	22,97
Oulad Dlim	15,57	95,09	11,62	0,43
Harbil	21,91	92,05	12,13	6,21
Sidi Ghiat	30,47	91,98	3,63	0,00
Ait Faska	27,11	90,99	3,70	6,66

Le taux officiel d'activité montre que seules 3 à 12 % des femmes rurales de cette région sont actives. L'un des objectifs de la présente étude était d'examiner la pertinence d'une telle définition.

Tableau 4: Situation matrimoniale des femmes:

Commune	Célibataire	Mariée	Autre	Premier mariage
Saada	16,11	27,07	5,74	26 ans
Tassoultante	14,51	28,87	5,42	24,14
Oulad Dlim	16,39	27,67	5,77	24,25
Harbil	13,86	28,95	6,06	23,56
Sidi Ghiat	17,01	29,64	4,06	24,05
Ait Faska	15,72	28,80	6,89	25,15

Telles sont les grandes caractéristiques des communes rurales cibles selon les données de la Délégation Régionale du Ministère de la Prévision Economique et du Plan pour la région Marrakech-Tensift-Al Haouz.

III. Les résultats

Sur les 1060 questionnaires administrés, 950 se sont avérés exploitables, soit 90 %. Ces résultats concernent donc ces derniers.

I- La Situation sociale

1.. Les caractéristiques de l'échantillon sont comme suit:

1.1. L'état matrimonial (Tableau 5)

Etat	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Célibataires	256	26.9
Mariées	644	67.8
Divorcées	18	1.9
Autre	32	3.4
Total	**950**	**100**

Outre les veuves, la rubrique autre s'explique par le refus de certaines enquêtées de dévoiler leur état matrimonial; ce qui dénote la persistance d'une certaine pudeur en milieu rural en dépit de la proximité d'une grande ville comme Marrakech.

1.2 La procréation (Tableau 6)

Etat	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Avec enfants	645	67.9
Sans enfants	305	32.1
Total	950	100

1.3. Le nombre d'enfants (Tableau 7)

Nombre	Fréquence	Pourcentage
0	305	32.1
1	90	9.9
2	125	13.2
3	151	15.9
4	102	10.7
5	95	10.0
6 et plus	82	9.1
Total	950	100

En se limitant aux femmes ayant procréé, les proportions deviennent

(Tableau 8):

Nombre	Fréquence	Pourcentage
1	90	14
2	125	19.4
3	151	23.4
4	102	15.8
5	95	14.7
6 et plus	82	12.7
Total	645	100

On constate qu'un peu moins du quart des femmes ont trois enfants.

2. La *Situation familiale:*

Nous entendons par là la situation économique: l'activité du conjoint et la nature de l'activité

2.1. *Situation du conjoint (Tableau 9):*

Situation	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Ndr	264	27.8
Actif employé	217	22.8
Actif au chômage	63	6.6
Inactif	72	7.6
Autre	334	35.2
Total	950	100

La situation autre correspond à une réponse vague « oualou ». celle-ci va éclater lorsqu'il s'agit de préciser la nature de l'emploi.

2.2. La *Nature de l'emploi (Tableau 10):*

Emploi	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Ndr	288	30.3
Décédé	70	7.4
Ouvrier à l'usine	21	2.2
Charretier	22	2.3
Saisonnier	205	21.6
Fellah	72	7.6
Chauffeur	29	3.1
Ouvrier construction	36	3.8
Journalier	64	6.7
Tourisme	35	3.7
Commerçant	33	3.5
Potier	15	1.6
Epicier	14	1.5
Gardien	12	1.3
Mécanicien	6	.6
Maréchal ferrant	4	0.4
Boucher	2	0.2
Menuisier	14	1.5
Fonctionnaire	2	0.2
Pêcheur	2	0.2
Autre	4	0.4
Total	950	100

On constate que 617 connaissent parfaitement l'activité contrairement à la question générale précédente pour laquelle la femme est incapable ou ne veut pas répondre.

2.3. *Le chef de ménage (Tableau 11):*

Genre	Nombre	Pourcentage
Femme	133	14.0
Homme	817	86.0
Total	950	100

Ainsi, 14 % des femmes assument la tâche de chef de ménage en milieu rural dont la moitié pour cause de décès du conjoint.

Pour ce qui du lien juridique entre la femme et le chef de ménage ***(Tableau 12):***

Nature du chef	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Ndr	4	.4
Conjoint	544	57.3
Parent	241	25.4
Grands parents	1	0.1
Frère ou sœur	24	2.5
Parent proche	30	3.2
Autre	106	11.2
Total	950	100

Le conjoint et les parents proches assument la tâche de diriger le ménage avec une prédominance du conjoint. Serait-ce que la grande famille qui caractérise le milieu rural s'estompe pour laisser la place à la petite famille?

2.4. ***L'activité du chef de ménage (Tableau 13):***

Activité du chef	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Employé	308	32.4
Chômage	65	6.8
Inactif	61	6.4
Autre	512	53.9
Refus de répondre	4	0.4
Total	950	100

Nous retrouvons l'ambiguïté de la même question posée à propos des conjoints. Aussi y a-t-il lieu de préciser l'activité du chef de ménage.

Tableau 14

Emploi	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Refus de répondre	24	2.5
Ouvrier à l'usine	64	6.7
Charretier	52	5.5
Saisonnier	217	22.8
Fellah	151	15.9
Chauffeur	58	6.1
Ouvrier construction	55	5.8
Journalier	103	10.8
Tourisme	20	2.1
Commerçant	59	6.2
Potier	17	1.8
Epicier	17	1.8
Gardien	20	2.1
Mécanicien	8	.8
Maréchal ferrant	28	2.9
Boucher	4	0.4
Menuisier	43	4.5
Fonctionnaire	4	0.4
Autre	6	0.6
Total	950	100

L'activité dominante est l'agriculture (fellah, saisonnier, journalier,…) avec près de la moitié des réponses, 49.7 %. La seconde activité est l'artisanat et enfin les services. Certains de ces derniers se rapportent au milieu urbain (gardiennage, domestique,..).

3. ***Le logement (Tableau 15):***

Logement chez	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Seul	10	1.1
Conjoint	582	59.2
Parents	246	25.9
Grands parents	5	0.5
Frère ou sœur	4	0.4
Parent proche	62	6.5
Amis	2	.2
Autre	59	6.2
Total	950	100

La solidarité familiale continue de dominer dans le monde rural. Rares sont les femmes qui habitent seules ou chez des amis.

3.1. ***Nature juridique du logement (Tableau 16):***

Nature du logement	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Propriété	689	72.5
Location	77	8.1
Gratuit	73	7.7
Autre	111	11.7
Total	950	100

Le type location en dépit de sa faiblesse (8 %) n'en constitue pas moins une évolution du monde rural.

3.2. ***Nombre de personnes par ménage (Tableau 17):***

Nombre	Fréquence	Pourcentage
1	11	1.2
2	62	6.5
3	57	6.0
4	164	17.3
5	174	18.3
6	150	15.8
7	108	11.4
8	74	7.8
9	51	5.4
10	46	4.8
11	11	1.2
12	23	2.4
13	4	0.4
14	8	0.8
Plus de 14	7	0.8
Total	950	100

La tranche dominante de ces observations est comprise entre 4 et 7 membres par ménage, ce qui représente 62.8 %. Elle correspond à celle relative au nombre d'enfants qui est de 2 à 3 enfants.

Cette moyenne est voisine de celle enregistrée en milieu urbain (5.7 membres par ménage dans la ville de Marrakech). S'agit-il d'une transformation socio-démographique en milieu rural?

Les campagnes de sensibilisation en matière d'éducation familiale ont-elles porté leur fruit ou bien le milieu rural, touché par des cycles de sécheresse commence à s'adapter au nouvel environnement?

4. ***Le revenu du ménage:***

L'estimation du revenu mensuel du ménage rural est très difficile. Environ les deux tiers des interviewées étaient incapables d'avancer un chiffre, et pour ceux qui ont osé, des discordances ont été constatées. Aussi a-t-il été jugé opportun de se cantonner sur le revenu annuel.

4.1 Le revenu annuel déclaré (Tableau 18):

Revenu annuel	Fréquence	Pourcentage
0-9999	333	35.1
10000-14999	98	10.3
15000-19999	35	3.7
20000-29999	23	2.4
30000-49999	12	1.3
50000et plus	2	0.2
Ne sait pas	447	47.1
Total	950	100

49 % des ménages ont déclaré avoir un revenu inférieur à 20 000 dirhams (environ 1800 Euros), c'est-à-dire le salaire minimum légal. A l'autre extrême, les couches aisées et riches ne représentent que 1.5 % des ménages.

Le rapprochement de ces résultats avec la nature de l'activité des chefs de ménage et la persistance de la sécheresse pendant les cinq dernières années expliquent cet état du monde rural.

Néanmoins, cette faiblesse est à nuancer:

1°/ plus de 90 % des ménages habitent leur propre logement ou de façon gratuite; seuls 8 % sont locataires. Il est généralement admis que la part du loyer dans le budget familial en milieu urbain oscille entre 25 % et 33 %. Il y a lieu donc de réévaluer le revenu déclaré à raison de cette proportion.

2°/ les dépenses de consommation représentent 30 à 40 % du revenu des ménages urbains. En milieu rural, la part de l'autoconsommation est importante et n'est pas prise dans la détermination du revenu. Un minimum de 25 % peut être pris en considération.

Compte tenu de ces deux éléments, le loyer et la consommation représentent 50 % du revenu; ce qui revient à multiplier par deux le revenu déclaré par les ménages ruraux.

Toutefois, pour plus de la moitié des ménages, ce revenu réévalué reste modeste.

III.2: Scolarisation, travail et politique

1. ***La scolarisation des femmes:***

1.1. Les femmes ayant fréquenté l'école (Tableau 19):

Fréquentation de l'école	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	329	34.6
Non	621	65.4
Total	950	100

Donc, sur les 950 questionnaires retenus, seulement le 1/3 avait fréquenté l'école. Ces chiffres ne contredisent pas les données statistiques du recensement général de la population de 1994 qui démontrent que 98,6 des communes rurales avaient à cette date des taux nets de scolarisation des filles dans le cycle

primaire inférieur à 80%.[11] Marrakech-Tensift-Al Haouz est parmi les six régions qui recèlent une proportion de communes rurales à forte inégalité scolaire (88,4 des communes rurales)[12]

1.2. Les raisons qui ont empêché d'aller à l'école (Tableau 20):

Raison	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Ndr	329	34.6
Les parents	344	36.2
Problèmes familiaux	76	8.0
Absence de l'école	77	8.1
Distance à l'école	22	2.3
Pas intéressée	102	10.7
Total	950	100

La non scolarisation des filles trouve sa raison principale dans l'attitude des parents. Alors que l'école existe (92 % des réponses) même si le trajet au domicile est d'au moins un heure (60 %), l'école est peu fréquentée par les filles.

Pour le tiers qui a fréquenté l'école, le niveau scolaire est comme suit: ***(Tableau 21)***

Niveau	Fréquence	Pourcentage
F1	14	4.4
F2	36	11.2
F3	30	9.3
F4	58	18.1
F5	42	13.0
F6	31	9.6
F7	12	3.7
F8	25	7.8
F9	24	7.4
S1	9	2.8
S2	26	8.1
S3	14	4.4
total	321	100

Seuls 15 % de celles ayant fréquenté l'école arrivent au lycée alors que 65.6 % sont restée au stade du premier cycle du fondamental.

Les résultats obtenus nous mènent à reposer les mêmes questions concernant la scolarisation en milieu rural, notamment celle des filles.

Si le 1% des réponses donne comme raison principale à la non scolarisation des filles en milieu rural l'attitude des parents. Cette dernière peut également s'expliquer par les autres raisons évoquées, à savoir les problème familiaux, l'absence de l'école, son éloignement ou par des facteurs socio-culturels liés au statut de la femme en général. D'ailleurs, plusieurs études et enquêtes, notamment celle menée par la Direction de la planification et le Ministère de l'éducation nationale, ont bien identifié les principales contraintes à la scolarisation des filles rurales[13]. L'absence de l'école, la distance, les charges liés à la scolarisation, les facteurs culturels…reviennent assez souvent.

Cette situation n'est pas sans conséquence sur l'activité exercée par la femme rurale, comme le montre les résultats ci-dessous.

[11] Aziz CHAKER « Genre et éducation » in Féminin, masculin, la marche vers l'égalité au Maroc, 1993-2003, p .07.
[12] Les autres régions sont Taza-Al Hoceima-Taounat, Doukala-Abda, Gharb-Chrarda-Bni Hssain, Souss6Massa-Draa et Tadla-Azilal.
[13] Aziz CHAKER, « Genre et éducation », op.cit, pp.212-213.

***2. L'activité de la femme en milieu rural*:**

Comme nous l'avons souligné, la faiblesse du taux de la scolarisation des filles ne laisse aucun doute quant aux effets sur la nature de travaux exercés par la femme rurale. Son activité se cantonne presque exclusivement dans son ménage. L'activité à l'extérieur est quasi nulle.

(Tableau 22)

Lieu de travail	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Au sein du ménage	927	97.6
Hors ménage	21	2.2
Les deux	2	0.2
Total	950	100

Si la femme rurale travaille au sein du ménage, la situation diffère lorsqu'il s'agit de distinguer l'intérieur de la maison de l'extérieur.

S'agissant du travail au sein du ménage, contrairement à celui de la femme citadine, il englobe un certains nombre d'activités qui s'exercent à l'extérieur et qui constituent une extension de ses travaux domestiques, c'est-à-dire effectuées gratuitement pour le ménage tel que la recherche de l'eau et du bois, le travail dans les champs, le bétail…Or elles auraient été rémunérées si elles avaient été faites par une unité économique extérieur au ménage.[14]

(Tableau 23)

Nature activité	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Ménage	80	8.4
Chercher l'eau	168	17.7
Champs	132	13.9
Bétail	6	0.6
Chercher le bois	4	0.4
Travail à l'intérieur	560	58.9
Total	950	100

Plus de 40 % des femmes rurales travaillent à l'extérieur. Cette proportion semble réduite par rapport à la réalité des campagnes où la femme travaille aussi bien à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur. Serait-ce la proximité d'une grande ville qui influe sur le comportement? En effet, la citadine s'occupe essentiellement à l'intérieur de la maison (ménage, cuisine, artisanat éventuellement). D'un autre côté, près du quart de ces femmes qui travaillant à l'extérieur, font le ménage, c'est -à- dire des domestiques et c'est sûrement en milieu urbain.

(Tableau 24)

Nature activité	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Ménage	80	20.5
Chercher l'eau	168	43.1
Champs	132	33.9
Bétail	6	1.5
Chercher le bois	4	1.0
Total	390	100

Nous constatons que près de la moitié des femmes qui travaillent à l'extérieur s'occupent à chercher de l'eau potable. Doter les douars de l'eau potable pourrait libérer les énergies de la moitié de ces femmes.

[14] *TRIKI:* Genre, activité économique et environnement Travail invisible des femmes rurales et budget temps des ménages ruraux en Tunisie, op.cit

La proportion qui s'adonnent à l'élevage et la recherche du combustible est faible, ceci s'expliquerait soit par le fait que ce sont généralement les petites filles qui s'occupent de ces travaux, ou par le fait qu'il s'agit des familles très pauvres ne possédant pas de bétail.

De toute évidence, quelle que soit leur situation, les femmes s'activent sans connaître le repos.

Ce qui se manifeste par le nombre de journées de travail par semaine qui est comme suit:

(Tableau 25)

Nombre de jours	Fréquence	Pourcentage
4	2	0.2
5	2	0.2
6	34	3.6
7	908	90.8
Sans réponse	4	0.4
Total	950	100

La femme rurale travaille sept jours sur sept sans répit. Les seules qui travaillent moins sont celles qui travaillent hors du ménage encore qu'elles sont généralement tenues de travailler chez elles.

Concernant les approvisionnements du ménage, il a été demandé aux femmes si elles vont au marché. Les réponses sont comme suit:

(Tableau 26)

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	281	29.6
Non	669	70.4
Total	950	100

En plus des 14 % qui représentent les chefs de ménage, près de 16 % supplémentaires fréquentent le souk ou le marché. Cet engouement pour le souk s'explique non seulement par les courses à faire mais, également et surtout par le fait que le souk est un centre d'information. Le jour du souk est pour les ruraux l'occasion pour échanger les informations et d'avoir des nouvelles d'un parent ou d'un ami habitant un village lointain.

La proportion importante et énigmatique des non actives selon leurs déclarations devaient être testées par une question plus précise relative à la saisonnalité de leur activité. Les réponses sont:

(Tableau 27)

Saison	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Moisson	24	2.5
Olives	356	37.5
Légumes	4	0.4
Fourrage	22	2.3
Travail dans les grandes fermes	396	41.7
Sans réponse	148	15.6
Total	950	100

Ainsi, plus de 84 %des femmes qui travaillent la moitié sont ouvrières agricoles dans les grandes fermes de la région et l'autre moitié s'occupe de la cueillette des fruits. Nous sommes loin des déclarations précédentes qui prétendent que les femmes ne font « rien ».

Même dans le cas où la femme ne travaille pas à l'extérieur, la budgétisation de son temps de travail témoigne qu'elle est toujours au labeur, comme la bien démontré l'enquête nationale du Budget Temps Femmes au Maroc, réalisée en 1997 1998. [15]

Selon ladite enquête, une femme rurale inactive dont l'occupation est exclusivement restreinte aux travaux ménagers, consacre 6h 53 minutes [mn]à cette occupation.

En plus du temps professionnel, la femme citadine pourvue d'un travail rémunéré devrait consacrer 4h 9mn aux occupations domestiques et ménagères.

La préparation des repas, lessive, nettoyage, achat de produits de consommation, approvisionnement du ménage en eau et en bois de feu,... occupe en moyenne 5h 17 minutes [mn] et est plus long en milieu rural (5h 53mn) qu'en milieu urbain (4h 49mn).

Lorsque le logement n'est pas branché au réseau d'eau potable, la femme doit consacrer en moyenne 58 mn à l'approvisionnement du ménage en eau, soit 1h 2mn en milieu rural et 34mn en milieu urbain.

L'insuffisance des équipements sociaux induisent d'importantes charges domestiques et ménagères et font que le temps alloué par la femme à l'activité économique soit significativement restreint, et que l'activité professionnelle de la femme constitue en général une occupation qui s'ajoute aux travaux ménagers.

3 - La femme rurale et la politique

Nous avons voulu faire un lien entre la conscience qu'a la femme de situation, de l'importance de son activité et la reconnaissance de son droit à la participation à la prise de décision au foyer, en dehors du foyer aux élections.

Considérée comme une machine à voter et à reconduire à l'infini les notabilités locales lors des élections, la femme rurale, du moins dans cette région, surprendra par sa conscience et le jugement qu'elle porte sur le monde politique.

1- conscience par rapport à leur situation:

Comment jugent-elles leur situation en général?

(Tableau 28)

Situation	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Difficile	834	87.8
Assez difficile	116	12.2
Bonne	0	0
Total	950	100

Aucune interviewée n'a estimé que sa situation était bonne, en dépit de la retenue qui caractérise le milieu rural.

Est-elle consciente qu'elle contribue au revenu du ménage?

[15] Ministère de la Prévision Economique et du Pan: *« Condition socio-économique de la femme au Maroc, Enquête nationale sur le budget-temps des femme »1997/98.*

(Tableau 29)

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	912	96.0
Non	38	4.0
Total	950	100

Là aussi les réponses sont unanimes. Elles sont bien conscientes qu'elles participent à la vie économique du ménage.

Dans ces conditions, sont-elles associées à la prise de décision?

(Tableau 30)

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	816	85.9
Non	134	14.1
Total	950	100

Nature de la décision: ***(Tableau 31)***

Nature	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Foyer	31	3.3
Tout	785	82.6
Ndr	134	14.1
Total	950	100

Du moment qu'elle participe activement au revenu du foyer, la femme rurale semble consultée sur toutes les questions qui touchent à la vie du ménage.

Cette double participation n'implique nullement une liberté d'action de la femme. En effet, l'autorisation du mari est pratiquement nécessaire.

L'autorisation du mari: (Tableau 32)

Raison	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Sorties, visites	82	8.6
Tout	868	91.4
Total	950	100

2 La femme et les élections:

Le sens du vote: (Tableau 33)

Sens du vote	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Désigner un représentant	322	33.9
Les urnes	140	16.7
Un devoir	6	0.6
Ne sait pas	473	49.8
Total	950	100

Inscription sur les listes électorales (Tableau 34):

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	693	72.9
Non	257	27.1
Total	950	100

La loi généralisant l'inscription sur les listes électorales ne semble pas appliquée en milieu rural particulièrement pour ce qui concerne les femmes.

Connaissance des partis politiques: à la question Connaissez-vous de partis politiques? Les réponses sont comme suit: ***(Tableau 35)***

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	285	30.0
Non	665	70.0
Total	950	100

Quels sont les partis que vous connaissez? (Tableau 36)

Parti	Fréquence	Pourcentage
PI	53	5.6
USFP	39	4.1
MNP-MP	21	2.2
UC	2	.2
PPS	2	.2
PI, USFP, MNP, MP, UC	168	17.7
Ne sait pas	665	70.0

Les partis les plus cités sont les partis « historiques » créés avant 1960. Les extrêmes libéral et communiste sont connus par une infime minorité. Les partis dits « administratifs » ne semblent jouir d'aucune notoriété alors que lors des élections, le monde rural est leur terroir.

Que représente un élu local? (Tableau 37)

L'élu représente	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Le Makhzen (L'Etat)	353	37.2
La population	257	27.1
Makhzen et population	59	6.2
Ne sait pas	281	29.6

Seul le quart des femmes interrogées estime que l'élu local représente la population, et pour 37%, l'élu représente le Makhzen, le pouvoir; ceci montre que l'image qu'une enquête faite par Paul Pascon presque une vingtaine d'années auparavant n'a pas changé. Mais cette réponse peut être interprétée de deux manières : soit qu'elle traduit une non assimilation du sens du vote, soit qu'elle signifie que les femmes comprennent ce veut dire « voter » mais sont conscientes que l'élu ne remplit pas sa fonction comme il le devrait, qu'il se met au service du pouvoir plutôt que de ses électeurs.

Ce qui se traduit par les réponses à la question suivante:

A quoi sert un élu local? (Tableau 38)

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Assumer une responsabilité	423	44.5
Défendre l'intérêt général	130	13.7
Défendre ses intérêts	106	11.2
Ne sait pas	291	30.6
Total	950	100

Connaissez-vous le nom de votre élu local? (Tableau 39)

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	700	73.7
Non	250	26.3
Total	950	100

La proximité semble jouer puisque les trois quarts des femmes connaissent leur élu local. Mais, quant à sa couleur politique, seule une minorité peut avancer le nom du parti.

De quel parti est-il? (Tableau 40)

Parti	Fréquence	Pourcentage
PI	73	7.7
UC	60	6.3
MNP-MP	18	1.9
USFP	16	1.7
PPS	4	.4
Ne sait pas	779	82.0

Ces résultats semblent surprenants. Si moins de 20 % peut mettre une étiquette sur l'élu local, l'unanimité n'est pas faite sur sa couleur politique. Ce qui dénote encore une certaine confusion à ce niveau.

Au niveau national, quelle est la perception du parlementaire? (Tableau 41)

Parlementaire	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Un responsable	196	20.6
Défend ses intérêts	30	3.2
Ne sait pas	724	76.2
Total	950	100

Ces résultats sont d'une extrême importance. Plus des trois quarts des femmes rurales ignorent la mission du parlementaire en dépits des votations qui se sont succédé depuis 1960.

Celles qui connaissent assimilent le parlementaire à un responsable mais dans le sens d'une autorité administrative. Serait-ce parce que le parlementaire est généralement absent de sa circonscription et n'y met les pieds que lorsque il accompagne le gouverneur lors de cérémonies officielles?

Connaissez-vous le nom de votre parlementaire? (Tableau 42)

	Fréquence	Pourcentage
Oui	54	5.7
Non	896	94.3
Total	950	100

Les élections législatives semblent ne pas intéresser les femmes rurales puisque la quasi totalité d'entre elles ignorent le nom du parlementaire de leur zone contrairement aux élections locales.

Plusieurs conclusions peuvent être retenues:

- La femme rurale est consciente de ses conditions difficiles;
- Elle est également consciente qu'elle contribue au revenu du ménage et qu'elle est consultée en général pour tout ce qui touche à la vie familiale;
- Globalement, elle est inscrite sur les listes électorales et participe aux votations;
- Elle s'intéresse aux élections locales mais sa connaissance des partis politiques demeure confuse. Mais ceci n'est pas surprenant vu le nombre élevé de partis politiques et la faiblesse des moyens de communication dans le monde rural. A certains égards, bien des citadins ont du mal à connaître tous les partis politiques;
- Les élections législatives ne semblent pas retenir l'attention des femmes rurales, et les parlementaires sont plutôt assimilés aux autorités administratives.

Ceci dit, les femmes enquêtées manifestent plutôt une certaine indifférence à l'égard du politique. En effet, leur situation, les responsabilités dont elles ont la charge, la lutte quotidienne pour survivre ne laissent pas de place à d'autres préoccupations et représentent de lourds obstacles à leur participation politique et à leur progression sociale et économique (scolarisation, carrière professionnelle, …). La non-reconnaissance e leur travail empêche par ailleurs d'établir de priorités en matière de développement économique et sociale.

Comme l'a confirmé l'enquête menée, la femme rurale a un niveau de scolarisation très faible. Elle exerce des tâches et des responsabilités multiples qui varient en fonction, notamment, de l'âge, de l'origine sociale et de classe. Ces tâches vont de l'entretien matériel et moral de la famille: à la recherche de l'eau et du bois, au travail dans les champs, le bétail…, Or, tout le monde est d'accord sur le fait que l'ensemble des activités sont effectuées gratuitement mais qui auraient été rémunérées si elles étaient effectuées par une unité économique extérieure au ménage. S'impose la question de savoir pourquoi, alors que l'on reconnaît de plus en plus l'importance de leur contribution, les politiques publiques en tiennent si peu ou si mal compte et se soucient peu de leur statut réelle.

En définitif, la condition de la femme n'est pas non seulement définie par la loi, mais elle dépend, dans une large mesure, des facteurs économiques et sociaux. Il est ainsi évident que le développement serait l'instrument qui lui permette de passer d'une vie limitée aux activités ménagères et invisibles à une vie ouverte sur des horizons permettant de contribuer à éliminer la précarité et la marginalisation à laquelle se heurte au quotidien et de lui garantir la jouissance de ses droits en tant que citoyenne.

THE FACES OF THE POOR: A SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW OF POVERTY IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE AND MALTA

ANGELE DEGUARA

A General Picture of Poverty in the EU and Malta

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, millions of people in Europe are still struggling with poverty. This despite the fact that Europe is a relatively economically well-off region. Taking a conventional relative measure of poverty, calculated in terms of income below 60% of the national median, it is estimated that about 16% or 75 million people in the European Union can be termed poor (European Commission, 2007). This figure however masks the considerable variation noted in different EU countries with the share of the population living on a low income ranging from less than 11% in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Luxembourg to around 20 or 21% in Slovakia, Portugal, Ireland, Spain and Greece (European Commission, 2007; European Communities, 2007a). In Malta, the percentage of people who in 2005 fell below the poverty line is quite close to the EU average. According to the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) carried out by the National Statistics Office, the poverty rate in Malta and Gozo stood at 14.9% or 59,315 persons. The SILC established a poverty threshold of Lm2032 (€4733.29) calculated at 60% of the median equivalised disposable income. All persons whose equivalised income fell below this threshold were considered to be at risk of poverty (NSO, 2007a).

Poverty is a relative concept and caution should be taken when comparing data from different countries because of the different statistical methods which may be used in compiling these data. The new Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC), launched in 2004, attempts to bring greater harmonization and comparability between countries. Furthermore, since at-risk-of-poverty thresholds vary from one country to another, the standard of living of people considered to be at risk of poverty in different countries may be significantly different in absolute terms (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). Calculating the at-risk-of-poverty threshold in purchasing power standard (PPS) for the different Members States, taking a single adult household as an example, the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Exclusion (Commission of European Communities, 2007a) shows that among the EU Members States with the lowest at-risk-of-poverty threshold one finds all the new Eastern European Member States as well as Portugal while Luxembourg and Austria have the highest at-risk-of-poverty thresholds. This means that for example, in Luxembourg a single person household falling just below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold would have a standard of living seven times higher than its counterpart in Latvia, Lithuania and Bulgaria and more than twelve times higher than in Romania. The same report shows Malta's threshold to be higher than that of Eastern European countries. At the lower middle side of the spectrum, following Portugal which has a notably lower threshold than Malta, Malta's threshold (over 6000 PPS) is similar to that of Greece and slightly lower than that of Spain and Slovenia (Commission of the European Communities, 2007a).

The same report also shows that those countries with the highest poverty rates also tend to have high rates of poverty intensity (at-risk-of-poverty gap) while the contrary applies to those countries with lower rates of poverty, albeit this is not always the case. In 2004 the at-risk-of-poverty gap for the EU was 23%. Malta appears to have one of the lowest at-risk-of-poverty gaps (around 17%) following Finland, Austria and Denmark (Commission of the European Communities, 2007a).

The above figures pertain solely to the bottom part of the income distribution. It is also interesting to compare the income of individuals at the lower end of the income distribution with those at the top. This may be measure by the income quintile ratio which shows that in 2004, 20% of the EU population at the higher end of the income distribution (top quintile) received an income almost five times higher than the 20% with the lowest income (lowest quintile) (Commission of the European Communities, 2007a). The report also indicates that member states which have the highest disparities in income also tend to have the highest at-risk-of-poverty rates. In 2004 the countries with the highest income disparities were Portugal (with a ratio of over 8:1) followed by Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. The figures for Malta do not reveal high income disparities between the top and bottom income groups. With a ratio of over 4:1 Malta's situation is similar to that of countries such as Germany, Belgium and Cyprus although its disparities are higher than those found

in the Nordic countries but lower than those of other Mediterranean countries. Indeed countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece have higher than average income disparities (Commission of the European Communities, 2007a). Data also show (European Commission, 2007) that since the 90s certain countries registered an increase in income inequalities while others experienced a decline. However there is little indication that member states will achieve any similarity in inequality patterns in the near future.

The Many Dimensions of Poverty

Much has been written about poverty and the poor. Many have defined it or attempted to measure or explain it. Others sought to offer solutions and to recommend ways of reducing or even of eliminating it. It is not the scope of this paper to dwell at length on definitions or measures of poverty (for a detailed discussion of definitions and measurement of poverty see for example Lister, 2004; Alcock, 2006). However a cursory look at the main issues raised in the debate is appropriate for a better understanding of the plight of the millions of people who experience poverty at some point in their life or even throughout their whole life span.

Traditionally poverty was understood to be directly linked with inadequate income resources. Early studies such as those of Rowntree in England (1901, 1941 in Barnes et al, 2002) defined and measured poverty in absolute terms. This approach perceives poverty in terms of not having an adequate income level to enable a person or household to satisfy basic needs such as food, water, clothing and shelter. Absolute definitions of poverty have a number of weaknesses and have been the target of criticism for various reasons such as (i) the difficulty of establishing minimum standards of physical efficiency; (ii) the problem of calculating a sum of money for achieving such a standard; (iii) the failure to account for cultural, social and individual variations as well as for changes over time; (iv) for taking into consideration only physical needs and neglecting the wider social and cultural needs (Barnes et al, 2002).

This latter dimension of poverty was developed by Townsend in his important work on poverty in the UK (1979). Critical of the narrow perception of poverty based largely on the notion of subsistence or survival, he broadened the definition of poverty and gave it a relative and social dimension. According to his much quoted definition of poverty,

> "Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns and activities" (1979:31).

Townsend wanted to show that need or deprivation is relative and that human beings are not only physical but also social beings. The cultural, social and historical circumstances not only influence our social needs but also impinge on our physiological needs (Lister, 2004:24-5).

The European Union also defines poverty in relative terms:

> "The poor shall be taken to mean persons, families and groups of persons whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the Member State in which they live" (1984 in Lister, 2004:21).

Although nowadays the importance of recognizing the cultural and social dimensions of poverty is widely acknowledged, the absolutist approach cannot simply be dismissed as wrong (Alcock, 2006). After all, the relativist approach is not without its limitations as critics of Townsend, most notably Sen (1983) have argued. In practice, a workable definition of poverty needs to combine both absolutist and relative elements (Alcock, 2006). Indeed recently the debate has moved beyond the absolute-relative dichotomy to take on a more holistic and reconciliatory approach. (Spicker, 2007). Both researchers and policy makers have lately acknowledged the importance of taking a multi-dimensional approach to poverty. Indeed the Copenhagen Declaration (United Nations, 1995 in Alcock, 2006) pointed to the importance of developing a notion of "overall poverty" encompassing its various manifestations.

In his book *The Idea of Poverty*, Spicker (2007) outlines and discusses the many clusters of meaning inherent in the various attempts at defining poverty, grouping them under three main dimensions which pertain not only to material need and economic circumstances but also to social relationships. The latter incorporates factors such as one's social class position, dependency on social assistance, social exclusion and lack of entitlement or basic security understood in terms of human rights (Spicker, 2007:4-5). Lister (2004) also points to the importance of understanding poverty in terms of both material and non-material factors. For people who experience poverty, their problem is not just about being economically disadvantaged but also about not having a voice, about disrespect, humiliation, lack of dignity and self-esteem, shame and stigma, powerlessness, denial of rights and diminished citizenship. These comprise what she terms the "relational/symbolic" aspects of poverty (Lister, 2004:7). In his remarkable work on development, Sen (1999) identified poverty in terms of capability deprivation, an approach which focuses on deprivations which are *intrinsically* important in contrast to lack of money which only has *instrumental* value.

These broader dimensions of poverty were also identified by the researchers of *Voices of the Poor*, a set of studies undertaken by the World Bank (1999 in Spicker, 2007). This in-depth analysis of poverty in different cultures revealed a number of elements which transcend material needs and involve precarious livelihoods, excluded locations, physical health, gender relationships, lack of social participation, lack of security, abuse by those in power, disempowering institutions, weak community organizations and limitations both in the capabilities of individuals as well as for collective and social action. The complexity of the poverty phenomenon, the heterogeneity of people "in need" and the diversity of contexts in which the problem is embedded have also emerged clearly in the study by Spiteri and McKay in this volume. The study which was based on the experiences of a number of families in St Helen's parish in Birkirkara is evidence of how financial problems are intertwined with a number of other mishaps such as illnesses and relation problems which further increase the disadvantage of the poor.

There seems to be a wide consensus that poverty is a social problem and that the problem is not simply about lack of money (Alcock, 2006). Attached to this multi-faceted phenomenon is the issue of morality (Spicker, 2007:5). Poverty is not just about definition and quantification. It is about finding effective ways of dealing with it seriously in order to alleviate the hardship and the suffering experienced by millions of people not only in the impoverished countries but also in the much richer regions of the world. But who are these people?

The Faces of the Poor

In the beginning of this paper I presented some statistical data pertaining to poverty levels, income distribution and poverty gaps across the EU. Behind these impersonal figures and statistical trends there are human beings of all ages, coming from different walks of life, different backgrounds and cultures and having different personal and social circumstances. Although everyone can become a victim of poverty, there are certain social groups which are more likely to experience poverty and deprivation since poverty is not evenly distributed in society. Certain people are at greater risk of poverty than others. This may be due to their economic status (Alcock, 2006:22). Unemployed and inactive people are at greater risk of poverty than those in paid employment, although employment does not guarantee an escape from poverty. People may also be poor as a result of their family circumstances (ibid.). For example lone parents are among the highest at risk groups (European Communities, 2007b).

Other factors which may have a negative impact on one's chances of being poor are gender, ethnicity, age and disability. Women are generally more likely to live in poverty than men and tend to experience poverty differently from men (Lister, 2004; Alcock, 2006; Gordon and Townsend, 2000). Millions of children in the rich countries have to struggle with poverty and deprivation. The poverty of children has been on the increase in many of the world's developed economies according to UNICEF reports (2005, 2007). Old age poverty is also on the increase and older women face an even greater risk than men (Peer Review, 2006). Immigrants (Caritas Europa, 2006) and disabled persons also have relatively high risks of falling into poverty. Poverty also varies by region or geographical area (Alcock, 2006). Alcock also cites research which links poverty to the life course. Events such as marriage, divorce, parenthood and retirement have an impact on a person's earnings, spending needs and spending and saving patterns. The life course approach identifies specific stages at which people's risks of poverty and social exclusion increase (Barnes, 2002). At the same time these life cycle experiences are also affected by wider social structures (Alcock, 2006:105).

On the basis of earlier data (early 1990s) from across the EU, Barnes (2002:13) notes that poverty tends to hit similar categories of people. Although at the time the data were not strictly comparable due to different methodologies or sample size, they give us a general indication of those individuals and households most at risk of poverty. These included households where the head or all members were unemployed, large households, single, elderly and retired person households and female headed households. More recent data on material deprivation in the EU (Eurostat, 2005) point to single parents as facing the highest risk of deprivation together with the unemployed who suffer higher deprivation levels than the rest of the population. Single parenthood increases the risk of poverty even after taking into consideration factors such as employment, status, education level, age, health and country of residence although the risk of poverty increases with parenthood even in dual parent families (European Commission, 2007). Single households and elderly persons also appear to have more problems than other age groups (Eurostat, 2005).

In Malta the situation does not appear to be much different from that of other European countries. Similar groups tend to be at higher risk of poverty as in other Member States. Malta's National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAP, 2004-6:8) identifies the unemployed and disabled people, together with disadvantaged children and single parents as being particularly at a high risk. However, low skill adults, persons with mental health problems, those suffering from addictions, certain categories of low income older people as well as immigrants are also likely targets of poverty and social exclusion.

In 2000 according to the Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion of Malta (JIM), children (0-15 years) and those over 65 years appear to have the highest risk in terms of age categories. While children and elderly persons are identified as the most vulnerable groups in Malta, it is male children and elderly women who face the greater risk, in line with EU trends. Regardless of their socio-economic background, persons with disabilities are also among the highly vulnerable groups (JIM, 2003:11-12). The report also notes a risk-of-poverty rate among the unemployed in Malta which is significantly higher than that of the EU (Malta 50%; EU15 39%). Also with higher than the EU average in 2000 are single parents and persons in rented housing (JIM, 2003; Cutajar and Deguara, 2004).

Taking household types, the JIM report (2003:11-12) identifies single parent households with at least one dependent child as being the most likely to have incomes below the poverty threshold. Most of these households are headed by women and more than one fourth of these included children less than 18 years old in 2000. Households with two adults and three dependent children, persons under 30 living alone, large families and single female households are also at risk according to the same report. In an earlier study based on 1995 data on Maltese families, Tabone (1998) identified four family types living in relative poverty. The largest group consisted of those headed by those in the 20-44 age cohort having a low educational level and mainly engaged in unskilled jobs. The second group consisted of families with unemployed breadwinners. The third group comprised families of pensioners, widows and widowers and the fourth group was made up of single-parent families comprising unmarried or separated parents.

A recent survey on income and living conditions (SILC) in Malta (NSO, 2007a) confirms most of the earlier trends discussed in the JIM report with some notable changes. Children and elderly people are still the highest two categories at risk of poverty although the percentage of children at risk has increased by 0.9 percentage points from 21% to 21.9% while the share of elderly persons at risk has declined from 20% to 16.3% since 2000. In terms of household type, single parent households have the highest poverty rate although this also declined from 55% to 47.9%. In contrast, while households with three dependent children still occupy second place, the poverty risk of this social category has risen significantly since 2000. While the JIM (2003) indicates that 28% of these households fell below the poverty threshold in 2000, the NSO survey obtained a worrying 34.7% result for this vulnerable group. Unemployed persons especially males are also a high risk group although since 2000, the poverty rate for this group decreased from 50% to 45.9%. However, this is still a point of concern especially since among males, the risk of poverty rate exceeds 50%.

The following sections take a more detailed look at the particular circumstances and issues related to some of these vulnerable groups in Europe and particularly in Malta.

The Poverty of Women

I have chosen to discuss women as a particularly vulnerable group not only because women, largely due to their caring role and disadvantaged position in the labour market, are more economically disadvantaged than men but also because their greater vulnerability is also evident in the higher poverty rates of lone parent households which in the majority headed by women as well as among the elderly (European Commission, 2006).

Research has consistently shown that women are more likely to be poor than men and have always been the more vulnerable group. They also tend to experience poverty differently from men (Lister, 2004; Alcock, 2006; Ruspini, 2000). Nowadays the term "feminisation of poverty" is frequently used although, as both Lister (2004:56) and Alcock (2006:134-5) argue, this may suggest that female poverty is a recent phenomenon. What is new, according to both authors is that female poverty has gained wider recognition. This is partly due to the increasing number of lone mothers and the increase in women's concentration in low paying jobs as well as increased gender-sensitivity in poverty research although much more still needs to be done in this respect (Ruspini, 2000).

Women face sex-specific risks particularly as a result of the family responsibilities which they have traditionally been expected to shoulder. These responsibilities tend to influence their work patterns, the type of work they do, their income and social security benefits. The combination of disadvantage within the family, labour market and social security system accounts for the persistence of poverty among women (Ruspini, 2000) and distinguish female from male poverty (Lister, 2004). Unlike that of men, women's participation in the labour market is closely linked to the number and age of children. EU data (European Commission, 2006) reveal that the employment rate of women declines between the ages of 20 and 49. The number of children also increases women's likelihood of being in part-time employment. The low female employment rate is a particularly worrying trend in Malta where the increase in female participation in paid work increased by only 0.6 points from 2000 (33.1%) to 2005 (33.7%) (Commission of the European Communities: Country Profiles, 2007b) while in 2007 the female employment rate stood at 35.5% (NSO, 2007c). In Malta, the majority of women start working when they are young and leave the labour market upon becoming mothers with only a small proportion returning at a later stage (NSO, 2007c; Vassallo et al, 2002), most likely on a part-time basis. In line with EU trends, part-time work in Malta has a high female concentration. Between January and March 2007, full-time employed persons were unevenly split into 73% males and 27% females. While 19.1% worked part-time or reduced hours (3.7%), the corresponding rates for men were 4.3% and 0.3% respectively (NSO, 2007c).

Women's limited or interrupted participation in the labour market combined with gender stereotyped occupational segregation and discrimination are predominant factors contributing to women's lower earnings. In the EU, women on average earn 15% less than men on an hourly basis (European Commission, 2006). Therefore while nowadays, more women in the EU are in paid employment, their experience of the labour market is different from that of men as they are more likely to occupy lower status and lower paid jobs, to work fewer hours and for shorter periods of time in predominantly "female" sectors (Alcock, 2006; Deguara, 2004). These factors often lead married women to become dependent on their husband and single, divorced, widowed or separated women, young lone mothers or elderly pensioners into poverty (Alcock, 2006:138-140). Consequently it is hardly surprising that more women than men depend on social assistance (Cutajar, 2006).

Women's Invisible or Hidden Poverty

Women's partial or total dependence on men is one element of poverty experienced by women which may be less obvious and less likely to feature in statistical data on poverty especially if the unit of measurement in poverty research is taken to be the household (Ruspini, 2000). A focus on household or family income may obscure differences in the experience and extent of poverty between men and women (Alcock, 2006). On the one hand the family may cushion the effects of poverty by acting as a support or protective mechanism. This is especially true in Southern European countries where the family still plays an essential role in filling the gaps left by the welfare state, often masking the poverty of women (Ruspini, 2000). On the other hand, household income does not necessarily give a true indication of the economic well-being of individual family members. It is misleading to assume that poor women are the wives or partners of men who are either

unemployed or in low-paying jobs. Women may experience poverty even if they are part of a family whose income is generally adequate (Alcock, 2006). This is due to a number of factors such as the distribution and control of household resources.

Lister (2004) refers to research which shows that household income may be shared unfairly to the detriment of women who often have less spending money and less access to resources and consumables such as food or a car. Since men are generally regarded as the breadwinners even when the women are in paid employment, their income is often regarded as secondary. Consequently, it is men who often control how money is spent, although it is often the women who have to manage the family budget (Alcock, 2006). Especially in low-income families where women also have to deal with debts, research has shown that it is not uncommon for women, especially mothers to make sacrifices and give up on necessities such as food, clothing and heating in order to protect other family members, especially children, from bearing the brunt of the family's economic disadvantage. The sacrifices women have to make in their continuous ordeal of poverty management often entails long hours of unpaid work at home in order to curb and control costs. Thus women's unpaid work is intensified and extended to the detriment of their personal well-being as well as their educational and career advancement (Lister, 2004; Alcock, 2006).

Lone Parenthood

The past few decades have witnessed profound changes in the size and structure of families in many countries including Malta. The various social, economic and technological developments have brought about new trends in various social spheres, not least in the family. Nowadays in many parts of Europe less people opt for marriage and those who do tend to marry at a later stage. Cohabitation and family breakdown are more common and one is less likely to stay with the same partner for life. Births outside marriage have increased while there has been a decrease in fertility (European Communities, 2007b; Millar, 2002). Although these transformations may have taken place later in Mediterranean countries, the situation in Malta is similar in many ways to the overall European picture. A general change in social attitudes, a more secular society and greater educational and occupational opportunities for women are among the factors which have had a significant impact on the family. Maltese families are nowadays much smaller than they were in the middle of the 20th century, couples are getting married at a more mature age and tend to postpone having children to the late 20s (NSO, 2006a). Although divorce is not available in Malta, couples may resort to annulment or separation. Since the 1990s separations have seen a marked increase with a separation index of 429.5 in 2003 up from 100 in 1995 (JIM, 2003). According to the 2005 census, the number of separated persons increased from 4120 in 1995 (1.4%) to 11,045 in 2005 (3.3%) while the number of annulled or divorced persons increased from 978 to 2309 respectively.

As a result of these transformations, the number of lone parent families has increased. There have been significant shifts in the composition of this type of family as well as a deterioration of their economic situation (European Communities, 2007b). In many European countries, marriage dissolution has replaced widowhood as the main cause of lone parenthood followed by single motherhood and the break-up of cohabiting couples. However in Mediterranean countries such as Italy and Spain widowhood is still significant. In Malta widowhood may still be the main cause of lone-parenthood as indicated by 1995 census data (Abela, 1998:65). However as might be expected, widowhood is more common among the older age groups while separation and single parenthood are much more likely to lead to the formation of lone parent households among younger persons especially women. Indeed, the age distribution of lone mother households is significantly different from that of other households with the vast majority (64.8%) aged below fifty; 34.4% aged 20-39 and 30.4% aged between 40 and 49 (NSO, 2003). Such young households are naturally more likely to have dependent children and therefore are at a higher risk of poverty as indicated earlier. In the six European countries reviewed by Millar (2002:94) lone mothers with at least one dependent child had a much higher poverty rate than the national average. Although couples with dependent children are also at a relatively high risk of poverty, their poverty rates are lower than those of lone mothers. Lone mothers wit non-dependent children have a much lower risk of poverty than their younger counterparts.

There are various ways into as well as out of the status of lone parenthood. A person may become a lone parent after divorce, separation or annulment; other causes are desertion or death of the partner as well as the birth of a child outside marriage. At the same time, there are various ways which offer a way out of lone parenthood such as cohabitation, re-marriage, giving up children for adoption or children growing up and

leaving home (Ruspini, 2000; Millar, 2002). This variety together with the numerous differences in welfare systems largely account for the lack of an internationally recognized definition of lone parenthood (Ruspini, 2000). However, regardless of how it is defined, lone parenthood, particularly in the case of dependent children is, as already shown, a high risk poverty factor. In many cases lone parent families are headed by women (European Commission, 2006) although research suggests that in some European regions or countries such as in Eastern Germany, Bulgaria, Ireland, Norway and UK, the trend for lone fathers to be old widowers is starting to change and there is evidence of a notable (although small) percentage of young (under 25) divorced or unmarried single fathers (European Communities, 2007b). However, overall women are much more likely than men to experience lone parenthood (Milliar, 2002:79).

In Malta the number of lone parent households with one or more dependent children in 2005 amounted to 3605 or 2.58% of households, according to the latest census of population and housing (NSO, 2007b) although the data are not classified by gender. However other data indicate that between 75 and 80% of lone parent families are headed by women. Data from the Household Budgetary Survey (HBS) (NSO, 2003) indicates that 76.1% of lone parent households are single mother households while the Gender Equality Action Plan 2005-2007 (ETC, 2005a) states that 75.5% of single parent households are headed by women. The JIM (2003) states that women head 79% of all lone parent households, 26.9% of which include children aged less than 18. This is certainly not a distinctive Maltese characteristic since women head the majority of this type of household in different European countries (Millar, 2002:79). Furthermore in countries such as Portugal and Greece where it is not easy to obtain a divorce and remarriage is not so common, women who become lone mothers as a result of marital breakdown may remain lone mothers for many years (Millar, 2002:86). In Malta divorce is not just difficult! It is non-existent. Therefore remarriage is only possible in cases of annulment or widowhood. However cohabitation appears to be gaining ground. The 2005 census reports 2538 persons as the unmarried partner of the reference person responding to the census, suggesting that there are at least 5076 cohabiting persons in Maltese households (NSO, 2007b).

The survey on income and living conditions (SILC) (NSO, 2007a) indicates that lone parent households are the type of household most at risk of poverty, with a poverty rate of 47.9%. The rate for males is slightly higher (49.2%) than that of females (47.1%). This may suggest that lone fathers tend to have low income occupations or that since lone mothers make up a larger group, their income range is more varied, thus raising their mean income. The slight difference to the disadvantage of fathers does not support the argument made by Millar (1992 quoted in Alcock, 2006:143) that gender is the most crucial element in lone parent poverty, that "it is precisely because lone mothers are women that they have a very high risk of poverty" and that the relatively small number of lone fathers are less likely to be poor. However the fact remains that since lone parent households have the highest poverty rate and most of these households are lone mother households, more women than men are suffering the financial consequences of lone parenthood.

In many ways the situation of lone mothers is a reflection of wider issues related to women in general and to gender inequality in various countries (Millar, 2002:79). In Malta, according to HBS data (NSO, 2003), the Southern Harbour district has the highest concentration of lone mother households. The same report also shows that only 40.8% of lone mothers own their house compared to 58.9% for other households. Furthermore Kiernan (2002:89) maintains that the odds ratio of unmarried mothers to be living in social housing at age 33 is almost seven times those for married mothers. As stated in the JIM (2003:11) those living in rented housing are two and a half times more likely to be poor than home owners. Furthermore, lone parents also pay the highest average annual rent compared to other households, this being one of the main factors leading to their poverty. However Malta's National Action Plan on Poverty 2004-2006 gives a much higher figure for single mothers who own their home (56.5%) although it gives a similar figure to the HBS for those in rented housing. As reported by Vassallo et al (2002:151), female-headed households are more likely to live in sub-standard or inadequate housing, although the situation is worse among older women.

With regard to household amenities, lone mother households in Malta tend to show higher levels of deprivation when compared to other households in terms of television sets, video cameras, freezers, dishwashers and air-conditioners although no differences were noted in relation to other appliances (NSO, 2003). Ruspini (2000:124) reports that in all the European countries in her study, when compared to married mothers lone parents lacked a number of consumer goods such as microwaves, dishwashers or videos. In Ireland and Great Britain lone mothers were less likely to have access to a telephone. They found it difficult to save, take an annual holiday, replace furniture or invite friends or family over. In a study on poverty and

social exclusion in six European countries (Tsakloglou and Papadopoulos, 2002:40), it was found that deprivation in terms of household necessities and consumer durables varied considerably across countries with relative deprivation scores being very high in Austria, Germany and the UK, high in Greece and moderately high in Portugal. However in all countries the share of lone parent households reporting financial hardship and lack of subjective well-being was higher than the national average. Reviewing the same countries, Millar (2002:95-6) found much higher levels of relative deprivation among lone mothers than among couples with dependent children, with the highest gap found in Germany and Austria and the lowest in Greece and Portugal. For these mothers, deprivation not only means having to do without certain desirable items or having to work harder without the help of certain appliances. It also means a greater risk of social exclusion to their own detriment and that of their children. This is especially more so when they lack means of communication or transport (Ruspini, 2002).

Lone parent families are more likely to experience poverty in countries where their employment rates are low and where family benefits and social transfers are not high (Millar, 2002). The decision of any woman with dependent children to participate in the labour market very often highly depends on her ability to find a work-life balance. This is especially more so where lone mothers are concerned (Millar, 2002). Millar also cites research which shows that the policy approaches of different countries have a significant role in facilitating or limiting access to the labour market for lone parents. In Malta where the participation of women in the labour market is only around 35%, the participation rate of lone mothers is even lower. According to the JIM only 16.5% of single parent households are employed, 2.4% of which only on a part-time basis. Lone mothers have a much lower full-time participation rate (8.1%) than lone fathers (35.6%) (JIM, 2003:11; NAP 2004-2006:9). They are also more likely to work part-time and in lower-paid "female" occupations" (Cutajar, 2000 in Cutajar, 2006). Lone mothers also tend to depend more on welfare benefits than their male counterparts due to their caring responsibilities (NSO, 2003; Cutajar, 2006). Dependence on benefits together with their generally lower educational level (NSO, 2003; European Communities, 2007b; Cutajar 2006) further contribute to lower rates of lone mother employment. At the same time, the activity rate of lone mothers is often higher than that of married mothers (European Communities, 2007b; Cutajar, 2006; Millar, 2002) partly as a result of being pushed into the labour market by their circumstances. It is hardly surprising therefore that lone parent households have the second lowest disposable income among all household types in Malta with an average annual income of Lm4744 following only single person households (NSO, 2007a). According to HBS data (NSO, 2003) within lone mother households only 40.8% of total income comes from salaries (60.1% for other households) while 43.8% comes from social benefits (16.6% for other households).

At the same time lone parents may receive additional support from family members, friends or the community apart from receiving social benefits. Millar (2002) reports that in certain countries such as Greece and Portugal there is greater reliance on family support as family ties are strong. In Malta family and neighbourhood ties are also quite strong very often resulting in the provision of informal support such as childcare (JIM, 2003). In her study of young, unmarried mothers, Cutajar (2006:287) also quotes research which shows that family support is of crucial importance for young mothers. The help offered by the family in the form of housing, advice, transport, childcare, financial as well as emotional support very often enables the young mother to develop her educational, emotional, parental, social and occupational skills. Furthermore, despite the financial hardship faced by many lone mothers, Lister (2004:58) cites research which suggests that some lone mothers tend to prefer the poverty of lone parenthood to the economic dependence experienced in their previous male-dominated marriage they at least enjoy financial autonomy.

The Elderly

While lone parenthood is a status which affects a relatively small proportion of the population, old age is a stage in the life of the individual which is experienced by most, especially in the industrialized countries, where more people are reaching old age. In Malta as in other European countries, the number of old people in the population has been on the increase. While in 1921 9.6% of the population were over 60 years old, the figure went up to 15.9% in 1995 and in 2005 (persons aged 65 and over) the elderly made up 13.7% of the Maltese population (NSO, 2006a). According to the 2005 census, there are 77434 people over 60 years old or 19.12% out of a population of 404962. As expected, in every 10-year category of those aged between 60 and 100, women are notably more numerous than men (NSO, 2007b). Women's longer life expectancy may be seen as a blessing but at the same time it has serious implications. Women not only tend to live longer

than men. They also tend to marry men older than themselves. Therefore older women are more likely to become widowed and spend their old age in solitude. This together with other disadvantages related to their gender has a negative impact on their quality of life (Vassallo et al, 2002:155). This trend for a larger proportion of elderly women living alone also has important implications for policy-makers (Middleton, 2002). Longevity is expected to rise even further in the future so that by 2050 Europeans are expected to live around four or five years longer than today. The population of those in their 20s will decline by 20%. While the category for those aged 50-64 will increase by 25%, the share of those older than 80 will double (Peer Review, 2006).

Overall, the elderly report living standards which are relatively close to those of the population aged 0-64. Although in some countries (Ireland and Cyprus) the level is under 75%, in others the standard of living of the elderly even exceeds 90%. In Malta, the elderly report a standard of living of over 85% of that of the rest of the population (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). However, the elderly have a higher risk of poverty than the rest of the population in most of Europe although the older group among the old (75+) and particularly older women are at a higher risk of poverty (SPC, 2006; European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006).

In the first years of the 21st century about 13 million elderly people in the EU25 are at risk of poverty. This translates into one-sixth of the 74 million elderly population of the EU (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). Taking income-based measures of poverty in terms of the 60% median income thresholds of each specific country, the same report indicates that the highest poverty rates among the elderly are found in Cyprus, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Greece and the UK. While in the EU 15 the average elderly poverty rate is 19%, lower rates (9% average) are observed among the new Member States, especially those previously forming part of the communist bloc. Indeed Cyprus has by far the highest elderly poverty rate in the EU (52%) while Malta, with a 20% poverty rate, slightly exceeds the EU average. In Malta the elderly are the second highest category at risk of poverty after children according to the SILC (NSO, 2007a). With the increase in life expectancy, protecting the elderly against poverty is a major concern for the EU. It is estimated (Peer Review, 2006) that by existing standards, those aged 75+ at risk of poverty will increase dramatically by the middle of the 21st century.

Compared to the working age population, among the elderly there was a higher persistence of the risk of poverty in all EU15 countries (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). Indeed this is one of the distinguishing features of old age poverty since it is more difficult for the elderly to improve their situation in societies which do not facilitate the continued participation of the elderly in the labour market. The situation is even worse for the oldest and most frail (Lister, 2004:67). Consequently, the report by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (2006) suggests that policies should aim to increase the incentives for elderly people to work and save more during their working lives. Indeed the EU is committed to facilitating a longer working life. The Lisbon Strategy set a target of increasing the employment rate for workers aged 55-64 from the current rate of around 43% to 50% by 2010 while the Barcelona Council of 2002 recommended an addition of five years to the retirement age also by 2010 (Peer Review, 2006; Commission of European Communities, 2007a).

Malta's employment rate of older workers is relatively low (around 30%) similar to that of Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Austria, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). Very often the difference in the labour force participation of older workers in different countries is accounted for by the variation in the labour market participation of women. In the Nordic countries elderly women are much more likely to be engaged in paid employment than in Mediterranean countries where the proportion of female homemakers is high (Hallberg, 2006). In Malta only about 11% of women aged 55-64 are economically active (NSO, 2007d). Indeed increasing these figures was one of the key priorities set out in Malta's National Action Plan 2004-2006. However Alcock (2006) cites research which shows that older workers, even before reaching the pension age, may face discrimination and marginalisation. This may be linked to the problem of ageism which is based on stereotyped assumptions about older people, such as their presumed lack of efficiency and flexibility. Older people may find it difficult to find employment also because due, to their pension entitlement, they may be considered as being less in need of a job (Alcock, 2006:168).

In terms of households, in most countries, single elderly households have a high risk of poverty. Like lone-parent households, single elderly households are more likely to be headed by women, further confirming the significance of gender in the distribution of poverty (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). As pointed out by Vassallo et al (2002:142) for elderly women, living alone can have certain repercussions such as emotional weakness due to lack of social contacts and activities. Especially at night elderly women may also feel physically insecure. Furthermore, it is also difficult for them to see to house maintenance since they are either incapable of doing the repairs themselves; they may not feel comfortable letting workmen inside their house or they may not be able to afford it. As a result, they often end up living in sub-standard housing. According to the JIM (2003) elderly female heads of households live in inferior housing conditions compared to their younger counterparts, many lacking such essential amenities as bathrooms and kitchens. In households with two adults one of whom is over 65 years old, the poverty rate in the EU is generally lower than the average for the whole elderly population (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). In this regard however, Malta does not follow European trends since according to the same report, in Malta these households have a higher poverty risk than the 65+ population. This is also confirmed by the SILC carried out by the NSO (2007a).

Elderly people who live in rented accommodation are in many countries more likely to be poorer than elderly home owners especially in Ireland, Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). Elderly people are also more likely to be sick and disabled than the rest of the population (Middleton, 2002) and thus may have more expenses, less access to the labour market and a greater risk of dependence and social exclusion. In a study based on six European countries, Middleton (2002) reports that retired people are slightly more likely than other adults to be deprived of household amenities, largely because their homes might be older. At the same time, apart from Greece, retired people are less likely to be deprived of consumer durables although they tend to lack household and personal necessities more than other adults. Education also appears to have a notable impact on poverty risk among the elderly. Older people in the south of Europe are likely to have spent fewer years in formal education, resulting in a higher risk of poverty (Hallberg, 2006). Furthermore, retired persons are less likely to have completed secondary and tertiary level education in many countries especially those where policies encouraging education at these levels are relatively recent (Middleton, 2002). For example in Malta, secondary education only became compulsory in the 1970s, thus not affecting today's elderly.

Although the elderly tend to have higher rates of poverty than the rest of the population, their income tends to be closer to the poverty threshold than that of working age persons (SPC, 2006). Higher poverty rates are normally linked to higher poverty gaps. The fact that among elderly people the reverse is true points to the importance of welfare benefits in alleviating poverty among the elderly (SPC, 2006). On average, in the EU 25 the elderly receive incomes 16% below the poverty line while the poverty gap for the rest of the population is 23% (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). The same report indicates that the poverty gap ratios for men and women are not significantly different although gaps in certain countries are notably higher for males (Ireland, Austria and Slovak Republic) or for women (Greece and UK).

According to the First Report on the poverty of the elderly in the EU 25 by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (2006), the difference in the poverty rates of elderly men and women is evident throughout the EU especially in the EU15. Although the figures are not strictly comparable, the poverty risk is higher for women in all member states and females aged 75+ have a higher poverty risk than those aged 65-74 almost in all countries but particularly in Ireland. Elderly women have more than double the risk of being poor than their male counterparts in a number of countries although in others (including Malta) the differences are relatively small. In Malta (2001 data) women also have a higher risk in both age groups. Although the gender gap is not large (19% males; 21% females for those aged 65+), it is wider among those over 75 years old (18% males; 24% females) (SPC, 2006).

There are various factors which account for higher risks among the oldest people especially women (SPC, 2006). They may have accrued lower pension entitlements; social security legislation may have made less generous provision. Women have traditionally found it even more difficult to have full pension rights due to gender differences in opportunities earlier in life (SPC, 2006). Women's financial situation during retirement is closely linked to the events and circumstances which have shaped their lives such as decisions about earning, saving and spending. Considering the different expectations tied to the roles of men and women in

society, certain 'choices' made by women may not actually be voluntary (Peer Review, 2006). This coupled with the various disadvantages experienced by women in the labour market discussed earlier, increases women's likelihood of experiencing poverty and social exclusion in old age.

As might be expected, old age benefits make up the largest proportion of the income of the elderly (Alcock, 2006; European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, 2006). However, despite the widespread provision of state benefits as well as the increase in private pension protection, many elderly persons still have to depend on inadequate state pensions (Alcock, 2006). Although for many retirement from work may be perceived as a time of rest, relaxation and an opportunity to enjoy pastimes and leisure activities, for others retirement brings with it a deterioration of their quality of life (ibid.). Furthermore, retirement has different implications for men and women, largely due to their different social roles (Hills et al, 2002). While women tend to retire from the labour market earlier than men (Middleton, 2002) for many older women who were homemakers for most of their lives, retirement "is something that happens to their husbands" as Alcock (2006:169) puts it. Elderly female homemakers continue being homemakers after retirement age. Unpaid work at home may even increase as a result of having to take care of one's spouse or other family members (Alcock, 2006). As often happens in Malta, due to lack of adequate or affordable childcare, female elderly often take up the responsibility of caring for grandchildren or other family members who need their support. Spiteri and McKay's study in this volume brings out the pros and cons of this dilemma facing the elderly. On the one hand, helping other family members makes elderly people feel useful and socially integrated. On the other hand, having to shoulder the problems of others very often leads to stress as well as to financial problems. Therefore especially for those who did not manage to save sufficiently earlier in life, retirement may not be associated with relaxation and leisure but with a continuation of unpaid work for homemakers and with lower earnings for breadwinners and their dependents.

The Poverty of Children

Children are among the most vulnerable groups experiencing poverty not only in developing countries but also in the rich developed countries. Some 40 to 50 million children live below the poverty lines of the world's richest countries (UNICEF, 2005). In the EU children are more likely to be victims of poverty than the average citizen in almost all member states. In some EU countries almost one third of children are at risk (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). The UNICEF (2005) study on child poverty in rich countries reports that, regardless of how poverty is measured, the situation of children has worsened since the mid 90s. The percentage of children living in poverty has increased in 17 of the 24 OECD nations for which data were available.

The same study (UNICEF, 2005) reveals that while Denmark and Finland have poverty rates of less than 3%, in the US and Mexico, the rates of child poverty are over 20%. The report also points out that all six non-European countries in the study (Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand and the US) are at the bottom half of a table indicating the percentage of children living in relative poverty (defined as households whose income is less than 50%). It is also shown that Nordic countries show the greatest progress, with poverty rates below 5%. The report also suggests that there might be a link between population levels and poverty as countries with smaller populations (4 to 9 million) tend to have lower rates of poverty. There are also significant differences between countries in the North and South of Europe. According to the UNICEF (2007) report, nine countries, all in the north of Europe, have managed to reduce poverty to less than 10% while in Portugal, Spain and Italy child poverty still exceeds 15%.

The UNICEF reports (2005; 2007) recognize the limitations of making international comparisons based on a specific measure of family income as this gives only a partial picture of child poverty. For example it does not indicate how far below the poverty line a family income may be; it does not indicate the differences in the standard of living of different countries; relative income poverty may also hide situations of child deprivation in cases where the family income is higher than 50% of median income but where this is not benefiting the child such as due to drug or alcohol abuse by parents. In contrast, a child may not be deprived in a low-income family. The 2007 UNICEF study in fact takes into consideration three other dimensions apart from relative income poverty: the unemployment of adults in the household; deprivation; and lack of cultural and educational resources, in an attempt to better grasp the complexity of child poverty.

In Malta, children (0-15) are the age group most at risk of poverty with a poverty rate of 21.9% according to the survey on income and living conditions (NSO, 2007a). Although since 2000 the figure did not change much, there was still a slight increase from 21% (JIM, 2003). Children increase household costs especially at a time when mothers reduce or end their participation in the labour market (Lister, 2004:68). It has also been documented that living in a lone-parent household or in a family with many children further increases the risks (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). As indicated earlier, most Maltese families rely on the income of a male breadwinner for their earnings, as the female labour activity rate is significantly low (below 35%). Most women quit the labour market upon becoming mothers. Moreover as the discussion on lone-parenthood has shown, in Malta the households experiencing the highest risk of poverty are those consisting either of lone-parents with dependent children or of two adults with three or more dependent children (34.7%) (NSO, 2007a). Another group of vulnerable children involves those in residential care. These made up 0.33% of all children under 18 in 2000 according to the JIM (2003). These factors probably contribute significantly to explain the relatively high incidence of poverty among Maltese children.

On average the proportion of children living in jobless households in the EU has remained the same between 2001 and 2006 although there are significant variations between Member States (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). In Malta there are almost 9% of children living in jobless households (Eurochild, 2007). While this figure is only about one half that of the UK (over 16%) which reports the highest rate of children living in jobless households in the EU, it is still significantly higher than that of Luxembourg with a rate of around 2.5% (Bradshaw, 2007). At the same time, Malta's proportion of children living in jobless households is close to the EU average of 9.5% (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). Moreover, between 2000 and 2005 the share of Maltese children living in jobless households increased by 1% (NSO, 2006a). The fact that a significant number of children are brought up in such households is of great concern. The absence of an adult breadwinner may be detrimental to the educational and future labour market success of children (Commission of European Communities, 2007a).

Data from six EU countries and the US (European Commission, 2005) suggest that apart from lone-parenthood, family size and the unemployment or underemployment of adults, there are other factors which enhance the poverty risks of children. Children are more likely to be at risk of poverty if their parents are young, if they are part of immigrant, ethnic or racial minority families or if a member of their family is disabled or chronically sick. Moreover, although the employment of one of the parents protects children to a degree, children living in one-earner families are nowadays at a higher risk of poverty than in the past even if the sole earner has a relatively good income (Hills et al, 2002:109). Children in care, disabled, Roma and unaccompanied immigrant children together with children of substance-abusing parents and of parents who had been institutionalised are mentioned as particularly vulnerable by many of national reports on poverty and exclusion in the EU. Malta's report particularly highlights the lack of attention given to unaccompanied immigrant children and children with disabilities (Eurochild, 2007).

Children's poverty is more likely to persist for a long time although a significant number of children do succeed in escaping poverty (European Commission, 2005). The experience of living in poverty not only has an impact on children at the time; it also has long-lasting effects such as low educational performance, unemployment and lower earnings (Hills et al, 2002; Alcock, 2006; UNICEF, 2007). Rates of early school leavers and school dropouts are one indicator of educational performance. Figures vary significantly across the EU with a rate of 30.8% in Spain and 5.5% in Poland. Malta has an alarmingly high rate of early school leavers (41.2% in 2005 down from 54.2% in 2000) (Eurochild, 2007). The same report interestingly notes that the EU15 average was higher (17.2%) than that of the EU25 (17.2%).

Poor children may also become pregnant at an early age, have lower skills and aspirations and be welfare dependent (UNICEF, 2007). They are also less likely to enjoy good health and to stay out trouble with the law (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). There may also be problems associated with stigma, being different and difficulties with fitting in or joining in which can lead to bullying (Ridge, 2002 in Lister, 2004:69). The impact of poverty tends to be harder if poverty spells are longer and more frequent. They also depend on the severity of poverty and the age of the child. Younger children tend to be worse hit (European Commission, 2005).

Child poverty is not inevitable. It is the result of political choices by governments in their efforts to mitigate market forces (Gordon and Townsend, 2000). However, policy decisions do not act alone in determining

poverty levels among children. There is a complex interplay between government policies, family efforts, labour market conditions and the wider forces of social change (UNICEF, 2005). Moreover, although there is a clear link between the level of government spending on family and social benefits and child poverty rates, there are still variations in child poverty rates in countries with similar levels of government spending. This implies (i) that child poverty does not depend only on the level of state expenditure and (ii) that many countries may potentially reduce child poverty without having to increase their expenditure (UNICEF, 2005).

The last few years have seen child poverty being given a much greater priority by many Member States. This was especially encouraged by the EU's Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Eurochild, 2007). However many governments still perceive child poverty from the perspective of adults. They tend to focus on the needs of parents and families while children's views tend to be ignored (European Commission, 2005). Malta has been criticised by Eurochild (2007) in this regard. The writers of the report argue that while children and young people are given due consideration in Malta's National Action Plan on poverty and social exclusion, their participation was not facilitated and their voices were not heard although various professionals who work directly with children were consulted. Lister (2004) cites research which calls for a shift to a child-centred perspective on poverty, focusing on the needs and experiences of children themselves as this would provide a more holistic picture of child poverty. A study by the European Commission (2005) argues for an integrated strategy of child, family and women-friendly policies aimed at reducing and preventing child poverty which would acknowledge the problem of child poverty and make it a policy priority as well as recognise the rights of children. The report sets out a set of child-related policy initiatives targeting the needs of children and their parents as well as particularly vulnerable groups such as disabled and immigrant children and children in care (European Commission, 2005).

The Unemployed and the Working Poor

As might be expected, unemployment is closely linked to poverty and social exclusion, although the link is not automatic. A person may be unemployed but not living in poverty as a result of support from other family members or due to state generosity. Similarly, being employed does not necessarily imply that a person is protected from poverty. In fact a significant proportion of the poor consists of low-paid working individuals - the working poor (McKnight, 2002:105).

Unemployment and poverty are related to a number of social factors, thus certain social categories are at a higher risk. According to Alcock (2006), the risk of poverty is related to class status since those occupying working class jobs and who have low skill and educational levels are more likely to experience unemployment and poverty. Sick or disabled persons may also find it difficult to secure paid employment as employers may perceive their ability to perform as too limited. Stereotyped assumptions and prejudice may also exclude other groups from the labour market such as older people and those belonging to ethnic minorities, thus increasing their risk of poverty.

According to the European Commission (2007a), in 2005, EU unemployment stood at 8.8% up from 8.6% in 2001. Long-term unemployment rose from 3.6% to 3.9%. In most EU countries, unemployment rates are higher for women than for men (2.1% on average) while youth unemployment stands at a high 18.5%. Malta's labour market trends are dissimilar in a number of ways to the general situation in the EU. Having the lowest labour market participation rates of women as well as of older workers in the EU as well as the highest rate of early school leavers, Malta also has comparatively lower levels of unemployment, both short- and long-term as well as acceptable levels of youth employment (Commission of European Communities: Country Profiles, 2007b). Another different streak characteristic of the Maltese labour market is that men register higher levels of both short - and long-term unemployment (NSO, 2007e). This may in part be due to the lower rates of female participation in the labour market.

In Malta, unemployment data are derived from two main sources: The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) which keeps records of all those registering for work and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) carried out by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on a quarterly basis and is based on a random sample of 2500 private households. Consequently the two sources provide different figures. According to ETC data (NSO, 2007e) in September 2007 there were 6629 persons registering for work, 5940 under Part I of the

unemployment register and 689 under Part II.[1] According to ETC data based upon both registers, in June 2007, the unemployment rate stood at 4.3% of the labour supply with men registering a higher rate (4.9%) than women (3.1%) unlike the general EU trend. The long-term unemployment rate stood at 1.7% (men: 2.1%; women: 0.1%), although these data pertain only to those registering under Part I. On the same basis, the unemployment rates of older workers (45+) stood at 4.1% for men and 2.9% for women while youth unemployment (younger than 25) stood at a relatively low rate of 5.5% (men: 6.4%; women 4.1%) (NSO, 2007e). The corresponding figures derived from the LFS (April-June 2007) are higher than those provided by the ETC although still lower than those for the whole EU. According to the LFS (NSO, 2007d), Malta's unemployment rate is 6.6% with most of the unemployed (14.8%) aged between 15 and 24 years.

The rate of those living in jobless households in Malta is also relatively low (8.2% in 2005) compared to the EU average of 10.2% (Commission of European Communities: Country Profiles, 2007b). In the EU even countries with relatively high rates of employment have above average rates of people living in jobless households. Overall the percentage of women living in jobless households (10.8%) is two percentage points higher than for men although this is higher (3 percentage points or more) in certain countries including Malta (Commission of European Communities, 2007a).

Besides being one of the main sources of poverty, joblessness is a central determinant of social exclusion. Having a job is for many people a platform to meet other people, form social networks and realize their full potential as members of society (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). This does not mean that all forms of employment offer such opportunities. Semi-skilled and non-skilled work often deprives workers of opportunities for personal development, social participation, learning opportunities, autonomy, job security as well as other related services such as transport and childcare (De Lathouwer, 2001). In spite of this, being without a job has been found to be a stressful experience especially for the long-term unemployed who do not just lose their source of income but also their skills and self-esteem (Commission of European Communities, 2007a). Although research has shown that people may experience unemployment in different ways, there is consistent evidence which suggests that the well-being of the employed is considerably higher than that of the unemployed (De Lathouwer, 2001). This also emerged from Spiteri and McKay's contribution in this publication. They showed how unemployment impacts negatively on the well-being of its victims by increasing their stress, demoralising them and putting serious limitations on their (very often modest) aspirations. In certain cases the frustration and the long periods of idleness also led to other problems such as gambling, drug abuse and alcoholism. Long-term unemployment rather than unemployment as such may be assumed to pose the real poverty risk. Those having low skills and qualifications have a higher risk of long-term unemployment mainly due to a decrease in the demand for skilled and unskilled work over the past years (Agulnik et al, 2002).

Despite the relatively low rates of both short-term and long-term unemployment in Malta, the poverty rate among the unemployed is a high 45.9% with men appearing to be much worse hit than women. In fact the poverty rate of unemployed males (53.7%) is more than twice that of their female counterparts (24.7%) (NSO, 2007a). This could be due to a number of factors such as the level and type of benefits received and whether they receive financial support from other family members. In Malta, according to ETC data (NSO, 2007e), most long-term unemployed persons are male. Out of a total of 2436, only 374 women have been registering for work for 53 weeks or more. Disability may also be an influencing factor considering that almost 80% of disabled persons registering for work under Part I of the unemployment register are male. The same ETC data show that youth unemployment is also dominated by men (6.4%) although the gap between males and females is not so wide (women: 4.1%). However, young unemployed persons are more likely to be recipients of low levels of social assistance, if at all. Most of the long-term unemployed who are older than 45 years old are also men (4.1% as opposed to 2.9% women). Furthermore, women (especially lone mothers) may also be recipients of children's allowance.

The high risk of poverty among the unemployed in Malta suggests that welfare benefits are not sufficient to alleviate jobless persons from poverty. Although not all those registering for work (such as school leavers who still live with their parents) are entitled to social assistance, ex-employed persons who have paid at least

[1] Part I includes new job seekers, re-entrants into the labour market and those made redundant by their former employer. Part II includes those who were dismissed from work due to disciplinary action, and those who left work voluntarily, refused work or training opportunities or were struck off the register upon inspection by law enforcement personnel.

50 insurance contributions prior to losing their job, are entitled to a fixed daily rate of unemployment benefit [Lm4.13 (€9.62) daily for single parents and married persons maintaining a spouse who does not have a full-time job; Lm2.70 (€6.29) for any other person]. The rates for special unemployment benefit are set at Lm6.92 (€16.12) and Lm4.52 (€10.53) respectively. Entitlement to unemployment benefit does not exceed 156 days after which a person who is still looking for work will start receiving social assistance (Department of Social Security, 2006). However, while social protection may relieve a person from poverty, it does not necessarily succeed in ensuring an escape from poverty. For social assistance to be truly effective, it has to be accompanied by other social services such as adequate health, education and housing and more importantly by measures which encourage and facilitate integration or re-entry into the labour market for those who are able to work (Commission of European Communities, 2007a).

Reducing reliance on welfare and increasing self-sufficiency by encouraging labour market participation and making work a more viable and attractive option than living on "relief" (as social assistance is often referred to by the Maltese) is the prerogative of many governments. While unemployment benefits may provide some degree of income security and enable people more time to search for jobs which suit them best, they can reduce the financial incentive to go back to work, hence leading a person into an unemployment trap. This happens especially when an individual is faced with the prospect of a low-paying job which would only increase her/his income marginally when calculating the taxes that have to be paid, the loss of benefits to which s/he was previously entitled as well as other expenses associated with work such as childcare and transport (Commission of European Communites, 2007a). Studies have shown that for long-term unemployed breadwinners and lone parents, these factors make low paid work financially less appealing, trapping them into unemployment for periods which may persist for a long time. This is especially so in countries with welfare models offering a long benefit entitlement without attaching to it any training requirement for the unemployed (De Lathouwer, 2001).

The Malta National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Inclusion (2004-6) certainly recognised the many challenges related to work and unemployment as evident both in its stated strategic approach as well as in the number of key priorities which are set to address a number of social problems, the first four of which being directly linked to employment, unemployment, making work pay, training and accessibility to the labour market of certain vulnerable groups (pp. 8-10). It is also important for policy-makers to recognise that although employment plays an important role in alleviating poverty, it does not necessarily imply that those who have a job are protected against poverty. There are workers who still cannot cope with living expenses especially if they have a low wage and they have a family to support (Alcock, 2006). The self-employed, who are not protected by the minimum wage, may also be at risk of poverty and their income may even at times drop below the level of social protection according to Alcock. In Malta, the percentage of the working poor is significantly lower than that of the unemployed. At 5.5%, the poverty rate of those who have a job is not extremely worrying considering the much higher risk of poverty of those without a job (45.9%) (NSO, 2007a). This is probably due to a combination of the long-established minimum wage which offers a degree of protection as well as the wide range of social measures and state-funded services offered in Malta. It is interesting to note that similar to the unemployed category, the risk of poverty among the working poor is higher for men (6.6%) than it is for women (2.9%) (NSO, 2007a). Considering that overall females tend to work fewer hours than males, that they are more likely to work on a part-time bases and occupy lower level jobs than men, this may be related either to the fact that more men are found in elementary occupations or to their being more likely to be the sole breadwinners in their household.

Paid employment is the main source of income for many families and individuals. It is also an important means of social inclusion. Although unemployment figures are not significantly high in Malta, close to half of those without paid employment live in poverty and the solution to the problem may not just be the availability of jobs for these people. As policy-makers are undoubtedly aware, the problem is more complex and various issues related to the problem also have to be addressed such as how to make work pay, how to make work more accessible to vulnerable groups such as the disabled, how to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in the labour market, how to integrate older workers in the labour market and how to improve the skills and knowledge of those seeking work, especially the long-term unemployed.

Disability and Poverty

The 2005 census indicates that there are 23,848 persons with long-term disability in Malta amounting to about 6% of the total population. This marks an increase of around 2% since the 1995 census where disabled persons amounted to 16,576 (Cutajar and Deguara, 2004). It should be noted that census data are based on self-assessment and individual perceptions and not on objective criteria although the census defines disability as "any restriction in or lack of ability (resulting from impairment) to perform an action in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being" (NSO, 2007b, p. xix). It may be argued that such responses are too subjective and that there has been no "real" increase in disability but simply an increase in those who see themselves as disabled. However, as Agulnik et al (2002) argue, subjective assessments of disability may be more useful than more rigid measures in that they reflect the person's actual experiences and needs.

Disability covers a wide range of physical and mental conditions and social circumstances where individuals may experience problems or encounter restrictions in being independent, in providing for themselves or participating in social activities (Alcock, 2006). Disability can take many forms and may be the result of visual, hearing, physical, intellectual impairments and mental conditions as well as a combination of these. A person may not necessarily be born with an impairment but may become disabled as a result of accidents, physical ailments or old age (Davis, 1995 in Cutajar and Deguara, 2004). As the nature of disability varies, so do the problems and needs arising from these disabilities (Alcock, 2006). According to the same author, this variation has also led to numerous political and academic debates regarding the definition of disability which remain largely unsolved and controversial. Therefore studies on the relationship between disability and poverty may be using different definitions of disability (and perhaps different definitions of poverty) making comparisons between research finding problematic (Alcock, 2006). Getting a clear picture of disabled persons in the EU is not an easy task also because definitions and criteria vary according to policy objectives, legislation and administrative standards. Surveys based on subjective data are influenced by varying cultural perceptions in different Member States. Furthermore, many studies focus on individuals of working age and exclude children and people living in institutions (Commission of the European Communities, 2005).

One may take different perspectives of disability. The medical model regards disability as a personal problem resulting from disease, accident or some other health condition which can be tackled by means of medical intervention. The social welfare model is closely linked to the medical model and sees impairments as a source of disadvantage and social exclusion which can be improved or reduced by means of cash benefits or other forms of welfare. In contrast, the social model does not consider disability as inherent in the person but which arises out of the person's social context and environment including its physical structures (such as buildings and transport services) as well as its social constructions and beliefs which may give rise to discrimination against disabled persons (European Commission, 2002).

According to the 2005 census, the most common form of disability in Malta is due to physical impairments (7702) while a significant number (3763) of disabled persons have more than one impairment. There are slightly more females (12003) who suffer from some form of disability than males (11845). The census also indicates that the highest concentration of disabled persons is in the Southern Harbour Region although the dispersion is more or less even across the other regions (NSO, 2007b). The majority of persons with disability are not registered with the National Commission Persons with Disability (NCPD). In 2005 there were 9063 on its register, 55% of whom were male. Almost 50% were aged 60 or older while 11% were younger than 20 (NSO, 2006b).

It is estimated that in the EU 44.6 million people or almost 16% of the EU population aged between 16 and 64 suffer from a long-standing health problem or disability (LSHPD) although there are significant variations between countries. It should be noted that these figures do not differentiate between disabilities and long-standing health problems (Commission of the European Communities, 2005). Although these figures cannot be compared to Malta's relatively low disability rate of 6%, the figure for Malta remains relatively low even when both long-standing health problems and disabilities are taken into consideration. According to Eurostat (2003) only 8.5% of the Maltese working-age population suffered from LSHPD in 2002 compared to 16.4% in the EU 15. The same report also suggests that rates of disability do not differ significantly on the basis of gender as data for Malta also show. However, data also indicate that the risk of being disabled in the EU is

slightly higher for women than for men, possibly due to gender differences in work participation although this has not been confirmed (European Commission, 2001). As might be expected, both local (NSO, 2007b; NSO, 2002) and EU (Eurostat, 2003) data show that rates of disability increase with age. At the turn of the millennium, 63% of people with disabilities were older than 45 while the corresponding percentage for non-disabled persons in the EU was only 34% (European Commission, 2001).

While an impairment does not necessarily lead to social problems such as poverty or social exclusion, there appears to be a dynamic link between poverty and disability (Elwan, 1999). Alcock (2006) cites research which shows that disability is often associated with a decline in or lack of income and employment while those at the lower end of the income distribution are more likely to become disabled than those having higher incomes. The JIM (2003) reveals that in Malta disabled people have a high risk of poverty regardless of their socio-economic background. Although the disability pension helps to relieve some of the financial problems faced by these people, it does not guarantee financial independence. Furthermore, although a disabled person may supplement the disability pension by income from paid work, the total income cannot exceed the minimum wage, thus increasing the risk that the disabled remain trapped in poverty (JIM, 2003: 12). The same report also notes the low rates of employment among persons with disability who also tend to have low educational levels. Disabled persons tend to find it difficult to infiltrate the labour market and to undergo training programmes.

The many difficulties encountered by persons with disabilities and their families in Malta were among the issues addressed in a research project conducted by the NCPD in collaboration with the National Statistics Office (NCPD, 2004). The survey participants were selected from among those registered with the Commission. Although the survey does not focus specifically on poverty or social exclusion, many of the findings point in their direction. Almost 15% of respondents receive no income at all while half of them claim to earn less than Lm200 (€465.87) a month, Lm40 (€93.17) less than the national minimum wage. Where income is concerned, the problem appears to be more prevalent among females than among males with 26% of females earning nothing compared to 5% of males and with a generally lower proportion of females than males the higher the income. At the same time, an ETC (2005b) study related to the work experience of disabled persons found that a significant number of respondents earned between Lm200 (€465.87) and Lm349 (€812.95) monthly. A disability pension is received by 37% of the people surveyed. Less females receive a pension than males although the percentage is much lower among those aged 60 and over (NCPD, 2004). Persons with disability may receive other forms of financial assistance from the government such as invalidity pension, special children's allowance or pensions for schizophrenia or chronic illness as indicated in the National Disability Survey (NCPD, 2003a). Furthermore, persons with disability have expenses related to their disability as the NCPD (2004) study shows. These may involve specialized services or equipment, home adjustments, physical aids and medicines. They may also need to pay for care and support services (Alcock, 2006). Alcock cites research which suggests that these expenses, combined with the generally low income of these people, point to much higher incidence of poverty among households with disabled persons than the official figures suggest. A local study carried out by Cordina (NCPD, 2003b) cites Household Budgetary Survey and National Disability Survey data which show that the average per capita income of persons living in a household with a disabled person is generally about 5% lower than that of other households. This may be due to the lower incomes of persons with disability which in turn affect the per capita earnings of their household. Buying medicines and other health-related products appears to be a huge financial burden among the poor who suffer from long-term illnesses or disability as shown by Spiteri and McKay in this study.

Data also show that households with a disabled member only earn just over two-fifths of their income from paid work compared to three-fifths in the case of other households. The lower earning capacity of these households from paid work is combined with their greater dependence on social welfare. EU data (European Commission, 2001) reveal that especially since disabled persons are more likely to be unemployed or inactive, they are more likely to be recipients of benefits than non-disabled persons especially among the older age groups. Across the EU, 80% of disability benefit recipients are over 45 years although certain countries have higher proportions of younger recipients. In some countries fewer women tend to receive disability-related benefits than men (European Commission, 2001). In Malta the income obtained from social benefits by households with a disabled person is double that for other households according to Cordina (NCPD, 2003b). As the author claims, this points to a significant level of dependence considering that disabled persons may also be receiving other forms of assistance or services not only from the state but also

from other organisations and particularly from their family (NCPD, 2003b; 2004). Cordina's research (NCPD, 2003b) also reveals that the lower earnings of households with a disabled person is reflected in their spending trends. While the distribution of their spending is similar to that of other households, the amounts spent on the different items is lower. At the same time, households with a disabled member tend to have a higher savings ratio. This may be due to their being more concerned about the future especially if the disabled person is a child, thus further limiting their spending capacity which continues to reduce their standard of living.

While persons with disability (the elderly to a lesser extent) tend to find support and assistance from various sources, especially from their family, the NCPD (2004) report calls for policymakers and service providers to help disabled persons achieve greater independence. There is a substantial number of disabled persons (40.4%) especially young ones who are willing to pay for services. However considering the generally low income of the disabled, the Commission's study recommends the development of support schemes provided at a fee but which will be state-subsidised according to the financial situation of the recipient.

The generally low income level of persons with disability is directly linked with their low levels of participation in the labour market as well as with the type of work they do. This in turn is also related to their generally lower level of education. All these specific issues, albeit closely linked, require the serious attention of policy-makers if the socio-economic situation of the disabled is to be ameliorated. The patterns which emerge when comparing disabled with non-disabled persons both locally and across the EU reveal significant differences in the educational levels of the two groups. Levels are relatively lower for disabled persons across the EU although in some countries such as France, Italy, Spain and the UK the proportion of disabled persons with no educational qualifications beyond primary level is extremely high. Although this may in part be due to the age factor, the lower educational level of the disabled persists even after controlling for age (European Commission, 2001). The link between disability and educational level is also possibly due to having less qualified people occupying jobs with a higher risk of becoming disabled. Another explanation is the probable effect of disability on educational level. People with certain types of disability have less access to educational opportunities (European Commission, 2001).

The NCPD (2004) study reveals that among the survey participants 12.4% have no education compared to 3.6% for the general Maltese population. More persons with disability are likely to have finished primary education only while the proportions decrease as the level of education rises. While only 14.9% of participants were undertaking some form of study at the time of the survey, it is noted that the figures for the 16-19 and 20+ age cohorts contrast sharply. There are very few disabled persons who continue studying beyond the age of 19. It is also observed that while over 70% of respondents claim that disabled persons have the opportunity to continue studying, only 20% are inclined to do so. It would be interesting to know the reasons underlying this reluctance on the part of disabled persons to further their education. After all education may increase the likelihood of finding employment and earning a decent income. A local study carried out by the ETC (2005b) among disabled persons and employers points to the low educational standard and low work experience of the participants as one of the factors inhibiting them from finding employment. Employers taking part in the study also remarked that they could not employ disabled persons who had sought work with their company due to lack of qualifications and work experience.

Indeed statistics both local and for the EU point to a significant gap in the labour market activity of disabled and non-disabled persons. In the EU in 2003 40% of disabled persons were employed compared to 64.2% non-disabled, while the former's inactivity rate was twice as much (Commission of European Communities, 2005). Research shows that the likelihood of a disabled person being employed is lower for almost all age groups and for all educational levels. Compared to other disabled persons, those who have a disability and are employed are younger, more likely to be male and better educated. However when compared to non-disabled persons who work, the opposite is true: employed disabled persons are older, slightly more likely to be female and with a lower educational level than non-disabled workers (European Commission, 2001). The factors underlying these low figures vary from one country to another but benefit traps and the risk of losing benefits upon employment are two central disincentives. A further explanation may be the unwillingness of employers to hire disabled workers to avoid making expensive adjustments in the workplace (Commission of the European Communities, 2005). Actually a local study (ETC, 2005b) found that employers were willing to introduce support measures such as changing working conditions or providing technical aids or personal assistance to any disabled employees. However they were more reluctant to make structural changes or to

offer disabled persons the opportunity to work from home. EU data also indicate that 43.7% of disabled persons believe they could work if they received proper assistance although only 15.9% of those who need assistance actually receive it (Commission of European Communities, 2005).

As might be expected, the more severe the nature of the disability, the lower the labour market participation of disabled persons in the EU. Only 20% of those with severe disabilities work compared to 68% of those without LSHPD (Eurostat, 2003). Data from various countries suggest that the type of disability has a major impact on employment rates. People with mental illnesses, learning difficulties or psychological impairments are less likely to work than those with physical impairments (European Commission, 2001). This was confirmed by a local study (ETC, 2005b) on the work experience and job search of persons with disability. Persons having intellectual or mental impairments as well as those having multiple disabilities are more likely to be inactive or registering for work. While the inactivity rate for disabled people is double that for the non-disabled, the unemployment rates for the two groups are not much different. This may be due to the "discouraged worker" effect. Since many disabled persons know or perceive their chances of finding employment as slim, they do not even register for work and consequently form part of the inactive category (Eurostat, 2003). As a result, the relatively low unemployment rates among disabled persons do not give a realistic picture of their labour market disadvantage (European Commission, 2001).

In Malta the Labour Force Survey of June 2002 (NSO, 2002) indicated that 4% of the disabled were unemployed while 63.8% were inactive. Local research (ETC, 2005b) suggests that persons with disability tend to experience long periods of unemployment and particular difficulties in finding a job. Most respondents in the study had been registering for work for over a year while others had been unemployed for more than two years. The study participants claimed to face difficulties due to their disability, lack of response from employers, lack of job opportunities or lack of support needed at work. ETC data (NSO, 2007e) show that in September 2007 there were 246 disabled men and 65 disabled women registering for work under Part I of the unemployment register. The NCPD (2004) study indicates a relatively high unemployment rate of 7.7% among the survey respondents compared to 3.1% among the general population. However, it is also significant to note that relatively few of these showed an interest in working.

Among those who are in the labour market, there are no major differences between disabled and non-disabled in the employment status (employee or self-employed), sector or firm size at EU or national level according to the European Commission (2001). However disabled persons are more likely to work part-time partly due to age and gender factors. Furthermore, disabled persons receive a lower hourly wage than non-disabled persons, are over-represented in lower income bands and under-represented in higher income bands. According to the same report (European Commission, 2001) this wage differential is largely due to personal or job-related factors such as age, education or occupation although there still remains an unexplained component which is possibly the result of discrimination against disabled persons. Data from the Labour Force Survey (NSO, 2002) indicate that 32.2% of disabled persons in Malta had a job. This contrasts sharply with the results obtained from the survey carried out by the National Commission Persons with Disability (NCPD, 2004) where only 11.5% indicated they were economically active with similar shares engaged in the private and public sectors. The same study showed that contrary to the general EU trend, most of these work on a full-time basis. In line with EU trends, in Malta persons with disability, especially males, are over-represented in elementary occupations (three times as much) while females are more likely to be engaged in clerical work than non-disabled persons (twice as much). Although most are happy at work, many feel underpaid. They also see little opportunity for promotion or further training on the job. These trends were also revealed in the study carried out by the ETC (2005b) where most claimed to have low-status jobs such as plan and machine operators, elementary occupations or clerical work and that most of them worked full-time.

All these trends clearly reflect the unfavourable labour market situation of persons with disability. Considering their low levels of education and labour market participation as well as their concentration in lower level jobs, it is clear that specific education and labour market policies are needed regardless of the employment status of the disabled. In the EU it is estimated that up to 3.5 million persons with disability can potentially be integrated within the labour market, although this obviously entails overcoming a number of major obstacles. There is enough evidence today that socio-economic integration of disabled persons is not merely a question of social justice and rights but also the most cost-effective way of reducing the poverty of children, young people and adults with disability (ILO, 2002). Although employment may not be the only

answer, it is a major source of income in modern industrial societies and a practical means of combating poverty. It is also an important route to social integration and thus of reducing the risk of social exclusion.

Considering the limitations and obstacles encountered by persons with disabilities in their daily life, it is not surprising that their level of social participation leaves much to be desired. The National Disability Survey (NCPD, 2003a) indicates very low participation rates of disabled persons in sports (males 5%; females 28%), politics (1.2%; 0.4%), social organizations (3.4%; 1.2%), religious organizations (13%; 13.8%), organizations for disabled persons (12%; 12.8%) and other activities (9.6%; 6.2%). The NCPD (2004) study gives a similar picture with 65.6% of respondents claiming to spend most of their time at home. Many disabled persons have difficulty going out on their own although most of them still manage to go out and very few never go out at all. There are quite a few who participate in sports, religious, local council or NGO activities. Others attend day centres or centres for the elderly. Almost 40% claim to go shopping or to do other errands. The situation is not completely bleak and much has already been done on social, political, legal levels as well as where physical and structural adjustments are concerned to facilitate the social participation of the disabled. However, greater physical accessibility and different forms of support and assistance would enable disabled persons to integrate more within the community not only as workers but also as independent members of society. The strong family ties characteristic of Maltese society have ensured that disabled persons receive ample support and assistance from family members. However, this may in a way have had undesired effects in that disabled persons may have come to be perceived as unable to run their life independently. Especially when their carer dies, this dependence implies that these persons may need to be institutionalised away from their community, further increasing their risk of social exclusion (JIM, 2003).

As some commentators (Alcock, 2006) have pointed out, most of the problems faced by the disabled are not due to the disability itself but concern more the failure of society to take into account the practical needs of the disabled. Poverty and dependence associated with disability are very often the result of the failure to respond to these needs. Consequently disabled persons are unable to provide for themselves as other people are expected to do and to achieve their full potential as active citizens who have a great deal to offer society.

The Plight of Immigrants

Around 175 million people (about 3% of the world's population) live outside their country of birth. Since 1970, migration has more than doubled. In the EU around 20 million people are third country nationals (from outside the EU) with legal residence (Caritas Europa, 2006). Malta only has a small share of non-Maltese and ethnic minorities. According to the 2005 census, only 3% of Malta's population comprised foreign nationals, the majority hailing from Britain, other EU countries and Australia. Malta also has smaller proportions of Italians, French, Germans, Americans, Canadians and Libyans among others. Most of these live in Malta's northern and northern harbour regions (NSO, 2007b). Certain minorities characteristically found in other EU countries such as Roma hardly feature in Malta (JIM, 2003). However one has to differentiate between voluntary and forced migration which involves an element of coercion and concerns people such as asylum seekers fleeing their country because of war, political, religious, racial or other bases of persecution or oppression as well as displaced people due to national, environmental, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine or land development projects (Caritas Europa, 2006). Malta has during the past few years seen an unprecedented influx of immigrants who come by boat largely from sub-Saharan African countries with the intention of finding asylum in Europe. It is on these that this section will primarily focus as it appears that these migrants are the most recent addition to the list of social categories most likely to experience poverty in Malta. Indeed reference is made to them, albeit briefly in both the 2004-2006 National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Exclusion as well as in the National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006-2008. African immigrants may not be the only category of foreign nationals who have been entering the country in an irregular manner. The Government's (2004) Policy Document on Irregular Immigrants, Refugees and Integration distinguishes three types of irregular immigrants in Malta:

- Those who enter legally but remain beyond their authorised stay;
- Those who arrive without proper documentation;
- Those who enter illegally either voluntarily or involuntarily after having difficulties at sea and are saved by Maltese coastguards. Most of these apply for refugee status.

This increase in migrant flows is partly the result of Malta's joining the European Union but also because of Malta's geographical position as well as globalisation trends which have made the flow of people from one country to another much easier. The rate of foreigners from other EU countries is double that of non-EU legally resident citizens. The legal immigration of third country nationals amounted to 1913 in 2004 although it is estimated that in 2005 about the same number entered Malta irregularly. In 2006 there were 1270 registered asylum seekers in Malta (MIPEX, 2007). Although in numerical terms, the flow of asylum seekers has not been dramatic, in relation to Malta's small population, the percentage of asylum seekers and refugees is one of the highest in Europe (MIPEX, 2007). Malta is tied by the Dublin II Convention which puts responsibility on the receiving states and prevents asylum seekers from going to a third country. This puts a lot of pressure on countries such as Malta which geographically stand on Europe's doorstep. As part of its obligation to becoming an EU member state Malta enacted a Refugee Act which came into effect in October 2001 and provided for the establishment of the Office of the Refugee Commissioner and the Refugees Appeals Board. In 2007, the Organisation for Integration and Welfare of Asylum Seekers (OIWAS) was inaugurated within the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity.

Although poverty and immigration are not always connected, in Europe large numbers of immigrants live in poverty and the groups most at risk are irregular immigrants and asylum seekers. Other high risk groups include sub-Saharan Africans, Turks, Moroccans, migrant women, children of migrants and elderly migrants. These are often victims of social and economic deprivation while they also risk exclusion from employment, housing, health and education (Caritas Europa, 2006). A Report by the Commission of European Communities (2007a) claims that in the EU, significant differences remain between immigrants, ethnic minorities and the rest of the population with regard to employment and unemployment, income, education, early school leaving, health and poverty. Research (European Commission, 2007; Lelkes, 2007) also shows that migrants from outside the EU are more likely to be at risk of poverty than those coming from another EU country. Their employment rates are significantly lower especially where women are concerned and they tend to be concentrated in elementary jobs. In 2005 their unemployment rate was more than twice as high compared to that of EU nationals. This may be partly due to their lower educational level although differences remain even after controlling for education.

According to Caritas Europa (2006) many European countries distinguish between the right to live in the country and the right to work and therefore certain migrants may be legally living in a country but are not allowed to earn a living. Immigrants are over-represented in atypical jobs making them vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation. If they are employed in the informal sector they are more likely to experience insecurity. Especially if they are also illegal immigrants, their bargaining position at work is even worse. As a result they are more likely to earn below-average wages, to be deprived of social rights and benefits and to work longer hours. Data from the UK (Alcock, 2006) also points to a concentration of ethnic minorities in low-paid, low status, public service manual work and shift work in labour-intensive sectors. Due to cultural and family patterns, women from ethnic minority groups have not infiltrated the labour market. Consequently earnings are lower for people belonging to some ethnic minorities resulting in a strong link between low pay and poverty within these groups. Unemployment rates are also higher among ethnic groups in the UK partially due to employer discrimination. According to Alcock (2006), asylum seekers are at a particular risk of poverty with statistical evidence indicating high percentages among them who experienced hunger and could not buy clothes. Child poverty is also high among asylum seeking families and gypsies. Asylum seekers are prohibited from working until their case has been processed, and they do not have full access to social security support.

Immigrants very often have to do the worst jobs - what Stalker (2001) calls 3-D tasks (dirty, dangerous and difficult) and thus find themselves in the periphery of the "dual labour market". In many industrialised countries, nationals tend to refuse such jobs as they opt for cleaner, white-collar jobs. The rise in the level of education, especially the expansion of higher and tertiary education in these countries, has left certain gaps in the labour market and it is these gaps which immigrants are likely to fill. 3-D jobs are rejected by nationals as they are unpleasant, low-paid and unstable. Construction and agriculture are sectors which employ a good share of immigrants in many countries. Immigrants have also become commonly associated with personal service work where many are employed as nurses, nannies, maids or gardeners. Others work in the catering industry or as cleaners. A good share of these workers consist of undocumented migrants (Stalker, 2001). This was largely confirmed by the Caritas Europa (2006) study. While employers have to turn to migrants when local people refuse certain jobs, Stalker (2001) argues it is the low cost which offers the greatest

incentive to employers. He quotes a study from the Netherlands which suggests that while it is convenient for employers to hire illegal immigrants as casual workers in times of peak production, what attracts them most is that they pay them less. While 3-D immigrant workers are generally paid less than locals, there are also distinctions between immigrants often depending on the country of origin. Some are less favoured than others and these differences are reflected in the unemployment rates.

The disadvantaged position of ethnic minorities in the labour market has not only raised their risk of poverty but also increased their dependence on benefits (Alcock, 2006). At the same time Alcock shows how immigrants may also be in a disadvantaged position where welfare is concerned. Uneven patterns of low paid employment contribute to the ineligibility of ethnic groups to certain benefits such as insurance benefits, especially pensions which are based on contributions paid during employment. Immigrants may also not be eligible to benefits due to not having lived in the country for the stipulated length of time. Furthermore, studies in Britain quoted by Alcock (2006) suggested lower levels of benefit take-up among non-British, the language barrier being a central obstacle.

Migrants may also face difficulties to access housing markets according to the Caritas Europa (2006) report. In many parts of Europe there is an inadequate supply of council or social housing. In the private sector, landlords may be reluctant to rent to immigrants or may take advantage of their desperate situation. Immigrants tend to concentrate in unpopular districts in appalling living conditions. According to Alcock (2006) this concentration is also linked to the risks of poverty and exclusion. In the UK, 70% of citizens from ethnic minorities live in the 88 most deprived districts. Although inequalities in employment, health and education have an impact on the poverty of ethnic groups in general, the geographical element is still important. In the UK, social rented housing and poor quality housing are disproportionately concentrated in these areas and are more likely to be occupied by ethnic minorities. While the concentration of ethnic minorities in a geographical area may result in greater cultural support and cooperation, it can also increase the risks of harassment and intimidation suffered by black people in the UK (Platt, 2002 as cited in Alcock, 2006).

The combination of living conditions, poor nutrition and dangerous, low-paid jobs lead to illness which exacerbates the poverty of these people. Immigrants are not given the same level of healthcare as the rest of the population in all countries. In many countries, asylum seekers and immigrants have limited or no access to healthcare (Caritas Europa, 2006) although this is not the case in Malta as all irregular immigrant asylum seekers are entitled to free medical assistance (source: OIWAS). Poor access to education and training as well as exclusion from participation in the democratic process also contribute to the poverty of migrants, according to the Caritas Europa report. These disadvantages are aggravated by discrimination. Furthermore, migrants do not face these problems only in the first months after they reach the receiving country but continue to do so for many years. Poverty can be inherited making second generation migrants also likely to continue experiencing poverty. Having lower levels of education and few job prospects and living in poor migrant communities very often reinforces disadvantage (Caritas Europa, 2006). In response to this situation many Member States have made the social inclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities a priority. However the lack of data on these groups makes it difficult to establish variations in the degree of vulnerability and social exclusion between different ethnic groups (Commission of the European Communities (2007a).

In Malta many migrants from African countries are here against their will. They embark on a journey across the Mediterranean hoping to reach Italy and then proceed to other European countries but end up in Malta after facing difficulties at sea or after being intercepted by the Maltese coastguards. The majority come from Sudan, Eritrea, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Somalia (LIBE Committee, 2006). Although landing in Malta is not considered a criminal act, irregular immigrants are kept in detention centres for a maximum period of eighteen months until their case is processed in the interest of national security according to the Government's Policy Document (2004). Detention policy applies to all immigrants who are caught entering Malta irregularly except certain vulnerable groups. The latter include unaccompanied minors, persons with disability, families and pregnant women, elderly and unaccompanied women with children although this list may not be exhaustive. These are accommodated in alternative centres. However, the release process is lengthy and vulnerable groups may be detained with the others for months according to the report by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament (LIBE Committee, 2006). Furthermore, according to the same report there are no formal procedures by which vulnerable groups

are identified. The Government's detention policy is controversial and not without its critics. A report by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS Malta, 2005) on the reception of asylum seekers in Malta expresses concern regarding the conditions of detention centres in Malta claiming that they fail to respect the dignity of immigrants and do not facilitate access to services which immigrants are entitled to especially legal assistance. Likewise, the report by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament (LIBE Committee, 2006) gives a very dismal picture of the living conditions of immigrants in detention centres and describes them as "unacceptable for a civilised country and untenable in Europe, which claims to be the home of human rights".

According to the JRS Malta report (2005) at any given time there is also a notable share of immigrants living in the community. These are invisible and not even mentioned in the Government's Policy Document (2004). Although their difficulties are different from those of immigrants who are held in detention, JRS believes that "these people are among the most disadvantaged in terms of access to material or financial assistance and professional or other services" (JRS Malta, 2005:6). This is a mixed group and includes those who manage to apply for refugee status before they are detained by the authorities, those released from detention and are still waiting for their case to be decided as well as those who enter Malta legally and apply for refugee status. There is also a category of forced migrants who do not legally qualify as asylum seekers but who claim they need protection from forced return. These are either in detention or in the community. According to the same report, those who live in the community receive no assistance and find it hard to meet their basic needs. Some manage to find accommodation and some support from NGOs. However families are faced with greater difficulty since NGO-run hostels for the homeless usually cater for women and children or for men only. The others have to turn to rented accommodation which is often expensive. Furthermore, apart from having no financial assistance, these people cannot work legally. Consequently they are condemned to a harsh life, struggling to make ends meet. This situation may last for long months until their application for protection is processed.

The majority of African immigrants apply for asylum. Once their application is processed they may be given refugee or temporary humanitarian protection. Around half of the applicants receive a positive response although the majority are granted temporary humanitarian status rather than refugee status (LIBE Committee, 2006; Vella, 2006). While those whose application for asylum is rejected should in theory be repatriated, many of these remain in Malta due to a number of problems and end up living in Open Centres. As the LIBE report (2006) shows, the conditions in the Open Centres are not much better than those of the closed centres. The JRS report (2005) considers the conditions in the Open Centres as leaving much to be desired while Darmanin (2008) describes how about 1000 immigrants live in a "tent village" in Hal Far, each tent taking up to 30 bunk beds. The facilities in these tents leave much to be desired and they are hardly equipped for the winter cold and the extensive summer heat.

National law does not provide for material reception conditions of asylum seekers. However in practice, asylum seekers who are released from detention after a maximum of eighteen months receive a number of benefits which do not amount to much but at least they are better off than those who were never detained who get no assistance whatsoever (JRS Malta, 2005). Until December 2006, immigrants living in the Open Centres used to be provided with a food ration apart from free accommodation. However the food ration has now been replaced with daily allowances according to the immigrants' status. These allowances are attached to regular registration in the Open Centres. Asylum seekers and those who are granted temporary humanitarian status are entitled to €4.66 (Lm2.00) a day; children receive €2.33 (Lm1.00); rejected asylum seekers get €3.49 (Lm1.50) while those who are returned to Malta by another country (in terms of the Dublin II Convention) are entitled to a daily allowance of €2.91 (Lm1.25) irrespective of their original status. Reception conditions are not indefinite and immigrants are encouraged to find regular employment so that they will eventually be able to live independently in the community (source: OIWAS).

Immigrants that have been granted Refugee Status by the Refugee Commissioner or upon appeal are not given an allowance since they are entitled to full unemployment benefits, housing assistance, rent subsidy, pink cards and other entitlements as any Maltese citizen. However between their release and their first payment, they are issued interim payments of €4.08 (Lm1.75) per day (source: OIWAS). Data on the issue of work permits and the employment and unemployment status of immigrants was difficult to obtain. Reporting the proceedings of a seminar on irregular immigrants and the Maltese labour market and citing statistics issued by the Employment and Training Corporation, Massa (2007) claims that 879 immigrants have been

granted a work permit although less than half of these have a regular job. Those issued with a permit include 82 refugees, 615 immigrants given temporary humanitarian status and 182 asylum seekers. Among asylum seekers, 57 worked as cleaners, 55 as labourers, 20 worked in construction and 18 in catering. Between January 2002 and October 2007, 2253 applications for a work permit by immigrants were rejected although the criteria for these rejections were not divulged. Rejected asylum seekers are not allowed to work and consequently they often resort to informal jobs (Vella, 2007). According to the JRS Malta (2005) report, most immigrants find the lack of access to the labour market as the biggest obstacle to a dignified life. Not being able to work legally, they often end up depending on charity or resorting to illegal work which increases their vulnerability to abuse and to work-related accidents and injuries.

The report adds however that while immigrants may find employment in the informal sector, employers in Malta are increasingly being more cautious in employing persons illegally. Furthermore, jobs are usually short-term and seasonal, often involving long hours, low pay and hard work. It is difficult to make ends meet especially if they have a family. Having a family also makes it difficult for immigrants to work because they would have nobody to look after their children. These problems are especially accentuated among the more vulnerable groups of asylum seekers. In view of this, the JRS recommends that the government should ensure a basic standard of living, some form of accommodation and access to the labour market to all asylum seekers as well as adequate financial assistance to those who cannot work.

The Government's Policy Document (2004) states that the welfare of immigrants, regardless of their status, is the responsibility of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity. The Ministry's responsibility is to ensure that all irregular immigrants are provided with food, shelter and other welfare services including education, health, job training and development of personal skills. Especially considering their traumatic experiences, their dangerous journey, their separation from family and community, their difficulties when faced with the language barrier as well as being faced with a completely different culture, the ministry is also responsible for promoting their inclusion into Maltese society. However, the integration of African irregular immigrants into Maltese society is no easy task in a country where the perception of the public towards immigrants is hardly favourable. According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (Mipex, 2007) Malta is one of only four countries where only a minority sees ethnic diversity as culturally enriching. The Maltese are the least supportive in the EU of migrants' rights and the most supportive of deportation policies even regarding *legally-residing* third country nationals especially if they are unemployed.

This had also emerged clearly from a Eurobarometer survey in candidate countries by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia back in 2003 (EUMC, 2005) when the immigrant issue had begun to leave its mark on the Maltese. The survey found that Malta features significantly among the countries which strongly oppose the granting of civil rights to *legal* migrants. The Maltese registered the second highest exclusionist stance after Latvia, strongly supporting repatriation policies even of legal migrants. In Malta the situation is similar to that described by Alcock (2006) where asylum seekers are often regarded with hostility. Although they may be fleeing violence and oppression in their country, they are often suspected of having left their country for economic reasons. Although this may be a false perception, it is often shared and projected by the media where immigrants are often portrayed as unwanted or illegal immigrants or as referred to by the Maltese as "klandestini" meaning *secretive.*

In the past few years, Malta has introduced a number of integration policies aimed at refugees, mainly as part of its process of transposing EC Directives into its legislation. However according to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (Mipex, 2007), Malta's highest scores are only in the areas of family reunion and long-term residence. Malta's scores are very low in relation to access to nationality and labour market as well as to anti-discrimination measures. The weakest policy scores were registered in terms of political participation, a characteristic shared by many other European countries. Therefore it is clear that not enough is being done to address the plight of immigrants and since they hardly have any voice, migrants have little chance of improving their situation. Since they have no vote, their problems are very often not a priority for politicians (Caritas Europa, 2006).

Across Europe (and Malta is no exception) there are very few studies on the relationship between immigration and poverty. More research is therefore needed in this regard. A European Commission Report written in 2004 (cited by Caritas Europa, 2006:15) states that: "While member states identify immigrants among those particularly at risk of poverty and social exclusion, many countries still fail to provide in-depth

analysis of the factors leading to this situation. Little attention is given to promoting access to resources, rights, goods and services, in particular to appropriate health care". Furthermore, although Member States may indicate in their national action plans that the inclusion of ethnic minorities is a priority, the EU may not be doing enough to instigate concrete action from its Member States. A report by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI, 2005) accuses the European Commission of ostracising ethnic minorities from its process of rejuvenating Europe's economy while acknowledging the impact of social exclusion on Europe's slow economic growth. The Commission acknowledges the importance of integrating minorities and migrants and that the unemployment gaps between disadvantaged groups and between non-EU and EU nationals is too high. Yet it does not explicitly point to the exclusion of ethnic minorities from the labour market as a deterrent to economic growth. The report points to the weak approach of Member States towards the social inclusion of ethnic minorities both whether it is rights-based or growth-motivated. Ethnic minorities are often regarded as second class citizens and an economic burden rather than as an asset.

From Poverty to Social Exclusion?

Social exclusion is closely related to poverty but goes beyond income poverty and includes the various dimensions of both economic and social deprivation. While the notion of poverty is linked to distributional issues and to "the lack of resources at the disposal of individuals or households", the notion of social exclusion involves relational issues and implies limited social participation, lack of integration and lack of power (Room, 1995:5). However the distinction is not always clear as there is an overlap with certain understandings of poverty especially relative definitions of poverty such as those of Townsend (1979) cited earlier. There are those who prefer the concept of exclusion to that of poverty since it tends to be perceived as more multi-dimensional than poverty and draws attention to the various dynamic processes which are experienced by those in disadvantaged situations although both concepts may be viewed in a multi-dimensional way (Whelan and Whelan, 1995:29). Room (1999, in Barnes, 2002) believed that many elements of the discourse on social exclusion also formed part of the analysis of poverty. It is the way these elements are combined which adds value to the concept of exclusion. He identified five factors which are characteristic of social exclusion:

- It is multidimensional.
- It is dynamic - It involves understanding a process and establishing the factors influencing entry and exit.
- It has a neighbourhood dimension - It is more than lack of personal resources and includes inadequate or insufficient community facilities.
- It is relational and focuses more on lack of social participation, integration and power than on distributional issues.
- It involves being cut off from the rest of society.

The idea of exclusion developed within the context of French social policy which was never mainly concerned with 'poverty' but rather with the concept of solidarity. While after World War II, the French social protection system sought to include as many social categories as possible, there were still those who were left out and hence the term *les exclus* - those who lacked the protection enjoyed by others. (Spicker, 2007). Society is seen in terms of a status hierarchy where people are united in terms of rights and obligations. Exclusion implies not being part of this moral order by virtue of a number of factors including low income (Walker, 1995:103). The modern usage of the concept refers to those who are excluded by the state, those who fell outside the net of social protection. In the 1970s it particularly referred to social categories such as the disabled, lone parents and uninsured unemployed especially young adults (Burchardt et al, 2002). This term was later extended to include people who were deviant. In France this was associated with 'marginality'. These people were perceived in a negative light for not sharing the values of society and thus undermining social solidarity (Spicker, 2007). In Britain and the US this was also linked to the notion of the underclass. According to Burchardt et al (2002) in the US, terms such as 'ghettoisation', 'marginalisation' and 'the underclass' are more likely to be used rather than social exclusion. The term 'underclass' tends to portray the socially excluded as a number of generations outside the mainstream who are mostly to blame for their predicament due to their attitudes towards work and their irresponsible behaviour and who tend to depend on welfare. The underclass tends to be characterised by ethnic minorities, single parents and unemployed youth. More recently, with the increasing intensity of social problems, the term has taken a broader meaning to include those who are isolated in society (Burchardt et al, 2002).

Measuring exclusion is not an easy task particularly in the absence of an agreed definition of the term. There are those who see exclusion in terms of a combination of social problems such as unemployment, lack of skills, low income, poor housing, poor health, family breakdown and criminal environments. Others associate exclusion with the inability to participate effectively in the various spheres of social and political society; a process of being shut out from any form of participation or integration in society (Levitas, 2000: 364-5). Another approach to exclusion has focused more on discrimination and lack of civil, social and political rights of certain groups in society. Others take a narrower perspective and see exclusion in terms of lack of participation in the labour market. A broader view gives importance to factors beyond low income to include polarization, differentiation and inequality (Burchardt et al, 2002). Another meaning is to refer to those who are socially rejected such as the unemployed, young offenders and people with AIDS. Although these are still outside the mainstream, they are not left out or standing outside but have been pushed out (Spicker, 2007).

There is also the issue of voluntary exclusion. There are those who regardless of their economic situation choose to isolate themselves from the wider society by refusing for example to participate in social or political activities or by refusing to work. However one has to distinguish between choosing voluntarily to live in exclusion and having to exclude oneself due to factors beyond one's control (Lister, 2004; Barry, 2002; Burchardt et al, 2000). A person may decide to withdraw from a number of social spheres due to hostility or discrimination. As Burchardt et al (2000:389) and Barry (2002:14) argue this would be a constrained rather than a free choice. A person's voluntary decision therefore has to be perceived within the context of the choices available to the individual. A person's present choices may be influenced by previous choices, for example early school leaving or not going to university. Choices may also be constrained by cultural barriers. For example nobody in a person's family or community would have continued to study beyond compulsory schooling. Barry (2002:14) argues that what appears to be voluntary social exclusion should always be regarded with scepticism although there might certainly be cases of genuinely voluntary exclusion. These should be distinguished from involuntary exclusion since they give rise to different concerns. Furthermore, although being denied what someone does not want bears no moral significance, one should recognise the implications that one may still be denied opportunity regardless of whether one desires it or not. Therefore for Barry (2002) the socially excluded are those who are denied the opportunity of participating whether they want to participate or not.

Although there may not be a universally accepted definition of social exclusion, Room (1995) believes that this should not deter policy-makers from addressing issues such as education, employment, working environment, health, housing and social participation on which there is agreement. Furthermore, although the various dimensions of exclusion are related, they remain distinct and are thus better analysed and addressed separately rather than lumping together "the socially excluded" (Hills, 2002). Indeed data show that there is no evidence that a particular excluded group is cut off from the wider society over an extended period of time. Rarely do individuals score negatively on every dimension of social exclusion (Burchardt et al, 2002; Lister, 2004). Evidence seems to point at a continuum of exclusion and non-exclusion or from less to more excluded and these vary with different dimensions of exclusion. Research suggests that exclusion and inclusion may coexist in different spheres and sub-spheres (Lister, 2004:87; Burchardt et al, 2002). However Burchardt et al also claim that long term exclusion on one dimension tends to lead to higher risks of other forms of exclusion.

There are degrees of exclusion with extreme exclusion implying little or no social participation although people can form part of certain groups and not of others (Spicker, 2007). Social exclusion affects individuals, groups and geographical areas and is reflected not only in earnings but also in access to health, education, housing and other services as well as other factors such as debt. Exclusion can therefore give rise to other social problems such as an increase in homelessness, urban crises, ethnic tension, an increase in long-term unemployment and persistent high levels of poverty (Spicker, 2007). It is also linked to the life-course or to particular life circumstances. Barnes et al (2002) examine stages or states which are more likely to give rise to poverty and social exclusion. They consider two particular stages in the life-course - young adulthood and retirement - which represent universal stages in the life-course and two life situations - lone parenthood and disability. Their findings indicate that young adults who leave the protection of their parents, enter the world of work for the first time or further their education may experience disadvantage leading to exclusion. Retiring from the labour market can likewise make a person more vulnerable to disadvantage and exclusion. Lone parents and sick and disabled persons represent life situations which are not experienced by everyone

and which may not be experienced permanently. Such groups tend to go through experiences such as separation from the partner, lack of access to the labour market, welfare dependency, difficulties with mobility and insufficient support which often lead to a deterioration in living standards, changes in lifestyle and an inability to integrate in society.

The relationship between poverty and social exclusion may be viewed from different perspectives. On an empirical level, the link may be viewed as being of a causal or of a consequential nature (Lister, 2004:81). Lister cites research which sees poverty and exclusion in terms of a consequential trajectory in the sense that one moves from income poverty to social exclusion. The poor are seen to have compounded their predicament and fared from bad to worse. Walker (1995:124) refers to this trajectory where people slip from poverty to exclusion as a shift which can be compared to moving from a state of "keeping their heads above water" through "sinking" through "drowning". This situation may be brought about by loss of employment and compounded by structural factors. Poverty may give rise to social exclusion as a result of being excluded from work, from participating in social and cultural activities, losing social contacts, living in stigmatised neighbourhoods and not being reached by welfare institutions (Lister, 2004:81-82). Exclusion may also be viewed as a cause rather than as an effect of poverty. Lister cites Sen (2000) as subscribing to such a view, pointing to the various ways in which exclusion can lead to poverty and deprivation. Other research (in Lister, 2004) has placed poverty within social exclusion, seeing poverty as one of the many aspects of exclusion.

The effect of poverty on social relations is mixed and not very significant (Heady and Room, 2002:148). European data suggest a varying degree of overlap between material poverty and social exclusion. Some research found a clear link between low income and some dimensions of social exclusion although generally speaking research does not point to a particularly strong link. The link is stronger in come countries than in others and in cases of extreme and severe poverty (Lister, 2004:85). A number of studies edited by Barnes et al (2002) found that poor young people are slightly less likely to be socially involved. Lone parents and parents who live with their partner portray quite similar patterns of social participation and there is no evidence that poverty accounts for any differences. Sick and disabled people tend to participate less in social activities but it is not clear whether this is due to their state of health or to their financial situation. For example the poor elderly in Spiteri and McKay's study in this volume at times felt restricted from participating in certain social activities not only due to lack of means but due to their poor health. Retired poor people are less likely to join clubs and meet friends and relatives in some countries although they tend to have regular contact with neighbours. Poverty appears to have little effect on social isolation possibly because social contact does not cost much and largely takes place between people of similar income (Heady and Room, 2002:148). However it is important to distinguish between different forms of social isolation. While the poor may have strong personal networks, they tend to be disconnected from the wider society. It is this form of isolation which is more typical of the poor and the unemployed. Research suggests that people may feel part of their community and that is why they may not feel a sense of exclusion. In fact there are those who question whether a person has to *feel* excluded in order to *be* excluded. However in reality their only contact with mainstream society would be through authority figures such as social workers. (Lister, 2004:86).

Therefore although certain types of poverty may increase the risk of exclusion, poverty is not an essential feature of social exclusion. While certain elements of poverty such as low income, limited choices and coping strategies are more likely to lead to social exclusion, there are many people who may experience short spells of poverty without much risk of exclusion. It is longer and repeated spells of poverty which increase the risk of exclusion as the poor lose their sense of dignity and self-determination and their coping strategies are pushed to the limit. The risk of social exclusion is enhanced when poverty is highly concentrated and there is a huge gap between the experiences of the poor and the non-poor (Walker, 1995: 127-8). While many view social exclusion as a wider concept than poverty, the apparent overlap between the two implies that there are those who experience both poverty and exclusion where there are others who may be poor but social integrated or socially excluded without being poor (Lister, 2004:82-3). Indeed, as Barry says (2002:16), while low income may act as a barrier to social inclusion, so may high income in certain situations lead to social isolation.

Different meanings of the term 'social exclusion' and different perspectives concerning its relationship to poverty not only point to the different dimensions of social exclusion but also to different models of causality

and consequently imply different policy agendas (Levitas, 2000:358). Burchardt et al (2002:3) refer to three broad traditions in the literature in which the blame is placed on (i) the bahaviour and moral values of the excluded; (ii) the system and its institutions from the welfare state to late capitalism and globalisation and (iii) discrimination and lack of enforced rights. Similarly Levitas refers to her earlier work (1998) in which she outlined three different approaches taken by researchers and policy-makers in the debate:

- *Redistributive Discourse (RED)* sees exclusion as arising from poverty and regards reducing poverty through an increase in welfare benefits as essential for solving problems of exclusion. In this approach exclusion is seen to be more complex and a wider notion than poverty although poverty remains its central element.
- *Social Integration Discourse (SID)* considers labour market participation as the central feature for working-age individuals to be socially integrated. Unlike the first model, this approach does not see welfare as the solution to exclusion but employment which facilitates inclusion not only in itself but also by not being poorly paid or by not preventing other forms of participation due to long and unsociable hours. Thus this model encourages inclusion through employment and diminishes the value of unpaid non-market work.
- *Moral Underclass Discourse (MUD)* focuses on moral and cultural causes of poverty and is particularly concerned with the dependence of jobless households on welfare. It also points to the impact of exclusion on social order and seeks redress in tough measures which will restore or enhance social morality and strengthen social order. This approach tends to put greater responsibility on the excluded rather than on the redistributive nature of the welfare state (Levitas, 2000:359-360).

The EU has in recent years, especially since the Lisbon summit in 2000, shown greater commitment to fight social exclusion, to identify the risks of social exclusion and to develop policies which promote inclusion and integration in society (Heady and Room, 2002). Thus social integration has become one of the strategic goals of EU Member States (Burchardt et al, 2002). According to Spicker (2007), the idea of exclusion partly gained importance in the EU as an alternative to discussing poverty issues and partly as an attempt by some governments to avoid using the term 'poverty' as it is politically safer. Nowadays social exclusion has become a buzz word especially in the EU. (Barnes, 2002). Barnes considers Graham Room as one of the influential figures who contributed significantly to the conceptualisation and measurement of the term at a European level. In 1994 he recommended to Eurostat that it should shift its focus from perceiving poverty in financial terms to adopting a broader conception embracing a number of dimensions. The shift from a focus on income/financial disadvantage to multidimensional disadvantage highlights both the importance of perceiving disadvantage as more than income poverty as well as to identify the various elements involved and the relationship between them for analytical and political purposes (Room, 1995:235). Although the focus on exclusion may not be an entirely new approach, considering its closeness to the notions of relative poverty and multiple deprivation, there is one factor which Burchardt et al (2000:6) consider as "a genuine extension of its predecessors in social policy" - that of perceiving lack of integration as being caused by factors other than low income. While lack of material resources is still important in causing social exclusion, it has been recognized that there are other possible causes.

"Exclusion" implies a different approach to policy in that it has created more awareness that people needed to be included, not just given welfare benefits although many issues involved in the conceptualisation of exclusion were also addressed in debates about poverty (Spicker, 2007). The *revenu minimum d'insertion* introduced in France in the 1980s differed in content and scope from the welfare programmes in other countries in that it not only offered a basic income but also made provisions for social inclusion. It included two types of "contract of insertion", one with the claimant and the other with social agencies and local industries to offer facilities, services, social support schemes and opportunities for social inclusion (Spicker, 2007). In a similar vein, the European Commission (1993 in Spicker, 2007) has taken three approaches to combat exclusion, approaches which were previously applied by the commission in its fight against poverty in its broad sense and these have been:

- to address the various dimensions of exclusion by finding multiple solutions and combining a number of efforts;
- to address the problems by creating a network between different social actors and agencies including NGOs;

- to involve the people themselves in the decision-making process since this in itself is a major aim of social integration.

Both EU institutions and Member States have recognized the importance of understanding social exclusion in order to develop effective policy (Heady and Room, 2002). EU Member States are in fact required to submit two-year action plans on combating poverty and social exclusion. In this sense, focusing on exclusion may not make a significant difference in policy-making in that such policy measures are in many cases already being taken in response to poverty if poverty is addressed in its wider sense (Hills, 2002:227), as reflected in many of the National Action Plans of EU Member States. As one of the new Member States Malta has drawn up a *National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion 2004-2006* and a *National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006-2008.* These were preceded by the *Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion in Malta (*JIM, 2003) compiled by the Government of Malta and the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs.

"Social exclusion" is a contested term and only recently is it being used more frequently (Hills, 2002:226). There are those who are not so comfortable with the use of the term. For example Levitas (2000:358) feels that although the dichotomy between the included and the excluded should not be dismissed, it is problematic partly because it tends to obscure divisions between the included and gives more importance to the division between the included and the excluded. There is also the risk that due to the multiple dimensions of exclusion, policy-makers may be tempted to focus on those which are more "politically safe" (Burchardt et al, 2000). There are those who are critical of the term, arguing that real poverty may be hidden under the wider term of social exclusion (Lister, 2004:87-8). Although social exclusion may make policymakers and researchers more sensitive to this aspect of poverty, it may at the same time reduce "the 'spark' that 'poverty' ignites because of its everyday usage and evaluative content" (Nolan and Whelan, 1996 cited in Lister, 2004:88). At the same time the concept of exclusion did manage to bring to the forefront certain social problems such as isolation and discrimination which may have been neglected in the past (Burchardt et al, 2000). Proponents of the concept argue that the various insights inherent in the concept of exclusion may not be new but they have served to widen the understanding of poverty and to encourage a wider policy focus which gives importance both to prevention and solutions (Lister, 2004:93). The use of the term may also be useful as the exclusion-inclusion dichotomy points to processes and instigates efforts to establish what is responsible for exclusion and who is doing the excluding. An understanding of such processes will surely lead to more effective policies which promote and facilitate inclusion (Hills, 2002:227).

The Value of Social Transfers

Social security benefits have been the major form of protection against poverty in many welfare states. They are mainly provided by the state and may be either horizontal (contributory) or vertical (non-contributory) (Alcock, 2006). However the state was never alone in this. Redistribution of resources to prevent poverty also takes place through voluntary organizations as well as informally by family members. However the state remains the major redistributor of income allocating huge sums of money to social security. In 2003, the EU25 spent 28% of its GDP on social protection, with the highest expenditure recorded in Sweden (33.5%) and the lowest (13.4%) in Estonia and Latvia. In most countries, old age and survivors' benefits account for most of the expenditure accounting for 62% of total expenditure (Malta: 52.3%). The expenditure on sickness and health also increased steadily between 1999 and 2003 in the EU 15 (Eurostat, 2006). In terms of per capita PPS (purchasing power standards), the differences between countries become more pronounced. Within the EU 25, Luxembourg had the highest expenditure (10905 PPS per capita) followed by Sweden and Denmark. The Baltic States have a very low level of expenditure (1411 PPS or less). Outside the EU, expenditure is highest in Norway. Malta's expenditure (2879 PPS) is relatively low compared to the EU25 average (6012). However the differences between countries are partly a reflection of the variation in the wealth of different countries and also relate to differences in welfare systems, demographic trends, unemployment rates and other social, institutional and economic factors (Eurostat, 2006). In the first quarter of 2007, social security expenditure in Malta amounted to Lm62.7 million (€146.05 million) and registered an increase of 5.8%. Compared to the same quarter in 2006, the government spent Lm3.5 million (€8.15 million) more mainly in respect to contributory benefits (NSO, 2007f). Malta's National Action Plan (2004-6) attributes the fact that poverty has not up to now been a major issue in Malta to the wide net of social protection and the continuous increase in social expenditure. The extensive social welfare system in Malta significantly reduces the proportion of those close to the poverty line according to the NAP.

Although combating poverty is not the only aim of social security expenditure, social security is the most effective means of preventing or combating poverty. By providing cash benefits to compensate for or to supplement income, it aims to prevent or reduce poverty by ensuring that welfare recipients receive an adequate income (Alcock, 2006:219). Gordon and Townsend (2000:12) quote data which show that in a number of European countries, social benefits raise the household income significantly although this varies and depends on benefit levels. OECD data (UNICEF, 2005:23) have shown that the greater the proportion of GDP which a country allocates to benefits aimed at increasing family security such as family allowances, disability and sickness benefits, day care provision, unemployment insurance, employment promotion and other forms of social assistance, the lower the risk of having children growing up in poor households. Tsakloglou and Papadopoulos (2002:46-9) also found benefits to have a substantial impact on alleviating poverty. Basing their conclusions on European Community Household Panel data, they found that pensions are the most important welfare component in all the countries they reviewed. In all countries except UK, the contribution of pensions in quantitative terms was more significant in combating poverty than all the other social transfers combined. In all countries social transfers contributed significantly to a reduction in poverty although differences between countries were also noted. For example social transfers were more effective in northern than in southern EU countries. In all countries, social transfers were more effective in reducing poverty in households with sick or retired persons than for the rest of the population while for households with young adults or lone parents, a lower decrease was registered compared to other households. As expected, households with retired persons experienced the most significant reduction in poverty. According to the same authors, while the impact of pensions is felt most significantly in households with retired people, non-pension benefits proportionately reduce poverty in households with sick or disabled people, young adults and lone parents than in other households.

The European Commission estimates that in the absence of social transfers, the risk of poverty in the EU would have been considerably higher (41% instead of 16%) in 2004 while if pensions are taken as income instead of social transfers, the rate would have been 26%). The impact of social transfers excluding pensions is greatest in Scandinavian countries and the least significant in southern countries (European Communities, 2007a). This was confirmed by a study of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2007) although the impact of benefits is strikingly different in the EU25 Member States. For example in the Czech Republic there would be an increase from 8% to 39% without social transfers and to 21% without counting pensions. In France the risk would rise from 12% to 44% and to 26% without pensions and in Poland the risk would increase from 17% to 49% and to 31% when excluding pensions. Contrastingly in Cyprus, the risk would only increase from 15% to 26% or to 18% without pensions.

Gordon and Townsend (2000:10) are convinced that the welfare state has been highly instrumental in maintaining the standard of living of people in Europe. Especially comprehensive welfare states have been crucial in alleviating the suffering and improving the health of millions in various countries. They are not only effective in reducing poverty but also in protecting the welfare of all Europeans not only through cash benefits but also by providing various universal services (Gordon and Townsend, 2000:12). Furthermore, the authors believe that many economic studies tend to overlook the important role of services in improving household living standards. Services provided by the welfare state such as education, housing and health often have a higher impact on the standard of living of the lowest income households than do wages, cash benefits and pensions combined (p. 13).

However whether the income provided by the welfare state is sufficient to help people escape from poverty is a controversial issue. There are complex issues related to the implementation of benefits such as fraudulent claims or underpayment (Alcock, 2006:219). According to Alcock the latter may be due to errors in calculation but there are also those who fail to claim or to take up their benefits. While universal and insurance benefits tend to be taken by most, there are problems of take-up with means-tested benefits. This happens either because potential claimants would not know they are entitled to benefits, because of the complexity of entitlement or the stigma associated with welfare dependency. Failure to claim benefits further increases the risks of poverty especially more so because means-tested benefits are aimed specifically at low-income households. There are also the problems of unemployment or poverty traps where finding a job or a wage increase may result in loss of benefits. Problems of error, lack of take-up together with poverty and unemployment traps limit the effectiveness of welfare in reducing poverty. This has led commentators and policy-makers to argue that in order for policy to be effective in combating poverty, other measures have to

be taken which involve more than just cash benefits. This line of policy has been strengthened by the shift in focus from material poverty to multidimensional poverty and social exclusion (Alcock, 2006:220-3).

At the same time one has to recognise the importance of modernising or restructuring social protection systems to be able to deal effectively with the rapid social changes and the ensuing social problems of the past decades. It has been found that while social transfers are effective in reducing poverty among "traditional" targets such as the elderly, the sick and the disabled, they are less effective in dealing with the problems faced by groups whose vulnerability is a feature of our times such as young people and lone parents (Heady and Room, 2002:151). Welfare programmes may also be blind to changes taking place in the fields of gender and the family. This is of particular concern in a small insular island state such as Malta where traditional gender roles are still relatively strong. Camilleri-Cassar (2005:49) is critical of Malta's welfare regime in that despite its generosity, it has not been sensitive to gender differences and to the greater vulnerability and dependence of certain categories of women. Built on a "male breadwinner" model, it fails to recognise women's capability of economic independence and may increase women's reliance on benefits in the incidence of marital breakdown, widowhood and in old age. Women's poverty, which is very often hidden within the family where income may not be evenly shared, is not adequately addressed by Malta's social security system (Camilleri-Cassar, 2005:52).

Welfare benefits and state services are clearly among the factors which influence entry or exit from situations of poverty and exclusion (Room, 1995:237). Hills (2002:231) distinguishes between policies which aim to reduce the risks of disadvantage and those which aim to improve their effects. There are those who refer to this distinction in terms of prevention and response or cure. Hills believes that in certain situations prevention may be more effective than cure. However unless it is possible to identify the high-risk groups, prevention can be more expensive than dealing with problems as they emerge. There is also a useful distinction between policies aimed at those *entering* an undesirable state and those *exiting* from it. In this regard he outlines four types of policy responses to poverty and social exclusion, the first two involving policies aimed at reducing the risks of disadvantage, what Hills calls "active" measures while the other two are more concerned with reducing the impact of poverty or improving its consequences, also called "passive" redistribution:

- *Prevention* or reduction of poverty risks e.g. through education and training to increase job security;
- *Promotion* of escape from poverty such as through "welfare to work" policies to instigate the unemployed to find work;
- *Protection* from the impact of poverty such as through the payment of unemployment benefits;
- *Propulsion* away from undesirable circumstances by emphasizing the benefits of exit for instance through in-work benefits for those who leave unemployment.

Poverty being such a complex and multi-dimensional problem, there is no one way of dealing with it. Although social transfers are not without their limitations they appear to be quite effective at least in cushioning the harsh effects of material poverty if not of eradicating it. Welfare benefits may also prevent people who are not poor from falling into poverty especially when they take the form of social insurance schemes. Although the concept of poverty goes beyond material deprivation, lack of money still remains a central concern for many of those who live in poverty. Even though social transfers do not necessarily enable the poor to escape from poverty, they certainly can make life for the poor less difficult.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The EU has on more than one occasion reiterated that the fight against poverty and social exclusion is one of its central objectives and that of its Member States. The Amsterdam Treaty (Articles 136 and 137 in particular) made the combating of social exclusion a clear objective of the Community. Its adoption in 1997 introduced the fight against social exclusion among the priorities for social policy and provided a new legal framework and basis for new policy commitment in this area (Commission of the European Communities, 2007c). In March 2000, the European Council which met in Lisbon acknowledged the unacceptable level of poverty and social exclusion in the EU. It recognised the challenges Europe was facing as a result of globalisation, an ageing population and the expansion of an information-based society. It was agreed that a number of economic and social reforms had to take place which over a ten-year period would combine job growth, greater economic competitiveness and social cohesion. Thus what has come to be known as the

Lisbon Strategy was launched. In Lisbon the European Council invited Member States and the Commission to take the necessary action to make "a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010" (Commission of the European Communities, 2007c). The Nice Summit of December 2000 asked Member States to submit their first National Action Plans covering a two-year period by June of 2001 (Heady and Room, 2002) and every two-years since then. Malta is at present working on its third report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion, as the action plans are now referred to.

The Lisbon European Council of March 2000 also established the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as a means to achieve the goals set in the Lisbon Strategy. The OMC aims to achieve greater convergence among Member States in the fields of economic, employment and social policy and to strengthen the capacity of the EU to support Member States in their endeavour to achieve greater social cohesion; to spread greater awareness and knowledge about the complex nature of poverty and social exclusion; to increase the participation of stakeholders both at national and EU levels as well as to promote a common approach to social protection reforms. According to the Council of the European Union (2007), the OMC has so far managed to obtain positive results, making the people of Europe more aware of the EU's commitment to social values. The OMC is managed by the Social Protection Committee within the Council of the EU which monitors the development of social protection policies in the Member States and which facilitates the exchange of information, good practice and experiences across the countries of the EU.

However less than half way through the Lisbon Agenda, it was already clear that the goals set for 2010 were unlikely to be reached. In 2004 a High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok (European Commission, 2004) presented its report to the EU Commission pointing to a lack of determined political action, lack of coherence and coordination as well as too many aims without any clear priorities as mainly contributing to the unsatisfactory results at the time. The Report also stressed the importance of strengthening the European social model. Despite the seeming good will on the part of the EU and its Member States; despite the numerous plans and reports which are written; the positive action which is implemented and the monitoring and evaluation processes which are undertaken, the results are still far off the desired outcome. Although certain achievements have been registered, over 75 million people in the EU are still living in poverty. In all Member States significant parts of the population are still experiencing deprivation and still have limited access to basic services or feel marginalized in their societies. Moreover, there is evidence that the number of people suffering from absolute poverty is increasing mainly due to greater wealth inequalities across the EU (Commission of the European Communities, 2007c). Furthermore, despite the efforts of Member States to reduce child poverty, it still remains a significant challenge (Commission of the European Communities, 2006).

In 2005 the European Commission launched its Social Agenda for 2005-2010 for modernising Europe's labour markets and social protection systems while protecting the most vulnerable in society by ensuring that the benefits of economic growth and job creation benefits everyone. In it the Commission announced its proposal to designate 2010 as the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion in order to complement the work being done through the OMC. Through its proposal the Commission (Commission of the European Communities, 2007c) wants to consolidate the EU's political commitment to solidarity, social justice and social cohesion as established in the Lisbon Strategy. It also aims to enhance public awareness of poverty and social exclusion in Europe and to challenge the view that the fight against poverty is a social cost. It wants to reaffirm the importance of collective responsibility in fighting poverty and marginalisation by promoting the participation of public and private actors as well as by giving a voice to those who are experiencing poverty and social exclusion. The Commission proposes that the European Year will focus on four specific objectives which are: recognition (of the rights of the poor); ownership (of responsibility); cohesion (by raising public awareness of the benefits of a just and integrated society) and commitment (of the EU to the fight against poverty). It is also planned that the activities underpinning the OMC during the European Year will focus on the following themes:

- child poverty and the intergenerational transmission of poverty;
- an inclusive labour market;
- lack of access to education and training;
- gender dimension of poverty;
- access to basic services;

- overcoming discrimination and promoting the integration of immigrants and the social and labour market inclusion of ethnic minorities;
- addressing the needs of disabled people and other vulnerable groups.
- (Commission of the European Communities, 2007c:3).

One of the central problems facing policy-makers and other stakeholders in the fight against poverty both at EU and national levels is that, considering the complexity of the problem and the many issues linked to it, "there is no obvious 'answer' to poverty" (Spicker, 2007:143). Since poverty can take different forms and has various dimensions, there is no simple formula which can be used to address it. Spicker therefore feels that any policy dealing with poverty cannot be expected to solve every aspect of the problem although the more comprehensive and wide-ranging it is, the more likely it is to be effective. Due to the multidimensionality of poverty, policies have to be multidimensional too. Every anti-poverty strategy has to take into consideration material need, economic circumstances and social relationships. Anti-poverty policies also have to take into consideration the wider patterns of social inequality and social exclusion. Material poverty is only one aspect of the broader structures and processes within which certain social categories experience disadvantage and social exclusion. Therefore any policy which aims to reduce or eliminate poverty must also seek to fight these structures and processes (Alcock, 2006). Furthermore, although for policy purposes it may be necessary to distinguish the separate dimensions of poverty and social exclusion, simply identifying the different dimensions is not enough. It is just as important for policy-makers to focus on the relationship which exists between the various dimensions which together can form a spiral or a chain of social disadvantage requiring a corresponding network of related responses (Room, 1995:240).

Although both academic and political discourse on poverty often assumes that action should be taken to combat the problem, very often disagreements over both the definition and the measurement of poverty lead to divergent views regarding which policies work best (Alcock, 2006). There are various ways in which government and society have responded to poverty such as poverty relief, social protection, strategic intervention, prevention as well as indirect responses (Spicker, 2007). Earlier in this paper, I referred to a classification by Levitas (1998 in Levitas, 2000) of different policy responses based on different discourses of poverty which she identifies by the acronyms RED, MUD and SID. Spicker (2007) feels that some things work while others do not. Among the policies which do not work according to him are those which aim to give the poor a better chance of competing with others. While incentives such as training and education may increase people's potential and revitalize the economy, in any system that is based on competition, there will always be those who are left out. Another approach which does not work is for policy to focus on some groups while leaving others out. For example a system which caters for the disabled but not for the sick inevitably results in people with long-term illnesses presenting themselves as disabled. In contrast, Spicker feels that three approaches have proved to be more successful than others:

Economic Development. Although it has its casualties and is problematic in a number of ways, it does reduce poverty. It raises the standard of living of many people and promotes inclusion. There may still be those who lose their job as a result of a changing economy or those who find it difficult to compete. It may also lead to a fall in the standard of living of the poor.

Social Protection is also generally successful in dealing with poverty especially when systems are generous. They prevent people from falling into poverty; they help specific vulnerable groups and protect people's economic position. However they also maintain high levels of inequality.

Good Governance is a political approach which is less direct and more controversial. It involves primarily democratic governance although the rule of law, the establishment of individual rights and the development of economic and social rights are just as important.

Spicker (2007) sees two major problems with anti-poverty policies. The first one is that they may work for one kind of poverty but not for others. For example a policy may protect rights but increase dependency or promote employment and economic growth and at the same time reinforce the disadvantage of those who cannot participate in the labour market. The second is that the aims of policy may be implicit, concealed or guided by other principles. They often take into consideration other issues such as the effect on the economy, on education, culture, family life, religion or personal relationships. A similar concern was also expressed by Lister (2004) when she claimed that policy responses to poverty usually reflect wider political issues and are

often shaped by definitions, conceptualisations and measurements of poverty as well as by the explanations offered for their emergence, existence or persistence. A further problem with addressing poverty and any other social problem is the bureaucratic processes and administrative procedures involved, making it more difficult to respond holistically and effectively to the problems. Policy tends to develop piecemeal and often involves lengthy periods of negotiation, experimentation, adjustment and use (Spicker, 2007).

A major problem in most European countries nowadays is unemployment (not necessarily linked to low levels of education). Indeed it has been suggested that the focus of policy should shift from welfare dependency to active labour market policies, anti-discrimination policies and family-work balance policies which take into consideration the existing variation in family and household structures and their specific needs (European Communities, 2007b). It has been proven that employment contributes significantly not only to reduce the risk of poverty but also that of social exclusion as work is an important means of social integration (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007). Indeed economic growth and the creation of employment are the basis of the Lisbon Strategy and some good progress has in fact been registered in the functioning of EU labour markets and in the employment rates of certain categories such as women and older workers (Commission of the European Communities, 2006). Employment also features prominently in Malta's National Action Plan (2004-6) as well as in the National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (2006-8). However, the document on the implementation of the Renewed Lisbon Strategy (Commission of the European Communities, 2006) notes that although progress has been made in many Member States, more effort is needed for example to narrow the still wide gender gaps and to reduce the higher unemployment rates among certain groups such as minorities and young and older workers. Furthermore, while employment creation undoubtedly has its benefits, in certain situations and for certain social groups living in poverty or experiencing exclusion, the problem cannot be solved simply by employment provision. Considering the difficulties of certain groups in accessing the labour market and their concentration in low-paid, unstable jobs (which may also be in the informal sector), making work pay through a decently paid, rewarding job is one of the options which should seriously be considered by policy-makers. However, even this option is not sufficient for certain groups such as the severely disabled whose access to employment is even more restricted and in certain cases out of the question. It has also been acknowledged by Member States in their National Reports on social inclusion that economic growth and employment creation do not necessarily lead to less income inequalities, in-work poverty or regional disparities (Council of the European Union, 2007). Therefore employment policies have to be implemented in conjunction with other policies which encourage active inclusion. Investment in employment cannot take place to the detriment of other forms of social inclusion programmes and welfare.

Another challenge in the fight against poverty and social exclusion is that nowadays, social policy makers are faced with a different set of requirements than in the past (European Communities, 2007b). New social risks are resulting in more social groups being left out of the network of social protection which traditionally covered most members of society. Despite the increasing difficulties of financial sustainability, both old and new risks have to be covered. While traditional risks such as unemployment, sickness, disability and old age remain today, new risks have emerged such as bad and unstable jobs, an increase in lone-parent families, long-term unemployment of low-skilled workers, the difficulty of women, young people and the disabled to enter the labour market as well as unemployment among middle aged persons (European Communities, 2007b). Indeed the Social Reality Stocktaking Consultation, initiated by the European Commission in 2006 draws attention to the importance of addressing both old and new forms of poverty and social exclusion in Europe (Commission of the European Communities, 2007b).

Malta's level of poverty is relatively low within the EU. At 15% it is slightly below the EU average. This is largely due to Malta's wide-ranging system of social protection, the active role played by NGOs as well as the informal support provided by Malta's still strong family and community ties. Indeed, the Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion (JIM, 2003) which the Maltese Government had prepared in conjunction with the Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission claims that as a result, "poverty has not up to now been a major issue in Malta" (p. 11). The report identifies the various social groups who are most at risk of poverty in Malta and outlines the major challenges and priorities for Malta as it was preparing for full participation in the OMC. As a Member State, Malta has pledged its commitment to fighting poverty and social exclusion particularly by focusing on increasing the overall employment rate (especially that of women) by investing in human capital, strengthening the welfare system through pension reform, improving access to health care services and guaranteeing quality health services to

all (Commission of European Communities: Country Profiles, 2007b). The Commission's report however claims that while Malta's strategy is well in line with the overall EU objectives, progress on some of the key issues related to the Lisbon Agenda is slow. It points out a number of weaknesses in the Maltese National Strategy Report for 2006-8. For example, it claims that the document does not give a clear indication of how the different challenges will be addressed in detail. In particular, Malta's National Strategy fails to identify specific measures which can be implemented in the various sectors, timing, financial resources, expected results and indicators, possibly undermining any future evaluation of the proposed measures.

Although the proportion of people at risk of poverty in Malta may be relatively low, this does not take into consideration those who are socially excluded especially those whose experience of marginalisation within Maltese society is not linked to low income. Furthermore, the percentage of the poor has not changed since 2000, the base year of the JIM. While this may be interpreted positively in the sense that poverty levels have been kept stable, an alternative interpretation could be that the first decade of the 21st century has not witnessed any improvement in the situation of the poor in Malta, despite the Government's claimed commitment to the contrary. Like other countries, Malta is also facing new challenges such as new family structures partly resulting from increasing rates of marital breakdown and cohabitation, an increase in teenage pregnancies, youth and 40+ unemployment as well as the influx of immigrants which the country has witnessed over the past few years. Other challenges may not be so new but have recently been receiving more attention such as the high rates of early school leavers as well as the high rates of inactivity among the disabled and married women. Demographic factors particularly the reduced birth rates coupled with a longer life expectancy make pension reform an ever pressing issue. In light of this, Malta's protection system has to be reviewed not only in terms of sustainability but also to ensure that all the vulnerable groups are included. While the active participation of NGOs, family and community is to be encouraged, one cannot ignore the social changes which Malta is undergoing as a modern nation. While Malta still retains traditional cultural elements in relation to family life, modern "European" trends may undermine the family support which has until now very often been taken for granted. Consequently, this may lead to an increase in the number of those who experience poverty or social exclusion.

The pledge to eradicate poverty and social exclusion in Europe is a shared commitment and this has to be reflected in the recognition of the growing interdependence of the Member States and their need to work closely together. Poverty and social exclusion are universal problems and greater efforts at coordination both among the Member States as well as with EU institutions will enhance the likelihood of realising the vision of a more inclusive, just and equal Europe a reality. Monitoring and evaluation processes need to be stepped up both at national and EU levels in order to reap more concrete results than those achieved so far. Complex problems such as poverty and exclusion will certainly be more effectively addressed if policy makers encourage the involvement of civil society. The support of NGOs, families, communities and above all the involvement of the poor themselves will undoubtedly contribute to the alleviation of suffering still experienced by so many people in Europe. After all nobody knows more than the poor and the excluded what would help their predicament most. More importantly there has to be sincere political will to implement effective programmes which will ensure a more just redistribution of material resources as well as greater recognition of the right of every human being as an equal citizen and a full partner in every sphere of society. Material and social deprivation are unacceptable in any part of the world but it is a greater shame for the rich and powerful region of Europe to be scarred with such human suffering.

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DIFFERENT FACES OF POVERTY IN A LOCALITY IN MALTA

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Foreword

The Church in Malta has a long history of being active in the welfare sector. It is widely considered as a pioneer of the social welfare system that is operative in Malta today as it came into being before the welfare state came to be conceived. Practitioners forming part of Church organizations and activities are constantly urged within their different organizational set-ups to promote, most especially by their example, such values as the centrality of the human person and the being of service to others with love and dedication. Church entities have also been encouraged to network with other church organizations and with state associations when extending their services to recipients.

This research came into being as a result of such networking when the Deacon of St. Helen's Basilica of B'Kara approached the Church-based Diaconia Commission at Caritas (Malta) in the early months of 2007 and asked that a needs' assessment be carried out amongst certain residents in his Parish. These residents were people who lived in the neighborhood for which St. Helen's Basilica catered and who were entitled to receive, per household, processed products from EU intervention stocks after satisfying certain criteria as described in Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1539/2006 of the 13th October, 2006. Very specific eligibility criteria are laid down in this regulation. It is stipulated that recipients of the stocks must be recipients of specific social security benefits (as specified in the regulation) and that they must not be deriving financial inputs from other sources.

The Diaconia Commission is responsible for the social welfare sector, and aims to coordinate, strengthen and unite different parish groups working in the social and charitable field in order to address the most urgent social needs of the different parishes in Malta. Even though the distribution of stocks was originally in the hands of the Church, recently its administration has been entrusted to the YMCA which then liaises with the different parishes so as to distribute the EU stocks.

The main aim of this study is to carry out a needs' assessment of the families that are receiving this type of EU-funded aid and engage in an empirical exploration of how they go about their lives despite their having a relatively lower financial income than those who are in gainful employment. It is intended to elicit an understanding of how these families construct different opportunities to set and reach goals despite the financial restraints that they confront.

The methodology employed in this report will be outlined in the subsequent section of the report. This details the approach used during the planning stage, the fieldwork employed, the analytic approach adopted, and the ethical considerations that were made. The second section explores some of the main themes that were generated through exploring the topic of poverty and social exclusion. In the third section, the results of the survey are presented and poverty is analyzed through examining the needs, the limitations, the resources and the aspirations of each and every family under investigation. The responses elicited were developed eventually by sorting out the questionnaires in terms of the main presenting issue that during the course of the study was found out to be un/employment, issues of health, issues related to marital problems, or issues related to the elderly. In the final part of the report, an analysis of results is presented.

Methodology

The research cohort is constituted of a total of 123 families from a total population of the eleven thousand people living in the St. Helen's area of B'Kara. The methodology selected is qualitative. This is oriented toward rendering a holistic appreciation of non-quantifiable data and its employment in this study further consolidates the thrust toward the acquisition of "firsthand knowledge of the situation" (Singleton, Straits, Straits, and McAllister, R., 1988, p. 11). To a certain extent, this person-centred and subjectively inclined method of data acquisition that gives importance to people's definition of poverty is mitigated by an objective element in this study. This is because it is only those people whose income is low enough to allow

them to be entitled to surplus EU stocks who were eligible as participants. Nonetheless, focusing on Malta rather than by adopting a comparative approach between different countries overrides the problems caused by having to consider different definitions of poverty-lines as referred to by Angele Deguara in her contribution to this volume. Deguara points out that it was only in 2004 that the EU embarked upon a survey of income and living conditions in such a way as to arrive at a more harmonized computation of poverty, particularly amongst EU member states. This research was carried out in a series of stages as detailed below.

Planning Stage

At this stage after having been briefed on different aspects of the village by the Deacon of St. Helen's Church, the personnel from Caritas (Malta) who were entrusted with overseeing the research and drafting this paper gave two seminars to the interviewers wherein they engaged them in experiential practice of the approach that they were to adopt during interviewing and how to draft their responses in as homogenous a way as possible.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork was started by the Deacon assigning members of the Diaconia Commission to visit the families who were due to be interviewed, explaining to them the rationale for the interview and setting an interview date and time. Subsequently, the interviewers, working in pairs, interviewed the participants a short time later at the participants' homes. The interview schedule that they were assigned was partially structured and partially semi-structured - (refer to appendix 2/3). Its final section was unstructured and it allowed the interviewers space to comment about anything that struck them in either the interview, or about the participants' home environment. The interviewing process was planned in such a way that the interview would not ordinarily last more than an hour. The people drafting this paper also carried out six of these interviews. This enabled them also to obtain hands-on exposure to the field, even though it is practically always the case that "entering other people's lives and representing their stories is far more complex than many would assume" (Larson, 1997, p. 469). There were a total of 12 pairs of interviewers, each pair interviewing approximately eight families each. The study was conducted in the summer months of 2007 and the participants were approached after taking into consideration that the validity criteria for Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1539/2006 ran from 1st July, 2007 to 31st December, 2007. This implied that all participants were recipients of the benefits in question while the research was being carried out.

Analytical Approach Adopted

The questionnaires were analysed and four common themes emerged. These themes, as pointed out in the foreword to this report, served as a means of classifying the data. They are issues of unemployment, marital and familial issues, health related issues and elderly related issues.

The questionnaires of each respondent were allotted to each of these four themes in such a way that they would be cited from once only. In this respect, a certain element of researcher discretion was employed in this study as it was the researchers who determined the questionnaires to be assigned to each one of the four categories. It needs to be stipulated that classifying the data in this manner is done for purposes of analytical convenience since it is impossible to explore all the complexities and nuances associated with the lives of each of the participants, and certain participants could very easily have had their questionnaires neatly 'boxed in' into more than one category. This is most especially since many problems and issues are interwoven with one another.

A further complexity comes about since people tend to experience changes for both better and worse as their life unfolds. This implies that the categorization of responses into themes is merely that of providing "a language of description" (Ball, Maguire, and Macrare, 2000, 17) via patterns of similarity and differences expressed by the participants through their qualitative interviews. Clustering the data into themes offered the advantage of making it more manageable. It was assumed that this would thereby allow for furnishing deeper insights on different aspects of the lives of the interviewees.

Ethical Considerations

Family members were asked to sign a 'data protection' form (see Appendix 1) that would allow the Deacon (or his respondent) access to any data collected and licence to publish any such data, but yet provided that such ethical issues as participant-anonymity and confidentiality were fully respected. The interviewers were asked not to disclose any information derived from the interviews to third parties other than the deacon if they deemed this necessary to respect the participants' privacy.

Literature Review

No study specifically addressed to an analysis of the needs of the residents of St. Helen's Parish in Malta has previously taken place. Although there can be no doubt that the participants experience a type of hardship and this has been traditionally connoted as an integral aspect of poverty, it can be disputed to what extent the participants can be classed as poor. This is because, as Donnison (2001, p. 88) points out "poverty is a changing phenomenon with meanings that can be fully grasped only as we gain an understanding of the society to be discussed." Although attempts have been made to determine the poverty gap in absolute terms, these efforts have been perceived as somewhat lacking in substance, as they fail to take into account all those hardships that cannot easily be accounted for in financial terms, as would be the case, for instance, when one is discriminated against in an unwarranted fashion. The poverty gap is the quantifiable amount by which the aggregate income of the poor falls below a designated poverty-line. It is based upon rational calculations of a minimum income below which one could be classed as 'poor.'

Townsend (1979) refers to a relative definition of poverty where each generation defines poverty differently as a result of the evolution of new necessities that accompany that generation. People who lack these necessities would be in a relatively poorer position than those with access to them. This notwithstanding that, in generations gone by, these same 'necessities' would have been unheard of. An implication of this is that even if there is economic growth, it does not necessarily imply an equitable distribution of wealth since goods and services that are introduced on the market and that come to be widely seen as necessities may not be readily adapted price-wise to those who do not have the requisite amount of money in hand with which to make their purchases of these items.

Lessof and Jowell (2000) use the term social exclusion to describe poverty in relativist terms, noting that, on the one hand, this term denotes an absence of financial resources and social capital and, on the other hand, it also denotes obstacles to building them up. They note that poverty is a fundamental aspect of social exclusion observing that the term 'social exclusion' was widely adopted in Great Britain during the Thatcher era, when the term poverty came to increasingly find its way out of being encrypted within social policy documents and reports. Over time, social exclusion came to be applied to describe the plight of a varied range of individuals who need some form of help, be they aged people, invalids, single parents, drug addicts, delinquents, and other similar categories within which people that are in some way disadvantaged can be categorized.

Adopting this wider definition of social exclusion, within the Maltese context, Abela (1994, 1998) notes that such things as the increase in youth crime and drug abuse have led to an increase in the number of people experiencing unforeseen discontent and insecurity. Social exclusion is thereby no longer as restricted population-wise as it was some time ago, as can be evidenced by police statistics showing a rapid increase in drug-related crime with certain drug-offenders already being hard-core users when still of a young age (Abela, 2001). Within the context of St. Helen's Parish, social exclusion can also be said to appertain to its elderly population that at times may be excluded from participating in certain activities not only due to lack of funds but also due to constraints imposed by failing health.

Levitas (1999, in Lessof and Jowell, 2000) refers to a lack of employment as being seen as a primary cause of social exclusion, and notes that in families where there is a lack of bread-winner or where there is total dependency on social security benefits, there are debilitating effects of such exclusion. This understanding of social exclusion is highly akin to Townsend's (1979, p. 32) definition of relative poverty. According to Townsend, this type of poverty is experienced when people's resources fall so "seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from the ordinary living patterns, customs and activities".

Since social, economic and cultural integration tend to be defined in terms of people's education and labor market, families that are lacking in skills may also face the possibility that unless they are able and willing to work at increasing their skills-base, they may easily become increasingly unemployable as time passes. Even on national and transnational levels, building up high human capital ratios is also being attributed considerable significance. This is reflected, for instance, in the current strategy, as outlined in the Lisbon Strategy, for turning the EU into the most competitive and knowledge-based economy in the world, granted that today's economies are consistently knowledge-driven (OECD, 2000). Although this may serve to generate economic growth and social cohesion, it also places an onus on those who are unskilled to invest in attaining certification. In Malta, this can be approached by people's possibly enlisting themselves in training courses provided by the Employment and Training Corporation (a partially government-run organization set up in the early 2000s with this end in mind) or in training courses offered by other providers.

Social exclusion has also been attributed, particularly from within a post-modern perspective, as being a product of risk, where risks are not necessarily distributed equally within a given society. It is possible for some to have access to means to prevent or to avoid certain risks, for instance, due to their having a higher standard of education that translates into their being more literate and thereby more likely to be informed how to address them (Beck, 1992). The notion of risk is not divorced from the labour market since the diversification of routes both into the labour market (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997) and within the labour market (OECD, 2000) implies that people need skills in order to navigate their way through these different routes and the resulting lack of predictability that they bring about. This is further exacerbated by the individualization of the whole process where individuals may find themselves increasingly on their own when negotiating transitions both into and within the labour market since the lack of linearity of the whole process implies that they cannot look to employers to simply offer them employment once they have left the school-bench and are available for work.

Within a Maltese context, there is a further de-structuring of life events that is clearly discernible and this has been referred to as a form of "neo-traditionality" (Abela, 1994, p. 38). This is manifested when the influence of traditional agencies such as the family and the church comes to be increasingly toned down by influences of the media, the internet, and peer-group pressures. This social change has brought about a situation whereby people cannot take their assuming social roles for granted since the expectations associated with those roles are constantly evolving. In terms of social exclusion, it is thereby possible nonetheless that certain persons may be less likely to overcome role incongruities stemming from the different demands that are laid upon them by social expectations. This may be due to their having a lack of resources with which to meet those demands, including the lack of money that they could use to go places, or the lack of the appropriate cognitive and social faculties that would enable them to participate in certain events.

Results

Table 1 summarizes the main complaints that the participants in the study claimed was contributing to their feeling needy enough to ask for assistance of the EU-funded aid referred to above.

Table 1: Summary of Findings: Reasons for Asking for EU-Funded Aid

Unemployment based issues including lack of education, inability or unwillingness to find employment.
Family based issues including single mothers and fathers, domestic violence, and separation/relationship dissolution.
Health related issues including physical and mental health difficulties.
Problems related to old age including solitude and decreasing ability to participate in activities of daily living.

The diversity of needs evidences the different reasons why this assistance was being asked for. The interviewees were not a homogenous group. Some of them were at different life-span stages (some were starting married life and some were elderly), some were visibly ill whereas others did not appear to present any health complaints, some lived on their own and some lived in a family context, and so on. This diversity of contexts betrays that there is no one solution to people's financial problems even if it could be argued that

understandably, very often, a lack of money implies a restriction upon their choices. Deguara places this diversity of needs in a wide international context. She notes that poverty is not something that is evenly distributed even if certain groups, which in the context of this study, would include the infirm and the elderly who, due to their state of health, are disadvantaged relative to the remainder. She notes that people may be poor due to their particular family circumstances and cites that according to a 2007 Report by the European Commission entitled *"Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Exclusion,"* lone parents in Europe are at the highest risk of poverty. Taken holistically, this implies that financial problems tend to be inserted in a myriad of other problems within people's lives, including health issues and relationship issues, as will be developed further in these pages.

All the respondents were (i) pensioners who, when of employable age, occupied working-class jobs, (ii) people working in working-class jobs or (iii) people who are currently unemployed. Although, at first sight there appears to be homogeneity in class background, nonetheless, 'within-class differences' prevail. For instance, certain respondents are clearly more skilled than others. This implies that it is highly probable that they thereby have the potential to be better off financially than at least some of the remainder since they have a higher level of accessible human capital at hand. Secondly, some people offered greater resilience than others when adapting to their current situation. Clearly, they were better equipped to deal with their concerns than those who tended to be more passive and who thereby possibly subscribed to having a lower self-efficacy in the face of their complaints.

The trap of falling into making generalities about class background has thereby been avoided. This is in further consideration that, as Furlong and Cartmel (1997) caution "the collective foundations of social life have become more obscure, they continue to provide powerful frameworks which constrain … people's experiences and life-chances." (p. 109). This implies that it is technically possible for someone to be relatively disadvantaged when coming to taking up a particular job. Stating this, people may consequently live their lives by "getting by" rather than by "getting on" (Clarke, 1999, p.1) This study is thereby intrinsically a study of such issues as people's identity and even of their reflexivity as they try to fashion out their life-course in a way that suits them despite any structurally-based constraints that may impinge on their sense of agency.

Identity is not divorced from work-place realities and unemployment is readily associated with negative influences on people's well-being (Feather, 1990).The impact that unemployment has is nonetheless mediated by such parameters as people's stage in the life-course. For instance, unemployment may mean one thing when people are young and another when they are slightly more advanced in aged. This is because the former may tend to be seen as possibly less worrying than the latter as it may be assigned a more transitional connotation. Unemployment can also influence people by not allowing them adequate financial resources to meet their own needs and aspirations. In other words, psychological well-being is correlated with the goodness of fit between people's resources and their immediate environment (Hamilton, Broman, Hoffman and Renner, 1990). The following exploration will be centred upon showing how unemployment was deemed as stressful and to exploring how this influenced the lives of the participants.

"Longing for a job." Unemployment Issues.

The following table shows that unemployment is not only associated with financial targets even though these are the most widely cited by the participants. The participants, for instance, mentioned that work can keep the participants' sons away from bad company, have the husband feel useful, avoid depression, and increase inter-spousal communication. This appears to subscribe to an "individual pathology model" (Banks and Ulah, 1998, p.4) where the negative effects of unemployment upon individuals are seen to transcend simply their financial merits. Notwithstanding this, the following table also shows that certain families are crying out loud to have their subsistence needs met.

	Needs	Limitations	Resources	Other Aspirations
1	To have 36 year old son find a job.	Bad company of son. Mother single parent.	Mother helps son financially.	For son to be financially independent.
2	To send children to private lessons (aged 18, 16 and 13).	Stress in family. Father of children has mental health issues.	Oldest child doing A levels, younger one (F. III) doing well at school.	For daughter to be doing A levels to be given an allowance whilst studying (she is a repeater).
3	To finish off the home with adequate internal finishes.	Lack of money. Son (24) unemployed.	Son is doing much of the decorating himself.	For son to find employment.
4	To whitewash home.	Lack of money. Husband scared of losing social security allowance if he starts working.	Willing to work if the advantages outweigh the loss of social security allowances.	Husband would enjoy working if he were to find a job with the conditions that he likes.
5	Adequate housing.	No money to buy house. Son unemployed.	Son willing to find a job.	To be in a position to purchase certain items such as mobile phones.
6	To have a catering job (father) in which he has job-experience.	No car.	Father is willing to find job.	To be in a position to make his house more comfortable to live in.
7	Adequate housing.	Lives in sub-standard tenement as she was evicted from her previous tenement.	Willing to find job.	To find adequate lodging.
8	Material items for daughter who is pregnant, unemployed and a single mother.	This daughter does not work.	Father (pensioner) and mother (pensioner and housewife) can help her.	To have larger premises where all family could live or that could be subdivided so daughter could live there also.
9.	Basic material items for daily living, including groceries.	Son (31 years old) abuses substances.	Mother's ability to relate to son despite his substance abuse problem.	To have son attend a rehabilitation programme in a therapeutic residential setting.
10.	Basis material items for daily living, including groceries.	Widow, Large family. 3 adult children unemployed.	Other 3 adult children are working, 1 is a student.	Mother wishes to overcome her own loneliness. Exhausted with the efforts of looking after her family on her own.
11.	Basic material items for daily living, including groceries.	Domestic violence due to husband's alcoholism. 19 year old son abuses substances.	Son is attending rehabilitation programme.	To overcome trauma of domestic violence. That 16 year old boy does not follow in his older brother's footsteps.

12.	Money to pay rent with.	Person (man living alone) in debt.	Looking for a job.	To settle debts.
13.	Employment of father.	Father was eight years in prison. Alcoholic.	2 older daughters work. Youngest (10) at school.	To overcome alcohol problem and to acquire a new bedroom for his daughters.
14.	Employment of father. To purchase baby items.	Has to finance upbringing of 2 daughters who are at school and a baby. Has been three years unemployed.	Wishes to find job.	To overcome depression stemming from his not working. To make husband feel useful.
15.	Money for daily living.	Feels lonely.	Help from family.	Would like more outings to be organized by the authorities.
16.	Money for daily living. Educational materials including school uniform.	Has to finance upbringing of five year old daughter.	Cooperation within the home.	To be in a better financial position.
17.	Financial aid to give their sons certain medicines and educational items.	Cannot cope with expenses particularly since their two young sons are regularly sick.	Cooperation within the home.	To be in a better financial position.
18.	Money for daily living and for educational items pertaining to children's schooling.	Mother is pregnant for the 5th time and cannot find employment because of this.	Father does the odd job.	To have enough food and money to pay for the 6 member family.
19.	Adequate housing including bathroom and basic finishing. Money for daily living.	Single mother. Cannot cope with daily expenses. Family is in debt. Son is ex-prisoner.	Son is looking for a job.	To overcome the family problems due to her son's way of life and to overcome loneliness.
20.	81 year old lady who is not coping with her old age pension alone. Needs money for medicines.	Playing tombola instead of saving up for necessities and medicines.	Making the most out of life.	To have enough money to both play lots of tombola and to pay for daily necessities.
21.	Whitewashing of the house. School uniforms. Milk for baby. Basic shopping needs.	Nobody is working in a family with 7 members. In debt with grocer, television licence, telephone, etc.	Husband is looking for work.	To have adequate financial resources to buy the proper educational material and food for the baby.
22.	Full-time job so as to cover expenses better for husband/father.	Paying off loan which limits family's cash-flow. Recently had accident that does not allow him to work at every likely job that comes up.	Husband is looking for full-time job.	To have adequate money to pay off loan.
23.	Basic commodities such as beds, bedding, washing machine, and money for	Person is unable to work due to a work-place accident. His	Person leads as active a life as possible helping out with the	For the man to determine his position as

	daily living expenses.	partner has 4 children from another person and does not work either.	upbringing of the children.	'boarded out' following an accident 18 years ago.
24.	Redoing of plumbing system.	Middle aged man who lives on his own.	Sometimes works at the odd job.	Spends a lot of money on alcohol and cigarettes, possibly an alcoholic.
25.	Clothing for 6 year old daughter. To cover expenses for daily living and medicines for daughter.	8 family members, none of whom are in paid employment. Family is riddled with social problems including substance misuse issues and children from multiple partners.	Certain family members would like to work.	To have enough money to cover the basic necessities.
26.	Financial aid to pay for daily expenses "you have to stretch your money as if it were chewing gum."	Cannot enjoy a normal life as they cannot afford a hobby or to go out for a meal. Low level of education.	Good housing conditions with acceptable furnishing and good sanitary facilities.	To have enough money to be able to lead an 'ordinary life.'
27.	Husband and wife have financial problems leading to their not coping with daily living. They are also in debt.	Stress in the family.	Good housing conditions.	To have enough money as sometimes they feel their survival is threatened.
28.	School items and expenses such as school outing, photocopies and medicines for two children.	Domestic violence at home.	Husband works rarely.	To have a normal family life where the spouses communicate.
29.	Dilapidated housing.	Lack of space in the house. Mother cannot have a shower when there is the son or vice-versa, as the house lacks the necessary partitions.	Son works.	To be assigned social housing as appropriate.
30	Household of six living on social state benefits and therefore cannot pay for educational items for children and subsequently cannot make ends meet.	Nobody is in a paid job.	Stability in the family - very good relationship between the different members Relatively excellent housing conditions.	To have enough money to organize a decent family wedding. Have enough money to invest in the children's education.

Other than subsistence needs, two other needs are clearly cited. The first relates to needs associated with children's education, and the second relates to housing. Housing needs are subdivided into either the need for alternative accommodation or the improvement of the existing one. One participant cites mobile phones as a necessity, this bearing testimony to the social transformations that have occurred as a result of the influence of technology on people's lives. Medicines, particularly as far as children or the elderly are concerned, are cited as being expensive, this thereby attesting to some participants being unable or unwilling to procure it through the national health system whereby medicines are usually assigned free of charge to patients, the charge being borne by the population at large, through a national insurance scheme. These types of problems

are nonetheless compounded by other factors such as the lack of stability in a person's home. This will be the focus of the next section.

"The problem seems to lie in my family". Marital and Familial Issues.

Perceiving oneself to be financially in a precarious state is one aspect of the potentially precarious situations that people face, particularly if they need to procure medicines and are unsuccessful in doing so due to their particular financial position. Nonetheless, terms such as poverty, or even social exclusion, tend to be subjectively defined, since they serve to give some idea about what they imply, yet they serve to obscure the rendering of any exacting definitions of what they connote. As Ball, Maguire and Macrae (2000: 43) put it, these terms work "as a banner around which it is possible to include a wider range of issues than just … deprivation, for example." In the following table, the needs expressed stretch from the desire to give children a good education, despite lack of financial resources, to the desire to get over past abuses which have left victims traumatized.

	Needs	**Limitations**	**Resources**	**Other Aspirations**
1	Financial help for bills Shopping needs.	Separated woman, for the past 3 yrs, lives with her 24yr old son.	Spends most of her time at her mother's home Interested in knitting and housekeeping.	Wishes to find more things with which to occupy her time.
2	Household of 8 persons. One of the children is an unmarried mother asking for baby clothing. The head of household is separated and is financially hard up.	The head of household is doing all the housekeeping. Two of her children are residing at a residential facility for the disabled.	Social Workers and respite care workers are helping this family.	That the residential facility where the children have been placed will pledge to look after them when the carer passes away.
3	Separated mother experiencing financial difficulties.	Cannot put her mind at rest that she will be able to make both ends meet when it comes to paying for basic necessities.	Has a part-time job and her 3 children are in paid employment or students.	To sell her home in order to get enough money for better living standards.
4	Unmarried father of a female youth with challenging behavior. Father does not work.	Cannot enjoy a normal life due to their family member with challenging behaviour running into various difficulties including receiving specialized care at a residential set-up for such girls. Father is on tranquillizers and occasionally abusing alcohol and gambling.	Parents of unmarried father are very welcoming and helping in this difficult family situation.	To get further professional help for the daughter. For the father to find employment.
5	Single mother with 2 young children in need of basic clothing for the children, Would also like free private lessons for her daughter.	Cannot work due to her home keeping needs. Experiencing loneliness Cannot have some free time Expensive home rent Cannot do any physical demanding tasks.	Spends most of her time at her mother's home.	Wishes to work as a telephone operator.

		Younger son with kidney problems Depression.		
6	Financial assistance for the cohabitating couple (both separated). Each of the partners has one child from their previous married life in this blended household formation.	Do not own their home and live with female partners' parents Male partner has back injury and so cannot do any physically demanding jobs. He has to juggle his unemployment benefits between his daily expenditure and maintenance for his ex-wife. Frequent clashes between father of female partner and couple because of children's behavior.	Female partner gets financial assistance from ex partner Attending ETC programs in order to be better trained to find employment.	Male partner wishes to find suitable paid employment Aspiration of couple is to have enough money to buy a house.
7	Disrespectful husband and occasional domestic violence inflicted on wife. In need of money to purchase items of daily living and foodstuffs.	Depressing situation for wife She has run up a debt on bills for medicine.	Excellent relationship between mother and children.	For wife not to suffer any more physical and psychological abuse from husband.
8	Items of daily living, particularly foodstuffs.	Single parent who finds it difficult to work as she has a young child.	She has her parents who occasionally look after the child.	To have enough money to pay for her daily expenses.
9	Single mother of 8 children in need of financial assistance to pay pending bills.	Stress in this large family Kitchen is in the yard (during rainy days kitchen is flooded) One of the children has a physical disability Neglect of the younger children attributable to financial problems. Two of the older children are unemployed.	Two of the 8 children are in paid job.	To have enough money to make ends meet, to purchase a computer, and for adequate housing.
10	Family of 4. In need of financial assistance, there is a single parent mother, a single parent daughter, a small child, and a mentally ill member (the mother's brother) present.	None of the persons are able to find work.	They keep the house as welcoming as they possibly can.	To have enough money to be able to live comfortably and stay clear of running into debt.
11	Widow in need of any material assistance including monetary aid.	She suffers with high blood Pressure.	Fairly good relationship with children and grandchildren This person is helped	Wishes to have bereavement counseling sessions for the whole family.

			by her parents in order to overcome her miserable sudden situation following the tragic death of her husband.	
12	Single parent taking care of her primary school-aged son living with her mother in need of school items and clothing.	Lack of financial income other than social security benefits.	Well mannered individual who shows genuine concern for others.	To give her child a proper education.
13	Family going through hard times since the married daughter has just separated from her husband. Mother is also going through difficult times with her British husband.	Stress in the family.	Owns apartment.	Aspires that separation process is affected in an amicable manner so that the process would be by far less lengthy.
14	Single mother who claims that her main needs are financial.	School-aged children who are too young to work and she has a disability that prevents her from working.	Mother claims that she has a good relationship with her children.	Aspires to be able to give her children a good education.
15	Separated for the past 4 months and in need of financial assistance.	Occasionally they have to use the sitting room as a sleeping room.	Traumatized by previous incidents of physical abuse and domestic violence.	To have better living conditions in terms of more adequate housing.

The participants share a commonality that cries out for attention not only to be granted to them as individuals but also in terms of job availability, recruitment patterns, social service allotments and labour market structures. Children of the participants would benefit educationally if attention is not addressed as much to their own individual setbacks as it is to the wider structural concerns that impinge on them from within a family and community context (Coffield, 1996) - something that becomes evident when considered in the light of the table presented above. This overlapping of concerns between the individual and societal aspects of a given problem is also evident when it comes to exploring health issues, as is done below.

"I want to live my life to the full, even if I am weak, vulnerable and ill". Physical and Mental Health Related Issues.

In the table below, illness is seen to increase the likelihood of the social exclusion of certain people, as they aspire to be more socially productive but find that, precisely for reasons of ill health, they cannot. The table below presents the participants in a very particular social world that appears to be characterized more by what they cannot do rather than what they can do. Their interests, their aspirations, their leisure pursuits and their social relationships are circumscribed by their limited choices in the face of their own health complaints or those of a near relative.

	Needs	**Limitations**	**Resources**	**Other Aspirations**
1	To have full pension	Not capable of working therefore she cannot have the full pension	Relatives visit her regularly	To have a full pension
2	Adequate housing	Serious back injury	Hobbies(hunting and trapping)	To find an adequate job accordingly
3	EU Aid from parish	Boarded out		
4	Alternative housing	Mental health issues	Owns her house along	Alternative and more

			with her brothers and sisters	accessible house
5	Stair lift to be installed Financial aid to make up for her much needed medicine	Amputated leg and uncomfortable artificial limb	Owns house and disability equipment	To overcome the physical discomfort caused by artificial limb.
6	Financial assistance to pay for the medicine	Financial income	Owns a stair lift	To have a stable financial income
7	To have an income to pay for the very expensive medicine Installation of intercom	Physical disability - lower body paralysed	Determined to see the bright side of life.	To overcome loneliness
8	Orthopedic mattress Shopping for the couple (chicken and vegetable only) and for their child.	Stomach, liver problems Slipped disc Cholesterol, and diabetic Mental health of child is problematic Stress in the family	Couple try to cooperate best they can.	To overcome the stress that is caused by the different health problems of all family members.
9	Financial assistance in order to pay for certain medicines.	Mental and physical disability of both members	Own their house	To continue being supported by their close relatives
10	Financial assistance in order to pay for certain medicines.	Mental health issues physical disability	Adequate smaller house	Care worker to attend more regularly
11	To overcome the fear of the very much needed surgery Adequate housing	Depression Back injury	Excellent relationship with family members	Successful surgery Adequate housing
12	Financial assistance in order to pay for certain medicines.	Physical disability	Sister is acting as his care worker	Easier mobility in the house.
13	Adequate housing with a reasonable rent	Lack of commodities	Reasonably sized house.	Improvements in the house, such as better equipped kitchen and bathroom.
14	Help and advice to parents on how to deal with their mentally retarded 51 yr old daughter, when aggressive Concerned about their daughter's future	Mental health of one of the children, aged 51 Do not have any hobbies or interests	Property ownership	To put their mind at rest regarding their daughter's future
15	Financial income to pay for electricity, water, and telephone bills	Physical disability	Father in paid employment	To have a stable income to make ends meet
16	Financial assistance to pay for the current bills	Physical disability In debt with family and credit-card account at bank.	Father and mother have great respect for their children.	To have enough money to settle current debt and to have a decent

				marriage ceremony for daughter.
17	Clothing and milk (NESTLE) for grand daughter	Unhealthy relationship between parents and children Stress in the family Aggressive daughter vis-à-vis parents Physical violence on the daughter by her partner	Well kept apartment	Healthier relationship between all family members
18	All kind of assistance by the parish priest	Physical disability and illiteracy	Their determination to fight the odds.	To benefit more from EU Aid
19	Basic shopping needs	Depression of father Mental health issues of son Son abusing alcohol	Mother is part-time employed and is taking care of her family as best as she can	To have a brighter future where both the son and husband/father have full rehabilitation
20	Helper to assist the mother so that she can do her shopping freely	Mental health problems of the son Mother suffering from polio Mother abusing alcohol	Dedicated helper who comes home.	Assistance in child caring
21	Adequate housing Overcome the parents' fear about their future; son's worrying health More and more material assistance from parish	Mental and physical disability Parents cannot handle the health worrying condition of their son No hobbies except outings with parish priest.	Family wants to do all possible for the son.	Adequate housing facilities
22	To get easier means to access the medicine from polyclinic To get EU Aid at home	Brain tumor. Cannot attend polyclinic regularly.	Do spend most of her time doing hobbies such as computer, playing piano, violin, and attending the missionary office	Provision of transport for elderly mass.
23	To have easier access to support services to help her through her difficulties with her husband.	Very weak due to her illness Experience domestic violence with her ex-husband	Access to housing handyman for any home related problems Well educated children who take care of her mother regularly	Overcome loneliness and her past experiences
24	Cooker	Domestic violence on wife which eventually resulted in depression	Owns apartment	Overcome depression.
25	Financial aid.	Elderly, widowed mother taking care of 60 yr old disabled member of family	Owns their house	To continue living such a life where she feels purposeful.
26	Cooker and fan Helper to assist her in cleaning the home and overall house management.	Unhealthy relationship between parents and their son Both parents are ill In debt with telephone department	Son works on an odd job basis.	Better hygienic conditions

27	Financial assistance for daily living.	High blood pressure and mental health issues	Very happy to have house in excellent condition	To enjoy life as best as they can
28	Financial assistance for daily living.	Husband seriously ill	Harmonious atmosphere between husband and wife	To have a more stable financial situation but they look very happy and positive
29	Settle income tax back payments To bring her daughter to live with her but it is very difficult for her to handle her conditions	Alcohol problems of father Mental health issues of daughter (residing in residential home for the disabled) Wife suffering from back problems. Stress in the family	In spite of her condition the mother does her best to work and carry on with life She regularly goes out with her daughter	To be in one house with daughter.
30	Financial assistance Assistance on house management vis-à-vis child caring	Mental and physical disability Mediocre interior decorations	Decent house	To arrange the interior of the house by whitewashing the walls and painting the apertures.
31	Difficulty to make ends meet.	Experiences mental health problems	Attend day centre activities	To enjoy her life with her family and friends
32	Male breadwinner is not fit to work due to his health condition - cannot make ends meet due to the electricity/water bills	Unsuccessful family business	Willing to find job	To have enough money to organize a family wedding Both spouses are looking for an adequate job to support the family

Notwithstanding the above, health can be somewhat of a complicated matter to describe as it is a highly subjective thing. It is technically possible for someone to go down and out with a cold while another person shrugs it off with an "oh, it's nothing" attitude. This problem is further compounded in old age when the distinction between sickness and illness becomes somewhat blurred as sicknesses take longer to heal and illness can become more emphatically present due to the frailness of the human condition in old age. This is the subject of exploration in the next section.

"I may be elderly but that does not mean I do not deserve to have my needs met". Elderly Related Issues.

Theorists like Giddens (1991), Beck (1992), Alheit (1999) put forward a post-modernist view of society, where they claim that people are becoming more individualized and as a result such values as those ascribable to a community feeling or even a family feeling are becoming increasingly socially eroded. Yet, many of the participants refer to help being acquired from either family members or from other community sources. Other than references to the government home-help system, these services are provided voluntarily by people who are familiar to one another either through neighbourhood ties or in virtue of their being related to one another. This offers testimony to traditional values not being necessarily 'eroding' or 'disappearing' (Alheit, 1999, p. 74). Rather, there seem to be a more community-based orientation based on concern for other people in one's life. Naturally, with some people, being elderly implies a higher level of vulnerability and for this reason, to meet that dependability on others, there must be other people to depend on. Notwithstanding this the preferred helpers are direct family members since one member families have reported experiencing loneliness and insecurity more often than those persons who live with other family members in their own homes. The table below illustrates the elderly participants' main concerns and aspirations.

	Needs	Limitations	Resources	Other Aspirations
1	Two elderly sisters with financial difficulties stemming from being elderly and depending only on social security allowances.	Lack of funds and increasing health problems that prevent them from carrying out activities they want to.	The two sisters respect one another	To continue living peacefully together.
2	Financial difficulties since she has to help her son and her grandchildren Loneliness	Cannot be financially stable	Her son and grandchildren offer companionship.	To be financially stable and make ends meet
3	Financial problems associated with simply living on social security benefits.	Cannot work due to being elderly.	Family unit of 3 living together in a peaceful life sharing their income equally	To continue enjoying this familial mutual respect
4	Financial problems associated with simply living on social security benefits.	Cannot work due to being elderly.	The couple lives in its own home.	To continue living this lifestyle
5	Loneliness	Living on her own	Owns modest home Recently appreciated her neighbors' support during difficult times	To overcome the fear of living lonely especially when sick
6	Mental health issues Safer environment Physical disability Visits from parish priest	After attempted theft, this old lady is afraid to go outside on her own	Finds the support of the neighbors an asset.	To have a safer environment both at home and outside home
7	Change her house not to live with her own relatives any longer	Afraid of loosing usufruct if leaving her home	Very willing to change her life in such a way that she would still retain meaningful contact with relatives but live in peace.	To have an alternative housing opportunity
8	Financial problems associated with simply living on social security benefits.	Would like to earn an income but cannot because of her old age.	Her children are all married and well settled with their respective families - mother living tranquilly in her home Landlord not asking for rent	To have opportunities for greater social involvement, for instance, through working.
9	Financial assistance for medicine since certain medicines are not provided free of charge through the national health scheme.	Loneliness Better housing conditions Low level of education	Feels regularly sick. Finds occasional support from neighbors.	To have a better house with the very basic facilities and stable finances to make ends meet
10	Financial problems associated with simply living on social security benefits.	Sometimes feels lonely. She thinks that she can give more to the community than she is doing presently.	Help from children when needed	Continue giving her service in church

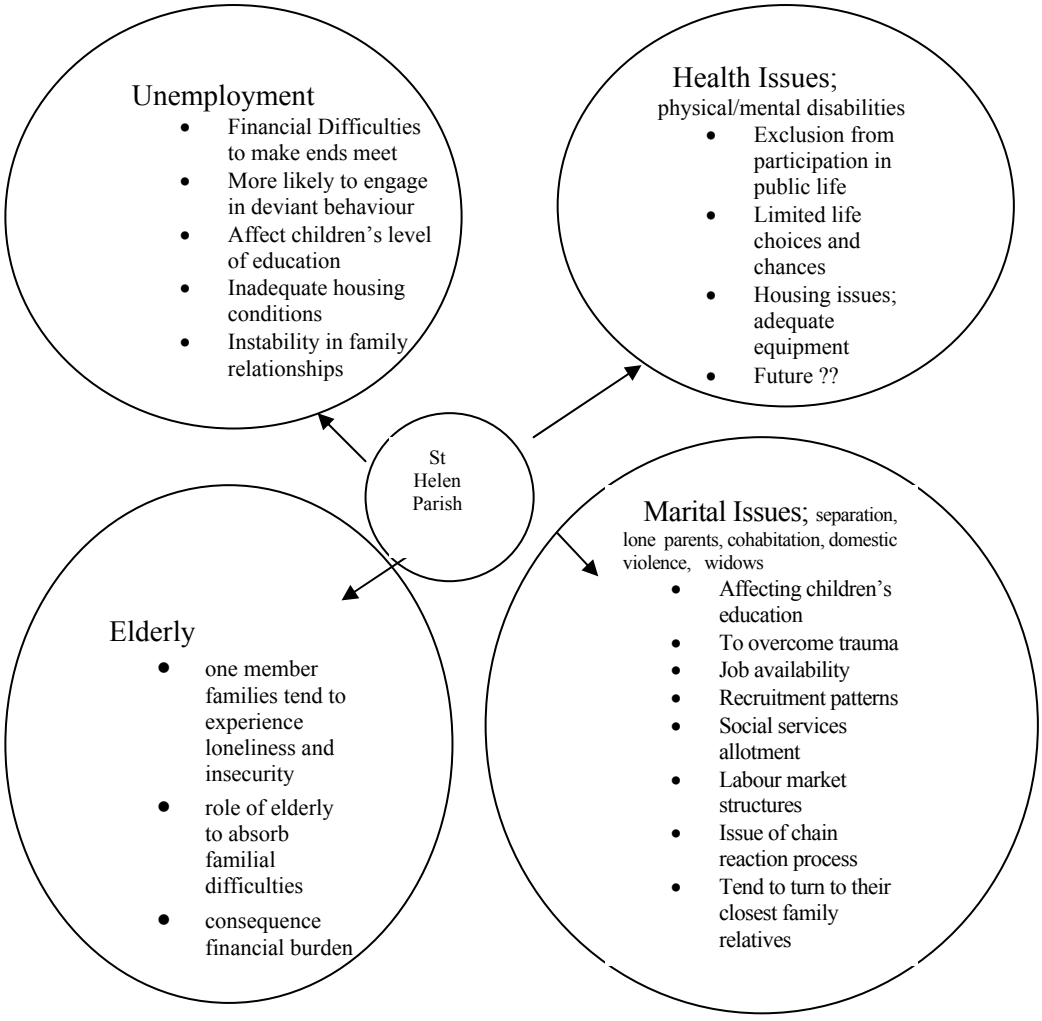
11	Financial help Housekeeping assistance Loneliness	Lives on her own	Government service offers home-help service that helps with the cleaning.	Overcome loneliness and have a better environment
12	Financial help for shopping needs	Physical disability	Does not experience loneliness since she visits her mother regularly	To acquire more financial help
13	Health problems associated with old age.	Lives on her own.	Visited by persons from parish group.	To acquire more financial help.
14	Health problems associated with old age.	The older family member is sick and the other takes care of her.	Two family members who cooperate together, feel very much supported by parish priest. Yet, younger one claims that she is financially drained.	Requires further help with finances.
15	Single parent (of adult child who has left home) Loneliness	Does not have any hobbies/interests apart from the mass attendance. Only leaves house to go to the grocer.	Is trying to become more involved in the parish activities.	Overcome loneliness
16	To change her large house to a smaller apartment	Single parent with relatives victims of gambling	Tries to help out gambling victims best she can. Feels involved in their lives.	To try to engage these victims in teasing out professional help for themselves.
17	Financial problems. Loneliness	Low level of education. This she attributes to her taking caring of parents during her childhood.	Is trying to become more involved in parish activities.	Would like greater financial help as well as a more regular distribution of foodstuffs at a parish level.
18	Financial difficulties to cope with the purchasing of medicine and pending bills	Cannot cope with financial burdens	Attend centre bi-weekly	Would like the government to consider further medicines to be listed under the free medicines offered.
19	Financial difficulties.	Cannot cope with financial burdens.	Elderly couple that respect each other.	Would like to ease off their financial burdens particularly when they have to buy medicines when either gets sick.
20	Financial difficulties.	Cannot cope with financial burdens.	Elderly couple that live together.	Wish to have more money so as to put their minds at rest that they can last out till the next pension money arrives.
21	Two elderly persons cannot plan a monthly budget since until recently	Mobility problems due to recent hip-bone surgery	Living with her sister which gives her a lot of support	Asking for more home help in terms of housekeeping

	electricity/water bills are based on an approximate not an exact value Expensive medicine			

The table reveals that certain elderly persons experience obligations to assist in extending support to their younger family members. This could assume the form of financial help, child-caring, looking after grandchildren, and sharing their homes with their offspring. This is clearly amplified when their children face marital breakdown and lone parenthood. Younger family members also complain that looking after an elderly person is an expensive affair. The financial aspect of the problem is clearly brought out with this category as it has been in all other categories. Deguara (in this volume) points out that, very often, the issue of being elderly is compounded furthermore, when this involves living on one's own. This is shown in this study by the person who is scared to leave her house after her having been robbed or the loneliness associated with being on one's own with the only reason for leaving the house being essentially to participate in activities of daily living, such as going to the grocer, or to attend mass. She notes that, even on a European level, in certain instances, living on one's own when one is elderly can easily translate into a person having a lack of social contacts and lack of social activities which to engage in.

Conclusion

Even though each participant, or more precisely each family, faced his/her own hardships, the results highlight some general common issues. Before pointing out these general trends, this section intends to highlight the different faces of poverty experienced by the four clusters that relate to the categories referred to above, namely issues of un/employment, marital problems, health related difficulties and elderly issues. The following illustration depicts the main concerns that were attributed to each …



If one were to look at unemployment, first, it is clear that this is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Jobless households clearly report an inability to meet certain needs. These needs vary from basic survival needs to those appertaining to a desire to have the house whitewashed and not affording it, having a new bathroom installed, or making the premises suitable to be lived in. Other needs that required financing related to children's education. One particular respondent mentioned that she cannot afford to send her children to school since she cannot pay for their daily lunch or to afford paying for their school outings. Another aspect of joblessness is that certain respondents claimed that either they or other family members had fallen in a cycle of alcoholism, chronic gambling, or drug-abuse, as a result of what they see as having had too much idle time on their hands.

Health problems that were reported related to both physical health and mental health. Nonetheless, this does not imply a total lack of resilience as can be seen by the assertion given by one respondent when asserting that '*I want to live my life to the full, even if I am weak, vulnerable and ill.*' Concerns regarding adequate and accessible housing conditions and the prices of medicine were visibly the most urgent needs of families that claimed that chronic health problems were the main source of their financial problems. In most cases, respondents who were so indisposed claimed that they could not participate fully in Community life. They reported experiencing long-term illnesses attributable to depression, stomach problems, liver problems, serious back injuries, and acute mental health issues. They saw themselves as having limited life chances and reported that they feel emarginated from mainstream society in terms of education and employment. Consequently, most of these respondents were very much preoccupied when thinking of theirs, or their family's, future.

Elderly persons see themselves as important and needed in certain families as they deem themselves important to other family members as they attend to such chores as looking after their grandchildren while their own children, the grandchildren's parents, are at work. Nonetheless, they are also called upon to absorb all kinds of familial problems and in some cases elderly respondents claimed that this was having a negative effect on their financial situation. In other cases, elderly persons claimed that their old age pension was not enough to help them with today's prices.

Respondents hailing from families where there are marital/familial conflicts can experience poverty for a number of reasons. The struggles of lone parents, including unmarried fathers or mothers, widows and separated persons, include locating a support system while they can go out to work and look after their families. In other families, respondents reported that they were victims of different forms of emotional and sometimes physical abuse who experienced neglect, disrespect, battering, and who were undergoing severe trauma. In such cases, it is the extended family, usually the parents, that normally offer assistance. It is very likely that these persons vent out their emotional difficulties with close relatives. It seems that these kinds of families tend to experience an intergenerational transmission of poverty. Certain families interviewed presented a scenario where they claimed that they faced different poverty issues. This was most especially in multi-generational families.

Certain commonalities emerge between the four clusters. Firstly, there is the financial aspect of the problem. Certain respondents highlighted that they were in debt with the village groceries and/or butchers. Others reported that they found it difficult to settle their own pending electricity/water bills. Others laid emphasis on their inability to engage in any leisure activity even though some claimed that they compensated for this by attending activities organized by the parish priest, some of which were organized for free. Certain respondents expressed frustration at being unable to purchase prescribed medicine that was not available through the national social security system. One particular person said that as a result of this he has to stretch his income "like a piece of chewing gum." He claims that medicines are becoming more and more expensive as time goes by.

These problems are exacerbated when people live in sub-standard housing conditions as this adds to the difficulties they face most especially when parts of their home were inaccessible due to particular health complaints or injuries, or when the room called the kitchen was actually a yard covered with a make-shift grating with a cooker and old-fashioned paraffin-heater underneath. Interestingly enough, only a handful of respondents claimed that they lived in an owner-occupied dwelling as most were tenants in rented tenements. Some were nonetheless offered protected tenancy in virtue of the 1939 Maltese rent laws that essentially offer elderly tenants the possibility of living in their rented tenements without fear of eviction or of increased

rents. The table hereunder points out the percentage of respondents residing in rented accommodation. The responses have been subdivided using the four clusters so as to retain consistency with the approach used in the report.

	Unemployment	**Health Related**	**Elderly**	**Relationship Issues**
% of responses overall as residing in rented accommodation	63.3%	68.75%	66.6%	40 %

A further factor that was clearly seen to be associated with poverty in the B'Kara area is illiteracy. This translates into people not having the necessary skills for many jobs. This further feeds their sense of hopelessness of ever holding down a job. As a result they feel dejected and in some cases, this dejection was attributed as their main worry, particularly amongst men in their forties and fifties who are unemployed and who fear that they are now unemployable.

It is thereby clear that there is no one way in which poverty can influence or affect any one family just as there is no one factor that can be attributed as consistently bringing it about in families. Nonetheless, what is certain, is that, as seen throughout these pages, poverty is associated with a level of distress that varies between being something that is highly frustrating to something that is actually a threat to people's health (as it can trigger off stress-related health complaints and illnesses). It is nonetheless clearly evident from the data presented that poverty is much more than a financial and economic issue as it touches upon the core of a person's selfhood and his/her relationships with others. Some of the respondents fit neatly the category described by Mgr. Victor Grech, the Director of Caritas Malta who states that "there are people who feel like strangers in their own family and their own neighbourhood. They are lonely, estranged, threatened, and isolated. They often lack inner strengths and the ability to cope with difficult life situations'[1]. St. Helen's Parish, through serving as a distribution point for surplus EU stocks, is offering more than these stocks, nonetheless. It is also serving as a reference point where people know that the Church is offering a helping hand to them and is thereby being with them in their pain as they experience any trying moments that are associated with their poverty in a financial or personal and familial way.

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Appendix 1

Data protection act (2001)
Att tal protezzjoni tad-data (2001)

I _____ residing in _____ I D no
jiena _____li noqghod _____id no

_____ accept to be interviewed by a diaconia commission member.
_____*naccetta li nigi intervistat/a minn membru tal-kummissjoni djakonija.*

I understand that my personal information would be accessible only to parish priest or his delegate.
Jiena nifhem li l-informazzjoni personali tieghi tkun accessibli biss lill-Prepostu Arcipriet jew Id-delegat tieghu.

I give my consent for this data to be processed
Naghti l-kunsens biex d-data relevanti tinzamm u tigi processata.

_____ _____
Date Signature
Data *Firma*

APPENDIX 2

Interview Guide (english Version)

Family
Surname
Address
Postal Code
Tel /Mobile

	Names	**Age**	**Work**	**Relation**	**ID Card No**
Father					
Mother					
Dependant Children					
Children					
Others					

Section A - Information from the family's point of view
A question is made to discuss the main needs of the family
Main need
Type of relationship between the members of the family (see geneogram)
Lifestyle
Hobbies - pets - Money expenditure
Ownership Possessions
Other comments

Section B – Factual information
What kind of needs arise?
Are there any other professionals helping the family?
Financial situation of the family
Home rent
Monthly expenditure
Any loans/debts? If yes, how much? Few

Do you experience any of the following:

	4	3	2	1
Social Problems	**Don't know**	**Little**	**Moderate**	**A lot**
a. Family stress	O	O	O	O
b. Inadequate housing	O	O	O	O
c. Patients in mental health caring institutions	O	O	O	O
d. Mental health issues	O	O	O	O
e. Physical health issues (bed ridden)	O	O	O	O
f. Physical disability	O	O	O	O
g. Mental disabilities	O	O	O	O
h. >35 year old living on their own	O	O	O	O
i. >60 year old living on their own	O	O	O	O
j. Financial problems	O	O	O	O
k. Unemployment issues	O	O	O	O
l. Lack of education	O	O	O	O
m. Lone parenthood	O	O	O	O
n. Domestic violence	O	O	O	O
o. Sexual violence	O	O	O	O
p. Psychological violence	O	O	O	O
q. Physical child abuse	O	O	O	O
r. Child abuse	O	O	O	O
s. Child neglect	O	O	O	O
t. Alcohol issues	O	O	O	O
u. Gambling issues	O	O	O	O
v. Usury	O	O	O	O
w. Drugs issues	O	O	O	O
x. Loneliness	O	O	O	O
y. prostitution	O	O	O	O
z. illegal immigrant workers	O	O	O	O

Do you benefit from the following
Social benefits
Benefits for separated women (men) having their children's custody not enrolling in the unemployment register

Unemployment benefits
Single Unmarried Person
Unmarried mothers

Age Pension
Non contributory pension - never payed any national insurance contributions- means tested - does not exceed a capital of LM6000 for singles and LM10000 for couples

Disability, Social Assistance Female, others

Sezzjoni C - observation from the interviewer point of view
Give you opinion and quote when you deem necessary

APPENDIX 3

Interview Guide (Maltese Version)

Familja
Kunjom
Indirizz
Kodiċi Postali
Tel /Mobile

	Ismijiet	**Eta'**	**Fejn Jaħdem/Skola**	**Relazzjoni**	**Numru ta' l-IDCard**
Missier					
Omm					
Ulied					
Ulied					
Oħrajn					

Sezzjoni A – Informazzjoni mill-lenti tal-Familja – Dak Intervistat
Ssir mistoqsija li tqajjem id-diskussjoni dwar il-bżonnijet tal-familja
Il-problema prinċipali
Tip ta relazzjoni bejn il-membri tal-familja (rreferi għal geneogram)
Stil ta' ħajja
Passatempi – pets – kif qed jintefqu l-flus DVD's Eċċ
Ownership Possessions
Kummenti ohrajn

Sezzjoni B – Informazzjoni Fattwali
X'għajnuna qegħda titlob din l-familja/persuna?
Hemm xi aġenziji jew professjonisti oħra li qed jgħinu lill-familja tiegħek?
Finanzi tal-familja
Kiri tad-dar
Spejjeż korrenti fix-xahar
Għandek xi dejn/loan?Jekk iva, kemm?

Tiltaqa ma' xi problemi minn dawn li ġejjin:

	4	**3**	**2**	**1**
Forom ta' Problemi Socjali	**Ma nafx**	**Ftit**	**Moderat**	**Hafna**
aa. Stress fil-familja	O	O	O	O
bb. Housing inadekwat	O	O	O	O
cc. Pazjenti fi sptar għal kura mentali	O	O	O	O
dd. Mard Mentali (Depression...)	O	O	O	O
ee. Mard Fiziku (Bed Ridden)	O	O	O	O
ff. Diżabilita' Fiżika	O	O	O	O
gg. Diżabilita' Mentali	O	O	O	O
hh. Persuni 'l fuq minn 35 sena li jgħixu weħedhom	O	O	O	O
ii. Persuni 'l fuq minn 60 sena li jgħixu weħedhom	O	O	O	O
jj. Problemi Finanzjarji	O	O	O	O
kk. Problemi ta' xogħol (unemployed)	O	O	O	O
ll. Nuqqas ta' edukazzjoni (skola)	O	O	O	O
mm. Genitur wieħed	O	O	O	O
nn. Vjolenza Fizika fid-dar	O	O	O	O

oo. Vjolenza Sesswali fid-dar	O	O	O	O
pp. Vjolenza Psikologika fid-dar	O	O	O	O
qq. Abbuż Fiżiku fuq it-tfal	O	O	O	O
rr. Abbużi fuq it-tfal	O	O	O	O
ss. Tfal mitluqin (neglect)	O	O	O	O
tt. Alkoħol	O	O	O	O
uu. Logħob (gambling)	O	O	O	O
vv. Użura	O	O	O	O
ww.Droga	O	O	O	O
xx. Soltiudni	O	O	O	O
yy. Prostituzzjoni	O	O	O	O
zz. Ħaddiema li huma Immigranti illegali	O	O	O	O

Tirċevi
Għajnuna Soċjali
Għajnuna li titħallas lill dawk in-nisa (u rġiel) separati li jkollhom il-kura u l-kustodja ta' l-ulied jew lill xi nies li ma jkunux tajbin sabiex jirreġistraw minħabba raġuni ta' mard

Għajnuna għal Qgħad
Ħlas li jsir lill nies li qegħdin jirreġistraw għax xogħol

Single Unmarried Person
Għajnuna li titħallas lit-tfajliet li għandhom tarbija barra ż-żwieġ

Age Pension
Din hi pensjoni mhux kontributorja għal persuna li qatt ma ħallsu bolla. Din it-tip ta' pensjoni hija means tested fejn jekk persuna waħedha ma tridx taqbeż LM 6000 kapital u jekk koppja LM10 000

Oħra eżempju persuna b'diżabilita', Social Assistance Female, Pensjoni tal-Wens, oħrajn

Sezzjoni C - Osservazzjoni u informazzjoni mill-lenti tar-riċerkatur

(Agħti l-opinjoni u kkwota fejn tħoss il-bżonn)

THE INFORMAL ECONOMIC SECTOR AND POVERTY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES AND TURKEY

NECDET SAGLAM

1. Introduction

The informal economy or Informal Sector (IS) plays a significant role on employment, income and supplying overlooked markets in developing countries. However, the conditions of work and employment within the sector are still poor. Its expansion and changing structures have thus drawn the attention of researchers and international policy-makers to the factors hindering its formalisation. Among the factors addressed are the high costs of formalisation and the lack of incentives for operating in the formal sector.[1]

The Informal Sector has been growing for decades and is the largest "economy" in many countries.[2] Many companies around the Mediterranean operate in the "informal economy," in which they misreport employment, avoid certain taxes, ignore product quality and worker safety regulations, violate copyright and intellectual property laws, and sometimes do not register as legal entities. Over half of the informal enterprises lack accounting records. The problem is particularly acute in developing countries, where companies that operate informally produce as much as 80 percent of the output in some industries. Only a few policy makers are interested in the issue. Although informal companies have small-scale production and lower productive methods, they gain a substantial cost advantage that allows them to stay in business by avoiding taxes and regulatory obligations. In these conditions, formal companies have difficulty in gaining market share resulting in slower economic growth and job creation.

Poverty is a constant problem of the world, and its conceptualization and measurement remains problematic as the concept is multidimensional and political. It is a known fact that economic development does not necessarily eliminate poverty, while countries with different development levels and welfare state policies experience different levels of poverty. Hence, poverty has become a major problem for both the developed and the developing countries.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the issue of poverty has emerged as one of the most challenging socio-economic problems in developing countries. Currently, about 20 % of the world's population lives in absolute poverty with an income of less than US$ 1 per day. Aggregate figures for economic growth disguise the fact that the number of people in absolute poverty is still rising. Surviving on less than US$ 2 per day is a reality for almost half of the people in the world.

This paper aims to analyse the effects of poverty on informal economy in the Mediterranean Countries and Turkey and show that the informal sector causes poverty. Definitions of poverty and the informal sector are given followed by the analysis of informal economy and poverty in the Mediterranean Countries and Turkey.

2. Definition of Informal Sector

The term Informal Sector was first introduced by Keith Hart (1973)[3]. The informality of firms has since been described in relation to interrelated aspects: compliance with government regulations (i.e. registration, payment of tax and adherence to labour regulations); size of the firm; firm level resource endowment and

[1] Esther K. Ishengoma and Robert Kappel, *Economic Growth and Poverty: Does Formalisation of Informal Enterprises Matter?* GIGA Research Program: Transformation in the Process of Globalization, N° 20 April 2006. p. 1.

[2] The number of informal enterprises without an accounting record has increased in Brazil. In 2003, 53% did not have any kind of accounting record and, in 36% of them the owners did accounting work without the help of an accountant. In 1997, those percentages were 46% and 39%, respectively. Employers' enterprises made more use of accounting services and only 21% did not keep any record of it. Among own-account enterprises the percentage was higher, 57%.

[3] Hart, K. 1973. *Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana*. Journal of Modern African Studies 11, pp. 61-89.

applied technology (i.e. labour or capital intensive), location, the physical place of operation and the characteristics of workforce and ownership.[4]

Wikipedia gives a definition of the informal economy. "In economics, the term informal economy (or second economy in the South African context) refers to all economic activities that fall outside the formal economy regulated by economic and legal institutions. It refers to the general market income category (or sector) wherein certain types of income and the means of their generation are unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated".

Simply put, it is an economic activity that is neither taxed nor monitored by a government; and is not included in that government's Gross National Product (GNP); as opposed to a formal economy.

Although the informal economy is often associated with developing countries and all economic systems also contain an informal economy in some proportion. The term "informal sector" was used in many earlier studies, and has been mostly replaced in more recent studies which use the newer term.

The English idioms "under the table" and "off the books" typically refer to this type of economy. The term black market refers to a specific subset of the informal economy in which contraband is traded - where contraband may be strictly or informally defined.

The term informal economy triggers a lot of confusion and interpretations depending on how people look at it. Economic and financial planners call it the Unobserved Economy. Labour advocates call it the Unorganized Sector. Social security officials label it the Unprotected Sector. Statistical authorities name it as Uncounted. Others say they are simply the poor and marginalized people who are forced to create their own employment. There is a huge debate on what the informal economy is. There is however one common denominator in all these interpretations - all of them refer to some type of exclusion: exclusion from social security, exclusion from statistical coverage, exclusion from traditional trade unionism, exclusion from GDP estimates, and exclusion from productive resources typically available to larger enterprises. True, they are inextricably linked to the formal sector through economic relationships - they are producers within supply chains, they market formal sector goods in hard-to-reach markets and communities. Yet, in most cases, their entitlements are low (e.g. human capital, physical assets) and their economic contribution is not matched with commensurate access to protection and resources.

The practice of defining informality in terms of the economic status of the individual (self-employed or own-account worker, domestic worker, small scale employer etc.) in conjunction with the characteristics of the employer (small scale, non-collective bargaining etc.) is well-established in the literature. A substantial number of early analyses of informality simply assume that the informal sector corresponds to sole-traders (own account workers) and those in small or micro enterprises. "Small" or "micro" is defined arbitrarily and may depend on questionnaire design.[5]

The OECD defines the Informal Sector (broadly characterised) as comprising production units that operate on a small scale and at a low level of organisation, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production, and with the primary objective of generating income and employment for the persons concerned. Operationally, the sector is defined on a country-specific basis as the set of unincorporated enterprises owned by households which produce at least some products for the market but which either have less than a specified number of employees and/or are not registered under national legislation referring, for example, to tax or social security obligations, or regulatory acts.

The current SNA (System of National Accounts 1993) treats the informal sector under the subheading 'the household sector and its sub-sectors'. It introduces the concept of the informal sector and makes reference to the guidelines developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) on employment in the informal sector.

[4] Esther K. Ishengoma and Robert Kappel, cit. p.7.
[5] See Andrew Henley, G. Reza Arabsheibani, Francisco G. Carneiro, *On Defining and Measuring the Informal Sector*, IZA DP No. 2473, Institute for the Study of Labor, November 2006.

According to the World Bank, the ILO and WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing), the informal sector entails a wide range of unregistered and or sometimes (partially) illegal market activities, which on the one hand are survival activities of individuals and families in an opportunity-poor economic environment and on the other hand profit-maximizing activities of micro enterprises in a highly competitive and opportunity-rich economic environment.[6]

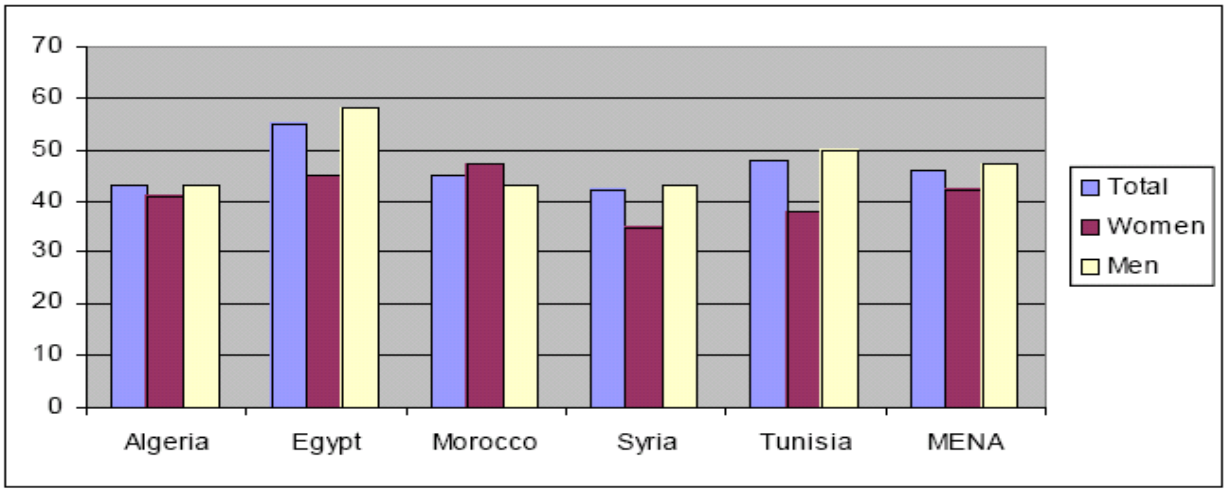
The Informal Sector represents a substantial portion of economic activity, especially in developing and transition countries. The contribution of the informal sector to non-agricultural GDP has been estimated at 27 percent for Northern Africa, 41 percent for Sub-Saharan Africa, 29 percent for Latin America, and 31 percent for Asia. The sector has not only grown in recent decades, but has emerged in new guises and unexpected places in the wake of industrial restructuring, globalization, and financial crises. It is of high policy interest in many parts of the world. First, it is linked directly and indirectly to the main development objectives such as increased income, job creation and reduction of poverty. Second, the informal sector's characteristics are key factors in designing and monitoring targeted support and assistance programs.[7]

3. The Informal Sector in Mediterranean Countries and Turkey

3.1 The Informal Sector in Mediterranean Countries

For a variety of reasons, the size of the informal sector in the Mediterranean Countries is relatively large. According to the ILO (Figure 1 below), the average percent of informal employment relative to total employment is above 40 percent. This observation applies to Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. It also applies to both men and women, although the percentage is somewhat higher for men.[8]

Graphic -1 Informal Sector in Mediterranean Countries



Source: ILO

The rise of informal employment is partly the result of the limited working opportunities in the formal sector relative to the proportion of the inactive working age population. In part, it is the natural result of the fact that those who opt to work in the informal sector tend to be poor and cannot afford to be "unemployed". In fact, the relatively high levels of the Minimum Wage in some Mediterranean Countries influence in a way the firms' behaviour with respect to employment.

The United Nations has made the demographic forecasts for 2020. It will be necessary to create 22.5 million new jobs, which corresponds to an annual growth rate of 1.9% over 15 years (see Table-1).

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[6] Inder Pal Singh Ahluwalia, Migration, *The Informal Sector and Poverty: Some Indian Evidence,* May 2005 Erasmus University Rotterdam.

[7] Ivo Havinga and Carol Carson, Informal Sector, Fourth meeting of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts, 30 January - 8 February 2006, Frankfurt, Issue 32, THE INFORMAL SECTOR IN THE 1993 SNA, REV. 1.

[8] F. Blanc, M. Louis, *The Challenge of Employment in the Mediterranean Countries,* Forum Euro-Mediterranéen des Instituts Economiques, Novembre, 2007.

Table: 1 Number of new jobs to create in 2020 to maintain the ratios of activity and unemployment unchanged.

2020	Total Employment 2020	To create 2005-2020	Share (%) in employment 2005	No. of unemployed	Inactive of 15+
Algeria	8 892 917	2 046 953	29.90	1 915 441	19 216 175
Egypt	24 570 872	6 452 272	35.61	3 038 643	39 104 175
Israel	3 231 130	737 530	29.58	319 278	2 743 046
Jordan	1 797 275	593 069	49.25	278 150	3 273 608
Lebanon	1 363 371	266 086	24.25	126 973	1 680 600
Morocco	12 802 303	2 889 007	29.14	1 583 844	13 625 681
Palest. A	998 460	420 021	72.61	366 210	2 119 299
Syria	7 227 151	2 405 394	49.89	955 982	9 839 058
Tunisia	3 587 904	661 204	22.59	596 288	4 989 120
Turkey	27 983 306	5 937 306	26.93	3 197 403	34 609 956
Total MPS	**92 454 688**	**22 408 841**	**31.99**	**12 378 211**	**131 200 718**

Source: F. Blanc, M. Louis, p.5.

As mentioned above, the Informal Sector is very large in Mediterranean Counties. For example the Syrian economy and labour market in particular, is plagued by a large informal sector, which involves no less than 43% of workers and seems to be increasing (from 40% in 1995 to 43 in 1999). There is no unified definition of the informal sector, but the definition applied in Syria in the census of 1999 covered those who are "playing a role in economic activity outside the institutions". That implies all small units and individuals producing and distributing goods and/or services, working for their own account, with a very small capital (even without any) using primitive methods that need low level technologies and low skilled workers. The structure of the labour force by occupation is estimated at 40% in the agriculture sector, 20% in the industrial sector and 40% in services. Agriculture, building and construction (24%) and trade (14%) cover 80% of the informal sector. The high proportion in the agriculture sector can be explained because 63% of the workers are located in rural areas, where agriculture is the dominant economic activity. It may come as no surprise that the educational level of most of the informal sector workers is low. Around 77% of the total number of informal workers has an educational level below primary school, some of those are even not able to read and write and are, therefore, highly vulnerable.[9] Due to the ongoing changes in the economy, the large size of the informal sector, the fragmentation of responsibility, the reliability of human resources information is questionable.

The most important pull factor is the nature of the economies in the Southern European countries. Greece in particular has a large informal economy that accounts for up to 30-35 per cent of the GDP. Small-scale family businesses are still very prominent in Greece. Roberto Dell'Annot and others researched the informal economy in the Mediterranean Countries: France, Spain and Greece[10] and found the following results.

1) Unemployment appears as one of the main causes for the existence of the informal economy. This indicator presents a positive sign in all the models and for all the countries. This aspect is very important if we have to take into account the supposition that these workers cost double for the country; they receive monetary income from the country and the country is losing the taxes they should be paying for their (hidden) incomes.

2) There is a positive relationship between the size of the non-observed economy and the self-employment indicator. This variable is one of the main contributors to the growth of the shadow economy irrespective of the level of development of the economy.

[9] Anna Galdo, *Welfare in the Mediterranean Countries, The Syrian Arab Republic.* http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/CAIMED/UNPAN018931.pdf.

[10] Roberto Dell'Annot, Miguel Gómez, Ángel Alañón Pardo, *Shadow Economy in three very different Mediterranean Countries: France, Spain and Greece*. A MIMIC Approach April 2004.

3) Social contributions are a significant determinant of the shadow economy for these countries. Thus, the job market regulations can be considered another cause of the unofficial economy in Spain, Greece and France.

4) Indirect taxes are the main fiscal determinants of the informal economy in Spain and direct taxes are the main contributors to the existence of the shadow economy in France. However, there does not appear to be any evidence of this in Greece. Consequently, the more developed the fiscal system and the bigger the country's growth, the clearer the economic agents' perception of the real taxes paid.

5) The level of development of a country, measured in terms of gross domestic product per head, and of political stability seem plausible explanations of the shadow economy. Low incomes per head and insufficient provision of public goods and services (education, health, security, etc.) may foster the need for additional (non -declared) sources of income.

6) Greek results, although statistically significant, should be interpreted with caution.

3.2 The Informal Sector in Turkey

The studies on the Informal Sector in Turkey go back to pre-1950s. These studies have been done primarily by social scientists, rather than economists, who investigated mainly squatter settlements and reached important findings. One paramount finding among them shows that the Turkish squatter settlements are quite different from those, for example, in Latin America in their relatively sound house structures, rich household facilities, appliances and particular cultures.[11]

The OECD estimated that Turkey's informal economy could be roughly 50% of formal economic activity with the official GDP around $400bn. This high percentage reduces the overall growth potential of the Turkish economy.

The Informal Economy consists of all the income generating activities that are unregulated or concealed from the government and its omission may distort macroeconomic indicators and thus policies to be undertaken by the government. The Informal Sector is a cheap way of doing business which unfortunately also loses the possibility of increasing productivity.

In 2006, the Turkish government created an action plan - "KADIM"[12] - to challenge the Informal Sector, coordinating various government and other institutions.

Statistics on the size of the Informal Sector in Turkey vary. One source estimates that 41% of the employed population in Turkey is engaged in the Informal Sector, or about 9.9 million people; another source estimates that the self-employed in Turkey are about 5.9 million. As misreporting is common in this sector, it is feasible to consider the first source to be more accurate.

Table: 2 Employment of Unregistered Persons

	Regular employee	Casual employee	Employer	Self Employed	Unpaid family worker	Total
2006	2.382	1.366	302	3.196	2.915	10.160
2007	2.286	1.353	322	3.102	2.865	9.929

Source: TurkStat

The consequences of informal economic activities on the economic structure of Turkey are both positive and negative. These are briefly listed below.

[11] Tuncer Bulutay and Enver Taşti, *The Informal Sector in the Turkish Labour Market*, Turkish Economic Association Discussion Paper, 2004/22, November, 2004. p.6.
[12] Fight against informality project. Kayit Dişi İstihdamla Mücadele (KADIM) Projesi.

Negative impacts:

- Unreal official economic indicators, which mean that macroeconomic variables such as GDP and inflation are not reliable. Policy-makers are not provided with reliable data to cure economic problems.

- Unfair competition for formal economy: firms fulfilling tax requirements will incur higher production costs compared to firms operating in the informal economy. FDI has been affected negatively in Turkey because of the Informal Sector.

- Ongoing budget deficits: A large informal sector means a low tax base and decreasing government revenues. There have been two domestic economic crises (1994 and 2001) and one international one (1998) resulting in the aggregation of systemic risks in the economy triggering the risk premium with the real interest paid on domestic debt going up to 35%. The average real interest rate paid over the post-1990 period was 13.1 percent, whereas in the post-1994 period it averaged 17.8 percent.

- High public sector borrowing rate: Alternative financing of government expenditures due to insufficient tax collection. High growth rates were maintained during the 1990-95 period at the cost of increased foreign and domestic borrowing, which funded an inflationary government budgetary and monetary policy.

- Negative financial structure in social security system. The net impact of unregistered employment will diminish revenues of social security organizations which in turn weakens the quality of service they provide.

- Negative impacts on public reconciliation, which means negative public opinion against government policies.

Although open to discussion, the Informal Sector has some positive impacts such as;

- Creation of economic boom, at least in short term due to lack of restriction on production.

- Increase in labour employment when the labour market is operating without any restriction. When tax and social security premiums are very high and enterprises prefer to employ in the Informal Sector.

- Postpone or decrease the public unrest.

- Positive effects on economic growth. For example between 2003 and 2007, the Turkish economy grew at an average annual rate of 6.9%

There are many causes for the existence of the informal economy, but some of the most important can be readily identified in Turkey. These are:

- High tax burden: The net impact of tax burden increase on individuals increases tax evasion. Corporate tax rate was reduced to 20% from 46% in 2007. Increasing tax rate after the Optimal Point diminishes total taxes collected due to increases in tax evasion.

- Weak banking systems: There were two financial crises in 1994 and 2001. Bottlenecks in the financing of enterprises due to the weakness of financial intermediaries push these enterprises to seek other sources of financing mainly in informal economy.

- Business regulations and legislation: the Turkish Commercial Code was passed in 1954. Over-regulation in an economy and imposing unduly legislative barriers give incentives to operate in the Informal Sector.

- Inefficiency of government institutions: Especially in developing countries there is a high level of bureaucracy in almost all the government institutions at every level. Thus individuals prefer to keep away from state bureaucracy in order not to face time and resource-consuming operations.

- High unemployment rates: High unemployment and weak social security system is a very lucrative source for shadow employment of the masses.

- High inflation rates: Inflation rates were very high during the last decade. It was over 100 percent for many years.

- Lack of inflation accounting: Enterprises paid tax without inflation accounting and preferred to work in the Informal Sector to survive.

- Low GDP per capita: The informal economy tends to be greater in the developing and transition countries due to more corruption and low incomes. The GNP per capita, which was $6,625 in 2006 and $7,139 in 2007, is below the population's expectations.

4. Poverty in Mediterranean Countries and Turkey

4.1 Definition and Measuring of Poverty

According to the World Bank's website, poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape from. So poverty is a call for action, for the poor and the wealthy alike, a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities.[13]

A common method used to measure poverty is based on incomes or consumption levels. A person is considered poor if his or her consumption or income level falls below some minimum level necessary to meet basic needs. This minimum level is usually called the "poverty line". What is necessary to satisfy basic needs varies across time and societies. Therefore, poverty lines vary in time and place, and each country uses lines which are appropriate to its level of development, societal norms and values.[14]

Information on consumption and income is obtained through sample surveys, with which households are asked to answer detailed questions on their spending habits and sources of income. Such surveys are conducted more or less regularly in most countries. These sample survey data collection methods are increasingly being complemented by participatory methods, where people are asked what their basic needs are and what poverty means for them. Interestingly, new research shows a high degree of concordance between poverty lines based on objective and subjective assessments of needs.

When estimating poverty worldwide, the same reference poverty line has to be used, and expressed in a common unit across countries. Therefore, for the purpose of global aggregation and comparison, the World Bank uses reference lines set at $1 and $2 per day (more precisely $1.08 and $2.15 in 1993 Purchasing Power Parity terms). It has been estimated that in 2001, 1.1 billion people had consumption levels below $1 a day and 2.7 billion lived on less than $2 a day. These figures are lower than earlier estimates, indicating that some progress has taken place, but they still remain too high in terms of human suffering, and much more remains to be done.[15]

While much progress has been made in measuring and analyzing 'income poverty', efforts are needed to measure and study the many other dimensions of poverty. Work on non-income dimensions of poverty -

[13] http://www.worldbank.org/poverty.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

defining indicators where needed, gathering data, assessing trend - is presented in the World Development Report (WDR) 2000/01: Attacking Poverty. This work includes assembling comparable and high-quality social indicators for education, health, access to services and infrastructure. It also includes developing new indicators to track other dimensions - for example risk, vulnerability, social exclusion, access to social capital - as well as ways to compare a multi-dimensional conception of poverty, when it may not make sense to aggregate the various dimensions into one index.[16]

Living standards have risen dramatically over the last decades. The proportion of the developing world's population living in extreme economic poverty - defined as living on less than $1 per day ($1.08 in 1993 dollars, adjusted to account for differences in purchasing power across countries) - has fell from 28 percent in 1990 to 21 percent in 2001.

While there has been great progress in reducing poverty, it has been far from even, and the global picture masks large regional differences. Poverty is a global problem. Global trends in poverty reduction have been dominated by rapid growth in China and the East Asia and the Pacific region. Poverty also fell in South Asia over the past 20 years, and while the decline was not as rapid, almost 45 million fewer people were living in extreme poverty by 2001.

Other regions have seen little or no change. In the early 1990s the transition economies of Europe and Central Asia experienced a sharp drop in income. Poverty rates rose to 6 percent at the end of the decade before beginning to recede.[17] According to projections by the World Development Indicators Report 2004, poverty rates will fall fastest in East Asia and the Pacific outside of China, but the huge reduction in the number of people below the $1 a day line in China will dominate global totals. In Europe and Central Asia and in the Middle East and North Africa, where poverty rates measured at $1 a day are low, a continuation of current trends will cut poverty rates to half their current levels. South Asia, led by continuing growth in India, is likely to reach or exceed the target. But growth and poverty reduction are proceeding more slowly in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will not reach the target unless growth picks up. The most difficult case is Sub Saharan Africa, where poverty has increased since 1990 and will, on present trends, fall very slowly in the next 11 years, unless there is a major change in prospects.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, where GDP per capita shrank 14 percent, poverty rose from 41 percent in 1981 to 46 percent in 2001, and an additional 150 million people were living in extreme poverty.

4.2 Poverty in Mediterranean Countries

Poverty has increased in Mediterranean countries and now has a different face. Aside from the "classical" poverty characterised by particularly destitute material conditions, another more recent type of poverty linked to the rural exodus and adjustments brought by changes in the allocation of resources has developed. This "modern" poverty which has emerged even in the most developed countries is found essentially in urban areas. It is characterised by mechanisms of exclusion - from the working world, from the growing consumer society, from social solidarity and from the possibility of integration. This new development, both in the North as well as the South, requires heightened consciousness and collective solutions. It is even more worrisome because migrations allow this poverty to "circulate" throughout the Mediterranean and Europe. There is, in effect, a considerable risk in accepting the terrible process by which the poor engender the poor in a closed and excluded society without any hope of the poverty issue coming to the forefront of public debate.[18]

Although the method of measuring poverty is inexact and controversial, at least 5 per cent of the total population in the Mediterranean region still lives on less than one dollar per day (Purchasing Power Parity, PPP). Although considerably lower than other regions of the world, it concerns some 11 million people. By fixing the poverty line at 50 dollars per month (the poverty line used by governments in Mediterranean countries), the number of poor in the region reaches some 40 million individuals or about 20 per cent of the population. Experts agree that the development of poverty is directly tied to earnings per capita and income

[16] Ibid.
[17] World Development Indicators 2004.
[18] http://www.femise.org/PDF/02_99_en.pdf.

distribution. Available estimates indicate that income inequality grew considerably in the 1990s (the Gini coefficient which measures earnings differences - the closer it is to 100 the greater the difference - is 39 for the principal Mediterranean countries and 33 for Eastern European countries).[19]

Poverty is higher in south Mediterranean Countries than in the European countries. With respect to the percentage of the population living under the international poverty threshold, which is conventionally fixed at an average consumption expenditure of 1 dollar (1985 PPP$) per capita per day, it is possible to note highly heterogeneous levels of economic destitution among the various countries of the Mediterranean. In fact, they range from 1.1% of poor people in Morocco's overall population, to 2.5% in Algeria, 2.5% in Jordan, 3.9% in Tunisia, and - finally - 7.6% in Egypt. Nevertheless, if we take 2 dollars per day as the term of comparison, these relatively low poverty incidence rates increase sharply to become: 17.6% in Algeria, 19.6% in Morocco, 22.7% in Tunisia, 23.5% in Jordan, and more than half of the population (51.9%) in Egypt.[20]

In fact, there is a real risk that social integration may become ungovernable. This would lead to a process that focuses on economic development in the Euro-Mediterranean Area without taking into account social development or the principles of cultural poly-centralism in the region. This would result in marginalisation from the productive sector, the exclusion of the weaker parts of the Mediterranean basin from the development process, forms of dependence, and permanent deep rifts between the North and South with respect to growth, incomes, work opportunities and dignified life conditions. Finally, it might generate new forms of conflict which would block the development mechanisms of the whole region's system.[21]

In order to reduce poverty and to strengthen human development, which are the main objectives of the Mediterranean countries, top priority should be given to those initiatives that speed up demographic transition. Above all, priority should be given to initiatives aimed at reforming the social security network (by programming focused and selective public transfer systems that satisfy the real needs of the poor), to guaranteeing health assistance and primary education for all (with the aim of completely eradicating illiteracy), and to favouring flexible work. This will make it possible to fight the main individual factors that cause poverty.

All studies indicate several specific causes behind the development of poverty: (i) the first is demographic pressure and the rise in women's participation rate which bring about a surplus of workers who naturally turn to domestic or foreign urban labour markets, (ii) the second is linked to the relative fall in agricultural employment, (iii) the third is the intensification of agriculture reducing its capacity to absorb the working age population (which has sharply risen again in rural areas as a result high fertility rates in the concerned regions), (iv) the fourth is linked to the decreasing role of the state as employer, which was necessary for stabilisation and transition, (v) the fifth is a result of the reallocation of resources imposed by liberalisation and (vi) the sixth is due to limitations on social aid which constitute the only means by which the long-term unemployed could avoid plunging into utter poverty.[22]

Without asserting that the EU is directly responsible for current trends in Mediterranean economies and societies, these remain of great concern to it. The surplus of workers moving from rural to urban areas could also clearly target European cities. There are, in effect, some 5 million individuals from Mediterranean countries in the EU of which 60 per cent are Yugoslavs and Turks (Germany is home to 80 per cent of them) and 40 per cent from Maghreb who for the most part reside in France (70 per cent).[23]

High concentrations of poverty among populations exposed to climate risk are a source of vulnerability. The 2.6 billion people - 40 percent of the world's population - living on less than US$2 a day is intrinsically vulnerable because they have fewer resources with which to manage risks. Similarly, for Mediterranean countries with a combined population of 509 million people in the low human development category of the

[19] http://www.femise.org/PDF/02_99_en.pdf.
[20] Carla COLLICELLI CE SIS, Poverty in Transformation: Definition, Indicators and Key Players at the National and Mediterranean Level, FEMISE, 2000.
[21] Carla COLLICELLI CE SIS, p.72.
[22] http://www.femise.org/PDF/02_99_en.pdf.
[23] http://www.femise.org/PDF/02_99_en.pdf.

Human Development Index (HDI), The HDI in the following table-3 refers to 2005 and covers Mediterranean countries. The HDI is an important tool for monitoring long-term trends in human development. To facilitate trend analyses across countries, the HDI is calculated at five-year intervals for the period 1975-2005. Many Mediterranean countries have low levels of literacy. In comparing standards of living across countries, economic statistics must be converted into purchasing power parity (PPP) terms to eliminate differences in national price levels.[24]

Table: 3 Human development indexes in Mediterranean Countries

Country and HDI rank	Human development index (HDI) value(2005)	Life expectancy at birth (2005)	Adult literacy rate (% aged 15 and above) 1995-2005	Combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education (%) 2005	GDP per capita (PPP US$) 2005	Life expectancy index	Education index	GDP index	GDP per capita (PPP US$) rank minus HDI rank
9 Netherlands	0,953	79,2		98.40	32.684	0,904	0,988	0,966	3
10 France	0,952	80,2			30.386	0,919	0,982	0,954	8
13 Spain	0,949	80,5		98,0	27.169	0,925	0,987	0,935	11
20 Italy	0,941	80,3	98,4	90,6	28.529	0,922	0,958	0,944	1
23 Israel	0,932	80,3	97,1	89,6	25.381	0,898	0,970	0,910	3
24 Greece	0,926	78,9	96,0	99,0	23.381	0,898	0,970	0,910	5
28 Cyprus	0,926	79,0	96,8	77,6	22.699	0,900	0,904	0,905	2
29 Portugal	0,897	77,7	93,8	89,8	20.410	0,879	0,925	0,888	6
34 Malta	0,878	79,1	87,9	80,9	19.189	0,901	0,856	0,877	2
56 Libya	0,818	73,4	84,20	94,10	10.335	0,806	0,875	0,774	4
84 Turkey	0,775	71,4	87,40	68,70	8.407	0,773	0,812	0,740	-18
86 Jordan	0,773	71,9	91,10	78,10	5.530	0,782	0,868	0,670	11
88 Lebanon	0,773	71,5		84,60	5.584	0,775	0,871	0,671	8
91 Tunisia	0,766	73,5	74,30	76,30	8.371	0,808	0,750	0,739	-23
104 Algeria	0,733	71,7	69,90	73,70	7	0,778	0,711	0,711	-22
108 Syria	0,724	73,6	80,80	64,80	3.808	0,811	0,755	0,607	7
112 Egypt	0,708	70,7	71,40	76,90	4.337	0,761	0,732	0,629	-1
126 Morocco	0,646	70,4	52,30	58,50	4.555	0,757	0,554	0,637	-18

Urban poverty, now developing on the outskirts of European cities, in many ways resembles urban poverty in Mediterranean cities and has similar characteristics. Likewise, as the rural exodus and the more or less rapid fall of agricultural production in Mediterranean countries are at the heart of migrations to cities, it is difficult to believe that the questions raised earlier regarding the agricultural issue are unanswerable. The difficulty of adjustment and reallocations between sectors, which will accompany the development of a free-trade area, also create new forms of poverty on top of the endemic poverty of which Mediterranean countries already suffer.[25]

[24] UNDP, Human Development Report 2007/2008.
[25] Carla COLLICELLICE SIS.

On combating poverty in Euro-Mediterranean countries[26]

- Poverty is a global scourge that affects every region of the world, including the most developed regions, in varying degrees and different forms;

- The aims of combating poverty must fit in with the perspective opened up by the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations for the period 2000-2015;

- The concept of development must not be limited to economic growth alone, but must be extended to include social, environmental and human considerations, and to take account of redistributive aspects in order to ensure respect of human rights for all;

- The efficacy of the fight against poverty depends in large measure on respect for good governance, inter alia the fight against corruption and thus the effective functioning of public authorities and their harmonious cooperation with the social partners and other representatives of civil society, and on the real involvement of those directly suffering extreme poverty;

- Civil society, in particular ESCs and similar institutions, must be involved in drafting and implementing strategies to combat poverty;

- Peace is an essential prerequisite for combating poverty;

- The phenomenon of poverty and social exclusion exists in EU countries just as it does in other Euro-Mediterranean countries;

- Recognise the efforts made in each country to combat the scourge of poverty;

- In the Mediterranean Countries poverty hits rural areas, women and the unemployed especially hard. Pockets of acute poverty in urban areas and the emergence of new forms of poverty like the "working poor" have appeared. The Mediterranean Countries should seek new resources to finance the World Solidarity Fund for Poverty Eradication;

- The emergence of extreme poverty for those affected is an attack on their human dignity;

- Consider the negative effect of the debt problem and the trade deficit vis-à-vis the European Union on the economic development of the countries of the southern Mediterranean;

- The Euromed Partnership should be re-launched focusing on the goal of combating poverty especially among the most vulnerable groups in society;

- The Euromed Partnership should adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to combating poverty. This approach should be based on a certain number of stated general objectives, with implementation being a matter for each member country in the partnership, based on the open method of coordination;

- Social protection systems based on solidarity and accessible to all, providing basic guarantees in the area of health and protection of the most vulnerable, in particular women, elderly people, people with disabilities, and children should be developed;

- Education and lifelong learning measures should be adopted so as to avoid the transmission of poverty from generation to generation.

[26] EURO-MEDITERRANEAN SUMMIT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS AND SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS, FINAL DECLARATION, Ljubljana, 15-17 November 2006.

4. 3. Poverty in Turkey

Poverty in Turkey is strongly associated with age and household composition; children and families with children are poorer than average. Poverty rates are higher for unemployed family male heads, and female heads, and sharply higher for illiterate heads. There is a sharp difference in the poverty rates between rural and urban households, with rural poverty substantially greater.

Poverty increases monotonically with additional household members, starting at three members. Larger households are poorer than smaller households, and this is primarily due to the fact that the additional household members are more likely to be children, who have a higher poverty rate. Households with no children or only one child have poverty rates below the average. There is also a correlation between having elderly members and household poverty, though this correlation is not as marked as with having additional children. Having one more elderly member did not noticeably increase the risk of poverty, and having two or more slightly elevated the risk. With respect to correlation with age, younger children are poorer, active-aged adults are not as poor on average, and the elderly are poorer than adults, but not as poor as children.[27]

The level of public spending on education also increased significantly after 1998, both in real terms and as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While rapid progress in recent years is encouraging, analyses of household survey data reveal that there is significant room for further pro-poor improvements when it comes to:

(i) Quality of schooling - the parents of poor children are more likely to report problems with schools, and they are less likely to be satisfied with the quality of education their children receive;
(ii) Enrolments in secondary education - the poor, females, and children who do not have a secondary school in their residential area are all substantially disadvantaged.

Turkey's health care delivery system and its finance are fragmented. Despite significant efforts, the service delivery network remains highly uneven, with major concentrations in urban areas. Both Household Consumption and Income Survey (HCIS) and Household Budget Survey (HBS) data suggest that over one-third (36 to 37 percent) of the population in Turkey does not have access to health insurance, and almost half the population in rural areas remains without any coverage. The Government gave 10 million green cards to the poor allowing them free health services; however they continue to face significant access barriers to health in some institutions.

Additionally, according to the TurkStat Household Labour Force Survey for 2007, the population 15 years of age and over is 49.2 million and the annual average of labour force participation rate in Turkey is 47.8 % (23.5 million). The labour force participation is 72.3% and 25.4% for men and women respectively. The employment rate was 43.2 % in 2003 and increased to 47.8% in 2007. The employment rates are 62.2% and 20.8% for men and women respectively. While the seasonal employment rate is not included in the survey, the informal sector and subsistence in agriculture are included. In Turkey, as in most countries, poverty is closely related to employment status and the type of job, whereby informally employed and casual workers have higher rates of poverty. Education plays a key role in explaining employment and poverty outcomes. Unemployment in Turkey was around 10 percent in 2007. There are very sharp differences in labour market participation rates between men and women, with extremely low rates of female labour market participation in Turkey. Reasons for not seeking a job varied from factors relating to age or family structure (student, housewife, elderly) to disability or seasonal employment. Poverty rates of those who had permanent employment were lower compared to those with casual or temporary jobs.

[27] World Bank, *The Turkey Joint Poverty Assessment Report* (JPAR), 2005, p.iii.

Poverty was found to be sharply associated with the lack of registration at a social security institution. The largest sector of employment in Turkey is agriculture, which is also the sector with the highest poverty rate of those employed in it.

Turkey is one of the countries where income distribution inequality is quite high. As is well known from the literature, the income level for the country as a whole may be increasing, but the crucial dimension for poverty is how income is distributed among the various population groups.

According to TurkStat data in 2006, 0.74 percent of Turkey's population (which means approximately 539,000 individuals) were living below the food poverty line and 17.81 percent of Turkey population which means 12,930,000 individuals were living below the complete poverty line that covers food and non-food expenditure. There aren't any people whose daily expenditure per capita is below $1 according to the Purchasing Power Parity.

Poverty restricts the poor from accessing many goods and services. The poor are less able to afford discretionary expenditures. Turkey is a middle-income country, and its inequality is high. The rate of extreme poverty in Turkey is quite low. However, the overall rate of poverty is high when compared to the EU, and this reflects the first fact on inequality. In 2006, the monthly food poverty line is $170 whereas the monthly complete poverty line is $457 for a 4-person household.

The ratio of individuals who live below the food poverty line which was 0.87 % in 2005 decreased to 0.74 % in 2006. Similarly the ratio of individuals who live below the complete poverty line decreased from 20.5 % in 2005 to 17.81 % in 2006.

Both consumption and income indexes indicate that inequality is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, but not much. Other data confirm overwhelmingly that there is a sharp East-West divide in Turkey where South-eastern and Eastern Anatolia regions are much poorer and have sharply lower human development indicators than Western Turkey. Turkey's poverty rate of 27 percent is in the midrange for most medium income countries but is much higher than those in the European Union countries.

The ratio of individuals who live in rural areas and live below the complete poverty line is 31.98%, whereas the ratio of individuals who live in urban areas and live below the complete poverty line is 9.31 %.

In 2006, while the ratio of individuals living in households which are comprised of 3 or 4 people and who live below the complete poverty line is 8.49 %, this rate among the individuals in households comprised of 7 and more people is calculated as 42.98 %.

According to household type, while the ratio of individuals who are in a nuclear family unit with children and who live below the poverty line is 17.41 %, the poverty rate for individuals who are in a nuclear family without children decreased to 10.14 %. The poverty rate for individuals who live in large families is estimated as 20.24 %.

According to analysis in percentage rates, first quintile's share received from the total disposable income decreased, whereas fifth quintile's share increased. According to Household Budget Survey's results of 2005, household disposable income first quintile's share received from the total disposable income is 6.1%, whereas households of the fifth quintile's share received 46.2% of it.

Table 4: The Poverty Rates according to Poverty

Methods	Percentage of poor individuals (%)				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
TURKEY					
Food poverty	1.35	1.29	1.29	0.87	0.74
Complete poverty (food+nonfood)	26.96	28.12	25.60	20.50	17.81
Below 1 $ per capita per day (1)	0.20	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00
Below 2,15 $ per capita per day (1)	3.04	2.39	2.49	1.55	1.41
Below 4,3 $ per capita per day (1)	30.30	23.75	20.89	16.36	13.33
Relative poverty based on expenditure (2)	14.74	15.51	14.18	16.16	14.50
URBAN					
Food poverty	0.92	0.74	0.62	0.64	0.04
Complete poverty (food+nonfood)	21.95	22.30	16.57	12.83	9.31
Below 1 $ per capita per day (1)	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Below 2,15 $ per capita per day (1)	2.37	1.54	1.23	0.97	0.24
Below 4,3 $ per capita per day (1)	24.62	18.31	13.51	10.05	6.13
Relative poverty based on expenditure (2)	11.33	11.26	8.34	9.89	6.97
RURAL					
Food poverty	2.01	2.15	2.36	1.24	1.91
Complete poverty (food+nonfood)	34.48	37.13	39.97	32.95	31.98
Below 1 $ per capita per day (1)	0.46	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.00
Below 2,15 $ per capita per day (1)	4.06	3.71	4.51	2.49	3.36
Below 4,3 $ per capita per day (1)	38.82	32.18	32.62	26.59	25.35
Relative poverty based on expenditure (2)	19.86	22.08	23.48	26.35	27.06

Source: TurkStat

By this result, the ratio of the fifth quintile's share to the first quintile's share S80 /S20 which is the inequality criteria has been calculated as 7.3. That ratio became 7.7 in 2004.

For households that live in urban areas the ratio of fifth quintile's share to the first quintile's share is calculated as 6.8, for rural areas this ratio is calculated as 7.2.

The Gini[28] coefficient (one of the income inequality criteria) is calculated to be 0.38 for Turkey with 0.37 for urban areas and 0.38 for rural areas. As the Gini coefficient gets closer to one, income distribution becomes less fair, and getting closer to zero means it becomes fairer. Urban and rural areas were 0.40, 0.39 and 0.37 in 2004. The Gini coefficients for income for 2002 were 0.44, which is noticeably lower than the very high Gini coefficients in many extremely low- income countries. However, Turkey does not measure up well against Western Europe which is substantially less unequal.

While the poverty rate for regular workers is 6%, it is 28.63% for casual workers, 3.75% for employers, 22.06% for persons working as self employed and 31.98% for persons working as unpaid family workers in 2006.

Agriculture has the highest poverty rate among all sectors. While the poverty rate among the people who work in the agricultural sector was 33.86 % in 2006, it was 37.24 % in 2005. The poverty rate among people employed in the industry sector has been calculated as 10.12% and the poverty rate for people employed in

[28] The Gini coefficient is a measure of statistical dispersion most prominently used as a measure of inequality of income distribution or inequality of wealth distribution. It is defined as a ratio with values between 0 and 1: the numerator is the area between the Lorenz curve of the distribution and the uniform distribution line; the denominator is the area under the uniform distribution line. Thus, a low Gini coefficient indicates more equal income or wealth distribution, while a high Gini coefficient indicates more unequal distribution.

the service sector has been calculated as 7.23% in 2006. Poverty rates are 13.6% and 20.05% for economically inactive people and for unemployed persons respectively.

The higher the education level, the lower is the poverty risk. The poverty rate is 33.71% among the illiterate, 14.19% among the elementary graduate, 5.2% among the high school and equivalent, and for professional school graduates it is 1.01%.

The share of salaries and wages in total income exceeds other types of income. Looking at functional distribution of income, 39.2 percent of annual disposable income of individuals is salaries and wages; 28.8% of that is entrepreneur income; 23% of that is transfer income; 5.6% of that is property income and 3.3% of that is daily wage. The same ratios were 38.7%, 31.8%, 21.2%, 4.9% and 3.5% in 2004.

5. The Informal Sector and Poverty

The incidences of poverty and the informal economy (sector) are larger in the poor (developing and transition) countries when compared with the highly developed countries. There is also a causal link between poverty and informal economy especially in the developing and transition countries with common factors such as high unemployment and corruption rates affecting both poverty and the underground economy. High social security and tax burdens were found to account for the high rates of informal economies in the highly developed countries even with people's awareness of the implications if caught.

There are contradictory views regarding the relationship between poverty and the informal economy. On one hand, the informal economy seems to trap its actors in poverty while on the other; it contributes to the eradication of poverty. However, the informal economy offers jobs that are of low quality, have poor employment and working conditions and therefore do not contribute much to poverty reduction. Among the working population, workers in the informal economy are poorly remunerated, underemployed, have no social protection; their rights are less respected, and they are excluded from social dialogue and decision making. Thus, workers in the informal economy run a high risk of injury and their health is harmed on a daily basis. In the event of injury or illness they have no protection or safety net to help them and their families survive on a reduced or cut-off income. Thus, it can be inferred that poverty forces people to engage in the informal economy and working in the informal economy means poverty. By comparing some of the dimensions of employment and working conditions of the formal and informal economy, Orlando[29] revealed that in 1991 and 1997 earnings per hour in the formal sector in Venezuela were 44 and 49 percent higher than in the IS, respectively. Looking at income dimensions of poverty the IMF reported that in Serbia and Montenegro the incidence of poverty, relative poverty risk, poverty depth and poverty severity are higher for people working in the informal economy than those in the formal one. The situation is even worse for female informal workers whose average earnings are 70 percent less than those of informal male workers[30].

The size of the informal sector, particularly in terms of its contribution to total employment, is quite large in most countries of the Mediterranean region. However, the incidence of poverty in this sector tends to be high due to low earnings. The serious problem of poverty cannot be tackled without paying closer attention to the informal sector.

The efficiency of the effort to combat poverty in the Euro-Mediterranean zone depends, to a large degree, upon good governance. Phenomena of over-centralization, accompanied by informal economy and lack of transparency in the interaction between public and private actors, must be dealt with so that anti-poverty policies may be less costly and more productive.[31] Poverty is also affected by mutually reinforcing migration, urbanization and the expansion of the informal economy. The phenomena of over-centralization, accompanied by the informal economy and lack of transparency in the interaction between public and private actors, must be dealt with so that anti-poverty policies may be less costly and more productive in

[29] MARIA BEATRIZ ORLANDO PAGNATARO, *The Informal Sector in Venezuela: Catalyst or Hindrance for Poverty Reduction,* Catholic University Andres Bello (UCAB) - Instituto de Investigaciones Economicas y Sociales, Asociacion Civil para la Promocion de Estudios Sociales, Poverty Project Papers Vol. 2 September 2001.
[30] Esther K. Ishengoma and Robert Kappel, cit. at p.22.
[31] CONSELHO ECONÓMICO E SOCIAL, p. 4.

Mediterranean Countries. A special effort must be addressed to facilitate the integration of the informal sector into the formal economy.

The informal economy is associated with sustained poverty with a long term Informal Sector affecting poverty negatively. When developed and undeveloped countries are compared with regards to the size of the informal economy, in general, the informal economy is smaller in developed countries.

5. Conclusions

The people in the informal sector serve an important function where employment opportunities are scarce and industrial employment is inadequate or even shrinking. If one can define entrepreneurship as a relentless and sometimes desperate pursuit of opportunities, regardless of resources or outcomes, persons in the informal sectors are certainly entrepreneurs. They create the most-needed employment for themselves and others similarly situated.

There is a lower level of education, productivity and income in the informal sector. These people share already existing jobs rather than create new ones. It is not possible to produce the much-needed outcome of raising the quality of labour and jobs through the informal sector.

High population growth in the rural areas and the productivity increases in agriculture create migration to urban areas in the Mediterranean countries. But it must create jobs for new job seekers to prevent poverty in urban areas.

The reduction of bureaucracy can be accomplished by having a one stop-shop for registration, decreasing registration procedures, and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of offices involved in the registration process. It will help to decrease informality in the Mediterranean countries.

The national tax system needs to be well structured, clear and transparent. Local levies may be transformed into fees for the use of community resources in order to encourage the efficient provision of local public services and accountability. Measures aimed at enhancing national-level accountability need to be taken. Straight-forward property right registration and efficient contract enforcement mechanisms which recognise and incorporate informal, popular rules need to be brought into the process of securing property rights. Ways to link multilateral private governance structures and the formal judicial system in relation to contract enforcement may have to be found to simplify the process, increase its effectiveness and efficiency and improving its reach to all business operators in the Mediterranean countries.

The national social security system needs to be reformed to prevent informal employment in the South Mediterranean countries. Formal sector jobs must be created as it is the main lever for poverty reduction, and it is necessary to have macroeconomic stability to reduce poverty. The Government's reform program should include measures on strengthening the tax system, including the elimination of loopholes and increased transparency, equity, and progressively of taxes. The tax strategy should assist in addressing the South Mediterranean's, including Turkey's, persistent income inequality, which has been a brake on poverty reduction.

Reducing the size of the informal economy would generate huge positive economic gains. To reap them, governments can fight against poverty. The formalisation of informal enterprises can be viewed as an empowerment process and a poverty reduction strategy. There should be legal/official recognition of the living conditions of the poor and their sources of income. This can be possible if the voices of employers and employees in the informal sector are empowered. If the people in the Informal Sector participate in decision-making and the formulation of policies/regulations they may in turn be motivated to comply with them. Increased formalisation requires incentives that is to say; the provision of public and infrastructural services needs to be obvious, efficient, reliable and cheaper.

In order to ensure long-term economic growth and equity, there is a need to maintain public education spending levels of at least 5 percent of GDP. The quality of education also needs improvement especially for the poor: parents of poor children are more likely to report problems with schools, and less likely to be satisfied with the quality of education their children receive.

In order to formalise informal finance, there is a need to encourage micro-finance institutions in such a way to reduce the cost of borrowing, especially in rural areas, and to maximise the number of people who are eligible for credit in the hope of reducing poverty in the medium and long term.

The fight against informality and poverty should be seen as a common endeavour of the peoples of the whole area.

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ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION AND ITS EFFECT ON POVERTY

AUDREY GATT

Illegal immigration refers to the movement of persons across national borders in a way that violates the immigration laws of the destination country. Several terms may be used to refer to an illegal immigrant, mainly, undocumented worker, clandestine worker, undocumented immigrant and unauthorized immigrant. Under this definition there are two types of illegal immigrants. There are the illegal immigrants who cross the border illegally into a country and those that enter legally but overstay their visa. For the purpose of this paper no distinction will be made as to the kind of entry made by the illegal immigrant. Rather the focus will be on the political, legal and social issues that arise due to the illegality, with particular reference to the issue of poverty.

Illegal immigration may be caused by a number of factors including war and poverty. Some immigrants are forced to move while others voluntarily emigrate. As *Inter Press Service* (IPS) reported,[1] the European Union has recently acknowledged a concern about immigration that has not received much media attention. That is, a large number of people are attempting to leave the devastation of their own country caused by the current form of globalization and other political and economic policies, which, as well as creating winners, is creating a large number of losers, and increasing inequality. It has been estimated that 175 million people currently reside in a country other than where they were born. This is double the number since 1975.[2] Tackling poverty and addressing issues of development and opportunity are important aspects of tackling this type of immigration.

Prior to proceeding with the discussion on illegal immigration and its effect on poverty I would like to point out that it is hard to speak about illegal immigration without in some way sounding controversial. Nevertheless, it is an important issue to address, because it raises questions about fairness and economic impact in developing countries around the world.

A. Definition of Poverty

Poverty can be defined in a number of ways. Some attempt to reduce it to numbers, while others argue that a more ambiguous definition must be used. To achieve a definition of poverty which reflects the global situation today, a combination of both methods is required. The purpose of this paper is not to enter into the merits of the definition to be utilized but rather to highlight the broad definition used and to show how easily illegal immigrants may come to be classified under the various definitions.

A social definition of poverty in its most bare definition means a lack of essential items which are required for proper living regardless of what their income might be. These include food, clothing, water and shelter. At the UN's World Summit on Social Development, the 'Copenhagen Declaration' described poverty as "…a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information."[3]

When poverty is measured statistically a more rigid approach is used, although two numerically defined methods to measure and quantify poverty are often used to define poverty in this way: relative poverty and absolute poverty. These definitions are based on income or consumption values making gathering information to compile statistics on poverty much easier.

Relative poverty measures are the simplest ways to determine the extent of poverty in individual countries. Using this method, the entire population is ranked in order of income per capita. The bottom 10%, or whatever percentage the government chooses to use, is then considered 'poor' or 'impoverished.' This can be

[1] http://www.globalissues.org/HumanRights/racism/immigration.asp?p=1.
[2] European Community on Protection of Marine Life: http://www.ecop.info/.
[3] United Nations: World Summit for Social Development Copenhagen, March 1995: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/wssd/index.html.

fine for country-wide measurements, but it has some major drawbacks in global use. For this reason, absolute poverty measures are more often used to define poverty on a global scale.

The most commonly used definition of global poverty is the absolute poverty line set by the World Bank. Poverty is set at an income of $2 a day or less, and extreme poverty is set at $1 a day or less.[4] This line was first created in 1990 when the World Bank published its World Development Report and found that most developing countries set their poverty lines at $1 a day.[5] The $2 mark was created for developing nations with slightly better income levels than their $1 a day counterparts. More developed countries are permitted to set their poverty lines elsewhere. In fact in highly industrialized countries, such as Britain, Japan, and the U.S., the absolute poverty line is usually set higher. The 2005 poverty line for single individuals in the United States is set at $26.19 a day.[6]

One other factor many experts on poverty refer to when defining poverty, is empowerment. 'Empowerment' refers to the ability of an individual to make choices regarding his or her life. Often, the poor are not empowered. They are forced to work at certain jobs or do certain things, and often this state of existence can be linked to poverty. When people are disempowered, many times, they are in poverty.[7]

Though most illegal immigrants would qualify under the various definitions of poverty the 'empowerment' factor is probably the most significant factor in discussions on poverty among illegal immigrants. Empowerment can refer to financial and educational opportunities which are often interlinked in discussions on poverty. Undocumented migrants leave their countries in poor conditions to attempt to build a better future in another country. However, lacking a legal status they are unable to empower themselves and improve their living conditions. The politicians in the most industrialized regions of the world are aware of this problem and often choose to neglect what is happening within their borders. Most governments have chosen to ignore the problem or provide solutions which allow these illegal immigrants to remain within their borders without the necessary empowerment to contribute to the society in which they live. The result is that these illegal immigrants are being considered as 'second class citizens', and although they are never referred to in this way, the truth about their living conditions and the high poverty rates among this social group leaves no doubt as to the role of these people in society.

This paper will attempt to show how poverty among illegal immigrants is rampant even though they reside in industrialised nations. It will attempt to highlight the cost that such industrialised nations will have to pay if they fail to empower these people. And finally, the discussion will end by attempting to make a case to empower these people should they be allowed to keep residing in these countries. References to industrialized countries will be made mainly through reference to the European region and the United States; however, most trends tend to repeat themselves in equally developed regions of the world.

B. Illegal Immigration: A Cause of Poverty?

Poverty has been attributed to a number of factors. However, no single explanation has gained universal acceptance, the reason being that poverty is a complex issue and rarely has a single cause. Factors include lack of education, human factors such as war and crime, natural resources such as climate and environment, discrimination and poor health. For the purpose of this paper a single factor, that of illegal immigration, will be analysed.

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has established that the average poverty threshold for a family of four in 2004 was an income of $19,307; for a family of three, $15,067; for a family of two, $12,334; and for unrelated individuals, $9,645. The poverty threshold is adjusted upward each year based on the annual rate of inflation. It has been estimated that according to these thresholds there were 7.9 million families in poverty in 2004 (an estimate of 37.0 million people), up from 7.6 million families in 2003 (35.9 million people). In 2004, the poverty rate declined for Asians (9.8 percent in 2004, down from 11.8 percent in 2003), remained unchanged for Hispanics (21.9 percent) and blacks (24.7 percent) and rose for non-Hispanic whites

[4] "Understanding Poverty": http://web.worldbank.org.
[5] World Development Report (WDR) 2000/01: Attacking Poverty.
[6] World Development Report (WDR) 2000/01: Attacking Poverty.
[7] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPOVERTY/Resources/WDR/overview.pdf.

(8.6 percent in 2004, up from 8.2 percent in 2003). The U.S. Center for Immigration Studies has estimated that in 2001 there were three million illegal aliens from Mexico. Of these three million illegal aliens, 972,000 (33 percent) live in poverty and 2.1 million (71.4 percent) live in or near poverty.[8] The fact that in the U.S. the poverty data can be traced to the various social and ethnic groups is even more significant. This could mean that solutions to reduce poverty could be more group-oriented.

The U.S. Census Bureau released a report[9] in August 2005 showing that the poverty rate rose from 12.5% in 2003 to 12.7% in 2004. On the surface it appeared that Americans as a whole were slipping deeper into poverty. Comparing these numbers to the rise in illegal aliens, estimated by some at 3 million in 2004 alone, showed that the numbers are severely misleading. Robert J. Samuelson in his Washington Post article "Discovering Poverty (Again)"[10] has held that

"*... poverty has been stuck for non-Hispanic whites, though it's fairly low. Since the late 1970s, it's generally fluctuated between 8 percent and 9 percent, depending on the economy. But poverty among blacks - though still appallingly high - has declined sharply. In 2004 it was 24.7 percent, down from 33.1 percent in 1993, though up from 22.5 percent in 2000. As recently as 1983, it was 35.7 percent.*
The dramatic improvement may reflect the 1990s' economic boom. Or it could stem from the 1996 welfare reform, which restricted benefits and imposed tougher work requirements. Job-holding among single mothers has increased significantly. Ron Haskins of the Brookings Institution reports that the share of never-married mothers working rose from 46 percent to 66 percent from 1994 to 2002. The number of families receiving traditional welfare dropped from 5 million in 1994 to 2 million in 2003.
Given these trends, the overall poverty rate should be drifting down. It isn't.
...
We have uncontrolled entry of poor, unskilled workers across our southern border. Although many succeed, many don't, and many poor Latino immigrants have children, who are also poor. In 2004, 25 percent of the poverty population was Hispanic, up from 12 percent in 1980. Over this period, Hispanics represented almost three-quarters of the increase in the poverty population."

The European Commission: Social Inclusion and Income Distribution in the European Union (2007)[11] carried out a survey that established that 16 per cent of EU citizens live below the poverty line, that is, their income is 60 percent less than the respective national average. That means that a total of 75 million people in Europe live below the poverty line. Measured in this way, the proportion of poor people has not increased, even since Romania and Bulgaria joined the Union. On the other hand, inequality has been growing for a quarter of a century, particularly in three countries: Britain, Finland and Sweden. Unemployment is obviously the foremost reason for people sinking into, or remaining trapped in, poverty. In some countries, such as Belgium and France, about half of all migrants live below the poverty line. Another study, "Making the City Work",[12] shows that ninety per cent of low-paid jobs are done by migrant workers.

C. Effects of Poverty

Looking at rates of poverty is very important because it provides a good deal of insight into the immigrants' impact on a particular country. Poverty rates have wide-ranging implications not only for the immigrants themselves but for society in general.

It is doubtful that anyone would disagree with the fact that illegal immigrants, by virtue of their working for low wages, boost corporate profits and reduce commodity prices for the general public. The latter translates not just to direct savings in purchases for individual consumers, but also contributes partly to keeping the lid on inflation. While this may seem small comfort for critics of illegal immigrants, understanding the reasons why illegal immigrants lower costs for consumers reveals why they end up being disproportionate burdens on local and state governments.[13]

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[8] http://www.cis.org/articles/2001/mexico/poverty.html.
[9] **"**Income Stable, Poverty Rate Increases, Percentage of Americans without Health Insurance Unchanged", US Census Bureau News, Tuesday August 30, 2005.
[10] Reported on September 21, 2005 Page A23.
[11] http://www.oecd.org/document/39/0,3343,en_2649_34111_38960487_1_1_1_1,00.html.
[12] "Making the City Work", University of London 2005.
[13] Schlosser, Eric; "Fast Food Nation: The dark side of the All American Meal" (2001).

Persons who live in or near poverty are generally eligible for a wide range of means-tested programs. Financially, illegal immigration in the United States is an extreme cost to the taxpayers. It is estimated by the National Research Council that the average household of illegal aliens in California alone uses $3,463 annually in services paid for by taxpayers. This includes, but is not limited to, health care, education, welfare, and criminal justice.

Moreover, because of the progressive nature of payroll and other taxes, those with low incomes pay relatively little in taxes. Finally, by consuming scarce public resources, an increase in the size of the low-income population as a result of immigration may hinder the ability of the nation to help those with low incomes already here.

It is not unreasonable to conclude that illegal immigrants who are typically employed in low-wage and unskilled labor are typically uneducated. At the same time one of the highest costs imposed on the host country is generally education costs. On the other hand this is the only investment on the illegal immigrant's family that has a high probability of producing a good return to the country over the lifetime of the immigrant's children and their descendants. Therefore the question arises as to whether to allow the children of illegal immigrants, often illegal aliens themselves, free education at the tax payers' consent. Arguably, as long as illegal immigrants are allowed to remain in the host country denying them the ability to send their children to schools is likely to increase the net cost to the country rather than the other way round.

A fact often ignored by critics of 'illegal immigrants' is that illegal immigrants often come to this country knowing beforehand that some small businesses as well as corporations are willing to employ them. It might be preposterous to say that there would be fewer illegal immigrants if the demand for them did not exist. Therefore, merely penalizing those who enter the country illegally will not solve the problem. Penalizing the businesses and corporations that hire them is also a must.

The main issue in these situations is that companies boost their profit margins by paying illegal immigrants egregiously low salaries with limited or no benefits, thereby forcing the state or local governments to bear much of the costs of living, including the education, of the immigrants and their families. Therefore, when companies employ but refuse to pay decent wages this is an injustice committed to legal residents within the host country since they will eventually bear the cost in either one of the following ways:

a. there is reduced employment;
b. companies are able to reduce wages, reducing the bargaining power of legal employees; and
c. by paying low wages to illegal immigrants they are creating second class citizens with less benefits and a poorer quality of life. This has consequences for the government which is forced to pay for welfare or education of the immigrants' families using taxpayer funds contributed by legal residents.[14]

Illegal hiring leads to displacement of legal workers, further degradation of benefits, and deterioration of the middle class. With decreased wages, people have less money to spend, and the economy can suffer.[15]

It is also worth pointing out that where the illegal immigrant is driven by poverty to resort to crime the government will eventually be forced to use taxpayer money to increase the resources of law enforcement agencies and prisons.

D. Legal and Policy Measures in the Context of Illegal Immigration

The above statistics clearly indicate that illegal immigration comes at a high cost to the tax payer of the host country. In 2002, households in the U.S. headed by illegal aliens imposed more than $26.3 billion in costs on the federal government and paid only $16 billion in taxes, creating a net fiscal deficit of almost $10.4 billion

[14] Smith, James P. & Edmonston, Barry; "The Immigration Debate: Studies on the Economic, Demographic and Fiscal Effects of Immigration", Panel on the Demographic and Economic Impacts of Immigration, National Research Council (1998).
[15] http://skymail-immigration.blogspot.com.

or $2,700 per illegal household.[16] The U.S. Center for Immigration Studies has held that with nearly two-thirds of illegal aliens lacking a high school degree, the primary reason they create a fiscal deficit is their low education levels and resulting low incomes and tax payments, not their legal status or heavy use of most social services.[17]

I beg to differ on this issue. Although the use of social services may not be the primary cause of the high cost on the tax payer, the lack of entitling legal status of illegal immigrants has a direct effect on their education and an indirect effect on their standard of living. Once illegal immigrants settle in a host country, the educational opportunities available to them are limited or simply unavailable. Unfortunately, in most cases, the children of illegal immigrants will also be denied these opportunities because of their lack of entitling legal status. Therefore a young generation of low-educated people is being allowed to form which will eventually result in low incomes and low or inexistent tax payments.

The situation of illegal immigrants, with regard to their poverty rate, is not as clear in Europe. Statistics on illegal immigrants are not as widely available as in the U.S., however the survey quoted previously which was conducted by the European Commission,[18] has established that immigrants, whether legal or illegal, are receiving lower wages than residents of a host country. This means that the developing trend in Europe is likely to develop into the current situation that exists in the U.S. today.

The United States government has for a long time ignored or avoided taking concrete action with regard to the 9 million people currently residing in the country illegally. It is only recently that the Bush Administration has proposed a bill which would address this issue, the “Guest Worker Program”. Though the bill never became law, it has opened the doors to further discussion, placing the issue of illegal immigration on the agenda of the future U.S. president.

The Bush proposal would have offered legal temporary worker status to all undocumented migrants who can show they are working in the United States, estimated to be around 8 million people. The bill promised future temporary visas for foreign employees to fill any job for which an employer, after undergoing a quick and simple job search, established that he could not find American workers. The idea behind this plan was that it would improve security and enforcement, because workers would come out of the shadows to identify themselves, and law enforcement can then focus on criminals and terrorists. The bill as proposed failed to become law because it presented huge questions of policy, resources and administrative capacity.

The bill as proposed created a huge debate as to whether this new law, if enacted, would be equivalent to an amnesty. Critics who thought it would amount to an amnesty, remembered the 1986 amnesty which was offered to over 4 million people in the United States. They believed that the bill proposed by the Bush Administration would have a similar affect as the amnesty granted in 1986, this time under the name “Guest Worker Program”. Many believe that if a form of amnesty is given now, in a few years the United States will be once again forced to face the issue of illegal immigrants and the possibility of granting yet another amnesty. The amnesty offered in 1986 was supposedly the last amnesty to be. Since then, the rate of illegal immigration has exploded to its current level. Critics of the Guest Worker Program believe that if this bill were ever to become law it would be a guarantee that the exact same thing will to continue to happen over and over again. Their belief is that by rewarding lawlessness, we are simply inviting more of the same.

These arguments are strong and hard to deny. On the other hand policy-makers need to understand that unless a sustainable proposal is put forward in the near future a new generation of “second class citizens” will be formed bringing with them all the consequences mentioned previously, including poverty, xenophobia and terrorism.

Policy-makers on illegal immigration who oppose any form of amnesty will reiterate that patrolling the borders is a priority in the combat against illegal immigration. Patrolling the border or building a fence might

[16] “The High Cost of Cheap Labour: Illegal Immigration and the Federal Budget” Center for Immigration Studies http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalexec.html.
[17] “The High Cost of Cheap Labour: Illegal Immigration and the Federal Budget” Center for Immigration Studies: http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalexec.html.
[18] http://www.oecd.org/document/39/0,3343,en_2649_34111_38960487_1_1_1_1,00.html.

slow down the problem, but will not stop traffickers from smuggling in illegal immigrants and will do nothing to solve the problem of the illegal immigrants already present within the borders of the host country. In addition, there are already several drug cartels known to be into the business of smuggling illegal immigrants across the border. The only real solution to stopping illegal immigration is for our politicians to stop preventing the present immigration laws from being enforced. In fact, many believe that if a country is serious about avoiding the fiscal costs of illegal immigration, the only real option is to enforce the law and reduce the number of illegal aliens in the country. First, this would entail much greater efforts to police the U.S.'s land and sea borders. Second, much greater effort must be made to ensure that those allowed into the country on a temporary basis, such as tourists and guest workers, do not stay in the country permanently. Third, the centerpiece of any enforcement effort would be to enforce the ban on hiring illegal aliens. Finally, a clear message from policymakers, that enforcement of the law is valued and vitally important to the U.S., would dramatically increase the extremely low morale of those who enforce immigration laws.

Policing the border, enforcing the ban on hiring illegal aliens, denying temporary visas to those likely to remain permanently, and all the other things necessary to reduce illegal immigration will take time and cost money. However, since the cost of illegal immigration to the U.S. federal government alone is estimated at over $10 billion a year, significant resources could be devoted to enforcement efforts and still leave taxpayers with significant net savings.[19] Enforcement not only has the advantage of reducing the costs of illegal immigration, it is also a very popular solution with the general public. Nonetheless, policymakers expect strong opposition from special interest groups, especially ethnic advocacy groups and those elements of the business community that do not want to invest in labor-saving devices and techniques or pay better salaries, but instead want access to large numbers of cheap, unskilled workers.

The above proposals are brought forward by those who reject any other form of solution to resolve the presence of illegal immigrants within one's national borders. The above proposals reflect the proposal for action mentioned in the Commission's Communication on Policy priorities in the fight against illegal immigration of third country nationals.[20] Some of the Commission's proposal include the tackling of illegal employment, a return policy, further strengthening of the external borders and cooperation with third countries.

Unfortunately, the U.S. experience has shown that enforcement of the extensive immigration law has failed. Since the 1980s, the U.S. has quintupled spending and tripled personnel particularly at the Mexican border, from which most illegal immigrants enter. The U.S. has built three-tiered walls for dozens of miles into the desert and imposed sanctions on employers for the first time in U.S. history. But the crackdown has failed to address the underlying realities of the U.S. labor market.

This in no way means that the EU's policies will necessarily fail. It only highlights the fact that the reasons for failure within the United States could easily be the reasons why similar policies would fail within the European region. A closer look at these realities could help shape future action by the E.U.

U.S. immigration laws constantly collide with two powerful realities. The U.S. economy continues to produce opportunities for low-skilled workers in important sectors such as retail, services, construction, and tourism. Meanwhile, the availability of Americans or legal residents who are ready to fulfill these jobs is decreasing as people grow older and better educated. Yet the U.S. immigration system has no legal channel for peaceful, hard-working people to come to the U.S. even temporarily, to fill those jobs. The result is widespread illegal immigration.

Attempts have been made by individual U.S. municipalities to develop and reinforce existing immigration laws. In 2006, Riverside, New Jersey became the first municipality in New Jersey to enact legislation penalizing anyone who employed or rented to an illegal immigrant. Though this law was never enforced, within months, hundreds, if not thousands, of illegal immigrants left Riverside and with the departure of so many people, the local economy suffered. Hair salons, restaurants and corner shops that catered to the illegal

[19] http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalexec.html.

[20] COM (2006) 402. This Communication forms an integral part of the EU's comprehensive approach towards effective migration management. It complements the policy plan adopted by the Commission in December 2005, which set out a range of initiatives that the Commission intends to take in the field of legal migration.

immigrants saw business plummeting and some even had to close down. Meanwhile, the town was hit with two lawsuits challenging the law and in August 2007 the town rescinded the ordinance, joining a small but growing list of municipalities nationwide that have begun rethinking such laws as their legal and economic consequences have become clearer.

In August 2007, a federal judge struck down ordinances in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, the first town to enact laws barring illegal immigrants from working or renting homes there. As a result of this ruling, Riverside repealed its law and other towns that had enacted such laws would follow suit; 'People in many towns are now weighing the social, economic and legal costs of pursuing these ordinances.'[21]

The above enforcement scenario is not the only example of failed enforcement of immigration laws. In 1996 the U.S. federal government enacted the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) that requires local governments to cooperate with Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Despite the enactment of this law, many large urban cities and some small cities, have adopted the so-called "sanctuary policies." Generally, sanctuary policies instruct city employees not to notify the federal government of the presence of illegal aliens living in their communities. The policies also end the distinction between legal and illegal immigration, so illegal aliens often benefit from city services too.

The question at this point is why do public officials pass sanctuary laws defying federal law and risk being prosecuted? According to Steve Salvi there are a number of reasons among which are (a) to appease illegal immigration support groups (b) buckling to political pressure from illegal alien support groups who lobby local governments to implement formal or informal sanctuary policies (c) political contributions and support at election time (d) complacency, ignorance, or "don't care" attitudes and (e) purposeful resistance to existing U.S. immigration law based upon an open-border political philosophy that serves their economic, political, and cultural ethnocentric interests.[22]

Unfortunately, in spite of these realities, long time critics of illegal immigration still demand more of the same failed policies: more walls and barbed wire and entire divisions of troops at the border as well as the enforcement of existing immigration laws. A more responsible approach would be to recognize the reality that with so many illegal immigrants already within the U.S. the options are either to institute a return policy which is effective, efficient and consistent or to create a temporary worker program and a path to legalization for those who for some reason or other are unable to be returned to their country.

A return policy remains a cornerstone in the EU's immigration policy and this policy should continue to be encouraged in the fight against illegal immigration. On the other hand, returning illegal immigrants to the poor conditions from which they fled will do little to alleviate the poverty rates in the returning country. This will merely solve the poverty rates in the host country. In addition, it is well known that where a return policy is in place, this may take months or years to take effect with regard to a specific illegal immigrant and sometimes, due to war and conflict in the returning country, the return of the illegal immigrant may have to be delayed. An education policy, possibly paid through community service, should therefore be developed for people subject to a return policy. This will help both the host country in which they may need to reside until the measure to return home takes effect, and the country to which they will eventually return. What the world has failed to do in poor countries it may do through the citizens who reside within one's borders.

Where a return policy is unavailable, then legalisation of illegal immigrants may prove to be the only solution available. The EU Commission has already recognized that where a return policy is not available, action towards the regularisation of illegal immigrants must be taken.[23] Legalisation or regularisation would replace an unsafe, disorderly and illegal flow of immigrants with one that is safe, orderly and legal. Legalisation would improve the living conditions of millions of illegal workers. Newly legalised workers would possess more bargaining power in the marketplace because they could more easily change jobs to improve their pay and working conditions. They would be more likely to qualify for health insurance and to

[21] Muzaffar A. Chishti, director of the New York office of the Migration Policy Institute: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/26/nyregion/26riverside.html\.
[22] Salvi, Steve; "Sanctuary Cities: What Are They?" (2007): http://www.ojjpac.org/sanctuary.asp.
[23] COM(2006) 402.

invest in language and job skills. The taxes and fees paid by newly legalised workers could help defray state and local costs for schooling and medical care. Because legalised workers would be able to visit their home countries more frequently, they would be less inclined to bring their families and more inclined to ultimately return home.

It is important to note that legalisation is not amnesty. While amnesty would allow for automatic citizenship or residency, legalisation of illegal immigrants would merely change their status from undocumented to documented workers awarding many but not all privileges available to a citizen. The most important privileges would be the empowerment of these individuals to improve their living conditions and to create a better future for them and their children. These privileges could be given temporarily with an option of renewal and always against payment of a fine. The possibility to become a citizen or otherwise is not within the scope of the discussion of this paper.

The concern of the EU Commission is that unilateral action by one Member State, could have undesired effects on other Member States. The Commission has therefore approved a study to be conducted on the practices, effects and impacts of regularisation measures. This study would then constitute the basis for future discussions as to the possibility of having a common legal framework on regularization at an EU level.[24] Unfortunately, countries such as France have already expressed their opposition to such measures being taken. The French President, Nicholas Sarkozy, though in favour of tighter cooperation with the EU over immigration, has already stated that a 'European immigration pact would include commitments to ban massive legalisation of illegal aliens.'[25]

It is important that a distinction is created between legalisation or regularisation and 'amnesty'. Legalised workers would not get automatic citizenship or even permanent residency. They would receive only a temporary visa renewable for a limited time. Ideally they would also have to pay a fine and then get in line with everybody else to apply for permanent status or any other form of status given under the existing law of the host country.

E. Conclusion

The issue of illegal immigration is particularly difficult due to the fact that it impinges on a number of issues including the economy, human rights, employment and poverty. However if we are to eliminate the increasing rates of poverty within industrialised countries the issue of illegal immigration needs to be addressed with more balance and less emotion.

Immigration policy should be aimed at maximising the benefits to the host nation. It should be about doing what is in the best interest of the citizens of the host country. When viewed in that manner, the priority for every host country should be to focus on the legal immigrants and to have effective laws to favour their entry and their permanence within the host country. On the other hand, illegal immigrants, though not providing a direct benefit to the host country due to their illegal entry, are, as explained above, constituting a burden on the citizens of the host country. Therefore, though everyone might agree on the action to be taken to block the entry of illegal immigrants, differences emerge when discussing what should be done vis à vis the illegal immigrants already present in the host country when their presence continues to constitute a burden on the citizens of the host country. It is ultimately in the best interest of the citizens of the host country to encourage their governments to take action to eliminate poverty among the illegals residing in their country.

Though many agree that amnesty is not the solution, some form of regularisation will eventually need to be considered to solve or alleviate the problem of illegal immigrants within a nation's border. The alternative would be for the host country to escort each and every illegal immigrant out of the host country and to finance the cost of such a policy. Ultimately, whatever policy a country chooses to adopt, there should be common accord that the principles guiding government action should be to treat illegal immigrants in accordance with the constitutional laws of the host country.

[24] COM(2006) 402.
[25] http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2007-07-09-eu-immigration_N.htm?csp=34.

POVERTY-INDUCED CROSS BORDER MIGRATION: SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

DANIELA DEBONO

Introduction

> "... asylum-seekers are mere 'economic migrants'. This phrase...serves to convey that the motives of those claiming asylum are trivial and unworthy...But of course to describe anyone's motive for seeking refuge in a country not his own as 'economic' does not entail that it is so trifling. In his own country he may be unable to feed his family; he may have seen his children die from malnutrition. It needs only a moment's thought to realise that flight for economic reasons may be as justified and as worthy of sympathy and help as flight from political persecution; but so conditioned has the British public become by unvaried official propaganda against asylum-seekers that it never spares a moment to think about the question." (Dummit, 2001: 44-45)

This quote captures the typical current discourse on asylum and migration at local, national, regional and international levels. The economic migrant usually brings negative images to mind - a 'bogus' migrant, hypocritical and unworthy of assistance. This has been brought about by a number of factors in the global political and socio-economic scenario.

International migration is on the rise. In 2006, there were 191 million international migrants in the world, up from 176 million in 2000.[1] International migrants represented 3.0% of the world population in 2006. There are roughly 30 to 40 million unauthorized migrants worldwide, comprising around 15% to 20% of the world's immigrant stock[2], and another 24.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in at least 52 countries. In 2006, the official global number of refugees according to the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) reached an estimated 9.9 million persons.[3]

At the same time, nearly three billion people, a figure that makes up nearly half the world population, live on less than two dollars a day.[4] More than 80% of the world's population lives in countries where income differentials are widening. In fact, the poorest 40% of the world's population accounts for 5% of global income, while the richest 20% accounts for three-quarters of the world income.[5] Another chilling statistic is that issued by UNICEF, which reports that some 26,500-30,000 of children under the age of 5 die each day due to poverty. And they "die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death." (UNICEF, 2000)

Substantial numbers of people have thus migrated - or sought to migrate - from regions that are afflicted by poverty and insecurity to more prosperous and stable parts of the world. People who have been forced to migrate often face increasingly tortuous and dangerous long-distance journeys. These migrants have been prompted and their travelling has been facilitated by a variety of factors associated with the process of globalization: a growing disparity in the level of human security present in different parts of the world; improved transportation, communications and information technology systems; the expansion of transnational social networks; and the emergence of a commercial and criminal industry, devoted to the smuggling of people across international borders.

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[1] Global Estimates and Trends, (2006), International Organisation of Migration, http://www.iom.int/jahia/page254.html [Last accessed 26th April 2008].
[2] United Nations' Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2003 Revision.
[3] The Refugee Story in Statistics, UNHCR, http://www.unhcr.org/statistics [Last accessed 26th April 2008]. This does not include some 4.3 million Palestinian refugees under the responsibility of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
[4] This method of calculation has been highly criticized over the years. For the sake of this paper, it helps to give a rough indication of the number of people and the kind of poverty that we are speaking about. UNDP, 2007 Human Development Report, November 27th, 2007.
[5] UNDP, 2007 Human Development Report, November 27th, 2007.

Some of these forced migrants fall under the current interpretation of the 1951 refugee definition[6] and are deemed 'deserving' of protection by the host state. All the rest are not.[7]

Migrants fleeing conditions of socio-economic deprivation, or more simply poverty, usually fall within this 'undeserving' category. The derogatory attitude towards them persists in European countries: their asylum claims are found ineligible and assistance is not extended to them. This state of affairs prompts the question as to whether there is any ethical justification for this.

Who are cross-border poverty-induced migrants? People who move to another country (flee poverty) or socio-economic deprivation are usually classified under the umbrella category of economic migrants. The term 'economic migrants' refers to a spectrum of people migrating to another country in order to improve their quality of life. This includes North-North migration, like British academics moving to the United States; South-North migration, for instance Ghanaian doctors moving to the United Kingdom; and South-South migration, like a Bangladeshi labourer moving to India. It is a popularly known fact that economic migrants can be either skilled or unskilled. Less well known is that economic migration involves both forced and voluntary migration. William Wood discusses this distinction at length and, amongst other things he reasserts that, contrary to public belief, refugees and asylum seekers represent only a small fraction of those persons who flee their communities - what he calls 'non-voluntary' (i.e. forced) migrations. He remarks that:

> "The extent of forced migration is underestimated, however, because the conventional definition of refugees as victims of coercive government policies or war who cross an international boundary fails to account for the many others uprooted by communal ethnic conflict, life threatening environmental and economic conditions and mandatory repatriations." (Wood, 1994)

A good definition of socio-economically deprived migrants which refers precisely to the group of people that will be the focus of this paper is Huyck and Bouvier's definition of 'economically motivated refugees', which describes those migrants who are incapable in their own country

> "to locate any kind of employment or to grow sufficient agricultural products to feed and house oneself and one's immediate family. Starvation in this case becomes the likely alternative to emigration." (Huyck and Bouvier, 1983:41)

Many socio-economically deprived migrants who are forced to migrate are constrained by tightened legal restrictions on their mobility and thus end up using illegal channels of travel. Western countries have immigration policies that regulate the supply of labour in accordance with the needs in their economic sectors. Reductions in the numbers of 'legal' jobs for migrant workers coupled with rising fears of increased illegal immigration has led to tougher immigration policies, more border patrols and quicker deportations. These measures often make it difficult for socio-economically deprived migrants to get a visa or passport. They often end up crossing the borders illegally in areas like the United States and Mexico border, at the Strait of Gibraltar and from Libya to Italy. This is often a very dangerous journey. Yet, illegal channels are at times more accessible, or are perceived as more accessible than legal channels. One of the main reasons for this is the likelihood of failure linked to legal channels. Other reasons are the complexities, costs and uncertainties in the bureaucratic process of the latter. For instance, applications for visas to Western countries from developing countries are often turned down, and for some of these migrants the costly prices of visa applications and flight tickets are a definite setback.

A popular argument in Western countries to justify the negative treatment of economic migrants rests on the claim that by resorting to illegal channels the migrants expose themselves to an attitude of hostility. These arguments ignore the fact that illegal channels may well be the only channels to which these migrants have access. Socio-economically deprived migrants are thus more likely to be migrants who attempt to enter a country without the necessary documentation.

[6] Several have criticized the 'limited' nature of the 1951 Refugee Convention in the current realities of the world today.
[7] Though people classified as 'vulnerable people', including minors, disabled people, and others (according to each state's policy), are usually offered some sort of protection by States.

Another criticism is that any arguments asserting that people are forced to migrate due to poverty are naive and over-romanticise poverty situations and migration to an extent which is unrealistic, since many scholars have shown that the 'poorest of the poor' are less likely to migrate as they have less access to resources and information. Such assertions have also contributed towards the negative portrayal of socio-economically deprived migrants. What these arguments fail to recognize is that poverty situations can be diverse and include a range of deprivations. So while those who migrate might not necessarily be the ones under the imminent threat of starving to death, their situation remains nonetheless one of poverty.

Finally, it is generally accepted that inequality is one of the drivers of migration. The widening of the North-South divide has brought predictions that this kind of migration is set at least to continue, if not to increase. In this scenario, the current derogatory discourse coupled with a simplistic view of 'who' these people are, and 'what' their motivations are, will not help in building a just and fair rights-based system.

I will attempt to show how using a narrow and oversimplified definition of economic migration reinforces the model that gives priority to civil and political rights over social, economic and cultural rights. This subsequently leads to a situation where it is perceived that individuals need protection from other states *only* when their civil and political rights are threatened. I will argue that this model is:

a) not rights-based and as such is hindering the development of a human rights culture (which goes against the same spirit and principles of the Refugee Convention itself);
b) that there exists a moral obligation towards people whose social and economic rights are not being respected by their State.

It should be pointed out that the aim of this paper is not to propose policies or forward any practical recommendations, but rather to expose current inconsistencies in perceptions and discourse on people who migrate due to poverty. These are the same perceptions which feed attitudes and policies. The paper will focus on human rights and the related ethical considerations necessary for ensuring consistency in policy making and social justice with all.

The Definition of a Refugee

In common parlance, the term 'refugee' has been extended to include all people forced to flee their homes even if they have not crossed international boundaries. This use of the word 'refugee' in public discourse has, at times, also been reflected in some Western states' practices.[8] But what are the legal definitions of a refugee within refugee law – that is, who are the people who are considered in need of 'political protection' and deemed deserving of inclusion (albeit within limits) into our societies?

The UN's definition of a refugee is substantially different from the abovementioned popular definition. The mostly widely used definition can be found in Article 1 of the UN Convention related to the Status of Refugees as amended by the 1967 Protocol:

> *"A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."*

[8] In 1991, Western states gave assistance to Kurdish refugees in Iraq. Even the UNHCR (amidst criticism) has gradually expanded its mandate to include protecting and providing humanitarian assistance to what it describes as other persons "of concern," including internally-displaced persons (IDPs) who would fit the legal definition of a refugee under the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol, the 1969 Organization for African Unity Convention, or some other treaty if they left their country, but who presently remain in their country of origin. UNHCR thus has missions in Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Serbia and Montenegro and Côte d'Ivoire to assist and provide services to IDPs.

The UN Refugee Convention is the only world-wide international instrument currently in force, even though refugee law also encompasses customary law, peremptory norms and a number of regional agreements and conventions. Apart from the 1951 UN Convention, the relevant regional instruments to date include:

a) 1966 Bangkok Principles on Status and Treatment of Refugees adopted at the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee;
b) 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa;
c) 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees for Latin America;
d) 1976 Council of Europe's Recommendation 773 (1976) on the Situation of de facto Refugees;
e) 2004 European Union's Council Directive on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals and stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and content of the protection granted.

In recent years, the UN's definition has been criticized for being too narrow in scope and for reflecting the post World War II political scenario and in particular the Western states' fear of totalitarian regimes at the time of its drafting. Much cited by many scholars, as an extended and more adequate definition, is the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) definition of the term 'refugee'. The OAU has adapted the UN Refugee definition "to conform with the tenets of humanitarianism, as well as the dictates of pragmatism" (Arboleda, 1991). Articles (1) and (2) of the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, state that:

> *"1. For the purposes of this Convention, the term "refugee" shall mean every person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.*
>
> *2. The term "refugee" shall also apply to every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality."*

This definition broke away from the UN refugee definition by extending protection to all persons compelled to flee across national borders by reason of any man-made disaster. Some have just seen this as a successful adaptation of an international definition to the particular reality of developing countries. However, it is now widely cited as a much-needed development to the UN definition in order to address the current global realities.

Another landmark for the development of the refugee definition was another regional Declaration called the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees which was born out of Latin American states' experience with refugees, and with people fleeing from general violence and oppression. This Declaration was extended more expansively to include:

> "persons who had fled their country because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights..."

Understanding the rationale behind the legal definition of refugee and its historical roots is important to appreciate who, today, is eligible for protection from another state. The historical roots are usually traced back to the concept of 'sanctuary', recognised by the ancient Greeks and Egyptians; the right to asylum, first codified in law in 600 A.D. by King Ethelbert of Kent; the advent of state sovereignty (and later nationalism) made the phrase 'country of nationality' meaningful and people crossing borders were required to provide identification. It was, however, only under the League of Nations that the modern refugee regime, and the provision of international protection to refugees, was constructed. The baggage that the concept of asylum carried along with it has a long history. This has clearly affected the current concept of asylum and the moral obligation we have towards people fleeing political persecution.

This brief overview of the origins of the definition of a refugee is also important to understand how in recent years we have witnessed a greater acknowledgement of the fact that the categorization of forced migration (*vis-a-vis* voluntary migration) does not exclusively refer to migrants who have fled for political reasons. Forced migration can also encompass other groups of migrants, including socio-economically deprived migrants and, more recently, 'climate change' or 'environmental' migrants. In a speech entitled 'New challenges of forced displacement', the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, when referring to the multitude of claims for asylum, reiterates the prevalent view on why a recurring proposal of re-drafting the UN Refugee Convention should not be considered. He says,

> *"It is sometimes suggested that the 1951 Refugee Convention should be amended to deal with this problem. I am reluctant to consider this, for if we were to re-open a discussion about that Convention, I am not convinced it would go in the right direction. I often wonder what would happen if we were drafting the International Declaration of Human Rights today?*
>
> *I would suggest we not touch the 1951 Convention, but consider instead that in addition to refugees, there are other people who need protection, assistance and solutions. I believe that we can find a way to do this using the existing framework of human rights law and international humanitarian law, coupled with more cooperation among governments, the United Nations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, and non-governmental organizations. The possibility of a new international instrument for the protection of forcibly displaced people who are not refugees should also be considered." (Guterres, 2008)*

A second proposal, which many have been supporting and advocating, is that of working on the reinterpretation of the UN Refugee Convention. This proposal similarly stems from the new range of refugee claims which not only challenge the boundaries of the UN Refugee Convention regime but also question the traditional distinctions between 'economic migrants' and 'political refugees'. It has also predisposed a new understanding of the responsibility of governments (and the international community) to ensure the best possible economic environment for sustainable livelihoods. One of the foremost advocates of this position is Michelle Foster, an expert in international refugee and human rights law, who argues that notwithstanding the dichotomy between 'economic migrants' and 'political refugees', the Refugee Convention is capable of accommodating a more complex analysis. The analysis she undertakes results in the recognition that many claims based on socio-economic deprivation are given due consideration within the scope of the UN Refugee Convention. She thus maintains that the challenges presented by claims based on socio-economic deprivation may be overcome by a creative interpretation of the Refugee Convention consistent with correct principles of international treaty interpretation (Foster, 2007). It is too early to note the reception of this idea or report any developments.

In the light of the centrality of the refugee regime, it is pertinent to next assess the role this regime may have played in the negative construction of the 'economic migrant' in Western States. More specifically, in consideration of the fact that the application of the UN legal definition excludes people fleeing for reasons other than political ones, one should carefully ask whether the refugee regime is including economic migrants in its protection discourse.

A Critique of the Refugee Regime Vis-À-Vis Socio-Economically Deprived Migrants

In recent years, following the tightening of visa controls resulting from an increased fear of irregular migration and international terrorism, the asylum system gradually became one of the last remaining ports of call for migrants from less developed countries who wanted to regularize their position in another state[9]. This led to a situation where the asylum systems were faced with claims for asylum for a variety of reasons, many of which were related to socio-economic deprivation in the migrants' country of origin. The capacity of the asylum system was stretched to the full, bringing about a situation where people who were claiming political persecution, and were therefore entitled to asylum under the current legal framework, were 'lost' in

[9] The claim for family reunification opens another avenue for legal migration. The principle of family reunification is embodied in a set of laws which attempt to balance the right of a family to live together, or the right of an individual to marry whoever s/he chooses, with the country's immigration laws.

mixed migration flows. This anomalous situation made it more difficult for the authorities to establish who of those migrants were eligible under the current laws. As the numbers continue to grow, potential refugees who today end up using illegal channels together with socio-economically deprived migrants and other groups are also subjected to administrative measures like detention in the countries of destination. They also face the lack of opportunities to apply for asylum and in some cases they are forcefully deported to third countries or countries of origin. Some have lamented that the refugee channel has been 'hijacked' by other migrants to the detriment of the 'real' refugees. These may partially explain why the refugee/asylum field adopts a protectionist attitude towards persons who are politically-persecuted in an effort to safeguard the present asylum system. As a result, the issues concerning socio-economically deprived migrants end up being further marginalised.

While the protectionist approach can be understood within the context of the current scenario, it is also clear that it has not helped the situation of people fleeing poverty. One might even suggest that these efforts could have indirectly worsened it by bringing about a situation where the plight of political refugees is portrayed as 'deserving' and legally enshrined, in contrast to others who are not recognized by law and are thus considered 'undeserving', if not outright parasites on the system. However, victims do not become so when the law says they are; but when the situation they are in develops in such a way as to create an injustice. The protectionist approach fails to recognise this and its rhetoric becomes exclusionary, unfair and clearly not rights-based. Such an inconsistency might be avoided if the refugee regime did not specifically choose to target 'economic' migrants and other non-refugee migrant populations to make a moral claim on their status. The problem is that cross-border migrants who are not refugees are given an 'undeserving' label.

On its official website, the UNHCR states that:

> "An economic migrant normally leaves a country voluntarily to seek a better life. Should he or she elect to return home they would continue to receive the protection of their government. Refugees flee because of the threat of persecution and cannot return safely to their homes in the circumstances then prevailing." (UNHCR)

This dichotomy clearly feeds the prevailing perspective of who 'economic migrants' are and why it is claimed that they do not need to be offered any protection or assistance by states. Unfortunately, it is also seriously misleading and defective as (a) it fails to qualify the term 'voluntarily' and take into consideration the fact that many people are forced to move due to the precarious conditions in which their families and communities find themselves; and (b) it also fails to consider cases where economic migrants who are forced to return may well reach their home safely but they do so poorer than when they left and are likely to suffer social isolation. The failure to incorporate these and other considerations related to economic migrants, in an attempt to distinguish them from their more 'deserving' counterparts, ultimately amounts to a failure to build a true picture of who these migrants really are. Such a lack of recognition of identity is often the cause of a lack of recognition of rights.

A more correct and fair description of economic migrants which would seriously challenge the above dichotomy is provided by Gibney:

> "Individual economic migrants might be located at various points on a continuum according to their reason for entrance, with those seeking to improve an appalling low quality of life marked by serious economic deprivation (like many immigrants from Asia and Africa) at one end and those migrating between first world countries in order to take up more lucrative employment opportunities (such as academics and business people) at the other." (Gibney, 2004: 11)

However, notwithstanding the sensitivity that Gibney (together with others) shows towards socio-economically deprived migrants, he has also warned against the widening of the definition to include other groups of migrants in need. He has argued that this would be no solution at all, but would merely serve to augment the present problems. This is interesting to note but the point of what is being said here is that the refugee regime has not 'helped' to portray fairly the problems faced by socio-economically deprived migrants. With the refugee regime growing increasingly on the defensive, particularly after September 11th, but even before to a lesser degree, there appears to be a lack of sensitivity to the issues of migrants fleeing poverty. Considering its long tradition in upholding the rights of disadvantaged migrants, one would have

expected the international refugee regime to act differently. This is partly due to the fact that socio-economically deprived migrants are many times victims of very similar adversities to those that refugees find themselves in both in their countries of origin and more particularly when they set off on their travels.

The unavoidable question at this point is: why is there an internationally enshrined obligation to a political refugee and not to a socio-economically deprived migrant? Some defendants of the current state of affairs have said that cross-border rights should relate only to political situations where the state has failed people (that is, civil and political rights). But nowadays there is a plethora of literature which shows how economic crises can be brought about by bad political decisions, corrupt administration and discriminatory economic policies that threaten the very livelihoods of multitudes of people (Kent, 2005). Evidence also shows that weak governments are the more likely to take wrong political decisions concerning the economy, and are less likely to be prepared when a crisis occurs.

The Interdependence of Human Rights

Human rights form the basis of a world built on freedom, justice and peace. One of the major functions of human rights is to guide governance in local, national and international settings. While the interdependence of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights is one of the fundamental principles of human rights. It is precisely this interdependence that is often not given due importance. Civil and political rights are enshrined in articles 3 to 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the ICCPR. Economic, social and cultural rights are enshrined in articles 22 to 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the ICESCR. Despite the categorisation of civil and political rights as different to economic, social and cultural rights[10], the drafters of the UDHR were rightly convinced of the importance of the principle that the different rights could only successfully exist in combination. Both the ICCPR and the ICESCR state:

> "The ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his social, economic and cultural rights"

This is held to be true because without civil and political rights people cannot assert their economic, social and cultural rights. In other words, without livelihoods and a working society, people cannot assert or make use of civil or political rights. The equal status, indivisibility and interdependence of civil, political, social, economic and cultural human rights have been affirmed unanimously and repeatedly by the international community, most notably at the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights (1993) and at the Millennium Summit (2000).

This was not even a new idea in 1945, when the drafting of the UDHR was commissioned. In his momentous address known as the Four Freedoms speech at the 77th United States Congress in 1941, US President Woodrow Wilson had already described four interconnected freedoms that are indispensable pre-requisites for 'a just and secure world' and which humans 'everywhere in the world' ought to enjoy. These were freedom of speech and expression, freedom of every person to worship in his own way, freedom from fear and freedom from want. The concept of 'Freedom from want' thus endorsed for the first time, a right to economic security.

'Freedom from want' and the right to a sustainable livelihood have been affirmed in many international treaties: the UDHR, Article 25(1) states that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself, and his family, including food"; the ICCPR, Article 1(2) states that, "In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence"; and the ICESCR, Article 11 states that States Parties, "recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself, and his family,

[10] Opponents of the indivisibility of human rights say that the two sets of rights are fundamentally different. One of the main reasons they cite is that civil and political rights are so-called negative rights meaning the state can protect them simply by taking no action; whereas economic, social and cultural rights are positive rights meaning that they require active provision of entitlements by the state (as opposed to the state being required only to prevent the breach of rights). Other scholars have shown that it is easy to find examples which do not fit the simplistic categorizations put forward by opponents to the indivisibility characteristic.

including adequate food, clothing and housing" and also recognizes "the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger."

Western states have been hugely influenced by this approach and there are ongoing attempts to give equal weight to civil and political issues on the one hand and economic, social and cultural ones on the other hand. An example of this is the rampant use of rhetoric on the significance of global poverty eradication/reduction programmes and the creation of sustainable livelihoods. Other examples are the numerous funded programmes with these same aims which have been introduced by some European countries and institutionalised by the European Union.

It is thus generally agreed that the right to adequate food and freedom from poverty[11], understood as socio-economic deprivation, is a basic right. Henry Shue, who has written extensively on international ethics, has defined basic rights as those necessary for the enjoyment of all other rights. In these terms, the right to adequate food and freedom from poverty are most certainly basic rights.

In his work on international distributive justice (Shue, 1980), Henry Shue argues for a basic right to subsistence. He defines rights as the rational basis for a justified demand. While admitting that in practice one can end up having to prioritize rights in policy, he tries to prove that at least one small set of what are normally categorized as economic rights belong among the rights of the highest priority. For Shue, the issue of the moral prioritizing of rights is relevant in relation to policy making. In principle, the prioritization of any set of human rights over another is flawed, although it is understandable that in practice, when decisions have to be taken or policies are put forward, there arise situations where the greater moral importance of a particular right (subject to the particular setting) would have to be assessed. Such a scenario would not mean that violations of the rights which are not prioritized should be altogether ignored.

Seen in this light, Shue's is a noble attempt at presenting the importance of economic rights to the well-being of individuals. His main aim remains that of establishing a 'moral minimum' which every human being is entitled to. He goes on to elaborate on the changes (by individuals and institutions) needed for this moral minimum to be observed. The moral minimum, or 'basic' rights, as Shue calls them, are a shield for the defenceless against some of the more devastating and more common of the threats to life, which include loss of security and loss of subsistence. They are a restraint on economic and political forces that would otherwise be too strong to be resisted. They act as social guarantees against actual and threatening deprivations of at least some basic needs. Basic rights are an attempt to give to the powerless a veto over some of the forces that would otherwise harm them most, and as such these basic demands constitute every person's minimum reasonable demands on the rest of humanity. Most importantly, basic rights cut squarely across civil and political (negative) and economic, social and cultural (positive) rights.

Shue argues that the same reasoning that justifies treating security and liberty as the substances of basic rights, also supports treating subsistence as a basic right. He concludes that from a rights-based and moral perspective, rich countries are required by justice and international law to share their abundance with those millions who are chronically malnourished.

Shue's arguments on moral obligations lead us once again to the same arguments used by President Wilson when he spoke of the four freedoms. It is worth noting that the four freedoms recalled above not only cut across the two distinguishable categories of civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other, but the model confess equal weight on both. This further confirms that from a moral and a human rights point of view one cannot justify the predominance of civil and political rights over economic, social and cultural rights. The well-being of people requires the upholding of both sets of rights.

Unfortunately, this has not been the dominant view for many years. The world's leading international human rights organizations of the 1960s focused on the protection of civil and political rights, no doubt contributing significantly to the development of such rights to the detriment of others. The historical marginalization of

[11] Poverty is viewed in this paper as multi-dimensional rather than strictly income-related. Poverty is deprivation of those things that determine the quality of life, including food, clothing, shelter and safe drinking water, but also such "intangibles" as access to education and freedom of social and cultural expression.

economic, social and cultural rights, however, has had an undesired effect and has demonstrated that securing civil and political rights is vital but insufficient. Shue's arguments are a reaction to this prevailing situation. Despite the elaborate international legal system designed to satisfy the basic needs of individuals, whole communities continue to be victimized by national and international policies that condemn them to increasing poverty and deny them their rights.

It would appear that socio-economically deprived migrants from these communities should also be morally eligible to protection or at least assistance by other States, on the grounds that their human rights in their home country are being violated. There is great awareness and international support to work on poverty-reduction, *in situ*. The difference is that while there are also many projects focusing on conflict transformation and democratization *in situ*, there is also the accompanying right to asylum for individuals who migrate spurred by fear for their lives brought on by impinging political circumstances. The situation is very different for individuals who migrate out of fear that the scarcity they are living in will at best lead to a miserable quality of life, and at worst to starvation and death. While there might be help *in situ* given by organisations and in the form of foreign aid, those who feel forced to leave their land are not given any accompanying rights to asylum or protection when they enter another country. This comparison brings to light a clearly inconsistent approach. Yet, on this point, Gibney has argued that:

> "...a distinction can be drawn between the moral force of the refugee's claim and that of the economic migrant's. The difference is rooted in the fact that the needs of refugees, involving as they do persecution and life threatening states of affairs, are more urgent than those of migrants attempting to escape poverty. If economic migrants are refused entry, they are forced to remain in a situation of poverty; if refugees are turned away, their very lives might well be on the line." (Gibney, 2004: 12)

Urgency and immediacy may well be more pronounced in cases involving victims of political persecution, but this does not in any way mean that victims of poverty are less threatened. An obligation of responsibility ought to be upheld in all cases where fundamental human rights are breached, be they civil and political, or economic, social and cultural. Gibney's assertion begs the question as to why seemingly different statuses are given to 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'. Is the refugee regime also a product of a global society which recognises 'fear' as more vital than 'want'?

Another ethical consideration which is worth mentioning is the principle of non-*refoulement*. *Refoulement* refers to the forced return of refugees. The principle of non-*refoulement* of refugees and asylum-seekers is one of the fundamental principles of customary international law, more specifically refugee law. Nonetheless, it is widely accepted that the sovereign state's right to enforce its immigration policies warrants that immigrants in breach of immigration laws could be sent back. The forced deportation of any economic migrants raises several questions, as this 'group' may include (a) failed asylum seekers who also claimed political persecution but were unable to prove it; (b) migrants who are fleeing a situation of socio-economic deprivation and are not in a position to cater for their (or their families') livelihoods; and (c) many migrants who are not strictly fleeing political reasons, ethnic strife or severe deprivation - but have pre-empted a worsening political and/or socio-economic situation, with the result that their own decision to migrate has left them even more vulnerable (financially, socially or otherwise).

This brief illustration has purposefully retained simplified arguments for the sake of keeping to the main focus of this paper. Nonetheless it important to bear in mind, when discussing the assistance of migrants who claim socio-economic deprivation, that such real life cases are complex and many times do not fit neatly into one category or another. This is owing to the fact that the links between poverty and conflict are often very strong. People with claims for political asylum could have become impoverished during a conflict and, conversely, there are circumstances when poverty and lack of resources have brought about conflict. The irony of the refugee regime is that asylum-seekers must deny the influence of economic conditions in order to satisfy most of the world's refugee laws (Gordenker, 1987).

Conclusion

It has been argued that poverty is a violation of human rights brought about by negligent, irresponsible or bad governance, and that this should be recognized in debates on immigration. Intrinsic to human rights and

to discussions of people's well-being, is the principle that the human person ought to be seen holistically. It is thus imperative that equal importance be given to both 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'. This is most clearly seen in the basic document of human rights, the UDHR, which purposefully encompasses both sets of civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights. On a parallel plane, globalization and cosmopolitanism have evidenced more clearly the increasing interdependence within the global community and the ensuing need for a consolidation of international solidarity. Foreign aid, NGO activity in awareness raising and in projects on the ground, the involvement of the private sector in embracing corporate social responsibility and funding projects in developing countries, and the Millennium Development Goals are all examples of international solidarity operating at different levels.

Globalisation has also brought about an overall increase of all types of migration. Amongst these flows we also find individuals fleeing their countries due to personal political persecution, and it is well established that we have an obligation towards such individuals. This paper has questioned whether the refugee regime, or rather the lack of a similar system of protection and assistance for individuals fleeing poverty - the 'other side' of globalisation - is a result of the conventional belief that the violations of civil and political rights are of a more serious nature than other violations of rights.

The duty of the State is to protect its citizens and ensure that all their human rights are upheld. This means that governments are responsible for creating a socio-political and economic environment in which everyone feels secure, able to sustain their livelihoods and make their own life choices. Unfortunately, this has not been the case for people whose governments have failed to create a situation where they can see that their livelihoods and their families' livelihoods are sustainable. When solutions do not appear in sight, the distressing insecurity and the prospects of socio-economic deprivation drive some people to the often painful decision to migrate. But these migrants, unlike political refugees, have no right to ask for assistance and solidarity in other countries. This in turn raises further questions on the moral obligation of host countries towards socio-economically deprived migrants.

As the role of Civil Society Organisations is being increasingly acknowledged in the economic migrants' countries of origin and destination, there is a correspondingly greater need for these organisations to be on the forefront in the evaluation of the ethical principles which sustain or challenge current practice. A moral re-evaluation of our responsibility in this field is called for, particularly now, at a time when the rapidly changing global scenario is making us more aware of new situations. Our responsibilities towards the 'Other', the foreigner in need 'on our doorsteps', are now more urgent than ever.

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PRECARIOUSNESS AND THE ERASURE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

ADRIAN GRIMA

When Malta joined the Euro zone on January 1, 2008, the billboard shown here was all over the place - and nobody found cause to complain. An important general election was in the air, and the ruling party was keen to show that the historic move would benefit the Maltese Islands greatly. The text in Maltese reads, *"Malta fil-qalba ta' l-Ewropa,"* and the English version, "Malta in the heart of Europe," appeared in newspapers and magazines.

The billboard makes at least two significant statements: first, that entry into the Euro zone placed Malta, which is clearly on the margins of Europe, in the heart of the continent. This anomaly between political claim and geographical fact is perhaps best typified by the failure of the metaphorical ripples made by the Maltese Islands to get anywhere near the throbbing heart of Europe. It is almost as if the Maltese ripples, which just about manage to leave their mark on Sicily, a couple of other islands, and southern Italy, are being completely ignored by the continent.

The second statement is that Malta's relocation in the heart of Europe means the erasure of the Mediterranean. When I look at a map of the world, I search for the Mediterranean and then locate our Islands at the heart of it - presumably many Maltese do the same. But this billboard reshapes our geographical and cultural imaginary. Now it is no longer a matter of locating the Mediterranean to find Malta in the centre of it, but rather that of locating Europe to spot Malta at the edge, which the billboard actually claims to be the heart, of the continent. Now the obvious objection to this unkind reading of the billboard is that it is all metaphorical: Malta may be at the geographical edge, and no map can deny this, but it is also, as a member of the EU's Euro zone, at the political and economic centre of Europe, "where are all the big decisions are taken," as our politicians often remind us. The objection to this objection is that the erasure of North Africa (read "Mediterranean," but more on this later), even though the northern parts of Tunisia and Algeria, and perhaps even a tip of Morocco, lie further north than Malta, is not just a metaphorical ploy but a significant omission. Being at the heart of Europe, with the Maltese emblems on its coins circulating freely in Paris, Brussels and Berlin, means that Malta has finally managed to erase its Mediterranean birthright. This geographical and cultural legacy is only acknowledged when it comes to selling Malta as a Mediterranean destination for tourists. In that case Malta returns to the heart of the Mediterranean, as in the advert promoting the iconic Maltese soft drink Kinnie in *Skylife. The In-flight magazine of Airmalta* (March 2008) as "The Taste of the Mediterranean. Naturally!"

The northern part of the map, all draped in euro coins and notes, is an indistinct mass of land that includes countries which are not in the Euro zone or even in the EU. This is hardly precise, of course, but understandable, given the focus and message of the design. However, I can't see why the southern Mediterranean was wiped out. Of course it is not part of Europe, but that does not justify replacing land with sea and changing the shape of the Mediterranean Sea. Wasn't the Mediterranean meant to be the birthplace of Europe?

There were certainly other ways of understanding and celebrating Malta's triumphant entry into the Euro zone. The billboard could have highlighted Malta's potentially unique role in the EU: *"L-Ewro fil-qalba tal-Mediterran"* (The Euro in the heart of the Mediterranean). But the fact is that for many Maltese, despite the fact that all human activity on the Islands "has been determined by the sea that surrounds them,"[1] Malta lies not between Europe and Africa, but rather between Europe and the Mediterranean, because the Mediterranean is Africa, with its problems and backwardness; the Maltese look towards the North, towards Europe, and want to erase the South from their mental map.[2]

In a survey carried out by sociologist Prof. Anthony M. Abela in 1995, the Maltese were asked which of the following they felt most part of: their village or town, their district, Malta, the countries of the Mediterranean, Europe, the Western countries and the world. The results were then compared to the results of a similar survey held in Spain. While 22% of the Spaniards felt that they were citizens of the Mediterranean, only 2% of the Maltese identified themselves with the Mediterranean. Moreover, 6% of the Maltese and 2% of the Spaniards thought of themselves as citizens of Europe. According to the survey, most Maltese people, 65% of them, see themselves primarily as citizens of their country. Perhaps it is a (quite understandable) symptom of insularity.

In 2001, Prof. Abela published the results of research he carried out in 1999.[3] "In Malta," he wrote, "younger respondents," that is people between the age of 18 and 34, "have a sense of belonging first to their locality or town, followed by their country and region. Their next belonging is to Europe, followed by the Mediterranean and least of all to the world as a whole." Most respondents identified mostly with their town or locality, their region within Malta, or their country itself, but they combined a predominantly local affinity with a global, foremost European, sense of belonging. When asked, "Which of these geographical groups would you say you belong to first of all?" 3% of the respondents replied Europe and 5% replied the

[1] Laurence E. Attard, *Beyond Our Shores. A Panorama of Maltese Migration* (Malta: PEG, 2007) 15.
[2] See also Adrian Grima, "Being Mediterranean is a Decision You Make. Malta, the Mediterranean and the EU," 2003. www.adriangrima.com.
[3] Anthony M. Abela, *Youth Participation in Voluntary Organisations in Malta: A Comparative Analysis of European Values Studies* (Malta: Parliamentary Secretariat, Ministry of Education, 2001).

Mediterranean. But when it came to their second choice, 17% chose Europe and only 6% chose the Mediterranean.

Abela found that next to their local identity, youth members of associations, especially voluntary workers, were more likely to have a sense of European belonging than their non-involved counterparts. The most significant difference over European sense of belonging, however, was observed for materialist and postmaterialist younger respondents. Forty-five percent of postmaterialists, that is respondents who are more highly educated, more articulate and politically more active than materialists, in contrast to fifteen percent materialists have a sense of European belonging. Conversely, less than forty percent postmaterialists compared to over seventy percent materialists felt no sense of European belonging. "These findings suggest that postmaterialism is one of the most important predictors of European belonging and identity."

The generally unwelcome phenomenon of immigration in Malta has also had a negative impact on the idea of the Mediterranean, because it is Malta's geographical position in the centre of the Sea that exposes it to these waves of immigrants. According to the Caritas report on *Poverty in Malta* for 1998,[4] years before the immigration issue came to a head with a string of racist arson attacks in 2006, a good number of Maltese respondents "considered the presence of immigrants and refugees in the neighbourhoods as a threat to their security. It somehow down-classed their neighbourhoods and brought abnormality into their otherwise normal lives." The *Poverty in Malta* report for 1996 linked immigration to the physical and relational types of poverty.[5] "For Malta, it was a new form of poverty introduced by the recent influx of refugees from Iraq and ex-Yugoslavia and immigrants from Africa." For immigrants, it took the shape of a diffuse sense of precariousness, as they waited for visas to other countries or for work permits for Malta. The report talked about "the indifference, prejudice and silent hostility that the local population showed in their regard." This negative attitude caused stress, frustration, ill health, weak communication and language skills, and solitude. The immigrants faced "old forms of poverty like inadequate housing, work problems and economic stress." The report noted that many non-Europeans requested refugee status "in order to acquire financial assistance. Many immigrants had large families. They often were employed illegally," and, it goes without saying, were savagely underpaid.

The arrival of drifting boatloads of immigrants heading for Italy over the past ten years or so has caught Malta and the Maltese unawares. From lands of emigration, the Maltese Islands suddenly found themselves receiving refugees and other immigrants themselves. Protest marches against "illegal immigration" in the main streets of Valletta in 2005 and 2006 drew hundreds, possibly thousands of people, and fanned racist discourse. The Mediterranean was inevitably, if not openly, associated with these bad feelings, as in the common belief that there are millions of Africans waiting to cross the Mediterranean and invade Europe, presumably also the Maltese Islands.[6]

According to an EU report published in 2007,[7] almost three-quarters of EU citizens believe that people with a different background (ethnic, religious or national) enrich the cultural life of their country. The highest levels of disagreement with this assumption were found in Malta, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania. However, even in the these countries, more than half of the citizens think that people with different cultural backgrounds (ranging from 52% to 57%) do bring benefits to everyday life. The report found that a well articulated minority in a number of countries (mostly in the old member countries) have a very outspoken view on the potential benefits of the year dedicated to intercultural dialogue. A totally sceptic viewpoint (i.e. those not interested at all) was provided by 28% of UK respondents; 24% of the Maltese; 22% of the Swedes and 21% of the Dutch.

[4] Quoted in Adrian Grima, "Reopening the Fortress" (2000) on www.adriangrima.com. Originally published in *The Sunday Times* of Malta in January 2000.
[5] Quoted in Grima, "Reopening the Fortress."
[6] See also Adrian Grima, "Hidden Away from the Public Eye - Irregular Immigration and the Press," Babelmed, 2005. http://www.babelmed.net/index.php?c=153&m=&k=&l=en.
[7] *Intercultural Dialogue in Europe*, Flash Eurobarometer 217. Published by *The Gallup Organization*, Hungary, upon the request of DG Education and Culture of the European Commission. December 2007.

A Precarious Life

Fernand Braudel's description of life in the Mediterranean, especially on the islands, as precarious seems to partly justify the unfavourable image of the region in Maltese minds. Although it is true that the Sea in the Maltese psyche, to use an uncomfortable cliché, must be associated with the arrival of much-needed provisions, it is also synonymous with isolation, tempests and the loss of human lives, and the unwelcome arrival of cruel invaders and thieves. "A precarious, restricted, and threatened life, such was the lot of the islands, their domestic life at any rate."[8] According to Braudel, neither the lands nor the waters of the Mediterranean waters are particularly productive. The much vaunted *frutti di mare* are only moderately abundant, its fisheries provide only a modest yield.[9] The islands faced the great problem, never or only partly solved, of how to live off their own resources, off the soil, the orchards, the flocks, and if that was not possible, to look outwards. All the islands, with a few exceptions (Sicily in particular) were lands of hunger. In the sixteenth century, those that suffered most were the Venetian islands in the Levant, Corfu, Crete and Cyprus;[10] but food was short on Malta too. "In spite of the many privileges permitting the island to import wheat from both Sicily and France, Malta was always in difficulties, so much so that in the summer the galleys of the Knights would stop grain ships coming from the Sicilian *caricatori*, exactly like the corsairs of Tripoli."[11]

To add insult to injury, foreign rulers imposed the cultivation of cash crops on many Mediterranean islands. Grown for export only, these crops regularly threatened the equilibrium of the islands' economy.[12] They also made the islands more dependent on the importation of food and other necessities from other lands. On the other hand, the arrival of these provisions was subject to the whims of the weather and the vessels that sailed the seas ready to grab whatever they could lay their hands on. The periodical occurrence of heavy mortality in the second half of eighteenth century Malta prompts Ciappara to think that "famine must have been prevalent." In 1783, for instance, the cotton-crop failed and a grievous hunger afflicted the island from August till the end of that year.[13]

This precariousness and insecurity affected the people of the Mediterranean profoundly. Even the labyrinthine quality of the typical Mediterranean village layouts seems to reflect this precariousness and quest for security. In his work on Mediterranean vernacular architecture, Pierre Micallef draws attention to the sense of closure and hiding in the typical Maltese village. The small houses are somehow hidden away inside the quiet alleys. The small openings, originally meant to keep out the blazing sun and the pirates who regularly hit the island, give the impression that the village dwellers find much of the security they lack in their own confined, private spaces. The narrow and curving village streets, and introvertedly designed dwelling units reflect a people's need to defend itself, to shield itself from outside threats.[14]

Because of the lack of resources, especially on the islands, the Mediterranean region has had to live with the burden of its dependence on outside help. But in the 20th century, this dependence on outside resources also created a defensive attitude that is depicted, amongst others, by Dun Karm Psaila's poem "Lid-Dielja," in which he encourages his compatriots to draw their resources from within, and to refuse what reaches the shores of their islands from without.[15]

Another very important issue in the region and how it is perceived by the Mediterraneans themselves and by outsiders is that of environmental degradation and most notably desertification. There is also increasing awareness about the effects of global warming and climate change on the Mediterranean (and Malta). The Nationalist Party (the Maltese Christian Democrats) mentioned the effect of global warming and climate

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[8] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, 1, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2 vols. (London: Fontana, 1972) 154.
[9] Braudel 138.
[10] Braudel 152.
[11] Braudel 153.
[12] Braudel 155.
[13] Frans Ciappara, *Marriage in Malta in the Late Eighteenth Century (1750-1800)*, (Malta: Associated News, 1988) 44.
[14] Pierre Micallef, "When Space Sings: On Architecture and Music." Unpublished B. E. & A.(Hons.) dissertation, (Malta: University of Malta, 1991), 104.
[15] Adrian Grima, *"Dgħajjes Qodma u Maħmuġin" - Dun Karm, id-Dielja u l-Barranin* (Malta: Kumitat Festi Nazzjonali, 2004).

change on the Mediterranean and Malta in its electoral manifesto for the 2008 general Elections.[16] A "bleak report" on climate change and tourism published by Deutsche Bank Research in 2008 estimated that, "by 2030, the region will have a noticeable increase in the number of days with temperatures above 40 degrees C."[17] According to the highly respected Maltese ecologist and physicist Edward Mallia, there is "general scientific consensus that temperatures in the Mediterranean are already approaching the limit of what can be considered as comfortable for 'seaside and beach holidays.' After 1995, summers have had numerous periods with air temperatures above 35 degrees Celsius. Such conditions are bound to become increasingly uncomfortable for holiday makers on our small and crowded beaches."[18]

The Mediterranean Basin's sensitivity to human impact through pollution and resource depletion came to the fore in the second half of the twentieth century. Ecological issues in Malta were picked up passionately by post-Independence Maltese literature. In a way this concern with the frailty of the natural environment and the side effects of modernity in general, with the inevitable reduction in quality of life on the Maltese Islands, has "replaced" the pre-Independence theme of economic poverty. This literary environmentalism is also the result of a shift from a purely descriptive rendering of the physical environment of the Maltese Islands to a more critical dialectic that raises serious doubts about how the Maltese in particular and humankind in general relate to the environment.

Carmel Cassar notes that for the peoples of the Mediterranean, food was a matter of survival, not preparing "sumptuous banquets;" the Mediterranean has never been a garden of Eden. The "frugality of the Mediterranean peoples was in essence a forced choice, the consequence of habitual rationing." Neither wheat, nor other grains like barley or corn, were always and everywhere in abundance and their supply was the perennial preoccupation of entire populations. "Recurrent crop failures, insufficiency or complete lack of staple food products gave rise to typical pathologies of malnutrition, high death rates, malaria, plague and other chronic diseases. Food shortages often led to a precarious and fragile equilibrium since food consumption often fell below nutritional requirements."[19]

Braudel describes the Sahara desert as the second face of the Mediterranean. On three sides the Mediterranean touches the great chain of deserts stretching uninterrupted across the entire width of the Ancient World. He argues that Mediterranean history "has the pull of its desert pole as well as that of its European pole."[20] This second face is characterized by immensity and emptiness, by poverty and destitution; it is a poor land, without water, and there are few springs, streams, plants, or trees;[21] the situation in the "privileged cities," like Cairo, was "always precarious." Apart from the oases, which rarely covered a large area, people in the Sahara have only been able to survive in small groups.

Juan Mamo and the Mediterranean

The negative perception of the Mediterranean in Maltese minds comes across powerfully in Juan Mamo's controversial novel *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka* (1930-31) (*Grandma Venut's Children in America*). In a cheeky satirical tone, Mamo tells the story of how a group of uneducated and unemployed Maltese rural villagers emigrate to the US in order to get rich quick and return to Malta to sit on their wealth. The emigrants return to their island poorer than and as stupid as ever, only to be murdered in an absurdist denouement, ironically, by a jealous fellow villager. The novel sees the poverty and backwardness of the Maltese population in general as a result of the exploitation and lack of opportunities granted to them by the local professional elite, but it also suggests that this backwardness stems from the fact that the Maltese Islands lie in the Mediterranean, which is compared to the far more advanced societies of (northern) Europe and the USA.

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[16] Partit Nazzjonalista, *Iva, Flimkien Kollox Possibbli. Programm Elettorali 2008-2013* (Malta: Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2008) 72.
[17] Karl Schembri, "Boiling Point: How Malta's summers will soon turn people away," *Malta Today*, Wednesday, 16 April 2008. http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2008/04/16/t1.html.
[18] David Darmanin, "Can Maltese tourism take the heat?" *Malta Today*, Sunday, 20 April 2008. http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/2008/04/20/n14.html.
[19] Carmel Cassar, "*The Culture of Food in the Mediterranean*." (Malta: Mediterranean Cultural Encounters, 2007) 10.
[20] Braudel 171.
[21] Braudel 174.

The first reference to the Mediterranean appears when the Maltese arrive in the USA and their unruly behaviour draws the attention of the New York police. The Police commissioner summons his detective, McHmairy, and asks him to keep an eye on these immigrants from Malta, "in the Mediterranean."[22] It sounds like an innocent geographical note, but subsequent references suggest otherwise. In the same chapter, the commissioner tells his detective that New York has already had to face a lot of problems of crime, especially "brigandage," perpetrated by Albanians, Yugoslavs and other people from the "Eastern Mediterranean."[23]

In a chapter, "*Il-Mostru-Fatat*" (the monster-ghost), about how the superstitious Maltese emigrants see ghosts and demons where there are only shadows and this causes a great commotion in the middle of the night, the narrator notes that the New York police officers who were present "realized that this matter" was a case of "Mediterranean chaos."[24] A few paragraphs further down, at the end of the chapter (each of which is a bit like a scene from a play), the narrator highlights the "fanatism and superstition" of the Maltese. When he refers to the police officers, he also says that each one of them was as intellectually able as the very best Maltese lawyers, which is Mamo's way of highlighting the vast superiority of the Americans over the Maltese.

The identification of the Maltese with the Mediterranean and talk of "Mediterranean chaos" means that for Mamo this is a region of unruliness, backwardness, intellectual inferiority, superstition and fanatism, prejudices that are still present in many contemporary Maltese representations of the region and have deep roots in colonial representations that have been adopted by the colonized. Pre-Independence Maltese literature sets the Maltese and the "outsider" ("*il-barrani*") against each other, idealizing the locals and demonizing the "other" in order to cultivate the Maltese national imaginary. According to Bertu Armaġużarma's mother, "Foreign lands are full of flying freemasons." That's what her mother told her.[25] Mamo attacks this binary opposition by poking fun at his Maltese characters, calling Malta, among other things, "the land of swearing and holiness" and identifying the Maltese with a host of other sins;[26] he also pokes fun at his foreign characters, like the naïve McHmairy and the worthless Sicilian agitator Luretu Nullo. But he reserves his biting sarcasm for the Maltese and the Mediterraneans, including someone like Nullo. In another comic scene in which the Maltese emigrants unwittingly gate-crash a scientific debate among top American scientists, the narrator tells us that for Americans, or perhaps some Americans, "the Mediterranean is a sea of dirt, scum of the world, beetles, fleas, spiders, etc."[27] It couldn't be any more eloquent.

The social conditions on the Maltese Islands throughout most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were poor, often verging on starvation, and this situation was generally attributed to British colonial policy.[28] The British looked at the occupation of Malta solely and entirely as an important fortress colony and were "indifferent towards the interests of its inhabitants."[29] To the British, the island was a strategic base necessary for the domination of the Mediterranean to guard the sea-routes to India. "Few cared about the real needs of the people: education, health, and a stable economy that was not wholly dependent on the strategy of Imperial policy planned in London."[30] Juan Mamo himself shared the fate of Malta's poor throughout his life: Mamo, his wife and his nine children are said to have lived from hand to mouth. In a letter he wrote from Rome in 1922 he described himself as "one of the poorest people" of Malta.[31] Most of the European islanders, like the Sicilians and the Maltese, who emigrated to different parts of the Mediterranean were poor and illiterate and continental Europeans like the French tended to look down upon them. Some had a criminal record too and they tried to carry on with their way of life in other parts of the Mediterranean where

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[22] Juann Mamo, *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka* (Malta: Dipartiment tat-Tagħrif, Partit tal-Ħaddiema, 1984) 87.
[23] Mamo 88.
[24] Mamo 99.
[25] Mamo 89. *"Barra kollu mimli mażuni li jtiru."*
[26] Mamo 143. *"Malta, art id-dagħa u l-qodos."*
[27] Mamo 196.
[28] Carmel Cassar, "Everyday Life in Malta in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in Victor Mallia-Milanes, (ed.) *The British Colonial Experience 1800-1964: The Impact on Maltese Society* (Malta: Mireva, 1988) 101.
[29] Carmel Cassar, "Everyday Life in Malta," 91, quoting Frenchman Frederick m. Lacroix writing in 1848.
[30] Lawrence E. Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration (1900-1914)* (Malta: Gulf, 1983) 17. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.
[31] Oliver Friggieri, *Ġwann Mamo: Il-Kittieb tar-Riforma Soċjali* (Malta: Mid-Med Bank, 1984) 36.

their names were not publicly known.[32] Charles Price estimates that in the late 1880s the number of Maltese living abroad, mainly in the Mediterranean - numbering roughly 50,000, with many in Algeria (15,000), Tunis (11,000), Egypt (7,000), Tripoli (3,000), Constantinople (3,000), and the Ionian Islands (mainly Corfu and Cephalonia, 1,500) - represented 25% of the total Maltese population.

In his foreword to *Early Maltese Emigration (1900-1914)*, written with a readership of Maltese emigrants living beyond the Middle Sea and non-Maltese people also in mind,[33] Lawrence E. Attard starts with a reference both to the Sea and to the region, precisely because he feels the need to locate his historical narrative about the Maltese in the Mediterranean region. The author presents what he perceives as the two sides of this reality: The Mediterranean is a sea associated with "sunshine and history," with "memories of swimming and fishing, of warm beaches and clear moon-lit nights." Fr. Attard was born in the Maltese town of Birgu in 1936 where "most of the inhabitants were able to enjoy the good things of a Mediterranean civilisation." Then he moves on to the other, less glorious side of the story. "However the Mediterranean has also been a very unstable area of our globe and wars have often tarnished the beauty which nature has so generously bestowed upon it. During the years immediately following the Second World War the people of Birgu and of many other towns and villages used to witness a peculiar sight which had little to do with beauty or sunshine: large passenger ships leaving Maltese waters with hundreds of migrants on board."[34] For Attard, like for the Americans in *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka* and for many whites in the host countries, from Algeria to Australia, the Mediterranean was plagued by war and emigration, by poverty and disenchantment, something one could easily say about Europe in general and about many European countries in particular. In this sense, Attard doesn't question the stereotyping and prejudice that so many emigrants from the region had to battle with in the host countries both within and far beyond the Mediterranean.

When they arrived in the receiving countries, immigrants from Southern Europe and the Mediterranean littoral "were particularly scrutinized," not only because of prejudices held against Catholics and Latins in English-speaking countries at the turn of the twentieth century but also because of diseases like cholera, fever and trachoma. Attard claims that the Maltese generally enjoyed good health, but the "prevalent poverty which preceded the First World War and the primitive standards in hygiene" contributed to occasional scares of cholera and fever, and trachoma was very common. In 1911 a number of emigrants from Malta were refused entry into the USA and were left stranded on Ellis Island because their eyes were infected with trachoma: they were all sent back to Malta. This disease, which was widespread in Malta for many years, was only eradicated in the late 1940s.[35] Very often, migrants who carried with them official certificates which stated that they had had their eyes examined by Maltese doctors, were found to be suffering from trachoma,[36] and this can't have inspired much faith in the Mediterranean Maltese among the immigration officials of the receiving countries.

In another scene in the *Nanna Venut* novel, Juan Mamo writes about one Indri Debono, a Maltese from Senglea born in 1821 to a Maltese sea-captain, who emigrated to Egypt, and became a great traveller and explorer. According to Mamo, although he was illiterate, he managed to travel to the heart of Africa among the "savages" where no Europeans had been before, "neither Livingstone, nor Stanley or even Cameron." He spoke European, Asian and mostly African languages, which he learnt through his travels.[37] Like the "savages" (in Maltese "*slavaġ*," a word which occurs also in prominent places like pre-World War II

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[32] Lawrence E. Attard, *The Great Exodus (1918 - 1939)* (Malta: PEG, 1989) 26. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/exodus/chapter3-4.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415200234-11BF9

[33] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, vi.

[34] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, v. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[35] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 3. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[36] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 4. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[37] Mamo 214. Mamo writes that Debono was born in Alexandria, but Charles Catania's biography shows otherwise (*Andrea De Bono. Maltese Explorer on the White Nile (1848-65).* Malta: Gutenberg Press, 2000). In Catania there is also no trace of Mamo's claim that Debono was illiterate. On the contrary, Catania notes that Debono wrote the story of his Makedo Expedition of 1853 in Italian (71, 78).

newspaper headlines[38]) Debono was illiterate and uneducated, but he compensated for this serious liability with his sense of endeavour and his courage, outdoing even the superior British. In this sense, the "subaltern colonist," the Mediterranean (or Southern European) foreign settler of a lower class status, managed to reach beyond his prescribed place in society. Mamo implies that the elite's seal of approval of the achievements of this inferior being arrives when Jules Verne, "the great, wise Frenchman" himself, wrote about Debono. If colonized people crave for recognition from their colonizers it is a measure of how they perceive themselves as subordinate and inferior.

In her work about Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France, Andrea Smith writes about how the Maltese *pieds-noirs* she interviewed "proudly proclaimed the Maltese immigrant's aptitude for assimilating to new cultural norms," but then told her that this assimilation was necessary to avoid the discrimination that had plagued them and their parents and grandparents. These men and women of Maltese origin "proclaimed their Frenchness without question," but at the same time they referred to a distinct group in the colony, "the French," and discussed this group with awe and reverence.[39]

The Mediterranean for a "Liminal Population"

Lawrence Attard argues that "racial prejudice" was behind the Canadian decision taken in 1910 through the Immigration Act to effectively exclude immigrants who were considered to be "inferior because of their way of life." These were people from Southern Europe who "were likely to live in congested urban areas and create ghettos which, in turn, would debase the standard of Canada's national life." The Maltese knew very little English, or none at all, and they were Roman Catholics at a time when the Orange Lodges were not very favourably inclined to accept Christians of the Roman tradition. Moreover the Maltese did not look particularly Nordic "because of their Mediterranean stature and complexion."[40] In the USA the approval of the Literacy Test Act in 1917 "effectively barred" large numbers of Southern Europeans (and practically all Asians) from entering the country.[41] In early twentieth Sydney, people "looked disdainfully on these foreigners from an unfamiliar Mediterranean island colony who spoke an impossible language, went about in groups with one of them trying to make himself intelligible, while others walked about without any shoes." The Maltese, who "threatened" the workers in Australia because they were seen as cheap labour,[42] came from one of the most Southern outposts of Europe "having as their immediate neighbours the Sicilians to the north and the Arabs to the South. At best they were thought of as Italians; because of their Semitic tongue very often they were taken for Arabs."[43]

In the hierarchy of colonist ethnicities in "French" Algeria, the French settlers were the elite, while the Maltese, and eventually the naturalized Algerian Jews, were situated at the bottom. The French and other northern Europeans in Algeria found the Maltese the most difficult to define, and often described them as a "liminal population, a hybrid boundary-defying people uniting West and East."[44] Smith argues that Malta's position in the Mediterranean Sea "is implicated in Maltese colonial liminality." According to Marc Donato, until 1801, when it was redefined as belonging to Europe, geographers categorized Malta as part of Africa. However, in his 1888 publication, Gabriel Charmes wrote that he found it difficult to say whether Malta

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[38] *Il-Berqa*, Tuesday, 10th July, 1934. "It-Taqbida mas-Slavaġ tat-Tribù ta' Lumbwa fil-Kenja. Mrs. Semini tirrakkonta ġrajja li tkexkex. Imhedda li tiġi mniffda b'lanza. Ippruvat tħares lil żewġha." Another article about this case, which deals with an attack on an Englishwoman and her Maltese husband on a farm in Kenya, and which appeared in *Il-Berqa*, on Friday, 6th July, 1934, also talks of "savages." "Wara l-Attakk fuq il-Familja Semini." Part of the article reads as follows: *"li l-oqsma mwarrba ta' l-Ewropej jiġu mħarsa biżżejjed minn nies tat-tribù slavaġ ta' dawk l-inħawi."*

[39] Andrea L. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe. Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006) 98.

[40] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 37. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[41] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 31. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[42] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*,52. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[43] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration,* 48. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.

[44] Smith 21.

should belong to Europe or Africa, but with its sterile earth, burnt by the sun, it "seems more African than European."[45]

When the Maltese, who were themselves colonized, arrived in Algeria in the early nineteenth century they were among the poorest of the Europeans to migrate across the Mediterranean, some arriving with no possessions whatsoever, not even shoes, hence their occasional appellation "*va pieds-nus*".[46] The reception that they got by the elite colonists, where they "occupied a unique, and uniquely stressful, status position," only reinforced the prejudice against their Mediterraneanness that they must have already picked up from their own status as bottom-of-the-rung citizens in their own, colonized country. "Ironically even their strong adherence to their Catholic faith marked them as less 'European' for many of the French elite." But perhaps their most "questionable" trait in racial terms was that they spoke a Mediterranean language par excellence that sounded so much like Arabic and allowed them to communicate relatively easily with the Algerians. This "dubious vantage," as Smith calls it, "only reinforced uncertainties about their origins and loyalties;" in their mind, many Maltese saw themselves as the elite colonists saw them: more southern than northern, more Mediterranean (and Arab) than European. If among the colonists in "French" Algeria, and elsewhere, the Mediterranean was synonymous with cultural and racial inferiority, the poor, uneducated Maltese, despite being "indefatigable workers," "*increvables*" (impossible to defeat) and incredibly thrifty,[47] were often considered the epitome of this Mediterranean or Southern European backwardness.

When they arrived in Algeria, extremely poor, most Maltese realized quickly that to advance, they were better off working first on improving their economic status, rather than focussing on improving their social or linguistic capital. From her interviews with Maltese *pieds-noirs* Smith concludes that the Maltese in Algeria "may have been sensitive to the racism inherent in the early French anti-Maltese attitudes, and perhaps felt too "marked" either racially or culturally to attempt political or social assimilation. Instead, they calculated that they could more reliably attain a certain level of comfort through economic success.[48]

Being Mediterranean made the Maltese hard to categorize. As the issue of immigration in the 21st century (in Malta, Europe and elsewhere) shows us, liminal social groups "are often viewed as especially polluting or dangerous."[49] In Algeria French officials and fellow European settlers accused the Maltese of manifesting "un-European, 'Oriental' business practices and cultural traits."[50] In *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl-Amerka* it is clear, as it must have been in the colonies, that the Maltese were as close as you could get to the European Mediterranean Other. In a scene from the novel that probably reflects the views that Mamo picked up from the colonists whose ways he admired so much,[51] Thomas Edison is speaking about how electricity will replace animals. Donkeys, he says, will become a rarity and one would have to go to a Zoological Garden to see them. "In fact, they have already disappeared from America: to see one or to hear it bray, you have to travel to Egypt, or Tunes, or Mediterranean Malta, but not, not ever in New York!"[52]

There is one other direct reference to the Mediterranean in the novel that gives an indication of the stereotypes that shape the concept. The Sicilian political agitator Lureto Nullo wants the Maltese to rise up against the British so that Malta can then "come under" the rule of Italy. The ridiculous surname Mamo gives him shows that, pro-British and opposed to the local elite that identifies itself with Italy and its culture as he was, he is not particularly keen on his ideas: "We have agreed to start a revolution on the island of Paul,"

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[45] Smith 21-22.
[46] Smith 22.
[47] Smith 124. "Arriving in Algeria extremely poor, many Maltese came to quick conclusions about what it would take to advance. While some undoubtedly focused on improving their social or linguistic capital, the majority seem to have worked first on improving their economic status." From her interviews with Maltese *pieds-noirs* Smith concludes that the Maltese in Algeria "may have been sensitive to the racism inherent in the early French anti-Maltese attitudes, and perhaps felt too "marked" either racially or culturally to attempt political or social assimilation. Instead, they calculated that they could more reliably attain a certain level of comfort through economic success." (Smith 125-6).
[48] Smith 125-6.
[49] Smith 23.
[50] Smith 23.
[51] I deal with this issue at some length in "Juan Mamo u s-Sigrieti ta' Wlied in-Nanna Venut," *Il-Malti* (LXXIX, 2007) 81-103.
[52] Mamo 241. The Maltese word used in the text for donkey, *"ħmir,"* is very often used to refer to ignorant, foolish, silly, unintelligent persons.

says Nullo, "that sweet rock in the middle of the Mediterranean that is like Paul's boat, and this for the sake of Italy, our mother."[53] This analogy with St. Paul's boat seems to highlight the precariousness of Malta's political, economic and cultural life.

When the Suez canal was opened in 1869, Maltese harbours flourished and Valletta became the chief bunkering station in the Mediterranean. The presence of the British empire contributed greatly to the economic boom that Malta experienced; Admiralty works in the Dockyard kept many workers busy and in 1905 the number of men employed by the Naval Establishment was no less than 9,175."[54] This situation, with full employment provided by British expenditure in the island, exacerbated the heavy reliance of the Maltese on imperial policy which itself was bound to fluctuate according to the international political situation. It also meant that the prosperity of the Maltese no longer depended on the amount of trade they were able to create with other Mediterranean lands. "As the Imperial link grew stronger," writes Price, "it weakened the traditional initiative of Maltese private enterprise."[55] It also weakened the relations between the Maltese Islands and its neighbours in the Mediterranean. When the Imperial Garrison, both naval and military, was reduced by six battleships and two battalions in 1902, Malta started to experience a gradual decline in revenue.[56] During the first fifteen years of the twentieth century unemployment increased, not only because of the decrease in Imperial expenditure, but also because the Grand Harbour was no longer the busiest port in the Mediterranean. Whereas in the past every steamer passing through the Mediterranean was practically obliged to call at Maltese ports for coal and provisions, the initial years of the 20th century saw the construction of larger ships that would bypass Malta and this led to a serious decline in bunkering. Malta's links with the rest of the region were also weakened by the fact that competition from other Mediterranean ports challenged the former superiority of Malta's position as the favoured island in the middle of a very busy sea.[57]

The Other Side of the Mediterranean

Official French colonial discourse about the relations between the various ethnic groups and accounts of colonial Algeria from the late nineteenth century to this day have used metaphor and the Mediterranean imaginary to tell another story. Algeria is described as a "melting pot" (*creuset*) in which the various European ethnicities "melted together" (*se sont fondues*), underwent "fusion" (*la fusion*) or "blended together" (*se sont amalgamés*). In 1906, the demographer Victor Demontès wrote about "a new people forming on the sunny shores of the Mediterranean," and discussed the "mixing, or better yet fusion" of different European races in the "African melting pot" (*creuset africain*). A publication by Gignoux and Simiot that came out in 1961 described the popular Bab-el-Oued neighbourhood of Algiers, where most working class European colonists in the city lived, including many Maltese, as "a miraculous melting pot at the bottom of which are slowly melted [...] all of the ethnicities of the Mediterranean."[58]

The dominant official memory was forged through these one-sided accounts with their simplified representation of the assimilation process. The melting pot metaphor served as "almost a formula of erasure, a figure of discourse that aids in the production of silences in historical narratives." In his history of contemporary Algeria published in 1979, Charles-Robert Ageron sees the "fusion" of the non-French in the Algerian "melting pot" as a straightforward process not worthy of historical examination or focus. "These European communities didn't just cohabitate in Algeria, they began very early to mix together." And he assumes complete assimilation to have occurred through involvement with such French institutions as obligatory military service for men, public school and the electoral and legal systems, and through intermarriage and daily interaction with French citizens.[59]

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[53] Mamo 269.
[54] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 1. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.
[55] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 1-2. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.
[56] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 2. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.
[57] Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration*, 2. http://www.maltamigration.com/history/earlymigration1.shtml?s=C1BC2EFE-7D8415171927-ED84.
[58] Smith 100.
[59] Smith 101.

A very good example of how a radically different official discourse about the Mediterranean served the colonial purpose is that of architecture. In "Mediterraneanism: the politics of architectural production in Algiers during the 1930s,"[60] Sherry McKay writes about how the concept of "Mediterranean architecture" in Algeria in the 1930s was constructed to strengthen French cultural colonization. "*If imperialism is about capturing foreign lands, then it is also about managing the resultant and juxtaposed identities within its expanding frame, the contents and discontents. Marking a Mediterranean spirit in Algeria was one such management device.*"[61] In the texts that identified the essence of this Mediterranean architecture published in the 1930s the writers were committed to presenting "*defining characteristics, legitimating precedents, a formal genealogy and shared cultural attributes*." Algiers was meant to become the very expression of the Mediterranean synthesis.[62] The fabrication of the Latin origin of the Mediterranean world gave the "*vainqueur gaulois*," the Victorious Gaul, the right to proclaim themselves its rightful heirs.[63] However, "*While synthesis was emphasized - of modern technique with local climate and topography, of indigenous forms with European spatial planning - elision was practiced*."[64] While the "Mediterranean villa" freed itself from the alienating effects of modern universal civilization by "claims to a pedigree for its volumetric complexity, climatic controls and landscape sensitivities in the interior ambiance of the Arab and ultimately Roman house, it also displaced the *maison indigène*," and confirmed to the French and the Europeans what they saw as their right to be there.

The Mediterranean region assumed a poignant role in the negotiation of modernity in architectural discourse and its presence is threaded through the ideology of the Modern Movement as the "emotive, poetic and lyrical antidote to an overemphasis on reason and technology." At the beginning of the twentieth century, geographers, historians and sociologists portrayed the Mediterranean, to quote Anne Ruel, as "an autonomous object, a historical, economic and cultural space inhabited by a Mediterranean people," thus throwing off both nationalist sentiments and the rootlessness associated with a more international and cosmopolitan modernism.[65]

McKay believes that "the idea of the Mediterranean rests on the paradox of frontiers, permeable and impervious, a place to traverse and a point of stopping, a space and a place." According to Gabriel Audisio in his *Jeunese de la Méditerranée* of 1935, as a permeable space the Mediterranean held out a future of *mélange*, a place of *métissages culturels*, the divisiveness of nations replaced by a *patrie*, a home and country. However, this idealistic or perhaps utopian idea of the Mediterranean contrasted with the ideology and concerns of the powerful colonialist project; as geographical space was annexed to political ambitions, conflicting claims to alternative cultural borders emerged. "The presence of rival assertions haunts the very description of the Mediterranean utopia of métissage in the 1930s." Writing in Algeria in 1937, Albert Camus protested that the Mediterraneanism of Maurras, Mussolini and Latinity was not the Mediterranean that "our 'House of Culture' lays claim to."[66] So although it was claimed that a number of buildings in Algiers (like the Government Offices, the Orphanage at Beni-Messous, the Algiers City Hall, and private villas) designed by the colonialists and built by the colonists were examples of "Mediterranean architecture" and that a "Mediterranean spirit" infused the new buildings,[67] local materials were largely replaced by "that greatly universalized material, reinforced concrete," and imported construction companies employing European colonists, including many Maltese, displaced local craftsmen. In their quest for an authentic Mediterranean architecture, the new breed of architects who had left a decadent, old Europe for a "new" land "would dredge more deeply than the recent colonial accumulation, to the bedrock of classical occupation and an apparently untrammeled landscape."[68]

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[60] Sherry McKay, "Mediterraneanism: the politics of architectural production in Algiers during the 1930s," *City and Society* 2000, XII (1):79-102, American Antropological Society.
[61] McKay 84.
[62] McKay 86.
[63] McKay 87.
[64] McKay 87-88.
[65] McKay 82.
[66] McKay 83.
[67] McKay 84.
[68] McKay 85.

In his article on *"Le temps du mépris ou la légitimation de l'oeuvre civilisatrice de la France,"* Bruno Étienne observes how colonization legitimizes itself by using the ideals that dominate in the metropolitan societies of the "Centre." The example of Algeria illustrates better than any other how "*un universalisme peut atteindre ses propres limites*," how a universalism can reach its own limits.[69] The majority of the French writers of the 19th century seemed convinced of the "universal law" that the whole of the Earth was by right owned by the civilization of the Whites. When Marshall Bugeaud, who defeated the Algerian hero Abd el-Kader, doubted whether France should keep Algeria, Hugo protested: *"Mais nous lui apporterons la civilisation!"*[70]

The subtext of the colonial "Mediterranean" discourse in Algeria, with its big ideals of bridging cultures, or even of looking beyond borders and individual cultures to a common heritage and a common future, and its rejection of the local (what may have been interpreted as the "real" Mediterranean), was that the Mediterranean was inferior, not up to the great ideals of the European visionaries; that the Mediterranean could only become great by rejecting the Mediterranean, the Southern European, Arab and Berber. Various texts of the 1930s, like an anonymous one published in 1933, talked about how "Algiers can and ought to become the living expression of the Mediterranean synthesis," offering "a typical example of Mediterranean architecture which by a very rapid but nevertheless sure evolution (revolution) has attained today a new form." Cotereau, Murat, Seiller and Lathuillière (1930) agreed that "What the Algerian atmosphere imposes is an architecture to be determined, a Mediterranean architecture."[71] McKay believes that the search in Algeria (and the Mediterranean) for a single authentic model was inspired by the idea, quoted from Lucas and Vatin (1975), that "The Mediterranean could be a model for the unity of Europeans, especially southern Europeans - Spanish, Italians, French of the Midi; a new nation of people of European provenance who might re-establish European if not French demographic superiority as well as counter the dis-aggregation of colonial society."[72] This imperial Mediterranean "essence," while mediating the Arab presence, would also clearly be, in Guilhaume's words (1992), "the destroyer of autochthonous society."[73] It was the imposition of a European (colonial) project on the (Mediterranean) Other. The western writers of the 1930s dismissed and demolished the *maison indigène* because they considered it outdated and decaying;[74] they described the plan of the Moorish house as "inefficient" and "time-consuming," and predicted that, with its "dark and fetid interiors," it would eventually die out. But their view was blinkered, because in fact it was a living and evolving vernacular form.[75] "It was also, in its acceptance of people from non-coastal areas of Algeria, the Kabyles from the rugged hilly areas of the Djudjura to the east or Mozabites from the rocky plateau of the M'zab to the south, as Mediterranean in its mélange as any fusion of people from Spain, Southern France and Italy."[76]

The construction of the Mediterranean imaginary occurred also in Italian colonial discourse about architecture. Mia Fuller outlines how Italian architects have used the idea of the Mediterranean "as if it were a purely natural domain, an obvious set of indisputable cultural and formal commonalities." She argues that this idea of the Mediterranean started to emerge in Italian political culture in the late 19th century, and "became a real instrument in Italian architectural vocabulary as of the colonization of Libya,"[77] which began in 1911. The Italians used the idea of the Mediterranean to lay claim to Libya. They argued that since the Roman empire had subjugated North Africa, it had left "immanent traces" on it; and the Mediterranean Sea had served as a vessel, a container for Italy's spirit and history.

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[69] Bruno Étienne, "Le temps du mépris ou la légitimation de l'oeuvre civilisatrice de la France," *La pensée de midi* (mai 2008) 47.
[70] Étienne 49.
[71] McKay 86.
[72] McKay 89.
[73] McKay 90.
[74] McKay 95.
[75] McKay 87.
[76] McKay 95.
[77] Mia Fuller, "Mediterraneanism," *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Reseach Centre* (1990): 8.

The political strategy involved not only assigned Italy precedence and the right to conquer, but it also annulled difference: the history of North Africa became an Italian history. And "the Mediterranean" became like a large mirror, in which Italy could find ghosts and premonitions of its own *civiltà*, past and future.[78]

When the Italians began to build, they needed to distinguish their constructions from those of the locals, and at the same time be inspired, even if partially, by the their forms, environment and climate, "also for reasons of political domination." This soon led to discourse among Italian architects about "Mediterranean architecture." The creation of "an absolute Mediterranean 'essence'" abolished from the official narrative any North African history, or cultural difference. At this point, discourse about the Mediterranean became more than a means to an end, or a vessel: "it developed into a full category in its own right."[79]

In his testament *Les damnés de la terre* (1961), dictated while in Tunis battling leukemia, Frantz Fanon, the author, essayist, psychiatrist and anti-colonial revolutionary from the Caribbean island of Martinique (then a French colony), is unforgiving in his critique of European colonial discourse about the Mediterranean. He writes about how the "colonialist bourgeoisie, in its narcissistic dialogue, expounded by the members of its universities, had in fact deeply implanted in the minds of the colonized intellectual that the essential qualities remain eternal in spite of all the blunders men may make: the essential qualities of the West, of course." The native intellectual, he Fanon, "accepted the cogency of these ideas, and deep down in his brain you could always find a vigilant sentinel ready to defend the Graeco-Latin pedestal." But when, during the struggle for liberation, the native intellectual reconnected with "his people," this "artificial sentinel" was turned into dust.

All the Mediterranean values - the triumph of the human individual, of clarity and of beauty - become lifeless, colourless knick-knacks. All those speeches seem like collections of dead words; those values which seemed to uplift the soul are revealed as worthless, simply because they have nothing to do with the concrete conflict in which the people is engaged."[80]

In a particularly insightful and in many ways prophetic chapter on "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" in which he deals with the under-developed national middle class that takes over power at the end of the colonial regime and fails to include men and women "on a vast scale in enlightened and fruitful work,"[81] Fanon writes about how colonialism and the religious tension it brought with it was responsible for a division of Africa into Black (south of the Sahara) and White (north of the Sahara). This divisive discourse used the Mediterranean in order to link, and subjugate, a "superior" North Africa to Europe, and depict Black Africa as "inert, brutal, uncivilized - in a word, savage." But Fanon also denounces the unpleasant remarks among sub-Saharan Africans about veiled women, polygamy and the supposed disdain the Arabs have for the feminine sex. These remarks by the national (local) bourgeoisie "are reminiscent in their aggressiveness of those that are so often heard coming from the settler's lips" and are therefore, at least partly, attributable to white, European colonialism. In North Africa, writes Fanon, "it is affirmed that White Africa has a thousand year old tradition of culture; that she is Mediterranean, that she is a continuation of Europe and that she shares in Graeco-Latin civilization;" and therefore, that being "Mediterranean," in the European, colonial sense, she is superior.[82]

Fanon published these words in 1961, almost half a century ago, and yet today, as we approach the end of the first decade of the 21st century, they still provide much food for thought, not least when we consider the European origins of the construction of "the Mediterranean," or the Mediterranean Other, and the hierarchy among human beings that it, sometimes unwittingly and unwillingly, forms part of.

Un Espace Dépendant, Fortement Hiérarchisé

Yassine Ferfera asks whether the Mediterranean Sea will be destroyed by the onslaught of pollution and by the loss of culture caused by the invasion of mass tourism.[83] He also asks whether some of the countries

[78] Fuller 8.
[79] Fuller 8-9.
[80] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trad. Constance Farrington (Londra: Penguin, [1961] 2001) 36.
[81] Fanon 165.
[82] Fanon 129-30.
[83] Yassine Ferfera, "Avant Propos," in Youcef Benabdallah, Mourad Boukella, Yassine Ferfera (ed.), *La Méditerranée occidentale. Entre régionalisation et mondialisation*, (Bejaïa, Algeria: CREAD, Université Abderrahmane Mira, [2000]) 5.

bordering the Sea are condemned to live in fear of the demographic explosion of their neighbours while the others feel threatened by the pitiless economic and cultural domination of the richer countries. The gap between the North and the South is widening and any initiative to start a true dialogue gets stuck in the "logomachy of good intentions."[84] In the next twenty years the population difference between the developed countries and the Southern and Eastern ones shall increase. The Mediterranean shall be in proportion more Arab, Maghrebin and Turkish.[85] Today, the population in the developed countries is much older than in the South and East. In 2003, throughout western Europe the number of people over 65 years of age was similar or even superior to those who were under 15; in the Maghreb and Machrek states, there were many more youngsters (from 27,5% to 46%) than elderly people (2,3% - 8,7%). In the year 2003, in Algeria 48% of the population was less than 19 years old, in Egypt 42% was under 18, in Tunisia 30% was under 14, and two thirds of Moroccans were under 30 years old.[86]

The physical cohesion of the Mediterranean arena resembles a shadow theatre where experiments are made with dreams and tendencies;" Fayçal Yachir calls it *"un ensemble virtuel*" which makes no real positive contribution to the everyday lives of people in the region.[87] The difficulties and contradictions of the Mediterranean basin are to blame. The demographic imbalance between the coastal and the inner areas is having a negative effect on the region. *"La littoralisation aspire les forces vives des campagnes, appauvries par une dégradation rapide des sols."* The cities, that were the soul of the Mediterranean civilization, are disappearing, being eaten away by desertification or the competition within and between megalopoli that are overflowing into uncontrolled suburbs and accumulating social and political problems. *"Ici, on rêve de repli. Là, on pense ouverture. Ici, on imagine la renaissance des Andalousies perdues refuge des traditions. Là, on envisage des technopôles."*[88] There seems to be a strong feeling, among people on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, that things are going from bad to worse in the South and that life prospects on the northern, European shores are significantly better.

Nourredine Abdi from the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique believes that in its relations with the Maghreb, Latin Mediterranean Europe has taken far too long to give up its colonial practices and to contribute effectively to the promotion of a system that favours integrated development.[89] Both before and after World War II the Mediterranean was unified by the colonial, and subsequently by the neo-colonial system, but now it risks slipping towards greater opposition rather than greater syncretism between its various parts.

En effet, au niveau de l'opinion publique, il n'existe pas vraiment de mouvement fort que l'on pourrait qualifier de méditerranéiste. La dynamique méditerranéiste étant relativement limitée, la perception de la Méditerranée y compris occidentale reste ambivalente sur ses deux rives. Même si une évolution se dessine dans certains milieux pour sa nouvelle reconstruction, la façon de la percevoir est plus ou moins marquée par certains isolationismes au Nord comme au Sud.

Nourredine Abdi argues that there are three ways of looking at the Mediterranean. In terms of history, the identity and personality of the Maghrebin-Latin-Mediterraneans has been shaped by the maritime dimension even though, in the current situation and more so in everyday life, its presence is hardly felt, except by those who live on the coast and by tourists. On a more pragmatic level, the Mediterranean is essentially seen as an expression of the preponderance of Europe, but also of the E.U. in collaboration with Israel. A third perception of the Mediterranean is more "virtual." It corresponds to the aspirations of restricted groups which see the Mediterranean as a common space of peace and progress.[90]

After they were gradually "evicted" from the region when the Crusades started in the 11th century, the Maghreb and the Arab world in general have occupied an increasingly marginal place in the Mediterranean.

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[84] Ferfera 5.
[85] Laura Davì and Claudio Jampaglia, *First Medlink Report*, (Rome: Medlink, 2006) 11. www.medlinknet.org.
[86] Davì and Jampaglia 12.
[87] Ferfera 5.
[88] Ferfera 5. Technopoles are high-technology industrial agglomerations.
[89] See Omar Barghouti and Adrian Grima, **"**An Alternative Bridging Project. Re-Thinking the Mediterranean," *Counterpunch* (September 9 / 11, 2005). http://www.counterpunch.org/barghouti09092005.html.
[90] Nourredine Abdi, "De la Méditerranéité a un Méditerranéisme," *La Méditerranée occidentale. Entre régionalisation et mondialisation*, 17-18.

Abdi believes that there is still, among the Mediterranean Arabs *"un interdit plus ou moins conscient à s'engager et à risquer de se dissoudre dans une mer, somme toute étrangère,"*[91] and points to the profound disparity in development between the two shores of the Mediterranean.[92] He argues that solidarity between the different states in the Maghreb can only develop with the weakening of the militarism fuelled by income from the oil industry, and that this solidarity is vital for the creation of a true rapprochement between the two shores. The Mediterranean can be constructed through regional co-development, "*en la saisissant à travers ses évolutions les plus profondes, y compris au niveau de ses mouvements sociaux et du mouvement naturel de sa population."*[93]

With respect to the Crusades and the Mediterranean imaginary in the Europe, Bruno Étienne argues that in France, the main prejudices against the Other, the Mohammedan, the Oriental living under the yoke of despotism, stem from a reading by French historians of the Crusades that ignores the many writings of the Arabs on this subject.

L'Orient, civilisation figée, soumise au fanatisme religieux et aux techniques traditionnelles, sans capacité à l'innovation, servit à l'homme des Lumières (occidental, moderne) à dessiner son identité collective légitimant son hégémonie. Un imaginaire rappelant sans cesse l'ère des croisades contribua à mettre face à face l'Orient et l'Occident. Bien plus que l'Egypte de Bonaparte, l'Algérie et le désert du Sahara ont contribué à la mise en forme de nos préjugés, dont nous subissons encore aujourd'hui les effets pervers...

Unfortunately, writes Étienne, this negative reading was confirmed by all French travellers, even those among them who were held in high esteem, like Chateaubriand, Flaubert, Pierre Loti, and Gérard de Nerval.[94]

Although the Mediterranean is a geographical and historical reality, *"qui a bien constitué une aire civilisationnelle relativement homogène dans un passé lointain, mais toujours sous la contrainte politique et militaire,"* today it is a region that is largely dependent on extra-Mediterranean powers; and there are no characteristics that give it a certain unity. In terms of development, it represents a "fault line" between southern European and Arab countries. Having ceased to be the centre of the world a long time ago, the relative decline of the Mediterranean has been accentuated by the appearance of new zones of economic expansion in Eastern Europe, South America and Asia and also by the renewed dynamism of capitalism in the North Atlantic.[95] Apart from its dependence on outside powers, the Mediterranean also presents itself as a "highly hierarchized region;" intra-Mediterranean exchanges are characterized by verticality, because there is unequal capitalist development of the countries in the region and because the countries of southern Europe have been more dynamic in their industrial development.[96] As in colonial times, in the hierarchy that characterizes the development and fortunes of the Mediterranean countries, France and Italy, with their strong industrial tradition, are at the top of the hierarchy. A second group of southern European countries occupy an intermediary position, while at the bottom of the ladder are the Arab countries of the southern Mediterranean.[97]

This is probably one of the main reasons why the Maltese and other Mediterraneans look towards the EU and the north of Europe rather than the Mediterranean, which is identified with the perceived backwardness, here acknowledged by North African experts, of the southern shore. The bilingual writer Francis Ebejer ("Mediterranean-Maltese and English," as he defines himself) argues that in the 1970s and 80s, with "the rapid encroachment of 'modernity'" - mass tourism, high-rise buildings, commercialism and consumerism: fast technical and technological advancement; the breakdown, or at least the radical reappraisal, of certain traditional codes and values; "the hard sell and the fast living;" the development of the islands' infrastructure; the emergence once again of social confrontation; and the implementation of educational and

[91] Abdi 19.
[92] Abdi 39.
[93] Abdi 39.
[94] Étienne 51.
[95] Mourad Boukella, M. Djenane, Mohamed Yacine Ferfera, "La Méditerranée, l'Europe et le monde arabe dans l'oeuvre de Fayçal Yachir," in Benabdallah, Boukella, Ferfera (ed.), *La Méditerranée occidentale. Entre régionalisation et mondialisation*, 46.
[96] Boukella, Djenane, Ferfera 47.
[97] Boukella, Djenane, Ferfera 47.

social reforms - the "old, colonially-disposed Malta-London axis" began to wobble a bit, and it became apparent that there was "more to the world than London; and, equally, more to the Mediterranean than just Malta."[98] Perhaps it was a time when other Maltese people, like Ebejer, were captivated by "the interlocking beliefs which have always defined the wildly complex Mediterranean."[99] Former socialist prime minister Dom Mintoff, who coined the "Malta Żvizzera fil-Mediterran" metaphor in 1959 (that survived till 1998),[100] and more recently leading writer and intellectual Oliver Friggieri, with his frequent reference to Malta's Mediterranean "soul,"[101] were two of the main proponents, albeit separately and in different ways, of a (short-lived) rediscovery of Malta's Mediterranean dimension in public discourse.

Ebejer describes the Mediterranean as a "long-troubled, tortured idea, yet one which is forever reaching out to, ultimately, the desired syncretism." This oneness is the best possible result of the bringing together of the old and the new, of tradition and progress, spirituality and material benefaction, technology and humanity, racial and national divisiveness and friendship, wealth and humanitarian concern, man and woman.[102] Ebejer's perception of a renewed Maltese openness towards the Mediterranean was overly optimistic, no doubt because of his deep attachment to the Sea and the region. "I have never wanted to live anywhere but in the Mediterranean." Although he was tempted to live abroad, he chose to stay in Malta. "No recognition is worth such a sacrifice. My roots, including the inspirational, are on the Island and in the Mediterranean, and they are thick and they strike deep."[103]

Conjuring Up Switzerlands

Between 1996 and 1998, when the Maltese Islands were debating what relations they should have with the EU, the Malta Labour Party used two rather different, though presumably complementary, slogans. In the run-up to the 1996 general elections the Party projected its vision of Malta as a "Żvizzera fil-Mediterran" ("A Switzerland in the Mediterranean"), a throwback to a slogan Dom Mintoff had coined in 1959 and used insistently in the 1970s. The metaphor refers to Mintoff's plan for an independent Malta, which was then a British colony, with its neutrality guaranteed by the United Nations.[104] In the electoral campaign for the general elections held two years later, after the same Dom Mintoff had caused havoc by not toeing the party line on an important issue and thus challenging the new leadership, the Party articulated its position vis-a-vis the EU by seeing Malta as "*Id-Dar Maltija fl-Ewropa*," the Maltese House/Home in Europe.

It must be said that political slogans rarely manage to capture the complexities of life and the policies that tend to shape and get shaped by it and these two slogans are no exception; political metaphors are designed to simplify what the public potentially views as highly complex issues, making them tangible and understandable. But at the core of political communication, writes Mio, echoing Edelman, is "the ability of the politician to use metaphor and symbols that awaken latent tendencies among the masses."[105] The Switzerland slogan omits the definite article "*l-*" and therefore refers to *a* Switzerland, prompting the Maltese mind to conjure up the real and stereotypical images of an idyllic land of natural beauty, well-being and untainted wealth that have been brought home by popular discourse and generations of Maltese visitors to Switzerland. This is what Mio means when he says that political metaphors "can resonate to underlying symbolic representations in its recipients." We're not supposed to think of the "other" Switzerland, with its homeless, its drug addicts, its dubious chemical industry and its secretive banks - no country is perfect. It is the same construct that gave birth to the metaphor of Lebanon, and Beirut, as the Switzerland of the Middle East. The metaphor prompts us to revisit the popular, albeit worn-out postcard of a country wrapped in the magical aura of its immaculate neutrality and all the rest. Saying "*L*-Iżvizzera tal-Mediterran" might have attracted the objection that Malta was trying to identify itself literally with another country, and that would

[98] Francis Ebejer, *The Bilingual Writer (Mediterranean-Maltese and English) as Janus* (Malta: Foundation for International Studies, 1989) 27-28.
[99] Ebejer 33.
[100] See Grima, Being Mediterranean is a Decision You Make." 2003.
[101] See Oliver Friggieri, *Il-Kuxjenza Nazzjonali Maltija - Lejn Definizzjoni Storika-Kulturali* (Malta: PEG, 1995) and "L-Istorja tal-Poeżija Maltija," in his anthology of Maltese poetry, *Il-Poeżija Maltija* (Malta: Malta University Publishers, 1996).
[102] Ebejer 32.
[103] Ebejer 20.
[104] Edith Dobie, *Malta's Road to Independence* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967) 193.
[105] Jeffrey Scott Mio, "Metaphor and Politics," *Metaphor and Symbol*, 12:2, 1997.

not have been a very inspiring, or inspired choice, because the indefinite "*a*" gives to "Switzerland" the quality of a model, a type; but perhaps, in this context of sloganeering, this is an irrelevant linguistic nicety. The point is that in the first slogan, the Mediterranean, which in the second half of the 20th century was much more part of the discourse of the Labour Party than that of the Maltese Christian Democrats (Nationalist Party), although it is present, it is dwarfed by an idealized "Switzerland," which in many ways represents in our consciousness the Europe that the Mediterranean is not: rich vs. poor, affluent vs. precarious, clean vs. dirty, advanced vs backward, cold vs. warm, punctual vs. late, efficient vs. inefficient, and so on. "Switzerland" seems to erase the imaginary of the Mediterranean and render it simply a geographical space, bringing Andrea Smith's words about Malta's position in the Mediterranean Sea implicating Maltese liminality back to mind. This is confirmed by the second slogan about the Maltese House/Home in Europe, created with the issue of EU membership in mind, that left the Mediterranean out altogether, even because it didn't reflect the aspirations of the Maltese voter. In its 1998 electoral manifesto, the Labour Party talked about the "Maltese road to Europe," a road that would consolidate Malta's focal position at the centre of the Mediterranean; the Maltese are European and Mediterranean, note the order.

In its 68-page electoral manifesto for the 2008 general elections, the Malta Labour Party mentioned the Mediterranean twice, once in relation to the Malta shipyards, and once to state that Malta must strengthen its political and economic initiative in the Mediterranean and the Gulf and create a Mediterranean-Arab Gulf Business Forum, suggesting that the manifesto was identifying the Mediterranean with the Arab world.[106] On the other hand, in its 72-page manifesto, the Nationalist Party that eventually won the 2008 elections referred many times to Malta's "creative" role in the Mediterranean in areas such as research, the environment, trade, health services, tourism, immigration, fishing, agriculture, music, and IT, very often in the context of its role as a member of the EU. The document talks about how "We need to stick to the path we have chosen, by participating actively at the heart of the European Union, as a Mediterranean country which is always ready to come up with creative proposals in the international scene."[107] But political discourse is notoriously fickle and there is little in 21st century Malta, and elsewhere in the region where they have turned their backs on the Mediterranean,[108] that suggests that the identification of the Mediterranean with precariousness, with the ills and evils of poverty, environmental degradation, social, religious and cultural conflict, the democratic deficit, economic shortsightedness, and neocolonial practices is on the way out.

Fanon's denunciation of the lifelessness of so-called Mediterranean values - the triumph of the human individual, of clarity and of beauty, seems as relevant as ever, because this narrative has nothing to do with the concrete conflicts in which the people is engaged. It is not only images like the Euro changeover billboard in Malta that erase the Mediterranean imaginary; it is also the empty discourse that is meant to construct it in the consciousness of people but inevitably erases it.

When over one hundred civil society activists from all over the Mediterranean and beyond met in Rome to renew their commitment against war and colonialism and to discuss ways of working towards peace, democracy, human and civil rights, justice, peaceful coexistence, and freedom, Omeyya Seddik presented himself as a Tunisian, Arab, Muslim, migrant, and, more importantly, as an activist engaged in in favour of oppressed people. [109] "This rather strange web of elements makes me what I am, but not only in an ideal way, because it also determines precisely, concretely my individual, political praxis, my way of thinking, my way of acting. In this web that constitutes me the Mediterranean is not present." He goes on to say that "For the people to whom I feel I belong, the Mediterranean is something that divides. It is a sea where our brothers and sisters die every day because there's a colonial relationship that has existed for a long time and is becoming stronger. The name of this relationship is 'the Mediterranean.'" He describes this sea as a "spatial segregation." Europeans "can visit us whenever [they] want; we cannot. This stops the Mediterranean from being something clear."

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[106] Partit Laburista, *Pjan għal Bidu Ġdid. Xogħol, Ħarsien, Dinjità. Manifest Elettorali* (Malta: Partit Laburista, 2008) 20, 55.
[107] Partit Nazzjonalista 71.
[108] Tonino Perna talks about the "progressive escape" of the Mezzogiorno from the Mediterranean Basin. "Se sulla carta geografica il Sud d'Italia sta al centre del Mediterraneo, dal punto di vista economico e culturale quest'area è lontana mille miglia dagli altri paesi del Mediterraneo." *Lo Sviluppo Insostenibile* (Napoli: Liguori, 1994) 183.
[109] See also Adrian Grima, "The Mediterranean as Segregation," *ZNET*, 2007. http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=74&ItemID=12069.

Omeyya Seddik argues that for him, and for Arabs generally, the issue is not "What is the Mediterranean?" but rather "Why isn't the Mediterranean present?"

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HOW DO THE RULES OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION CONTRIBUTE TO REDUCE POVERTY OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES?*

BASSEM KARRAY

Summary

Introduction
The differential treatment rules applied to Less Developed Countries (LDCs)
The necessity of dismantling barriers for LDCs' trade
The advantage of the integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance to LDCs.
Conclusion

Introduction

Trade is a carrier of peace, as Montesquieu said[1], unless it is inequitable. If profit provided by commerce growth is not shared out in justice, fairness and impartial ways for all, it begets feelings of exclusion and injustice. The Adam Smith expression "laisser faire laisser passer", which became the dogma of free trade, highly and paradoxically nurses nowadays temptations[2] to violence. Liberalism is at best placed by the margin, and radically refused by some, especially those suffering from poverty.

The corollary of free trade, regulation is able to mitigate reactions and dodge reluctance as it takes into account particular and adapted treatment. By creating the world trade organisation (WTO), nations agreed to rightly manage free trade. Its core aim is to promote prosperity and the commercial growth of its members. Commercial liberalisation should permit least developed countries[3] to actively participate in world trade[4] so as to catch up with the rich ones. Poverty[5] is the principal enemy of freedom; it is one of the origins of misunderstanding, intolerance, violence and terrorism.

The WTO has a key role to play in this multidimensional and variable[6] problem mainly its global vocation and appropriate architect[7]. However, this organisation is fiercely criticized everywhere for focusing on liberalisation of world trade to the detriment of the needs[8] of the poorest people. Now, it needs to legitimate its role by enhancing efforts in combating poverty[9]. Political declarations and diplomatic views do not meet

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1 Montesquieu, De l'esprit des lois, Flammarion 1979, 4ème partie, Livre 20, chapitre 2, p. 9.

2 Bassem Karray, *the Tunisian import trade defence measures*, doctoral thesis, Faculty of Law, Sfax, 2005, p. 5, (in French).

3 The WTO considers as LDCs those which have been designated as such by the United Nations. Now, there are 50 LDCs on the United nations list, 32 of which are members of the WTO, 10 are discussing their accession (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Lao PDR, Samoa, Vanuatu, Yemen and Sao tome).

4 The participation of poor countries in world trade could boost the world economy by nearly 3 billions US dollars a year and bring 320 million people out of poverty by 2015 (*speech of Mike Moore, the ex-head of WTO, in international conference on financing for development in Monterrey 22/3/2002*).

5 Living in extreme or absolute poverty (less than 1$ a day) means not being able to afford the most basic necessities to ensure survival. Eight million people a year die from absolute poverty. Moderate poverty is defined as earning about 1$ to 2$ a day, which barely enables households to meet their basic needs, but they still must forgo many of the things- education, health care- that many of us take for granted. The smallest misfortune (health issue, job loss, etc.) threatens survival. Relative poverty means that a household has an income below the national average (source, Jeffrey Sachs, The End of Poverty (2005), World Bank, UN)

6 The causes and expressions of poverty are not the same everywhere.

7 The WTO has a mechanism which permits a correct evaluation of the needs of each member. This mechanism is the trade policy review assumed by general council (annexe n° 4 of the GATT 1994).

8 With each conference of trade negotiation and parallel official meeting of main countries in the world, many peaceful and violent manifestations are organised against "unbridled capitalism".

9 The WTO, like the GATT before it, is a critical component of the system of global governance. See, Faeïz ISAMIL, "Mainstreaming development in the World trade organisation", *Journal of world trade* (39)1: 11-21, 2005.

poor countries expectations[10]. Those countries denounce the rhetoric of the prosperity connected to international trade. A feasible strategy of job creation in needy areas will provide positive returns not only for poor countries but also for developed and developing ones by limiting illegal immigration and terrorism.

The GATT of 1947 (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) was an instrument conceived by the richest countries to combat protectionism and to establish a new international commercial order based on the elimination of tariff barriers between contractual parties. Its rules were completely designed to encourage liberal policies. During the multilateral trade negotiations, which were held in the twentieth century during the sixties and seventies, a specific treatment had timidly been provided to poor countries[11]. Till this period, negotiators did not take account of social problems related to liberalisation.

By the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties and during the trade negotiation of the Uruguay round[12], many developing countries signed the GATT. The negotiations were concluded, with difficulties, by creating the WTO[13]. The Uruguay round did not offer to LDCs a central place. The negotiators adopted only a concise decision which reflected their little weight. However, the current round of trade negotiation, which begun in 2001 in Doha, is known as the round of development. It is unfortunately in crisis due to the deep differences between nations especially in the matter of agricultural subsidies.

How do the rules of the WTO manage its main vocation to promote world trade and the necessity of alleviating poverty?

The differential treatment rules applied to LDCs

The multilateral system contains some specific exceptions and derogations for both developing countries and least advanced ones. Further to the general exceptions of article 20 of GATT 1947[14], these countries can profit from specific treatments embodied in different agreements of the first annexe of GATT 1994[15]. These rules aren't frequently used by poor countries because they do not have a great capacity to actively participate in the world exchanges. Certainly, their existence encourages developing countries and especially least advanced ones to take part in world trade, but they are insufficient as they are not adapted to their real problems[16].

In order to improve the economic growth of developing countries, the Doha round of commercial negotiations has put emphasis on reducing trade restrictions and discriminations that these countries face in international transactions. The differential treatment should be stronger. It is unreasonable to apply the reciprocity principle to all countries in the same way. Transition measures are necessary to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment. The WTO should take more account of the economic differences between its members. An adapted policy for poor countries is likely to urge the remaining ones to adhere to the organisation.

In this context, the council on trade in goods adopted in 15 of June 1999 a waiver decision for LDCs. It encourages developing countries, till 30 June 2009, to offer a particular and favoured treatment for poor

[10] We note as example the Millennium Development Goals adopted in New York by heads of state of 189 countries. The first goal is to halve by 2015 the portion of the world population suffering from extreme poverty and hunger. Eight years after, this ambition seems to be out of view.

[11] An enabling clause (decision on differential and more favourable treatment, reciprocity and fuller participation of developing countries, 28 November 1979, L 4903) adopted by the end of Tokyo round, encouraged specially favoured treatment to be given to LDCs.

[12] This round had started in 1986 in Punta del Est in Uruguay and was concluded in 1994 in Marrakech.

[13] In 1947 an international trade organisation couldn't be created because the USA was opposed.

[14] This article permits countries to set up several measures to protect morality, public order…

[15] The first annexe of GATT 1994 contains 14 special agreements such as on antidumping, countervailing, safeguard, agriculture and so on.

[16] Further preferential treatment in some cases is used for political purposes by the industrialized countries, in order to carry through demands in other areas. (See Michael Reder, *Reform of World Trade of the WTO, ethical and political considerations*, from Stimmen der Ziet, 6/2007, p. 397, pp. 389-401).

countries' goods by facilitating market access[17]. Developing countries are recommended to adopt a preferential tariff treatment on a generalized, non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory basis and to accord preference margins[18]. This measure results in effective participation in international trade for the LDCs. It should not be used as a pretext to raise more barriers or to create undue difficulties in trade to any other member of the WTO[19]. This mechanism was already provided in 1979 for developing countries. But now, those countries are asked to apply it to the poor countries. Since 1996, in the Singapore ministerial conference, the waiver mechanism has been extended to LDCs under the terms of their action plan. It was reiterated in the ministerial declaration of 20 May 1998 which concerns integration of the LDCs in the global trading system and the adoption of a foreseeable and favoured market access for their goods.

Moreover, LDCs benefit from several waivers provided by the first annexe of GATT 1994. Those rules offer an exemption from the cardinal principle of trade freedom: most-favoured nation treatment. Such mechanism is absolutely not enough for the growth of poor countries as they have a minor influence on the multilateral legal framework.

The relevance of this idea to our study lies in the fact that the poorest countries are marginalized in the structure order of the WTO and therefore dispose of a small say in the decision-making process[20]. In the eyes of some experts, the WTO suffers from a democratic deficiency and lack of transparency. This shows the vital importance of introducing the principle of justice in the decision-making mechanism through consecrating genuine participation for all members[21]. The multilateral trade system should be administrated with morality for our well-being; otherwise it may fortify mistrust and violence.

The necessity of dismantling barriers for LDCs trade

What poor countries need is to get more facilities for their products to have access to external markets, knowledge and technical assistance so that they can ameliorate the quality of their products. Paradoxically, certain developed countries have applied a protectionist trade policy against poor countries' products by implementing non-tariff barriers, such as technical and sanitary norms. Adding to that, many countries have instituted some internal taxes having the same effects as tariffs (value added tax and consumption tax) to the foreign products, especially those coming from poorest countries. These protectionist policies should be strongly condemned by the WTO.

Developed and developing countries should eliminate duties and quotas for the products originating from poor ones. A specific treatment and flexible procedures at the borders are recommended to facilitate the access of goods coming from poor countries. Also, rules of origin should be simplified in order to reduce the market access difficulties. International poor country operators usually protest against complicated systems of origin established especially by developed countries. So, particular attention is given to this question in the Doha program[22].

Since the Doha ministerial conference, the sub-committee on LDCs, which is a subsidiary body to the committee on trade and development, has concentrated on setting up the WTO work program for LDCs. The first purpose of this program is to facilitate market access for them.

In its report related to globalization, growth and poverty the World Bank highlights that rich countries maintain protection in exactly the areas where developing countries have a comparative advantage, and there

[17] Countries which desire to give such preference shall notify to the council on trade in goods the list of all products of LCDs for which preferential treatment is going to be provided.
[18] Point 2 of the waiver (WT/L/304).
[19] Point 3 of the waiver (WT/L/304).
[20] The WTO work program for LDCs contains 9 issues. The ninth one is related to follow-up LDCs to WTO ministerial decision/ declaration.
[21] See further Michael Reder, *Reform of World Trade of the WTO, ethical and political considerations*, from Stimmen der Ziet, 6/2007, p. 392, pp. 389-401).
[22] The 47th paragraph of the Doha is reserved to LDCs "we reaffirm our commitment to effectively and meaningfully integrate LDCs into the multilateral trading system and shall continue to implement the WTO program for LDCs adopted in February in 2002".

would be large gains if these were reduced[23]. Rich countries argued the inconformity of LDCs products to their norms, especially those connected to health aspects. This problem cannot be avoided if WTO does not seriously back up the policies of ameliorating quality. The WTO should establish a network of exchanging experiences in product normalisation between its members. An arrangement on circular trade immigration could eventually be necessary. It provides rules encouraging unemployed persons to periodically receive a training courses in developed countries and to get an indemnity to set up a project in their locality. This proposal will be definitely boosted by the rich countries since it has the potential to put an end to illegal immigration and facilitate technical apprenticeships.

The differential rule has become mainly insufficient while industrial countries allow prejudicial practices against poor countries, such as agricultural subsidy measures. The LDCs' agricultural products are unable to compete with those of developed countries whose prices are below their cost due to subsidisation. Although the Doha negotiations pointed to this problem, a revised agriculture-agreement has not yet been adopted. The LDCs call for an agriculture-subsidy dismantlement as well as more favoured access to developed countries' markets.

Finally, the links between waivers and poverty are not as direct and immediate as the links between the integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance and poverty. Nor does their marginalised status in the WTO system compare to the inappropriate internal financial management policies.

The advantage of the integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance to Least Developed Countries

The differential treatment rules are insufficient to alleviate poverty in the LCSs. It is necessary to strengthen them by a trade-related technical assistance mechanism. These countries are especially affected by archaic institutions, unqualified personnel and inoperative infrastructure. The commercial tissue is not competitive and is composed of very small enterprises and family ones. So the economic growth of poor countries implies apart from differential rules, a renovation of their commercial environment.

Conscious of its role, the WTO decided to establish, in October 1997 at the high-level meeting on LDCs trade development, an original process called the integrated framework (IF). Five multilateral institutions take part in this initiative: International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the World Bank (WB)[24]. This combined action excludes the disadvantage of double use by centralizing resources destined to help LDCs to be active beneficiaries of the multilateral trade system. This process' aim is to support LDC governments in trade capacity and to integrate trade issues in all national development strategies. The integrated framework is based on four parts: awareness-building on the importance of trade for development, diagnostic for a trade integration strategy (DTIS) to identify constraints for traders, sectors of greatest export potential, and a plan of action for integrating into the global trading system, integrating the plan of action into the national development plan, such as the poverty reduction strategy process and the implementation of a plan of action in partnership with the development cooperation community.

This process is administered by a working group (IFWG) which is responsible for its management. The IFWG is monitored by the sub-committee on LDCs and controlled by the IF steering committee (IFSC)[25]. The IF concerns all LDC members[26] of WTO but fewer apply to the secretariat. After examining demands, the secretariat chooses those which meet the selection criteria[27].

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[23] World Bank, *Globalization, Growth and Poverty (building an inclusive world economy)*, January 2002, World Bank policy research report, p. 155.

[24]The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) have observer status at the integrated framework steering committee (IFSC).

[25] The IFSC is a tripartite arrangement with representation from agencies, donors and LDCs.

[26] At the beginning of 2008, 36 LDCs (of a total of 49) have become beneficiaries under the IF. Twenty four of them have already completed the diagnostic stage and they are now implementing the action plan (see WTO Web site).

[27] These criteria are: demonstrate strong government commitment to integrate trade into its national development strategy; show that the country is at the preparatory stage in the development of its overall poverty reduction strategy; prove that the country has created an environment which helps the integration of trade in its plans for economy growth

Then, a long process follows in order to implement the secretariat's decision[28].

The assessment was subtle, that's why a task force was created in 2005 in order to prepare a proposal for an enhanced IF[29]. The task force mandate was to formulate recommendations on how IF should be ameliorated. In June 2006, the task force successfully adopted its recommendation. The enhanced integrated framework was approved in July 2006 by the integrated framework's governing body (IFWG and IFSC)[30].

Conclusion

Free trade is not an end itself; it is only a means to realize well-being by creating jobs, acquiring new technologies and knowledge, attracting private capital and stimulating private initiative. Poverty is a complicated phenomenon; its causes are heterogeneous and highly intertwined.

Trade can contribute to the process of reducing poverty if it is not managed in arbitrary ways. As long as WTO takes into consideration the contradictory imperative, that is, poverty and free trade, it consolidates its role.

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and development. This should include providing an institutional arrangement, implementing domestic reforms that favour trade and engaging donors; showing a conducive operational country environment, such as sufficient agency/ donor activity in the country to be able to ensure a good diagnostic trade integration study and follow-up.

[28] This process contains 8 phases. I/ establish a national implementation structure; II/ select a lead (donor) facilitator to assist and support the government in managing the IF process; III/ agree upon the terms of reference and timing for diagnostic for a trade integration study, IV/ develop DTIS for identifying (sector of export potential, supply-side constraints to trade, human and institutional capacity constraints) measures to be taken to implement and apply international and regional trade agreement, implications of analysis and recommendations on growth and poverty redaction; V/ establish, as part of the DTIS, an action plan (also called action matrix) including policy reform measures, sectoral plans and trade related assistant needs; VI/ convene a national workshop to discuss and prioritize DTIS action plan, (or action matrix) with stakeholders and to define the way forward; VII/ link trade with development: incorporate prioritized action plan (action matrix) into the country's national development plans such as poverty reduction strategy process (PRSP); VIII/ implement the action plan (action matrix) including undertaking policy reform and sectoral measures and delivery of technical assistance by the international development community.

[29] The task force was composed of representatives of donors and LDCs.

[30] WT/IFSC/W/15, an enhanced integrated framework, report of the chairman of the task force on the enhanced integrated framework including recommendations, by the integrated framework steering committee, WTO, 29/6/2006. In this report the task force focuses on 3 elements: increased, additional and predictable financial resources, strengthened in-country capacities to manage and implement the IF and enhanced IF governing.

DOES MORE INTERNATIONAL TRADE OPENNESS INCREASE WORLD POVERTY?

IVAN SAMMUT

Introduction

There is no greater problem facing the world at the beginning of the 21st century than that of world poverty. Tremendous advances have been made by large segments of the world population in this age of globalisation. Globalisation can be summarised as the global circulation of goods, services and capital, but also of information, ideas and people. Yet there is a fear that globalisation is exacerbating inequality, and perhaps even worsening the lot of the poor by eroding their incomes, increasing their vulnerability, and adding to their disempowerment. Although this fear may not be universal, it does play a role in the public perception that cannot be ignored. It has been argued that globalisation has played an important catalytic role in accelerating growth and reducing poverty in developing countries. However the converse also holds true especially as a result of the fact that the impact on inequality is more complex. While some countries particularly the most populous have benefited, others have been left behind.[1] Distribution of wealth within the same country that has benefited from globalisation is very often unevenly distributed. Trade integration does not increase income volatility but financial integration can increase the propensity to develop crises which can have a severe detrimental impact on poor. This paper seeks to give a snapshot of how international trade openness may or may not increase world poverty. This is done by presenting the views of some typical writers as well as the author himself as examples of some typical arguments that can be made on this subject. The arguments presented are meant to stimulate further discussion. By no means do they claim that they are comprehensive on all the possible views that one can have on this subject matter.

The past decade has seen the re-emergence of 'poverty' onto the international development agenda, as explained by the World Development Report 1990 (World Bank, 1990).[2] But there has been and continues to be much debate about how poverty should be defined. Poverty has been defined according to what is prioritised as a 'need'. It is usually conceptualised as an economic or social condition, and has major implications for policy. Income/consumption measures are conventionally used to map poverty. A person is poor when their personal income or consumption is below a specified 'poverty line'.[3] However, personal income can vary greatly from year to year, is only appropriate for wage earners, and has less relevance to the poor. Many poor people rely on their own production and informal-sector activities in which the concept of profit is unclear, rather than on a formal income.

In the 1960s consumption of goods and services gained favour as a superior poverty indicator, as it presents a more stable indicator over time than income. A bundle of goods deemed necessary for meeting basic needs is identified, consisting of food expenditure and modest expenditure on non-foods.[4] Despite subsequent broadening of the definition of poverty, consumption has remained the most widely used indicator. As the definition of poverty expanded with the concept of basic needs in the 1970s, so qualitative indicators expanded to incorporate the satisfaction of those needs. These indicators incorporated aspects of ill-being, such as poor nutrition, shelter, clothing and access to health services. In the late 1970s Amartya Sen introduced the concept of 'capabilities' to replace the basic needs concept.[5] The entitlement approach draws on Sen's work, and leads to a definition of poverty that is concerned not only with material well-being, but also with opportunities what people can or cannot do (capabilities) as well as what they are or are not doing

[1] See 'Assessing Globalization' *World Bank Reports* at www.worldbank.org.economicpolicy/globalization/.
[2] Catherine B. Hill, World Development Report 1990: Poverty by World Bank, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (Jan., 1993), pp. 427-430.
[3] Coudouel, A., Hentschel, J. S. & Wodon. Q.T. 2004, Poverty measurement and analysis, in A Sourcebook for poverty reduction strategies, pp. 29–35. Washington, DC, USA, World Bank. Available at: povlibrary.worldbank.org/files/5467_chap1.pdf.
[4] Lipton, M. & Ravallion, M. 'Poverty and policy' in *Handbook of Development Economics*, Chapter 41, Volume 3, Part 2, 1995, Pages 2551-2657.
[5] See DG Westendorff, D Ghai - *Concerns, and Priorities* Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1995.

(functions). From this understanding of poverty, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed its Human Development Index as an alternative to income/consumption measures of poverty. Three dimensions of human deprivation are captured in this index, which draws from measures of life expectancy, adult literacy and access to health services and safe water, as well as percentage of underweight under-fives. Poverty is defined as a deprivation in the most essential capabilities of life, including leading a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, having adequate economic provisioning and participating fully in the life of the community.[6]

Poverty has been linked to the context of globalisation. Evidence suggests that developing countries are becoming more integrated with the global economy. The pace has accelerated over the past decade. Progress on integration has been uneven between developing countries in trade and international finance and also in information technology. There has been a growing divergence over the last three decades in shares of trade between those countries actively participating in the global economy and those that do not. For many of the poorest Least Developed Countries (LDCs) the problem is not that they are impoverished by globalisation, but that they are in the danger of being largely excluded from it. The same can be said with regard to the financial flows where they remain concentrated. Rapid technological change and global connectivity has generated an information and knowledge gap between countries, the so called 'digital-divide' and overcoming this digital divide is going to be a key challenge for developing countries in the future. Globalisation has played an important catalytic role in reducing poverty in developing countries through its impact on growth. More open economies have recorded improvement in economic growth, the success being higher among those who have successfully integrated into the global economy. By stimulating higher growth, integration can have a strong positive impact on poverty reduction. However poverty is not only affected by economic growth but by other factors. For example, initial levels of income inequality and changes in inequality may also impact poverty.[7]

Trade integration can also affect the poor beyond and above its impact through higher growth, but these effects are not clear cut. In general for the poorest countries opening up trade expands the production of goods intensive in the use of low-skilled labour, but the demand for the least-skilled labour may not necessarily be boosted by trade and may be adversely affected by technological change spread by globalisation. For middle-income countries, the impact on the poor is likely to be even less clear cut based on the prevalence of the poor in previously sheltered sectors relative to potentially expanding sectors, and the competition coming from large low-income countries. The impact of trade liberalisation also varies depending on the post-liberalisation pattern of inequality which depends on the way trade reform is managed and on other accompanying reforms. Trends in global inequality depend on changes in inequality between and within countries. This has been characterised by two divergent trends in recent decades. The gap between the richest and poorest countries has progressively widened as a significant number of countries are falling behind compared not only to industrial countries but to other developing countries. At the same time there has been acceleration in growth in many developing countries including the most populous ones so that the gap between their average incomes and that of industrial countries has began to narrow.

There is compelling evidence that increased openness to trade and investment has played an important facilitating role in accelerating growth and poverty reduction in an increasing number of developing countries and so in reducing overall global inequality.[8] Conversely, lack of openness increases inequality between countries since closed developing economies have performed much more poorly than more open ones. The poor performance of these countries is not necessarily the result of integrating with the world economy but on the contrary it is due to their inability to achieve greater integration very often as a result of domestic issues such as wars and conflicts. However it can also be argued that this is often worsened by barriers to integration still imposed by the reach countries.

International Trade through globalisation necessitates the need for development. Development may entail disruption of established patterns of living and there are strong disagreements on whether and how it is

[6] See the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) of 1997 at: http://www.undp.org/hiv/publications/.
[7] K. Watkins et al Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p.31-35.
[8] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p.47-50.

occurring. Nevertheless development often implies improved living standards, including improved health and well-being for all and the achievement of whatever is regarded as a general good for society at large. Sometimes development is described as 'good change'. However this expression combines quite different ideas which can cause confusion between different senses in which the term 'development' is used. 'Good' implies a vision of a desirable society, something to aim at, a state of being with certainly positive attributes which can be measured so that we can talk of 'more' or 'less' development. 'Change', on the other hand, is a process, which may entail disruption and which it may or may not be possible to direct.[9]

For change not to entail too much disruption, good governance is essential. This is because of the role of the government as a builder and provider of institutions, and because the failure of governance can lead to an overall political breakdown. If a country becomes a 'failed state', development can be set back by decades. Weak governance has been an overriding characteristic of the poorest performing economies. Globalisation has put a premium on good governance because of the need to put in place policies and institutions demanded by an increasingly competitive global market place because of pressures on governments to be transparent and more accountable to their citizens, and because of higher costs of mismanagement. Globalisation has also raised new challenges for governance above the level of the nation-state. Technology gains, shifting geopolitics, expanding trade and financial flows and cheaper communications have created tremendous opportunities and lifted barriers to global knowledge and problem solving. They have also raised new risks and challenges. The need to address these issues is also very complementary to international trade to tackle poverty. [10]

While opening up to international trade can lead to economic growth and positive development, opening up to international trade can also lead to precisely the opposite. The contrasting results depend on the context within which it is being encouraged to take place. The context includes the possibility of achieving development through economic growth. Also very important is how the wealth that may be created is distributed. Inequality between trading countries as well as within the same country could lead to increase in poverty. One must not forget the exploitation of the environment. Having good environmental standards is an essential complement to the generation of wealth as wealth created at the expense of the environment is not sustainable. Finally one must not forget labour rights and human rights in general. Trade at the expense of human rights cannot lead to a reduction in poverty.

International Trade & Economic Growth

International trade is often viewed as a threat to the poor by opening up opportunities of exploitation by richer countries of poor countries that possess primarily raw resources and cheap labour. While this can be true in some cases, certain opportunities that international trade creates for poverty reduction and human development are frequently overlooked. The reason is that poverty reduction does not automatically result from a mere increase in trade. The increase in trade has to be accompanied by good policies that will enable poor countries and poor people to participate in markets on equitable terms. Trade should also be in a way that will assist the country to develop more independently on commercial lines as an enterprise rather than reliance on foreign state aid.

The financial transfers from development assistance are possibly dwarfed by the potential benefits that would result if developing countries increased their share of world exports. For example developing countries have increased their share of world export. They generate more than thirty times as much revenue per capita through exports ($322) as they receive in aid ($10).[11] Low-income countries generate twelve times as much from exports ($133 per capita) as from aid ($9).[12] These figures demonstrate that even modest increases in developing countries' share of the world export will massively outweigh any conceivable increase in aid. If their share of world exports were to increase by 5% this may generate more than $350bn.[13] This could amount to more than seven times the amount they receive in state aid. It has also been found that for low-income countries as a group a one per cent increase in world export market would

[9] Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, *Poverty & Development into the 21st century*, OUP, 2000 p.15-20.
[10] Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, *Poverty & Development into the 21st century*, OUP, 2000 p.15-20.
[11] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p.47.
[12] Ibid p. 48.
[13] Ibid p. 48.

generate almost four times as much income per capita as existing aid transfers. There are other reasons why trade is more important than aid as a force for poverty reduction. Broad-based economic growth provides an outlet for the productive potential of poor people, enabling them to produce their way out of poverty. Unlike aid, it directly generates income, employment and investment resources for the household. Trade can also help poor countries to achieve a greater level of self-reliance. By generating the foreign exchange needed to sustain imports, it can reduce dependence on aid and with it exposure to the interests of the donors who govern access to aid budgets.

While it can be shown that trade may decrease poverty, determining to what certain levels of trade reduction can be more difficult. Changes in income poverty can be analysed in terms of the effects of changes in total GDP and changes in income distribution. Overall growth determines the rate at which average income increases while the proportion of any increment to growth accruing to the poor determines the rate at which growth is converted into poverty reduction. It follows from this that that the nature of the growth associated with increase exports has an important bearing on poverty outcomes. In countries with high concentrations of rural poverty, broad-based agricultural growth will have stronger effects on poverty. Similarly, labour-intensive manufactured exports that generate income and employment for the poor have more impact on poverty than capita-intensive exports. Generally, the bigger the share of growth generated and captured by the poor, the bigger the impact on poverty.

The case for trade goes beyond a mere comparative advantage. Comparative advantage can be argued to be a deceptively complicated theory with a deceptively simple conclusion.[14] It holds that trade makes it possible for people to consume more goods than they would be able to without such exchange. For example economist Ricardo demonstrated that it was in the interest of two countries to trade, even if one country had an absolute advantage in that it could produce all goods more cheaply than the other. He showed that by concentrating on areas where they had a comparative advantage countries could arrive at a higher level of wealth by exchanging two goods than if they each produce two goods. The conclusion of this analysis is that free trade would make it possible for households to consume more goods regardless of whether their trading partners were more or less advanced.

Through the theory of comparative advantage, Ricardo sought to establish the case for removing all barriers to trade.[15] His immediate target was the removal of the Corn Laws, which were used in the early part of the nineteenth century to restrict imports of grains, artificially inflating the profits of landowners and the prices of food in the process. Modern day international trade associations such as the IMF and the World Bank view all trade barriers in a similar light. However such thinking can be seriously criticised. Import protection can play a role as part of the wider development strategy in developing national capacity. While trade restrictions inevitably impose short-term costs, these costs might be outweighed by longer-term benefits. In this context what matters is the distribution of benefits from protection. Trade barriers designed to protect a small but politically powerful group of producers such as Brazilian landowners, or farmers in the Paris Basin, have different consequences from barriers designed to protect smallholder producers. In addition, any move towards liberalisation raises questions about the pace and sequencing of reforms. Another problem with the idea of comparative advantage is that international market conditions have changed since Ricardo assumed that capital did not move between countries that trade would take place between competing companies and that markets were competitive. These positions are subjective and may be challenged. In the modern economy capital is global and concentrations of market power at national and international levels create restrictive barriers.

The idea of specialisation is fundamental to the phenomenon of comparative advantage. One of the paradoxes in Ricardo's legacy is that many of the governments that espouse his idea violate the principles behind it. For example European consumers and Third World farmers would certainly be better off of the European Union's agricultural policies were guided less by vested interests and more by the principles of comparative advantage. The same applies for US consumers and millions of people in the developing world would stand to benefit from more open North America markets, and from policies which are not designed to favour textile magnates of the Carolinas, the farmers' lobbies and the steel industry.

[14] Ibid p. 49.
[15] See Samuel Hollander - *The Economics of David Ricardo* University of Toronto Press, 1979.

More international trade may lead to more rapid growth. International trade is an important source of wealth generation. Exports grew at more than twice the rate of world GDP in the 1990s. As a result, participation in trade has become an increasingly important determinant of economic growth. Also international trade leads to access to larger markets. International trade gives producers and firms in developing countries access to larger markets with more developed purchasing power. For example South Korea could never sustain the development of its micro-electronic industry on the basis of its domestic market alone. International trade also leads to access to ideas and technology where importers can provide a source of new technologies that are needed to boost productivity and competitiveness.[16] Also it leads to access to cheaper goods. Import barriers act as a tax on imports. They drive a wedge between world prices and domestic prices increasing costs to consumers and returns to producers of the protected product. International trade assists in the removal of such barriers.

As a guide to formulation of policy in developing countries, the idea of comparative advantage has suffered from gross over-simplification. It has been applied in ways which have failed either to predict problems or to recognise the limits of free markets. Trade economists have adapted the idea of comparative advantage to argue that free trade is inherently good for developing countries. Reduced to its essentials, the standard theory asserts that countries trade with each other on the basis of their inherent specialisation, which for developing countries means unskilled rural and urban labour. Through free trade, according to this argument, rich countries can increase demand for goods produced by this labour thus generating employment, raising income, and reducing poverty in the process.

Inequality leads to Poverty?

So far the argument in this paper has been that it is not necessarily true that international trade increases world poverty. It can decrease it as explained above. However it is naïve to deny that international trade cannot create poverty. It was once believed that globalisation would lead the world into a bright new era of rapid poverty reduction and falling levels of inequality. The World Bank for example declared that global integration is already a powerful force for poverty reduction.[17] However this assessment may be difficult to reconcile with facts. On the evidence of the World Bank's own figures, the impact of global integration on poverty reduction appears less powerful than often suggested. Extreme poverty declined only slowly in the 1990s. The proportion of the world's population living on $1 a day fell from 28% in 1987 to 23% in 1998.[18] At the start of the twenty-first century, 1.1 billion people are struggling to survive on less than $1 a day, the same figure as in the mid-1980s. The proportion and number of people living on less than $2 a day, a more relevant threshold for middle-income countries, show similar trends. This shows that wealth that flows from liberalised trade is not necessarily reaching those who are most in need.

On of the main reasons that makes international trade less successful in reducing poverty in a globalised system is precisely inequality. International income distribution is important for poverty reduction. With the other things being equal, the larger the share of the global economy captured by developing countries, the higher would be their average income. Steps towards the redistribution could have pronounced effects on poverty reduction. The problem is that often the steps are taken in the wrong direction. For example high-income countries maintained their share of global wealth even though their share of the world population fell.[19] For example in 2000 they accounted for 78% of GDP and 14% of the world's population. At the end of the spectrum, the low-income developing countries saw their share of world population. At the other end of the spectrum, low income developing countries saw their share of world population rise and their share of world income fall to less than 3%.

Distribution is important for poverty reduction to a global level for the same reason that it matters at a national level. Economic growth determines what happens to average income but not necessarily to the income of the poor. The larger the share of any increment to growth captured by the poor, the faster the rate

[16] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p. 50-55.
[17] Ibid p.65-66.
[18] Ibid p.66.
[19] Ibid p.66-67.

of poverty reduction. In the global economy, the very small share of growth captured by poor countries weakens the link between world economic growth and incomes in the developing world.

Eduardo Galeano, an Uruguayan historian, once wrote that the division of labour among nations is that some specialise in winning and others in losing.[20] What he said could also be applied to the division of labour that is emerging under globalisation. Some countries have seized the opportunities created by globalisation. They are not only increasing the volume of their exports but are also raising the quality of their exports in terms of local value-added, entry into dynamic sectors of world markets, technological composition and employment creation. Many more other countries are failing in this. This group includes not only the majority of primary-commodity exporters in central Africa but also countries that are participating in some of the most dynamic areas of international trade on the basis of low-quality export activity. While export growth creates employment in these countries, this is often based on simple low-cost assembly operations. Links with the economy are minimal and very little effort is made to create the foundations for successful integration into world markets.

International trade in a globalised world has achieved different results in different parts of the globe. For example export 'success' is highly concentrated in East Asia. The region accounts for more than three-quarters of the exports of the developing world especially in the manufacturing sectors. In fact several countries in this region ought to be described as developed rather than developing countries now. Other regions of the world have continued dependence on primary commodities. Slow growth and adverse price trends in commodity markets are a major source of marginalism. Most of these countries are found in sub-Sahara Africa. One can also distinguish a category of states with low-quality but labour-intensive exports. The countries have a large labour-intensive textile industry. There is also another group of countries with several 'successful' high-technology economies that are operating in low value-added ghettoes.

Developing countries have been increasing their share of world markets for manufactured goods but one must not generalise. As mentioned previously East Asia has been among the most successful regions and it accounts for more than two-thirds of all manufactured exports from the developing world. This shows that while international trade could have its benefits, they are not shared in an equal way and thus may not necessarily benefit those who are in greatest need. The expansion of trade under globalisation may be symbolised by the micro-electronics industry, but many developing countries continue to participate in the global economy on the basis of trading relationships established in the colonial period. The modern economy is dependent on primary commodities and offers an almost automatic route to a diminishing share of world exports and world income. Dependency on primary commodities is most acute in sub-Sahara Africa where commodities account for about half of merchandise exports. These countries have generally a slow market growth and adverse price tends. They tend to export goods with low value-added and face fierce competition from developed countries.[21]

Foreign investment can play an important role to address this inequality. The magnet for that investment has been cheap labour and preferential access to major markets. Important gains have been made in terms of employment generation and export earnings. Unfortunately considerable foreign investment has not helped address the issue of inequality and may continue to contribute towards more inequality itself. For example export activity driven by foreign investment has for the most part been characterised by weak links to domestic firms. In some cases, entire factories have been transplanted into the host economy where they may operate as if they are enclaves. Machinery, raw material, and other inputs are almost entirely imported, with the export factory operating as little more than an assembly site. Local value-addition under these conditions is minimal.[22]

Standard trade theory seems to offer good news for the poor. Since developing countries generally have an abundance of unskilled labour relative to other factors of production and relative to industrial countries, free trade is presumed to increase global demand for exports that embody inputs of unskilled labour thus driving up employment, increasing incomes and reduce poverty in the process. However practice is different from theory. Integration through trade creates opportunities but these opportunities are biased towards those with

[20] Ibid. p. 70.
[21] J. Ahmed, Globalization - a minimalist view, *Progress in Development Studies* 3, 4 (2003) pp. 345-347.
[22] Ibid. p. 347.

access to productive assets, infrastructure and education. Poverty is a powerful barrier to participation in markets as the rural poor lack access to the land, credit, and market information that they need and because often face higher transport costs and are ill equipped to compete. Evidence from many countries suggests that the expansion of trade has often resulted either in the poor getting left behind, or in the intensification of exploitative and environment-damaged systems of production which challenge human-development aspirations. Failure to link integration into global markets with a strategy for the redistribution of assets upon which greater equity depends will leave the poor in an increasingly marginalised position, even in countries that achieve higher levels of economic growth.[23]

Unfortunately most of international investments in the globalised trading system do not lead to real increase in wages. One of the reasons is the skills composition of exports. The assumption that unskilled labour is an automatic beneficiary of export growth is flawed. Also mass poverty, large-scale unemployment, the erosion of basic human rights and the dismantling of wage-protection provisions generate a large supply of labour that is forced to work for wages below levels previously regarded as an acceptable minimum. Also export growth in developing countries is heavily concentrated on labour-intensive production and the simple assembly of higher-technology goods.[24] Another reason that can lead to inequality is the actual composition of imports. Imports can also increase, producing complicated patterns of winners and losers. If imports displace production in labour-intensive industries, while exports generate demand for skilled labour, the poor can lose out in relative and absolute terms.

Education and health are also very important dimensions of human development in their own right. They are critical assets for successful integration into global markets. Deprivation in these areas restricts the ability of poor people and poor countries to benefit from opportunities in world trade. For national economies, education is one of the keys to successful integration. In an increasingly knowledge-based global economy, there is no substitute for human capital. Skills are replacing other assets as the main source of a country's comparative advantage. The overall quality of education in the world's poorest countries is extremely low and the rate of illiteracy is very high. Without substantial investment in education it is highly unlikely that any investment would go to address the inequality created by world trade as also within certain countries themselves, extreme inequalities in education impede the ability of poor households to benefit from trade, and contribute to the income inequalities noted before. Like education, the same can be said for the health sector. Ill health in itself undermines productivity. Poor countries and poor people bear the brunt of the global burden of disease and its associated costs.[25] As in education, narrowing the health gap is a requirement for making trade work for poor countries and poor people. That is why health policy has to be taken as an integral component of wider strategies for achieving more equitable forms of globalisation.

Trade can be a very effective engine for economic growth and for poverty reduction. For the engine to be able to function, poor countries need access to rich-country markets. By expanding market access poor countries can be helped to accelerate economic growth while at the same time creating new opportunities for their population. This applies for agricultural and labour-intensive products since the livelihoods of so many people living below the poverty line are concentrated in these sectors. Trade liberalisation may destroy poor countries if they open up their market to richer countries while the richer countries remain fiercely protectionist in their approach to developing countries exports.[26] These protectionist policies are one of the reasons why integration into world markets is not delivering its full benefits to poor countries. Tariff and non-tariff barriers penalise developing countries in precisely the areas where they have a strong comparative advantage. Poor countries seeking access to richer markets for manufactured goods face trade barriers four times higher on average than rich-countries competitors.

Reducing trade barriers in rich countries will not automatically increase the world market shares of developing countries. Many producers especially in the poorer countries lack the infrastructure, skills and capacity to take advantage of market opportunities. However, when market opening is combined with measures to develop supply capacity, major benefits are possible. Lacking access to land, credit and market

[23] Poverty in the Age of Globalisation, World Bank Report, October 2000 p. 4.
[24] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p. 95.
[25] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p. 135-137.
[26] Ibid. p.135-137.

information and facing high transport costs, the rural poor are the last to benefit from the opportunities created by trade. It is up to the governments of the developing countries to implement rural development programmes that redistribute opportunities to the poor and address the barriers that are faced.[27]

Another issue concerns the use of subsidies particularly in the agricultural sector. According to the EU, the overall level of support to agricultural matters less than the structure of subsidies. The contention is that industrialised countries have scaled down subsidies that directly encourage production, in favour of subsidies that support farm income. This may not necessarily benefit developing counties for two particular reasons. The first is that market-price support and farm payments linked to output remain the major form of producer support in developed countries, and accounted for almost three-quarters of payments in 2000.[28] Governments restrict imports and buy agricultural commodities at prices above world market levels, transferring income to their farmers. Then they transfer the same commodities on to world markets, usually with the help of hefty export subsidies, pushing down world prices. Developed countries spend around $7bn per year on export subsidies.[29] Secondly, far from being 'non trade-distorting', payments under the multi-coloured box arrangements can have an impact on production decisions, notably by taking the risk out of the market.

The above could show that the idea that existing industrialised-country agricultural policies benefit poor and small-scale farmers and are good for the environment is simply a myth. On the contrary, there is overwhelming evidence that the main beneficiaries of current farm support are the largest farmers. For example according top ABARE 2000, 17% of farms in the EU receive about 50% of agricultural support.[30] Thus the way that aid is structured is possibly hastening the demise of small farmers. This also goes with its environmental consequence which among others could include the pollution of lands, rivers and water reserves as a consequence of fertilisers and from the run-off of intensive livestock production.

Integration into global markets does offer opportunities for sustained and equitable growth, current approaches to import liberalisation are weakening the links between trade and poverty reduction. Therefore the issue is what is wrong with openness. Openness as a concept in trade policy has at least two different meanings. The World Bank uses it to describe what is essentially an economic outcome captured in the ratio of trade to GDP.[31] The Bank then undertakes a leap of imagination to a second meaning, that of policy inputs. If the aim is to examine the relationship between trade policy, growth and poverty reduction, then the indicators of trade policy have to be tested. When they are tested the World Bank view appears as an upside-down version of reality. It turns out that some of the most successful globalisers are anything but radical liberalisers, while many of the most radical liberalisers have actually achieved very little in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction.

Having established how openness can hinder the development of poor counties it is also worth mentioning that the distribution of any wealth that may be generated is also very important. The problem with income distribution is that other things to be considered are not equal. For policy makers interested in poverty reduction, what matters is the interaction of two factors, the rate of growth and the proportion of any increment to growth captured by the poor. The rate of growth decides the size of the economic cake while distribution decides how it is sliced up.[32] If the poor account for only a small share of national income, then they will capture only a small share of any increase in income. Research suggests that high levels of inequality not only slow the rate of poverty reduction but also restrict the rate of economic growth.

Unfortunately the problem that leads to inequality in the distribution of international trade is sometimes the result of the politics of international institutions such as IMF and World Bank which help industrialised countries maintain a highly unbalanced process of trade liberalisation. Developing countries have been

[27] Ibid. p.134.
[28] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p. 113.
[29] Ibid p.114.
[30] Ibid p.114.
[31] Does More International Trade openness Increase Poverty? *World Bank Reports* at: www.worldbank.org.economicpolicy/globalization/.
[32] Does More International Trade openness Increase Poverty? *World Bank Reports* at: www.worldbank.org.economicpolicy/globalization/.

liberalising rapidly, incurring large adjustment costs while at the same time rich countries have failed to open their market for poor countries. At the same time, the IMF and the World Bank have frequently undermined the ability of poor countries and poor people to integrate successfully into the global economy. Loan conditions that place a premium on rapid liberalisation, without proper consideration of the consequences for short-term poverty and long-term development are among the factors that prevent trade from working for the poor.

It has been suggested that the removal of trade liberalisation from IMF-World Bank loan conditions is one of the measures that need to be addressed.[33] These loan conditions have worked against the interest of the poor countries. Also IMF-World Bank staff should undertake a full review of all unilateral trade-liberalisation measures undertaken under programmes supported by the two institutions over the past decade. These measures should be converted into tariff equivalents. They should then be reciprocated by the industrial countries through negotiations at the WTO. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers should include a comprehensive assessment of the implications of trade liberalisation for poverty reduction and income distribution. These should also be applied by developing-country governments in their trade policies.

International Trade and Development

From the above arguments it can be concluded that international trade rules can have two sides of the coin. On one hand they can enable environment for poverty reduction as the facilitate policies that are good for the poor while on the other hand they do not necessarily create automatic benefits for human development. The authority of the WTO has been extended into areas of public policy that have a critical bearing on poverty reduction. Its mission is nothing less than to provide the common institutional framework for the conduct of trade relations between its members. One of the main problems is that many WTO agreements were negotiated under the strength of richer countries and multi-national companies and the agreements may serve nothing except to act as a smoke screen for private interests. For multilateralism to work it has to be fair and balanced as it has to protect weak countries from the abuse of economic power rather than concentrate advantage in the hands of rich countries. The WTO fails this test in many areas.[34]

One of these many areas is precisely the TRIPs agreement. The agreement is the product of intensive corporate lobbying, the aim of which is to create a set of trade rules designed to raise prices for technologies and products controlled by multi-national companies. The public interest suffers particularly in the developing world. Cost of technology transfer increases and this will widen the technology gap. TRIPs also threatens to force up the costs of basic medicines thus posing a direct threat to public health and widening inequalities between rich and poor countries. Applied to agriculture, TRIPS can damage the food security of the poor as it threatens the right of poor farmers to save, sell and exchange seeds which is vital not merely to their livelihoods but to bio-diversity.

It can be argued that Trade is also unbalanced when it comes to GATS, The General Agreement on Trade in Services, a category of economic activity that covers everything from banking and insurance to health services and education. The Agreement is heavily biased towards services provided by big multinational companies and industrialised countries. Another problem is that the agreement lends itself to interpretations that could restrict the capacity of governments to extend access to basic services to the poor.

WTO rules are also being used to restrict the ability of developing countries to develop broader policies needed in order to integrate them successfully into the global economy. The WTO system is based upon a philosophy which sees free markets and their corollary of trade liberalisation as the most effective route to economic growth. Government intervention in markets is viewed as inherently inefficient and damaging to national and international interests. Non-compliance with the instructions attracts penalties in the form of trade sanctions. Developing countries are expected to comply with WTO standards subject to minor concessions. Unfortunately these standards are inconsistent with policies for broad-based economic growth,

[33] K. Watkins et al *Rigged Rules and Double Standards: Trade, Globalisation, and the Fight Against Poverty* (Oxfam Campaign Reports), p. 122.
[34] See R. Hudec, *Developing Countries in the GATT legal system*, (London: Gower, 1987).

and successful integration into the world economy. The main issue to be discussed here is how to make trade work for the poor.[35]

Trade cannot realise its potential unless rich and poor countries alike take action to make it work for the poor. That means redistributing opportunities through new rules and new forms of international cooperation at a global level, and through more effective anti-poverty strategies at a national level. Good international rules can create an enabling environment in which poor countries can successfully integrate into global markets, but it is national policies that determine the extent to which the poor share in the benefits of trade. Making national markets work for poor people is as important as making international markets work for poor countries. International trade cannot be considered in isolation from other development issues, such as aid, debt relief, and the management of capital markets. One of the problems facing the international community is that the pace of economic integration has outstripped the pace of international cooperation in these areas.

Finally one also has to focus on the governance of world trade. It could be argued that the WTO is fundamentally failing poor countries and poor people. The authority of the WTO has been extended into broad new areas of public policy thus limiting the autonomy of national governments in the process. For them there is an increasing tension between the imperative of complying with WTO rules, and the need to adopt policies which will reduce poverty. The reverse of this extension of the WTO's role into new areas is its failure to address long-standing problems in old ones, such as market access. Meanwhile, the system of trade governance is failing to respond to major new challenges posed by globalisation, including the threats arising from the enormous concentration of corporate power.

Trade and the Environment

The relationship between international trade and the environment has only recently attained a prominent place on the trade agenda, although it has been a concern of environmentalists for some time. Much of the debate on this issue has been highly emotive and polarised. Often environmentalists tend to identify liberal trade with environmentally destructive economic growth. Many free traders, on the other hand, are largely dismissive of the environmentalists' concerns as either disguised protectionism or irrational fanaticism.[36] The environment is widely recognised as a broad term with many interpretations and definitions. The term 'environment' may be used narrowly, with reference to 'green' issues concerned with nature such as pollution control, biodiversity and climate change; or more broadly, including issues such as drinking water. The broad interpretations of both poverty and environment mean that understanding the linkages between the two is particularly challenging.

Some international environmental treaties, such as the Convention on International Traffic in Endangered Species (CITES) use control of trade as a direct means of achieving an environmental purpose.[37] Even where there is no direct relationship between trade restrictions and environmental regulation, environmentalist may view trade restrictions as appropriate sanctions for non-compliance with international environmental standards, as a means of imposing such standards where there are none. Whether trade measures are an appropriate or effective means of achieving this end raises a wide variety of normative and empirical issues. While having a good environment is essential to have a sustainable good standard of living, developing countries need to exploit their natural resources more than developed countries. Developing countries need assistance to help them develop their economy with the least impact on the environment. The problem here is that the use of trade sanctions against such countries as a result of exploitation of the environment may hinder their development. Thus rather then helping the environment long term, trade sanctions may adversely be the cause of further pollution long-term. However the environmental issue hits developed countries alike. If developed countries ignore environmental issues they might themselves face consequences which will see their standard of living falling.

[35] Trebilcock M. J. & Howese R. *The Regulation of International Trade*, 3rd ed Routledge, 2005 p. 471.
[36] D. Esty, *Greening the GATT* (Washington DC: Institute for International Economics, 1994).
[37] CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN (The World Conservation Union). The text of the Convention was finally agreed at a meeting of representatives of 80 countries in Washington DC., USA, on 3 March 1973, and on 1 July 1975 CITES entered in force.

International Human Rights

The trade/labour linkage has a long history.[38] It has become one of the most contentious contemporary issues in trade and labour policy circles and debates.[39] The idea of using international labour standards to protect workers from economic exploitation was first promoted by individual reformers in Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century at the early stages of the Industrial revolution. The work of these reformers was later taken over by various stages of the Industrial revolution. Nowadays labour standards are important to ensure that the increase in the openness of trade does not lead to exploitation and as a result poverty, but that it leads to good labour standards that will in turn encourage an increase in the living standards of developing countries. Labour standards are rules that govern working conditions and industrial relations. They range from fundamental human rights such as freedom from forced labour and freedom of association to more specific rights such as health and safety, maternity leave or minimum wages. Formal labour standards may be established at the national level, in the form of laws or regulations, or at the international level through global or regional institutions. However, labour standards may also be informal, established through norms and values in the 'living law' of institutions and communities.

The social case for labour standards as a means of reducing poverty rests partly on the importance of core labour standards as fundamental human rights and freedoms. Eliminating discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, for example, can improve opportunities for disadvantaged groups (such as women, disabled people or ethnic minorities). A robust system of labour rights and standards can also contribute to social and political development. Freedom of association is a fundamental political right, and labour organisations can play a key role in the development of responsive and democratic politics. The implementation of substantive labour standards also has a role in public policy for poverty reduction. Effective occupational health and safety regulations, for example, protect households from being plunged into poverty through injury or loss of working members.

The economic case for core labour standards as a means of reducing poverty overlaps with the social case. Social and political stability, to which labour standards can contribute, increases private investment, including foreign investment. Freedom of association can enhance market effectiveness by increasing freedom of choice, equality of bargaining power and availability of information. Freedom from discrimination reduces the risks of skills and capabilities being wasted. Elimination of exploitative child labour improves economic prospects by getting more children educated. There is also an economic case which goes beyond core labour standards to support substantive standards, such as minimum wages and obligations to provide decent working conditions. Such specific labour standards can raise productivity - by boosting labour motivation and effort, by improving workers' health, and by inducing employers to adopt new business strategies. Good wages and working conditions can reduce wasteful labour turnover, while the empowerment and security of workers can facilitate creativity and cooperation in the workplace.

However, action to promote the rights of the poorest workers in the world must be tailored to their needs. Most of these workers are not members of formally recognised trade unions, though some are represented by other sorts of associations. Many of them are self-employed, particularly in agriculture, and many would be glad to get any sort of regular wage employment. It is thus crucial to act in ways which promote employment for unskilled workers and socially disadvantaged people and to empower workers both within and outside unions to claim better treatment from employers and governments. Action to promote workers' rights must be careful not to restrict the livelihood opportunities of poor people in developing countries by pricing them out of jobs, whether in firms producing for foreign markets or for the home market, nor by intentional or unintentional protectionism in developed countries.[40]

Whether international trade policy could or should be linked - through incentives or sanctions - to labour standards has been the most controversial element of the debate. Such links are already made in some bilateral and regional trade agreements - for example by both the EU and the USA. The controversy has been mainly over the possibility of bringing them into the rules of multilateral trade agreements. A possible 'social clause' in the WTO was discussed at its Ministerial Conference in Singapore in 1996, but was strongly

[38] Trebilcock M.J. & Howese R. *The Regulation of International Trade*, 3rd ed Routledge, 2005 p.557.
[39] See B. Langille, 'Eight Ways to Think about International Labour Standards' (1997) 31 *Journal of World Trade* 27.
[40] Ibid. p. 29.

opposed by many developing countries. The final declaration of the Conference called for ILO-WTO cooperation, but identified the ILO as the right body to set and monitor standards. The trade ministers said, "We renew our commitment to the observance of internationally recognised core labour standards", but also "We reject the use of labour standards for protectionist purposes and agree that the comparative advantage of countries, particularly low-wage developing countries, must in no way be put in question".

Given the strong positive correlation between a high level of labour standards and economic development, the top priority for multilateral trade policy, in relation to global Poverty reduction and the promotion of workers' rights, is to open markets to the products of developing countries, in order to expand their economic opportunities. Punitive trade policy measures (such as trade sanctions) have rarely been tried as a means of improving labour standards, and might well be ineffective. At best, since they apply only to export sectors, they are unlikely to induce a general rise in a country's labour standards. They might even be counterproductive: fear of sanctions could encourage firms to extend in formalisation of employment, outsourcing and subcontracting in order to circumvent labour regulations. There is also a risk of trade sanctions discriminating against poor countries, which lack the regulatory and institutional infrastructure for implementation, and within countries bearing particularly heavily on poor people.[41]

In extreme cases of persistent and sustained human rights violations, the international community may consider adopting sanctions as a last resort. Non-respect of economic human rights is likely to coincide with non-respect of political human rights, in a general climate of poor governance. Non-respect of human rights is a political problem that only the United Nations can address. Its sanctions might include trade sanctions, but the existing trade dispute mechanism of the WTO is not naturally suited to applying political pressure, since it is a system of compensation, based on the premise of injury to the country bringing the case, rather than of injury (to human rights) in the country at which the case is directed.

Therefore, the key task for the international community is to strengthen the capacity of the UN system (including the ILO) to bring effective pressure to bear on states which are in serious violation of the human rights of their own citizens. For example, Article 33 of the ILO's constitution provides that, if satisfactory compliance is not forthcoming, "the governing body may recommend to the conference such action as it may deem wise and expedient to secure compliance therewith". As noted above, in March 2000, the governing body invoked Article 33 for the first time in the ILO's history and recommended action against Burma because of its failure to comply with the actions indicated in an earlier Commission of Inquiry. The outcomes of this action are as yet unclear - but the international community in general needs to develop stronger political mechanisms for dealing with egregious and persistent cases of human rights violation.

Can there be sustainable Globalisation through International Trade?

Globalisation is a process which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions assessed in terms of their extensity, velocity and impact generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power.[42] Globalisation is today driven by a confluence of forces. First there are the economic shifts which are the natural tendency of capitalism to expand expressed in the need of businesses to compete in regional and global markets. Secondly there are the technological shifts which are the increasing use of informatics. Thirdly there are political shifts. Over the past years there has been a dramatic shift away from state intervention to the market as the emphasis on deregulation and privatisation increased. Fourthly there are cultural shifts which are fuelled by the above developments. Awareness has grown among national movements such as the global environmental movement that the fate of nations and communities is increasingly bound up with the dynamics of the global economy and the global environment.

There are three accounts of how globalisation affects inequality and the world order. Neoliberals view globalisation as a progressive force for creating prosperity in a global market civilisation. Inequalities are gradually overcome and what was the 'third world' is increasingly differentiated as some countries successfully industrialise. Radicals suggest that globalisation means exclusion, deepening inequality and a

[41] See *Labour Standards and Poverty Reduction*, Department for International Development UK, May 2004.
[42] A.McGrew 'Sustainable globalization? The global politics of development and exclusion in the new world order' in Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, *Poverty & Development into the 21st century*, OUP, 2000, p.345.

reinforced division of the world into core and periphery. They see the developed countries as imperialist and international institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF as their tools. Meanwhile Transformationalists argue that globalisation is new. It has changed the configuration of global power so that there are growing concentrations of wealth and power in the developing countries namely in Asia and increasing social exclusion poverty in parts of the North. There is also a changed role for states which now share global political space with multinational companies and NGOs.[43]

There are three main strategies for managing globalisation. Regulation can mean developing states both attempt to reform the institutional institutions which embody the rules of the global system and trying to see those rules enforced favourably. Regionalism replaces global solidarity among all developed countries with effective economic groupings on a regional basis. Resistance refers to challenges 'from below' as social movements, citizens' groups and communities build translational alliances to contest the neoliberal vision of globalisation and promote an alternative programme. A crucial question for the twenty-first century is whether globalisation can be managed in the interest of equity and sustainability. This can only be achieved if the major actors and social forces accept that unfettered global capitalism will tend to cause fragmentation and chaos, and work with others for cooperative goals which directly address the needs of the poor and excluded. So far such progress has been limited.

[43] Ibid p.347.

FREE TRADE, RATIONALITY, AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

PAUL TURNER*

'We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future.' - George Bernard Shaw

The constant criticism of free-trade is inescapable, the lack of action is unbearable, and the future is argued to be incurable. This is the axis where rationality loses to irrationality. The market system has distanced itself from the cooperation ethics that make markets work for all and rational self-interest is losing to the capitalistic self-interest making externalities of the losers in the global economic game. Economic hard law and the combination of rich nations and IFIs[1] have provided a 'morals barrier' of sorts to the consequences of their actions. By contrast intergenerational justice relies on morals and fails against the hard law of the WTO to secure markets and resources equitably between the current generation, the next, and the future generations. Intergenerational justice cannot exist in any active sense until the collective concern of mankind is elevated to the highest universal concern such as anti-poverty[2]. This lofty goal requires a consensus of the willing to remove poverty so intergenerational justice can work for a common mankind, not presenting the current status quo in the future.

Through social-science trials on spite and altruism we know that humankind has an innate attraction to fairness. The rational self-interest that equitable distribution is based upon must be limited and considered with rational altruism. By establishing rational altruism in trade the benefits can be applied to equitable exchanges between states and between present and future generations.

Altruism and Greed

Whilst the debate continues as to what level Future Generations have 'rights' and to what extent they can achieve 'justice', the main conjecture between the rights of future generations and the benefits and drawbacks of free-trade are in the pillars of moral law. The often argued key of intergenerational justice is picking a justice principle through rational self-interest and cooperation between and amongst today and the future and whilst free-trade is competitive it has been shown that cooperation in the market provides better returns for all involved.[3] 99% of human history was hunter-gatherers in small packs; due to this a psychology which is not strongly equipped to reason around the modern, ever globalising, world has evolved. In other words what is irrational today may have been rational in the past.[4] A University of British Columbia study showed that altruism is similar in both hunter-gatherer societies and foraging societies which redresses the view that people only help for something in return and will even help at a cost to ourselves, but further trials showed that we also require justice and fairness.

Why does it seem that free-trade works against evolution? Can it be all-for-one-and-one-for-all? Is there space for cooperation?[5] Shermer argues for embracing our evolution to understand our rationalities.[6] Take for example the Ultimatum Game where an individual is given $100 to split between himself and a partner. If the partner does not deem the split equitable, neither player will get the money. Therefore the person could split the $100 evenly so each has parity (the most usual scenario), alternatively he can play the role of the 'selfish proposer' and offer a 90-10 split, or an 80-20 split. If the partner is a self-interested money

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[1] International Financial Institutions. Such as The IMF and World Bank.

[2] D Skinner 'The Prerequisites for Global Governance' *Generational justice!* Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations 3/2002 November 2002 p.8.

[3] For example some of Japan's success in the free-market can be attributed to cooperation and loyalty. G Stigler (1981) in AK Sen (1987) *On ethics and economics* Basil Blackwell Oxford p.19.

[4] M Shermer 'The mind of the market' *Scientific American* vol 298 No 2 Feb 2008 pp27-28.

[5] S Pinker (2002) *The Blank State* Penguin London P.256-7.

[6] M Shermer 'The mind of the market' cit. pp27-28.

maximiser or 'selfish respondent' they will accept the $10 or $20 as it is more than they had before, this reflects the sale of liberalisation to the developing world, or they could reject it to spite the individual at a loss to themselves to prove a point of the injustice. Splits lower than 70-30 are usually rejected showing 'reciprocal altruism', our gauge of fairness, in that one partner provides a benefit to another without expecting any immediate payment based on fear of spite from the other side to ensure some income. The Ultimatum Game shows that our minds are aimed to look for parity and reciprocal altruism offers a more realistic option in the midst of the free-trade system. By comparison, the Dictator game has no fear of reprisal so the individual can propose any split, but strangely the offers are more generous because the proposer worries of gaining a reputation of unfairness.[7] When the game is played blind the proposals are far less generous as there is a moral barrier of anonymity.[8]

Reciprocal altruism by theory would solve intergenerational inequity because it supports a decision to provide without needing to see the result. The only minor discrepancy is that the beneficiary receives more than the benefactor and that this is repeated when the roles are reversed, but this would mean that when the future generation becomes the present generation proving the conservation was not in vain. The strong element of reciprocal altruism specifically between the generations is that the decisions need not be behind a veil of ignorance and that should enhance cooperation.

Another test in human altruism is the Public Good game where each player makes a voluntary contribution to a common fund. Gachter and Herrmann's trials on how far we are spiteful or altruistic[9] experimented the Public Good game on Russian volunteers with a possible $20 each going to a public fund. Once they decided what percentage to relinquish the experimenter doubled it and shared the result out equally, so the more they put in the more the group received. The best strategy for the individual (the free rider strategy) is to contribute nothing in hope that the rest will contribute, and then take a share of the doubling of their donations. The market bottoms out if they all took this strategy as there would be nothing to double. The optimum strategy is to put all the money into the fund so the full amount doubles.

The general rule is the more rounds the game is played the more people take to being free riders which becomes self-defeating. For example, in Russia if they all gave generously they would all win, but if one was selfish and kept their $20 whilst the rest put in their $20 the 'selfish' individual would be better off by an extra $20 over the others, that would be akin to present generation unfairness. This 'cheating' would benefit that individual but the public fund would lose and the mathematical inequality would be noticed by the other players. In many trials the group was willing to punish the cheats by cooperating together and isolating this 'cheat.' However in the case of Russia generational differences is a major factor. The elders, who lived under a socialist spirit, were more collectivist in their thinking, whilst the younger were orientated by free-market principles to profit at the expense of others.

Trust varies across groups but it always 'measures the confidence we have in perfect strangers.'[10] I can meet someone from India if I so wish. I cannot meet someone who is not born. Therefore we require a high level of trust to believe that our preservation won't be in vain. Problematically, the lower the income level in a country the less trust its people have,[11] and understandably so many have a history of colonialism and many see it repeating itself. Trust has to increase to make economic arrangements based on reciprocal altruism, sustainable otherwise the current insider-outsider mentalities will continue keeping the developing world on the bottom rung.

Trials of the Ultimatum Game uncovered something which could spark conflict under the old GATT system, that when one partner feels an injustice they will opt out of the game. This may be why the WTO has made it so difficult to withdraw. In many cases accepting the 90-10 or 80-20 split was seen as an injustice meaning there is a strong indicator toward fairness in our financial arrangements between partners. These cooperative

[7] S Pinker (2002) cit. p.257.
[8] S Pinker (2002) cit. p.257.
[9] S Gachter and B Herrmann (2006) 'The limits of self-governance in the presence of spite: Experimental evidence from rural Russia' *CeDEx Discussion Paper* No.2006-13.
[10] W Easterly (2006) *The White Man's Burden* Oxford University Press p.69.
[11] Also, people who said only 10% of people can be trusted only had a $2,000 per capita income, whereas it goes over the 50% after $12,000 per capita earning. Denmark led the way with 58% trust, Philippines only had 5%, and that is a bastion of cheap labour. W Easterly (2006) p.69

models use human history to depict how our rationalities evolve; we can aim towards these projections to foresee the 'expected results'[12] self-interest is based upon and focus the strongest consensus for realistic sustainable development. Cooperation stands for healthier markets and the Ultimatum Game shows personal level possibilities for the acceptance of intergenerational-minded economic policies. By embracing reciprocal altruism we increase the chances of stability as two performing markets are likely to use the market to settle disputes and advance a more universal marketplace, closer to the collective rights goal of a common mankind.

However, it may be that the market is a behavioural anomaly and is run by selfish amoral egoists.[13] Disgraced Enron CEO Jeff Skelling cited Dawkins *The Selfish Gene*[14] to argue that the world is driven by self-interest[15] and Nobel Prize winning Economist George Stigler thought similarly.[16] Shermer disagrees with this thesis because we attempt to find partners for survival and the Ultimatum, Dictator and Public Good games show this. We are equally cooperative and competitive, and group loyalty is based on a healthy mix of selflessness and selfishness.[17] The WTO is different, it tries to limit the former and promote the latter, in short it plays with evolution.

I. The Wishful Altruistic

Equitable Utilisation

Rawls philosophised the idea of equitable economic exchanges[18] through the 'Just Savings' principle[19] to ensure a 'least bad' condition is left for the future. This would provide the materials for growth but also choice to make their own decisions.[20] Under Rawls' conception the choosers of the mode of distribution are influenced by rational self-interest, not reciprocal altruism. Therefore how 'willing' would we be to adopt sustainable development principles to provide options and economies for future generations, and how can we 'legitimise' the role of future generations against international trade law which is based largely on short-term values and plans? Following the Public Good game in Russia it could be that self-interest in the purest capitalistic form is strongest. However the Russian example has significant flaws due to extraneous economic and social changes since the fall off communism.

Mixing the process of the Ultimatum Game and the potential outcome from the Public Good game, Hardin's *tragedy of the commons* uses a simple formula to demonstrate the strengths of equitable utilisation and the inequity of mismanagement of the common good. Hardin depicts a field owned by all of society where the herdsmen keep cattle on the land to provide food and income for themselves and their family, and in the long run, their community. Should they respect the carrying capacity of the land this can be sustained equally between herdsmen and be equitable for future generations but if one herdsman increases his livestock above the carrying capacity the land becomes unsustainable and the other herdsmen have to accept an unequal split. By going against the group, that single herdsman could gain higher dividends[21] but because the equilibrium of earnings from the common good ceases to be equitable it will be self-defeating in the long run.

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[12] G Stigler (1981) in AK Sen (1987) p.19.
[13] S Pinker (2002) p.256.
[14] R Dawkins (2006) *The Selfish Gene* Oxford University Press.
[15] See the Documentary *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* 2005.
[16] 'We live in a world of reasonably well-informed people acting intelligently in pursuit of their self-interest' G Stigler (1981) in AK Sen (1987) p.18.
[17] AK Sen (1987) p.18.
[18] Derived from principle 8 of the Rio Declaration: 'To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies.' 'Equitable utilisation' is a term used in the UN watercourse convention. Article 5 and 24(2a).
[19] J Rawls (1971) *A Theory of Justice* Harvard University Press.
[20] J Serra 'Creating a Culture of Consequences' In TC Kim and JA Dator (eds) (1999) *Co-creating a public philosophy for future generations* Praeger Connecticut P 41.
[21] G Hardin 'The Tragedy of the Commons' *Science* 162 1968 pp1243-1248.

Hardin's view highlights the utilitarian norm of the common good to be used for the benefit for the greatest possible number of individuals. Rawls argues similarly in his difference principle. Influenced by the Social Contract, Rawls differs from the main proponents of the theory through his 'original position' wherein everyone decides the principles behind a veil of ignorance binding us to a societal notion of justice. Because when we are ignorant of the details we can create principles which are fair to all. The aims of the difference principle would stand opposed to free trade principles. It opts to take the social and economic inequalities and arrange them to benefit the least advantaged. Free-trade by contrast, in principle, puts all the states in a race to the bottom so those who cannot compete are buried. Rawls is arguing that without fair equality of opportunity the poor (of today or the future) may not have access to primary or common goods. Based upon what the 'rational man' needs, the theory assumes there are rights to certain shares of what is to be distributed according to their need and their worth[22] and are and is only justified to the extent it can improve those who are worse off to enable a 'just' society.[23]

The major flaws within intergenerational justice are that anything can be argued in its name and its reliance on ethics as if they are static. Free trade ethics are pretty straightforward - to create an economic base, trade, and develop. To disregard free-trade from future generations would be to render it immoral. The problem is our rational self-interest blinkers the role of free-trade and it could fall foul of some of our other dystopian myths which we find morally repugnant today for whatever reason.

Weiss' Three Principles of Equitable Utilisation

Similar to the difference principle, Weiss argues there are three basic principles of intergenerational equity to consider, *Options*, *Quality* and *Access*. These three principles are central to the wave of anti-globalisation as these three encapsulate the fears over the lack of distributive powers coupled with the strength of global economic powers and its effects on finance, the environment and poverty reduction. There are equity concerns between communities of the present generations. Currently ¼ of the world consumes ¾ of the world's primary energy and the rich are pacing ahead with free-trade attained surpluses to find cheaper and efficient sources of energy. Poverty leads to the use of outdated energy sources and is a primary reason for ecological degradation. Much of the developing world cannot spare (if they even attain it) the 3% per capita income growth that the WCED[24] require for efficient energy growth to meet human needs, creating dependencies on outmoded sources like wood fuel which are not being renewed to meet demand (something pure free-trade ethics could not allow). This economic misbalance ensures the developing world will not have the capacity to adhere to plausible intergenerational obligations.

Conservation of Option limits usage and increases protection to ensure that the diversity of the natural and cultural resource base provides our 'descendents a robust and flexible heritage with which to try to achieve a decent and healthy life'.[25] The IPCC predict that 25-30% of plant species will be extinct or endangered by the end of the millennium.[26] To protect crop diversity the Svalbard vault (some 1,000 miles from the North Pole) will house 1.5 million seeds from around the world at -18ºC for 100 years, the Millennium Seed Project at Kew Gardens in the UK will preserve 24,000 wild plant species, and US department of agriculture have been given the remit to collect reproductive material from all livestock.[27] These three examples of preservation are direct intergenerational equity and not the passive kind of the 'rational man.'

In these cases ethical and real problems will arise, mainly based on trust. Such as how justly will these be distributed and when? Who controls these sources or are they still owned by the communities from which they came? Will it cause international instability because of the prospective value of these seeds? Fairness

[22] Vastos in W Beckerman 'Intergenerational Justice' Intergenerational Justice Review Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations 2/2004.
[23] J Rawls (1971).
[24] World Commission on Environment and Development.
[25] E Brown Weiss (1989) In fairness to future generations: international law, common patrimony and intergenerational equity, United Nations Tokyo p.40.
[26] M Hopkin 'Frozen Futures' *Nature* vol 452 no. 7186 27 March 2008 pp405-406.
[27] M Hopkin cit. pp 405-406.

has to be balanced between the current generation, the next, and the future generations[28] and so the preserves would require similarities to Rawls' state-ready stage of 'Just Savings' whereby institutions of intergenerational justice are produced to safeguard generations at all levels, such as a Ministry, as seen in France and Colorado.[29]

Conservation of Quality has similarities to 'Just Savings' accumulation stage to yield benefits in preserving resources in no worse condition. In impoverished and developing areas strict implementation of this principle would be extremely unrealistic and so trade-offs arise. For example, to preserve access for the present generation of the benefits of the planet, conserving the quality and harnessing economic development must go hand in hand. Therefore it is feasible to exhaust one natural resource and cause modest pollution but pass on a higher market share or economic interest sufficient for the future generations to develop substitutes for the resources and methods of tackling the pollutants (alternatively wait for the intellectual property to expire on technologies already discovered). This is rational self-interest by providing one possibility whilst removing another. Both sides are served, but it also reveals a gamble on the hopes of future technologies and sciences.[30]

Parfit's value trade-off is similar to reciprocal altruism because it is based on investment now and returns later (which can be reinvested in the generation thereafter). He postulates a serene field left untouched that will look as good in ten years. However a water tower installed will mean it loses its beauty but helps a larger number of people's development,[31] and through free-market principles it may provide longer term benefits. Alternatively it can be argued that selling a resource base disables the future from inheriting that endowment.

Finally, *Conservation of Access* is to provide reasonable and non-discriminatory access to resources. Similar to *quality* only a limited amount of resources can be used exhaustively. Under the ICESCR present generations can use their resources to improve their own economic and social well-being; [32] Weiss uses an intergenerational equality principle to expand this for equitable usage to meet the needs of today and tomorrow. The level of access for the first generation includes absolute minimum which each generation must pass on. This in turn should follow a social contract of reciprocal altruism to determine where the boundaries lie. Together these three principles should work to support 'just savings' and end colonialism of the future by providing *only* the means for their growth and use.

To illustrate Weiss' three principles consider water-stress, where supply is less than 1,700 cubicmetres per person per annum.[33] This arguably dystopian proclamation adds weight to Weiss' *Options* because unfair use of reserves and aquifers which can dry out will add to water-stress, in the case of aquifers being over-pumped and drying out causing the aquifer to be no longer accessible and the land around it to become barren disregarding conservation of quality or access. Some regions will be stretched due to the scarce resources required to keep the land arable and will be strained on an individual level by UN estimates of population growth. Entitlement strains on the water supply will increase with 3,324million affected by water-

[28] J Tobin 'The trustees of endowed institutions are the guardians of the future against the claims of the present. Their task in managing the endowment is to preserve equity among generations', in J Tobin 'What is permanent endowment income?' American Economic Review 64 2 1974.

[29] France in 1993 established a council on future generations, to work with government on environmental polices, and after an intergeneration minister. Mayor Walter Orr Roberts of Boulder Colorado created the symposium on intergenerational equity in 1993 that experimented with a similar scheme to assess current legislation for their future impact. There were no results published.

[30] It is argued that this is important because it gives incentive to the future and humans are spurred to advancement when pressed with destruction. M Mills and P Huber (2006) *The Bottomless Well: The twilight of fuel, the virtue of waste, and why we will never run out of energy* Basic Books.

[31] D Parfit argues this in P Streeten "Future generations and socio-economic development in the long term perspective" In E Agius *What future for future generations* (1994) Union press Malta p253.

[32] ICESCR Article 2(1) Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures.

[33] Swedish Hydrologist Malin Falkenmark regards water stress as when supplies are under 1,700 cubic metres per person annually, there is no great debate in this area as a basis of the measurement. See Report of the independent commission on population and quality of life (1996) Caring for the future Oxford University Press P103-106.

stress by 2025,[34] and current global trends the water usage per-capita will increase 40% in the next 20 years.[35] Which is where a value trade-off is required. These numbers are generally meaningless in this context as it purely depends on where the bigger population (or migration) booms occur and their relativity to local supply. The long term effects on industry would see high usage industries investing in efficiency technologies to survive, or closing if the investment is uneconomical, therefore resource, land, people and business could leave land and industry which has no inheritable value. This scenario plays out Hardin's theory where water replaces the land, the economy the herdsman.

Lowe and Beckerman are together in the view that much of the dystopian sprit of intergenerational justice is based on overreactions.[36] Beckerman argues specifically of empirical evidence of continued falsifications[37] about the decline of the environment and resource base.[38] This is the success of the veil of ignorance but would undermine Weiss's *Quality*. For example, with regard to water use for sale or industry, the water shortage may be overstated as 3% of the world's water is available for human use which is more than enough for survival and so can be rationally shared for use today and tomorrow. In turn, following equitable utilisation rigidly could cause serious economic inequalities for the developing world. A hard law on environmentally efficient technologies can make the developing world even more dependent on IMF/World Bank loans to pay for the prospective legal requirement of these technologies. This calls Intergenerational Justice into question as how can it be rational if its stock is irrational?

With regard to water privatisation there may be a fair bit of irrationality. Arguably free-trade could fix the above scenario. There is a serious humanitarian concern if states do not invest in their water service. An annual investment of $180 billion (World Water Conference)[39] or $300 billion (millennium goals)[40] makes the aspiration of an adequate service way out of reach for developing nations. The World Water Conference argued for a welfare-based approach for water to be supplied through private full-cost recovery to reduce the 12 million dying per year of water-related deaths. This has strong backing with 200 million less contracting diarrhoea and 300 million less with roundworm.[41] Price modifications can conserve 20% more water, which can also protect exhaustible aquifers for the future.[42] Sedgerfeldt outlines why arguments that privatisation ignores the poor could be hyperbolic.[43] The concessions agreement would include a performance requirement, although he does not mention the 'lapses'[44] of a desperate state to not include universal access,

[34] These population estimates are non-conclusive as estimates show that Europe's population levels will decrease. Report of the independent commission on population and quality of life (1996) P103-106 and D Gardner (2008) *Risk: The science and politics of fear* Virgin books UK.

[35] O Balch "Can public-private partnerships work for water?" *Ethical Corporation* 4 May 2005.

[36] 'Few [if any] resources are likely to be completely exhausted in the foreseeable future' I Lowe "Governing in the interest of future generations" In TC Kim and JA Dator (eds) *Co-creating a public philosophy for future generations* (1999) Praeger Connecticut P132.; I Lowe "sustainable development and unsustainable arguments" In A Boyle and D Freestone (eds) International law and sustainable development: past achievements and future challenges (2001) Oxford University Press P27.

[37] 'Past predictions… of exhaustion of so-called 'finite' resources - and such predictions go back at least 2,400 years – have been falsified' In W Beckerman 'Intergenerational Justice'P.5.

[38] I Lowe "Governing in the interest of future generations"; W Beckerman 'Intergenerational Justice' P.5.

[39] This figure emerged at the World Water Conference at The Hague in 2000.

[40] R Bailey 'Water is a Human Right: How privatisation gets water to the poor' Reason Magazine 17 August 2005. http://www.reason.com/rb/rb081705. html

[41] Of 900 million affected with Diarrhoea the improved quality and connections through water privatisation brought a 22 median reduction in the disease, a 300 million reduction from 900 million with roundworm and 150 million reductions in the 200 million contracting Schistosomiaisis. Based on predictions from World Bank World Development Report 1992: development and the environment (1992) IBRD Washington DC P48.

[42] For example, Namibia used a new pricing and information campaign to thwart overuse, and consumption went down over 20%.

[43] For example, Suez have extended services to 9 million below the poverty line, however it is not known how many have had undue increases adding to new poverty problems or how the poverty line for their statistics is determined.

[44] For example the World Bank $40 Million loan to La Paz, Bolivia, did not include any incentive to extend the service universally. M Barlow and T Clarke (2005) *Blue Gold* the new press London p.110.

which is why IFIs promote full-cost recovery.[45] But importantly access to safe water to the poor is 7% higher under private management,[46] and World Bank privatisation studies also show increased connections.[47]

Take as an example the furore over water privatisation in Bolivia of a corrupt municipal water supply in Cochabamba that was always doomed to fail.[48] Bolivia had a weak bargaining position and a weak regulatory authority[49] to oversee the prospective 25 year concession which was later annulled under ICSID arbitration.[50] It is unknown whether the water privatisation would have provided increased connections for the municipality, but it is clear that the early years were going to involve great strains on the local economy primarily through the $85 million investment required and the $15,635 the concessionaire, *Aguas del Tunari* (a subsidiary of Bechtel) put in.[51]

Bechtel planned to finance the system on full-cost recovery as promoted by the World Bank which has a high economic risk of isolating the poorest from access or affording full-cost recovery.[52] Prices rose on average 40% (double the estimate to use the market to achieve water conservation), in some cases 92%.[53] Post-privatisation Cochabamaba has embraced intergenerational justice when *La Coordinaora*, the protest group, took over the corporate ownership of the supply for collective rights to ensure future decision making has the 'inclusive notion of the common good.'[54] *La Coordinaora* was largely the economically hit middle-classes, leading the poor who generally had no connection. Their stance is strong ideology where the poor need policy.[55] The stark reality is ideology alone cannot connect the population to water and in the case of Cochabamba there is no guarantee with the $150,000 debts they inherited and service costs of maintaining the municipal service that there will be significant improvements in real terms.

In cases of poorly managed privatisations it is feasible to use elements of international economic law and international Human Rights law to promote equitable utilisation. If the service is directed by government, which was not the case in Cochabamba, then GATS General Exception Clause (Article XIV)[56] could be invoked if the company is not conserving an exhaustible source and if it has an adverse effect on domestic

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[45] The global challenge initiative undertook a random review of IMF loan documents in 40 countries where 12 required privatisation and full-cost recovery. Nine of these were under the IMF Poverty reduction and growth facility, which is re-named SAP. Many had to raise tariffs and make concessions for private management. In M Barlow and T Clarke (2005) p.163.

[46] Without private sector management the figure is 73% access in the developing world. In F Segerfeldt (2005) Water for sale: How business and the market can resolve the worlds water crisis Cato Washington p.62.

[47] World Bank (1992) p.103.

[48] An economist journalist said 'bet their friends at Suez had a good laugh' In B Kohl and L Farthing (2006) *Impasse in Bolivia* Zed Books London p.192.

[49] The Superintendent of basic sanitation.

[50] *Aguas del Tunari S.A. v Republic of Bolivia Decision on Respondent's Objections to Jurisdiction* ICSID Case no ARB/02/3 Washington DC 21 October 2005.

[51] They invested an initial $15,635 of the $85 million they were supposed to invest in the first five years. This is not an isolated case, the IFC put up $300 million and provided a further $250 million in loans. The expected investment by Suez was $1 billion but only $30 million was invested. Similarly in Sao Paulo Brazil they only invested $7.2 million of the $14.4 million agreed upon. In M Barlow and T Clarke (2005) p.161.

[52] In Kwazulu-Natal 120,000 people fell ill with cholera when water and sanitation were cut-off for non-payment. And the Suez operation in South Africa has cut off water to 10 million since it began operation in 1996. In M Barlow "The World's Water: A Human Right or a Corporate Good?' In B McDonald and D Jehl (eds) Whose water is it? The unquenchable thirst of a water-hungry world (2003) National geographic Washington D.C. p.27. It is estimated that 3 billion of the proposed 8.5 billion people of 2025 will still suffer from shortages and 80% of the developing world will live without a sustained water supply. In N Rosemann "Financing the Human Right to Water as a millennium development goal" Law, Social Justice and Global Development Journal Vol 1 2005.

[53] For example, Lucio Morales in Region 2 ($67 per month income, no shower, has indoor toilet) was paying $4.15 under the municipal source but paid $6.63 under Aguas del Tunari (60%) increase. German Jaldin in Region 3 (Poor but above $67 per month, has indoor amenities) had a 92% increase from $13.67 to $26.27. Bechtel argued that the Bolivian protest group (La Coordinadora) 'manufactured' the bills, the source of this material, the Democracy Centre, do not state where they obtained these bills and so it cannot be verified if they were in any way manufactured. Original copies of the bills can be viewed on www.democracycenter.org/bechtel/waterbills.

[54] R Gutierrez-Aguilar "The Coorinandora: one year after the water war" In O Olivera and T Lewis (2004) *Cochabamba! Water war in Bolivia* South End Press Mass P55.

[55] See Chapter nine of F Segerfeldt (2005) pp.111-118.

[56] http://lists.essential.org/random-bits/msg00184.html.

production. By applying UN resolutions and international decisions the state could pass GATS necessity test for regulation through 'relevant international standards.'[57] Firstly, through the culmination of principles granting states sovereign rights over their natural resources[58] to exploit or conserve them upon their own development program. Second, through growing opinion about how the underdeveloped can exploit their resources.[59] These are based on protection against the 'assertion of superior strength,'[60] over-exploitation,[61] requirements for progression and development,[62] subsistence and improved living standards[63] which *cannot* be infringed,[64] and full sovereignty.[65]

Fairness to the Poor, Altruism for the Future

The standard edifice of Adam Smith's free-trade theory, as shown in the historically strong performers, is that countries specialise in what they do best to find a comparative advantage. Some states are good at some things; some are not, so one trades their strength with another's strength (which is the former's weakness). Comparative advantage, if found, is the best institution to pass to next generations. By contrast Oxfam assert that for trade to reduce poverty 'the poor need access to rich country markets,' a faulty argument. To jump to another field briefly, affirmative action, African-American John McWhooter has argued extensively for the reduction of quotas for African-Americans into top schools where they cannot compete and struggle, which has longer term negative effects.[66] The Oxfam view may act similarly, the developing nations' economies would be up against the strongest markets in the world and be ill-equipped to compete; instead they would be best looking for cooperative trade partners and entering the markets once they have secured a trade base.

Similarly Easterly argues that markets need to be protected to evolve into specialisation and stability before they enter the global markets, as venturing unprepared will reduce your value and trust in the marketplace making growth exponentially harder. Whereas entering at their own pace, although restrictive for the impoverished present generations, would have longer term possibilities for growth. In stark contrast to the WTO blaming the lack of growth of developing nations on their lack of rapid liberalising,[67] some of the slower liberalising of developing countries like Vietnam, China and Indonesia have some of the strongest export performances.[68]

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[57] GATS Article VI.

[58] United Nations UN Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States General Assembly Resolution 3281 (XXIX) 12 December 1974; United Nations General Assembly resolution 1803 (xvii) permanent sovereignty over natural resources 14 December 1962. Libyan American Oil Company LIAMCO v Government of the Libyan Arab Republic 62 ILR (1977).

[59] Article 2 United Nations Convention on the environment and development (1992) Rio, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 626(VII) Right to exploit freely Natural Wealth and Resources 21 December 1952, Fisheries Jurisdiction case: Federal Republic of Germany v Iceland ICJ 2 February 1973, Dispute concerning filleting within the gulf of St Lawrence (Canada and France) Arbitral tribunal established by agreement of 23 October 1985.

[60] Dissenting opinion of Judge P Nervo *Fisheries Jurisdiction case: Federal Republic of Germany v Iceland* ICJ 2 February 1973.

[61] As Judge Nervo, though speaking of living species, calls it, 'consequence of irrational exploitation or pollution'. In Dissenting opinion of Judge P Nervo 1973.

[62] United Nations General Assembly Resolution 626(VII) *Right to exploit freely Natural Wealth and Resources* 21 December 1952, *American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man* Bogota 30 April 1948, *Declaration of Caracas* Tenth Inter-American Conference 28 March 1954.

[63] *American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man* Bogota 30 April 1948, *Declaration of Caracas* Tenth Inter-American Conference 28 March 1954.

[64] Article 4: Each State Party to this Convention recognizes that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage referred to in Articles 1 and 2 and situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that State. It will do all it can to this end, to the utmost of its own resources and, where appropriate, with any international assistance and co-operation, in particular, financial, artistic, scientific and technical, which it may be able to obtain. UNESCO Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage Paris 21 November 1972.

[65] United Nations General Assembly Resolution 626(VII) *Right to exploit freely Natural Wealth and Resources* 21 December 1952.

[66] C Swain (2001) *The New White Nationalism in America* Cambridge University Press; National Public Radio 'It's time to end affirmative action' *intelligent squared debate series* New York.

[67] J Stiglitz (2006) *Making Globalisation Work: The next steps to global justice* Penguin London P.6.

[68] Oxfam International (2002) *Rigged rules and double standards: Trade, globalisation, and the fight against poverty* London p.125.

Ultimately the debate over the privileges and protections for the future culminate in the implementation of Sustainable Development, which as an ethic of development has some grounding under international law as a **'**principle with normative value**'**[69] with 'principle[s] of intergenerational rights'[70] formulating a 'principle of trusteeship of earth's resources.'[71]

But via the vague[72] WCED approach of Sustainable Development as harmony between generations[73] it can be justified to abandon sustainable development for short-term development goals to relieve extreme poverty and grow to a better position for FDI (thus providing the benefit for the future generation). From this reassessed original position long term goals can be acknowledged. This provides reciprocal altruism for the Next Generation[74] to be the catalyst for growth for the future generation(s).[75] ICESCR article 2(1),[76] may give this process some protection, and through Article 5(1),[77] under an intergenerational interpretation, could ensure the present-day fairness required to keep today and tomorrow in unison.[78]

It is however wholly conceivable that desperation supersedes intergenerational fairness. This would be a welfare-based approach and arguably within distributive justice principles. Equitable treatment for the future cannot be guaranteed[79] as through plunder, market forces, conflict and policy the present can control the destiny of the future and the WCED approach makes no claim as to which generation has priority or what the consequences are for overexploitation. However since its assumption as a moral right[80] the debate for a legal approach is receding and pressure for implementation is advancing.

Like free-trade, Sustainable Development argues to sustain growth for the poor,[81] but under free-trade this is empty rhetoric. The competitive nature of the economic system along with the unfair practices of subsidies and other protections together with fledgling economies leaves the developing world little leverage to advance or sustain growth their way whilst protecting their resource or endowment. The soft law assertion of Sustainable Development if pressed would crumble under the hard law principles of international trade law because the political and economic investment in the latter is that much greater, especially since guilt is not a commodity and the developing world can just be labelled as externalities. The 'moral obligation'[82] presumed by Sustainable Development of legitimising conservation for the future is at odds with the legitimisation of the market. This legitimisation is difficult because it is hard to measure what the future generations are entitled to.

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[69] This value comes from the appearance of the idea in several multi-lateral treaties. Judge Weermantry in *Case concerning the Gabcikovo-Nagymoros project (Hungary/Slovakia) 25 September 1997.*

[70] Judge Weermantry *25 September 1997.*

[71] Judge Weermantry *25 September 1997.*

[72] As Boyle puts it, 'inadequate and incomplete prescription, which begs elaboration.' In A Boyle and D Freestone (eds) (2001) p.13.

[73] In both the Brundtland report and *proposed legal principle for environmental protection and sustainable development adopted by WCED experts group on environmental law* Principle 2: 'States shall conserve and use the environment and natural resources for the benefit of present generations and future generations.'

[74] Although determining a 'generation' is difficult as it can be measured by years, birth pangs, political changes in demography. I am using the notion that 10-15 years brings the next generation as a rule of thumb.

[75] Following ibid. The future generations in this sense will be those coming 15 years after the next generation. Roughly the generations coming 30-100 years from today. Alternatively one can take an Iroquois approach that decisions must consider the impacts on the next 7 generations, but taking the advances in life spans this will amount to about 4 generations in our current stage.

[76] ICESCR Article 2(1) Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures.

[77] ICESCR Article 5(1) Nothing in the present Covenant may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights or freedoms recognized herein, or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the present Covenant.

[78] I Lowe "Governing in the interest of future generations" p.131.

[79] I Lowe "Governing in the interest of future generations" p.131.

[80] Rio Summit United nations *Convention on the environment and development* (1992) Rio.

[81] '[need] an assurance that those poor get their fair share of the resources required to sustain their growth.' World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) p.43.

[82] World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) p.67.

II. The Absurd[83] Idea of Being Rationally Selfish

Insanity and the SAP

Arguably the SAP is there to serve different masters. Contrary to its promotion of amending haemorrhaging economies to provide for progressive development, the SAP[84] acts as a transfer of western law to ensure the developing world is viable for free-trade through the imposition of its social and legal philosophy for stable, and investor friendly, economies.[85] Through extensive trade liberalisation the door is opened to mass privatisations, deregulation, and low-tariff trade as the state and IFI's attempt to reduce national debt by removing the public sector from capital-intensive services.

Liberalisation is promoted through conditionality,[86] corruption[87] or evidence of success in the private sphere.[88] For example, the 2002 IMF mission in Slovakia recommended a list of changes to promote convergence to EU living standards; this included a strengthening of the financial sector to be attractive to investment, and commercial law to harmonize with western standards.[89] The 'interests of the poor did not have enough weight to force a change in western policy'[90] and poorer states do not have the economy to resist the developing nations and so reform subsidies to look for the greater good. Whilst the developed nations do not need extensive loans they can continue to subsidise without pressure. Arguably the rich should learn from the Public Good game that the few will look to punish the selfish when they have their turn, the future could strike back, an economic blowback. The rich are using the law to ensure that occurrence never comes.

The method of stripping inefficient areas from state expenditure follows the same 'one-shoe-fits-all' austerity processes. Free-trade advocate Jagdish Bhagwati defends this process through an argument of tired clichés that the developing world is 'barefoot…busy removing thorns instead of proceeding at due speed to their destination.'[91] It is possible to go barefoot without getting thorns in your feet, the road just needs to be clear from thorns and so providing these metaphorical 'shoes' (where in reality it is the straightjacket)[92] they are merely papering cracks. Removing the real obstacles, such as the foreign subsidies that disable specialisation in home markets,[93] is where the real road to recovery lay.

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[83] AK Sen (1987) p.18.

[84] Following criticism of the austerity processes from organisations like the UN over the affects on human necessities the SAP from the 1980s included small-scale safety nets which were often based upon providing entry for former soviet states entry to the EU trading blocs. The IMF admitted to severe inequalities in the opportunities the SAP could provide but also blamed the populations for not supporting the process and so changed the name to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, but ostensibly it is the same thing and so the term SAP will be used for this paper. See *General comment no.12 On the right to adequate food* UN Doc E/C.12/1999/5 12 May 1999; Tomasevski in SI Skogly (2001) *The Human Rights Obligations of the World Bank and the IMF* Cavendish London P23; IMF response to the UN committee on economic, social and cultural rights criticism in 1991 in UN Doc E/C4/Sub2/1991/63. HJ Chang (2007) *Bad Samaritans: Rich nations, poor policies and the threat to the developing world* Random House London; W Easterly (2006) pp52-56.

[85] RC Wolf (2004) Trade, Aid, and Arbitrate: the globalisation of western law Ashgate Aldershot P108.

[86] The Loans and SAPs of the World Bank/IMF have a lot of influence, for example the Bolivian Cochabamba privatisation was secured by enforcing it as criteria to provide a $25 million loan to Bolivia. A study of 40 privatisations in 2000 saw 12 were enforced through conditionality to loans by the World Bank and IMF. In L Mehta and B La Cour Madsen "Is the WTO after your water? The General Agreement on Trade in services (GATS) and poor people's right to water" Natural Resources Forum Vol.29 No.4 2005 P156.

[87] In the case of Bolivia there were a number of high-level politicians who became shareholders in the Bechtel subsidiary in operation in Cochabamba Aguas del Tunari before the privatisation began.

[88] F Segerfeldt cit. (2005).

[89] RC Wolf (2004) cit. p 104.

[90] W Easterly (2006) cit. p.54.

[91] J Bhagwati "Trading for development: how to assist poor countries" In M Moore (ed) (2004) World Trade Organisation: Doha and beyond: the future of the multilateral trading system Cambridge University Press p.116.

[92] This is a theory of one similar economy for all to conform to. It involves attracting investors by privatising enterprises, balancing budgets, lowering tariffs, removing restrictions on FDI, eliminating subsidies for state-owned firms T Friedmann (2000) *The Lexus and Olive Tree* Anchor Books New York; B Eichengreen 'One economy, ready or not: Thomas Friedman's jaunt through globalisation' *Foreign Affairs* May/June 1999.

[93] W Easterly (2006) cit. p.53.

Easterly pointedly criticised this top-down approach to market manufacture that 'free markets work, free market reforms often don't because the free market depends on the bottom-up emergence of complex institutions.'[94] Attempting to plan a market, as does the IMF, ignores the rational advances of market evolution, whereas Buiter defended the system as a course of 'enlightened self-interest' of reciprocal trade liberalisation enhancing the gains for all where those gains do not need to be present.[95] Buiter's view may be flawed; one only has to consider Moldova, one of the richest Soviet Republics whose transition to the market economy caused a 70% drop in GDP and since 1998 their economy has been devalued, an effect of Russia's devaluation, causing the cost of foreign debt service to escalate to 75% of the governments budget leaving little for social service and development infrastructure.[96] Moldova have a 25% economy in effect, by the terms of reciprocal altruism the future generations may only see 7 cents in the dollar at a minimum, but are likely to see at least 55 cents in the dollar on transferred debts.

This debate may be irrelevant based on the irrationality of the system. The goal is simple, the World Bank argues that the benefits are future based and social costs will reduce over time,[97] the SAP is a means to an end but the end is the same as the beginning - to repay the loans, and not 'more equitable and sustained growth.'[98] If the program fails the loan still must be repaid. This can forge the argument of conspiring to 'squeeze the poor'[99] through the high levels of debt service leading to loan cycles which are fed through over-lending or being pressured into over-borrowing.[100] The Ivory Coast had 26 SAPs in the 1980s and 90s and per capita income plunged.[101] After Russia's 13 SAPs in the 1990s inflation increased 1000%. Bolivia began their 'textbook application of neo-liberalisation'[102] from 1985 following the debt crisis and was aided by IMF and World Bank loans the effect of which was nothing but mismanaged debt[103] passed onto successor governments and free license to privatise which saw control of five main companies[104] cede to foreign corporations for the minimal sum of $1.7 billion[105] leading to a 75% national tax reduction in some industries as the privatised profits were skimmed or re-directed away from the public purse.[106]

The SAP fulfils the definition of insanity, trying the same thing year after year; they have not shown the desired results for the developing world but persist because they benefit the IFI shareholders. This 'utopian social engineering'[107] is based on irrationally thinking the results will be different the next time around. This cycle predictably saw the top 20 African loaners receive negative or zero growth in the 80s and 90s.[108] These states with balance of payments problems are falling into larger debt holes as they spend more than they take in, then they restrict their expenditure and liberalise causing recessions in their economies. In some cases, after 20 years of austerity loans the country is still too poor to service the austerity debts, a debt that is transferred to succeeding generations. The help on offer for the very poor is misleading; the HIPC[109] debt

[94] W Easterly (2006) p.53.
[95] HJ Chang (2007) p.67.
[96] J Stiglitz (2006) p.211.
[97] World Bank In SI Skogly (2001) *The Human Rights Obligations of the World Bank and the IMF* Cavendish London P21.
[98] J Stiglitz (2002) *Globalisation and its discontents* Penguin London P53.
[99] Poor countries sent over $4 billion per month to just service their debt, if they were paying their instalments it would be $12.5 billion per month. In O Olivera and T Lewis (2004) P15.
[100] See J Stiglitz (2006) pp211-245.
[101] W Easterly p.58.
[102] M McFarland Sanchez-Moreno and T Higgins "No recourse: Transnational corporations and the protection of Economic, Social, and Cultural rights in Bolivia" *Fordham International Law Journal* Vol 27 No 5 May 2004 P1663.
[103] Based on 1985 figures, Bolivia had a $4.3 billion debt, prior to the NEP the external debt equalled 33% of expected earnings, by 2001 the payments on debt was $36.8 million annually. Which is a reduction but is not a debt that can be equitably managed by the present generation and will be passed on. In O Olivera and T Lewis (2004) P15.
[104] There are the national companies of electricity, oil, gas, transport, telecoms.
[105] In addition to these other privatisations were undervalued such as the $14m sale of the Huanuni mine and vinto metallurgic complex to a British firm. The site alone, without the mineral value, was in excess of $15m.
[106] For example the state owned petroleum company provided $400 million annually in taxes, this dropped to $80 million for the same privatised company.
[107] P Murrell 'What is shock therapy? What did it do in Poland and Russia?' *Post-soviet Affairs* 9 no.2 April-June 1993.
[108] W Easterly (2006) p.59-60.
[109] Heavily Indebted Poor Countries.

relief program serviced only three of the members (currently standing at 41)[110] in the first four years of the program.[111]

Debt passed on, with the burden of interest, leads to over-proportionate reductions for future utility. Debt highlights the importance of stability in the economic and political process because without stability there is the risk of passing on odious debt. Consider the current generation in Ethiopia who are still paying off the Red Terrors weapons that were killing their forefathers for 17 years. After their overthrow the new government inherited this debt. There are similar examples in Nigeria,[112] Congo,[113] South Africa,[114] and Chile.[115] The term 'moral obligation' frequently arises in intergenerational justice theory. We have a direct example of a future generation living today paying an unfair debt. There is a saying investors in violent regimes should consider - *if you play with matches you're gonna get burned.* However, if they are from the UK they will not get burned as the British government will service the loan to the arms dealer.[116] The next and future generations of Iraq may be in an even worse position, with debt increasing at $322 per minute. The debt has combined with market forces and is traded on the open market,[117] this will continue until it is paid, accruing huge interest payments for the future generations who may be 'liberated' from political and social repression but are arguably entering a world of economic repression.

The Success of Openness

The IMF Trade Restrictiveness index which exposes the extent of liberalisation in a country shows the EU, US and Japan as the *least* open, therefore least cooperative even though they have the larger incomes, therefore less trust in the other members of the economy. By contrast, Haiti with a very low income but rapidly liberalising is one of the least restrictive. Perhaps there is a middle level where trust increases because for the poor money is too important to lose and the rich becomes part of a competition. If the levels of state trust on an axis of state income were marked on a bell-curve we may see the median income is the most trustful by chance and the poor and rich are at the same level of trust. A World Bank cross-country research study claimed there was a strong beneficial relationship between aggregate income and economic openness.[118] Oddly enough, openness was correlated positively with the top 60% performing economies, meaning the poor are paying for the openness of the richer. In a sense this pre-empts the possibilities of protection to find comparative advantage.

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[110] World Bank Economic Policy and Debt The Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEBTDEPT/0,,contentMDK:20260049~menuPK:64166739~pagePK:64166689~piPK:64166646~theSitePK:469043,00.html

[111] J Stiglitz (2006) P.226.

[112] Nigeria had a $27 billion debt in 2005 and much was interest on loans taken out by the military dictators in the periods of 1964-79 and 1983-99. The dictatorship was unsustainable as they pillaged the countries wealth whilst the country pumped $250 billion in oil.

[113] The dictatorship of Mobutu See Seko was sending cold-war affiliated development loans into Swiss and offshore accounts. By the end of his regime the country amassed an $8 billion external debt, whilst Mobutu stood on a fortuned estimated between $5-10 billion. He will not be asked to part with that fortune to pay the external debt.

[114] The South African government are still paying the debts incurred during apartheid, when they were isolated from the state.

[115] Chile still owe on debts incurred during Pinochet's reign. The removal of Allende has always had conspiracy of multinational corporations and investors financing the coup. Under Pinochet many national assets and national industries were sold off culminating a tax shortfall. See A Dorfman (2002) *Exorcising Terror: The incredible unending trial of Augusto Pinochet* Seven Stories Press New York; A Dorfman, P Aguilera, R Fredes (eds) (2006 2nd ed) *Chilie: The other September 11* Ocean Press.

[116] Through the ECGD scheme the British Government pays out over $1billion a year to arms companies in Britain whose foreign clients defaulted on their debts. This includes regimes like Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Sierra Leone. In addition the whole industry is subsidised to the tune of $26,000 per person. See M Thomas (2006) *As Used on the Famous Nelson Mandela* Ebury Press London.

[117] M Thomas (2004) *Mark Thomas Debt Collector* just about productions.

[118] M Lundberg and L Squire (1999) *The simultaneous evolution of growth and inequality* World Bank Washington DC.

Justice in Free-Trade?

Much of the debate between proponents and opponents of intergenerational justice follows similar philosophical debates over free-trade as hegemony and the dynamics of the state-system. For example the rigid trading system cannot allow the difference principle to take heed for distribution for the greatest number of people, specifically those in need. The WTO can be considered irrational this way by serving the opposite audience of Rawls' principle.

Nozick is a key opponent; though not saying he is selfish or immoral, envisioned the ultra-minimal state (no welfare, no bailouts) which has become a key influence to the US social policy and support of pure free-trade.[119] Although there are flexibilities as successful trade partners who go sour receive bailouts, like Asia in 1997. This rejects the Original Position use of the veil of ignorance to level the different strengths of the population. This occurs because of a differing of value between distribution ethics. Nozick argues progress and success should be rewarded through the Wilt Chamberlin principle of a successful basketball player that 1 million people are willing to pay an extra 25c to see play earning him an extra $250,000, a larger distribution from the original position. Nozick argues this is as just as Rawls theories as the extra payments are made by freely made exchanges. Therefore legally mandated equitable utilisation policies as envisaged by Agenda 21 would discriminate and self-interest, not reciprocal altruism, would be the catalyst of 'fairness' to the future.

The above view of applying free-trade principles to intergenerational justice is valid because it shows how an important part of the system (competition) reacts with 'morals'. The system of going from big and scaling down, one of the many incarnations of the 'invisible hand', applied to developing nations markets, under protective measures, can be used to find their specialisations. Internationally this would undermine the difference principle negating options for distribution and protection for the developing world. Consider the following idea as either moral or immoral. One of the starkest aspects of the Enron scandal was their ability to convince the SEC[120] to allow them to use mark-to-market accounting.[121] Hypothetically if this system were adapted to offset sustainable development costs through an equitable exchange with the future generation the present can lift some of the debt burden. The debt would come from a multilateral development bank and the financing would run as long as the service being paid, with servicing costs factored in. Therefore the brunt of the cost will not only be felt by the poor today but levelled across the next and future generations for as long as the financed service will be projected to be in use. Granted there will be issues about political and economic stability and inflation and interest but a median level would be attained so that no generation is charged over a certain projection of their GNP. Consider this similar to UK student loan repayments which are only eligible when the graduate earns a specific income level.

The Rationality of Irrationality - the WTO and Unfair Trade Policies

It has been argued that the WTO is the 'only answer'[122] to development for the poor, and that the institution is misjudged through misinformation of a conspiracy[123] for multinational capital to dominate the South.[124] This argument goes that at the end of the 30 year 'nightmare of protectionism'[125] that proceeded WWI the Bretton Woods system created the institutions for liberal internationalism, notably the World Bank and GATT. Outside of the Asian Tiger economies[126] the developing world was progressing slowly, if at all. The

[119] For the influence Noziks works incur in US democracy see J Micklethwait and A Wooldridge (2005) *The Right Nation: Why America is Different* Penguin London.
[120] Securities Exchange Commission.
[121] In short it is when the prediction of the value of the product or service at the end of a specific time not reached (like the end of a financial year) is assigned as the current value. Therefore for those nine months, if timed right, it can fetch the optimum value even if there is a price drop in the market.
[122] P Legrain (2002) Open World: the truth about globalisation Abacus London p.52.
[123] 'Conspiracy of the rich to get richer at the expense of the poor' M Vander Weyer "Can free trade be fair trade?" *New Statesman* 28 February 2005 P23.
[124] M Desai 'The left is wrong about free trade' *New Statesman* 17 April 2000.
[125] M Desai 'The left is wrong about free trade' *New Statesman* 17 April 2000.
[126] The Asian Tiger economies' success came through exporting to richer northern countries. Between 1960-75 they claimed 10% of world GDP, this rose a further 10% by 1999. By 2005 they controlled 38% of world exports on high and medium technology exports. UNDP *Human Development Report 2005* Geneva.

Keynesian system broke down largely at the behest of the oil crisis causing stagflation in the North, so when the Uruguay round of GATT/GATS negotiations opened in 1986 the agenda had moved towards free-trade liberalisation through a democratic structure which Desai argued was 'at the behest of the south.'[127] In 1995, after five years of capital growth, arguably the most controversial institution of modern times was born - the WTO. It was to bring a 'semblance of a rule of law to international commerce' where 'everyone was *supposed* to be a winner' (italics added).[128] Its democratic structure would make entry more inviting to the developing world, and the non-discrimination in trade made it accessible for the developed world. However, the creation of the WTO was based more for the market entry for the north[129] in a system not reciprocal but that condones pressure and irrationality.

Desai argued favourably for the WTO that 'the developing countries had secured the first and only post-1945 global institution in which countries were treated equally.'[130] Ironically this equality had an entry fee - to accept single undertaking and to harmonise one's domestic economic system with the agreements of the WTO,[131] replacing the opt-out clause under GATT[132]. Ensuring that foreign investment and companies get Most Favoured Nation[133] and National Treatment[134] effectively renders the state unable to provide incentives to national companies to increase distribution of a resource to the poorest regions,[135] and although the states before entry can decide which sectors of the economy are open for national treatment this can only be done through non-discriminatory limitations[136] and are 'effectively prevented'[137] from rescinding commitments under the structure's rigidity.

Economist George Stigler argues self-interest always wins through because their arguments are based on 'expected results'[138] and this may be no more evident than within the WTO. 'The WTO is no would-be tyrant. It is democratic to a fault and has few powers of its own'[139] argues *The Economist* and compared to institutions like the IMF (with voting rights based on donation)[140] and the UN (with veto powers for five Security Council members) the WTO is equal as each state has an equal vote. Because the WTO rules and procedures are altered only by members' consensus, 'power-plays'[141] occur and the rich states are driving the all-important agenda.[142] Whilst two-thirds of the delegations are from the developing world, without a strong consensus there is little hope of implementing poverty reduction measures or making free-trade work for them under majority rules.

The internal functioning of the WTO breeds inequality both in delegation and structure which are incompatible with intergenerational justice. The system causes an undue burden on the developing world.

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[127] M Desai 'The left is wrong about free trade'.
[128] J Stiglitz (2006) p.7.
[129] As US president of the time Ronald Regan said 'treat American products as their own' In HJ Chang (2007) p.75
[130] M Desai 'The left is wrong about free trade' *New Statesman* 17 April 2000.
[131] RC Wolf (2004).
[132] HJ Chang (2007) p.74.
[133] Article II.
[134] Article XVII.
[135] E Tuerk and A Ostrovsky and R Speed "GATS and its impact on private sector participation in water services" In E Brown Weiss and L Boisson de Chazournes and N Bernasconi-Osterwalder (2005) P169.
[136] The state must divulge all possible alternatives to not be discriminating trade.
[137] E Tuerk and A Ostrovsky and R Speed in E Brown Weiss and L Boisson de Chazournes and N Bernasconi-Osterwalder (2005) *Fresh water and International Economic Law* Oxford University Press P148.
[138] AK Sen (1987) p.18.
[139] *The Economist* 'Who elected the WTO?' 27 September 2001.
[140] Voting power at the World Bank and the IMF are based upon deposit amounts thus - The IMF has 185 members as of 2007. The US is largest quota holder with 16.79% of votes, Japan has over 6%, Germany over 5% and the UK and France over 4%. Developing nations barely make over 0.1% each. The World Bank has 185 members and the US is again the largest quota holder with 16.38% of the votes, Japan has over 7%, Germany, France and the UK have over 4%. These figures are easily accessible from www.imf.org and www.worldbank.org; RC Wolf pp103-107.
[141] Ian Wilkinson of the EC in 2002 argued that although the WTO is not undemocratic because all members are democracies (which is a fallacy) the economic interests of the US (he forgets to note the EU interests) are too large, causing power plays. In F Jawara and A Kwa (2004) *Behind the scenes at the WTO: the real world of international trade negotiations and the lessons from Cancun* Zed Books London p. 19.
[142] A Malaysian Delgate M Suppermaniam in F Jawara and A Kwa (2004) p.19-20.

There are no delegations for the future generations and any state who argues the intergenerational case would be jeopardising their market share. Governments who have a nowise conception of free-trade like the US and the EU states bring the largest delegations. At Cancun the US brought 14 delegates, EU 18 and Japan 23 (who were looking for trade after their crash), this is to promote markets as much as to protect. Of the middle income nations the mineral rich brought the largest delegations (Brazil (12) and Venezuela (8)) but these are the exception as they have the most resources to negotiate with. Most brought 2 or 3, some brought zero,[143] LDCs peak at 6, most are also at zero. What this depicts is the lack of voice for the developing world to negotiate possibilities for growth and to create a strong consensus to drive the agenda away from the richer states. This scenario is made worse by the structure of meetings.

The real power lay in the teams that reside in Geneva who can navigate the structure of the WTO effectively. The structure of the WTO is like a war of attrition with those with the most feet on the ground succeeding further in the 1,000 meetings per year, and with over 67 bodies and over 30 standing bodies there is ample of discussion and negotiation. This bottleneck of negotiations results in meetings running in unison with other meetings. For small delegations it is a question of which to focus on, where the richer states can speculate and specialise to attend a wider number of, if not all, meetings which is effectively used to open or protect any market. In 2001 the high volume of meetings exhausted the smaller delegates with 400 formal meetings and 500 informal meetings, the extent of which led the 30 strong South Korea team to complain of exhaustion.[144] The ministerial runs every two years but the power broking begins at the preliminary mini-ministerial attended by few members which give the strongest indications of where the powerful will direct the agenda. In turn developing world delegations have been played off against each other[145] and their inherent economic weaknesses make them vulnerable to the inequitable exchanges the agenda setters offer. Those with the feet on the ground walk around Stigler's view of "self-interest by 'reasonably informed' people" by becoming *hyper* informed people in negotiations. The self-interest will win.

Agricultural Unfairness

The use of tariffs as a protection has come under extreme scrutiny since the formation of the WTO and has been argued as a discriminatory practice. The EU alone held 4.9% of imports from LDCs to 15% tariffs. The average agriculture tariffs amongst the main players are: EU 20%, US 9%, Canada 8.8% and Japan 29.7%.[146] These markets are further protected by developed nations holding anti-dumping investigations on developing nations.[147] The richer states can use their surplus to protect themselves, if African or Latin American states wanted to propose the same levels of subsidy they would need to invest half their budget. On the one hand it could be an educated gamble from the developed nations as it may give them a foothold in the global market and create inheritable businesses, ironically the aim of free trade for the developing world. On the other hand it puts the living standards of those living today in the developing world in jeopardy against state spending and price increases in food stuffs. Haiti dropped tariffs from 50% to 3% in the 1980s and 1990s and consequently became open to heavily subsidised US agricultural imports. The real price of rice fell by 25% destroying the majority of local producers,[148] and 80% of Haiti's rural population fell into poverty. Although the urban poor benefited from the drop in prices of staples of their diet the large farming communities had worthless and un-inheritable land and produce and even with an abundance of food one half of the Haiti children were malnourished.[149]

[143] Antigua and Barbuda brought zero.
[144] F Jawara and A Kwa (2004) p.19-20.
[145] F Jawara and A Kwa (2004), ibid.
[146] Oxfam International (2002) p.98.
[147] Between 1995 and 2000 the EU held 145 investigations, the US 89, Canada 27 and Japan 6. In Oxfam International (2002) p.98.
[148] One Haitian farmer remarked 'the rice is so cheap, we can never find a way out of poverty'. In Oxfam International (2002) p.141.
[149] This concept of famine whist there is food available was populated by Amaryta Sen's entitlements theory in his polemic *On poverty and famines*, the theory also included an factor of the entitlements theory as inheritance entitlements, whereby the needs to produce 'entitlements' would be preserved. And see Oxfam International (2002) p.141.

Agricultural subsidies may not have been intended to cause this harm, but as Stiglitz asserts, these externalities were a '*foreseen* consequence.'[150] However tariff reductions alone are not enough to promote fairness because they are not structured to be pro-development, or even economical. For example, if the developing world canned their fruit instead of exporting raw produce they would earn more, could use preservatives to protect against spoilage, and create jobs in a burgeoning tin and distribution industry for instance. This industry would become the bedrock of a rational progressive development model. This does not occur because they would in effect become manufactured goods. The developed world use tariff escalation to protect themselves from manufactured goods; the tariffs are higher than if the product was sold raw, which sells at a lower price.

Non-discrimination in trade as promoted by the WTO seemingly has been lost in translation when referring to agricultural subsides. In principle agriculture was outside GATT principles, in the 1950s the US sought a waiver to allow protective measures but following a subsidies war between the EU and US in the 1980s huge surpluses were attained which needed to be exported, the US was losing markets to the EU and sought that agriculture be brought under GATT. The Blair house accord (1992) bi-lateral agreement between the EU and the US put the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) under GATT/WTO principles with single undertaking for other members.

The developing world agreed to join the WTO believing they would benefit from agricultural liberalisation and subsidy reduction in the OECD. However the green-box loophole in the AoA provides special and differential treatment for the developed nations for 'non-trade distorting subsidies' resulting in the legitimisation of crop dumping in developing markets at below production prices as a result of the huge subsidy. The defence of this was for home job sustainability. In the OECD sugar and rice subsidies count for 80% of these farmers' incomes.[151] Contrast the following figures to the $8 in EU aid each African receives.[152] The subsidies which are put on agricultural products, an increase from $243 billion in 1986 to $279 billion in 2004 globally,[153] and some $40 billion in the EU alone, or $913 per cow, means that at a loss the Europeans, Japanese, Canadian and Americans are dumping cheap produce on fledgling economies destroying domestic economies and in many cases their main export strength. For example, farmers in California would not be able to compete with the developing world if agricultural markets were based on comparative advantage. The Californian farmer can use subsidised water, where much of the developing world have to move to full-cost recovery (in Cochabamba commercial users had the largest increases at 59%),[154] and the US government offers to pay half the income of many farmers so as to compete.[155]

So why are the West using subsidies and different protections? For the same reasons the developing world would want to use them, because the world is unequal. In 1975 the OECD had 80% of the world's GDP; it had been reduced to 70% by 2000. Marx quipped 'capital has no country' and capital is finding its way into more profitable niches outside of the rich nations. To continue global economic hegemony they need only the like-minded to join their club, thus the point of the WTO, in essence to maintain the status quo, which is why Chang likens the system to Freidrich List's disdain of Britain's imperial legacy of 'kicking away the ladder'.[156]

Global Cooperation - Protecting the Present and Future

The question of global governance is strongly affiliated to two pillars of intergenerational justice, that of sovereignty and democracy, which the WTO is argued not to uphold but to destroy. The current economic system is an 'anarchic collection of states with their own interests,'[157] not the anarchism of Berkman or Goldman, but that of Nozick to be moulded by the most powerful. However, states must be shown to not be

[150] J Stiglitz (2006) p. 86.
[151] OECD (2005) *Agricultural policies in OECD countries: Monitoring and Evaluation* Paris.
[152] F Jawara and A Kwa (2004).
[153] UNDP (2005).
[154] Comparatively, under the municipal service they paid on average $1,531,530 per annum, under *Aguas del Tunari* they would pay $2,440,446.
[155] J Stiglitz (2006) p.85.
[156] H Chang (2007).
[157] D Skinner p.8.

threatened by global governance and embrace cooperation. They may benefit from living in a more stable world with a better distribution of wealth but without binding enforcement mechanisms states can ignore and undermine their responsibilities. This is not the case with the WTO. The economic globalisation as promoted by the IMF and WTO is not globalisation in its strictest sense. Globalisation initially was for the peaceful interaction between states. This could act as an overseer for fair practices in free-trade and could be the key against the 'unaccountable corporate elitism'[158] which forces all nations to accept standards that yield the highest profit margin whilst adopting measures that restrict distribution aimed for the least advantaged.

Edmond Burke, against the Jeffersonian ethic that the earth belongs to the living, argued for a type of 'human nature' conservatism[159] in the 'cash nexus' where all actions by the state are of a 'primeval contract of eternal society' that our partnership with the state 'becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born'.[160] For free-trade to work for the future a mindset of Burke's 'cash nexus' must be founded within the WTO. However the dynamics of this include too many variables, to agree on an intergenerational policy, to agree with what resources and what levels will be preserved, and whether the partners can be trusted.

Conclusion

The vastness of the international trade system and poverty limits this to less than half an argument, but seedlings for thought. With issues such as TRIPS and the lack of transfer of technology agreements there are further elements that hold the developing world from market growth and efficiency in production. However, the system of free-trade as it stands is irrational against the evolution of the market. It purports to keep the developing world static with the negative consequences from tariff escalation keeping them tied to failing commodities and raw materials markets and trading on prices lowered due to crop dumping. In effect, between the escalation and the price reductions the developing nations are forced to accept a 90-10 split. By adopting the principles from the Public Good game, markets, resource and policy are not out of the reach for the future generations. Adopting reciprocal altruism would make the assumption that the contribution would be made and paid forward generation to generation, each time strengthening our resolve for justice and fairness. This would stand opposed to the free-rider strategies the rich states are seemingly adopting towards the developing world. Reciprocal altruism would limit objectivism and feed the aims of equality through the principles seen in the Ultimatum Game and Public Good game as these are above philosophy; they are human nature and are the only way for 'just savings' to be just. Though it must be said it took a few rounds for these games to strike parity, and 13 years down the line we are still in the early rounds.

The problem with rational self-interest is that it moves in a static moral context and therefore blinkers the positive possibilities free-trade can provide, such as the increased connections to water supplies and trading strength for strength. Rejecting an optimum view of free-trade would be self-defeating. The altruistic are wishful because they do not embrace that their devil may also be their angel. The WTO can be used to our advantage if a common consensus is formed. The likelihood of this is growing but without major players this can never be assured, especially as developing nation consortiums at the WTO are targeted by the richer states with bribery and misinformation about their partners' motives.[161] In a sense they are playing partners against each other as profit-maximisers. Decisions made through reciprocal altruism do not require justification other than being 'just' for furthering cooperation. Humanity can gain because it can create benefits based on human history of market growth to cause the present generation to increase their trust in the market and the future to make intergenerational equity a reality without the need of a veil of ignorance, but on free-exchanges.

The Ultimatum Game and the Public Good Game, in the context of the international economic system, miss one key variable which makes it more akin to the dictator game - power. By controlling the majority of the global economy and the agenda of the IFI's the rich states have created a moral barrier for the 'selfish proposer' role and submitted the developing world into the role of 'selfish receivers'.[162] The usual scenario

[158] D Skinner, cit., p.8.
[159] C Hitchens (2007) *Thomas Paine's Rights of Man* Atlantic Books p.80.
[160] Ibid p.80.
[161] See Jawara and Kwa, cit.
[162] For example, an agreement between the UK and 76 ACP states for favourable access to EU markets expired in 2007. Through the UK Comprehensive Spending Review of 2007 it was shown that the UK is trying to pressure the

in the Ultimatum Game of parity is never offered. In this ideology the poor and the future are externalities for deals done today. The SAP system has clear agendas away from the 'enlightened self-interest' of reciprocal liberalisation that Buiter suggests. It does not promote cooperation but creates tiers and lessens the protection once afforded to the industrialised states by fracturing sovereign protection as depicted by List's 'kicking away the ladder'. In effect austerity fractures their sovereignty and the WTO completes the takeover. The pressurised WTO negotiation system induces irrational behaviour. As a group there should be measures of both selfishness and selflessness; in the WTO the former succeeds. The height of the irrationality is the failure to learn from mistakes and successes, the failures of the SAPs are repeated, the successes of protected markets for specialisations which founded the strong economies today are repealed.

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THE 'TIME-HORIZON': INSTITUTIONALISING INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

JEAN-PAUL DE LUCCA

Introduction

When the problem of poverty in the Appalachia region reached the highest echelons of power in the United States in the 1960s, the standard of living of the people in this region, in one of the richest countries of the world, was comparable to that in most 'third world' countries. Notwithstanding region-specific poverty policies, the situation has not changed much since then. Local communities live in isolation, and the rich natural resources of the area are not owned or used for the benefit of the locals or their development. It was only in recent years that the limited access to 'their' own resources moved the locals to consider the more sustainable use of these resources as a means of solving the problem of poverty which has for centuries afflicted the region. It has been argued that the failure of 'conventional policies' over the years led to the development of a series of new initiatives aimed at augmenting sustainable community capacity 'from the ground up' (Glasmeier & Farrigan, 2003).

The situation in Appalachia may seem remote to many readers living in industrialised and technologically-advanced communities, but like many other similar cases across the globe, it gives us certain insights which I would like to use in order to loosely frame the thoughts put forward in this paper. The itinerary I would like to follow starts by considering the concept of sustainability as setting the requirements needed for development within an integrative framework which takes into account economic, social and environmental factors. All three spheres have a direct impact on the rise or reduction of poverty levels (whether relative or absolute - a distinction which is not crucial in the present discussion). Economic decline, social exclusion and environmental degradation can be causes and effects of poverty, while, inversely, economic growth, social inclusion and environmental conservation can contribute to improved livelihoods. Sustainability is precisely the kind of behaviour which sees the latter set of initiatives as a response to the former ills. Apart from widening the intersection between its three pillars, the concept of sustainability is inherently future-oriented, in that it aims to integrate the needs and aspirations of present as well as future generations. It was mainly due to this evolving concept that the discourse of intergenerational justice and solidarity has developed in recent years. Just as it challenges those policies which isolate social, economic and environmental issues from one another, the integrative notion of sustainability seeks to introduce a 'time-horizon' in present-day policy decisions to cover as long a stretch of time as possible. This goes against the all-too-common trap of 'short-termism' in the formulation of 'conventional' policies. This pitfall is arguably the greatest threat to intergenerational justice, as it fails to recognise future needs or, worse still, recognises them and fails (refuses) to address them. Introducing a 'time-horizon' in policy would significantly help to address problems beyond the immediate concerns they raise. More specifically to the case of poverty, this would help us see beyond the alleviation of poverty for those who are currently afflicted by it and develop policies aimed also at improving the quality of life for future generations.

The argument in favour of a 'time-horizon' is based on ethical principles of justice, equity and solidarity as an underpinning to the formulation of policies, strategies, structures and political action in general. The manner in which such principles are understood and implemented will unavoidably characterise the discourse of "why?" and "how?" the "fight against poverty" is conducted. It is precisely at the policy level that the impetus to take intergenerational solidarity seriously can be put forward through the introduction of long-term approaches. It is also at this level that one can hope to start moving towards the institutionalisation of intergenerational justice. This movement needs a solid commitment 'from the ground up' to take off. Like any other movement which has significantly resulted in the recognition of society's responsibility towards a particular segment of its members, intergenerational justice relies heavily on the ability of grassroots for its promotion. In a setting where many state institutions (e.g. governments) tend to adopt short-term approaches in practice, Civil Society - collectively taken as representing various groups of members of a community - can play a critical role in ensuring that state policies are sustainable in the long-term. As the role of Civil Society is gradually evolving (not without struggle) to include its representatives in different levels of policy formulation and decision-making, the demands of intergenerational justice and solidarity can find in Civil

Society a suitable advocate and promoter. One of the major requirements for the implementation of sustainable development is the growth of more participative forms of democracy. Within this changing context, the role of Civil Society in the 'wider' fight against poverty should not be overlooked. The itinerary concludes with some thoughts on the Maltese situation in relation to the promotion of intergenerational equity and its institutionalisation.

Poverty and Sustainability

Let us start with sustainability, which is, in many ways, the pivotal concept linking the key themes of poverty, justice and future generations in this paper. It is rather unfortunate that the concept of sustainable development is still today perceived by many as dealing predominantly with environmental concerns. Criticising this perception, Pal remarks that

> "[t]he concept of sustainability has evolved and expanded to include more than just environmental issues. Development practitioners now address questions linking sustainability to population and, in particular, poverty alleviation. Environmentally sustainable development cannot be achieved, let alone maintained, unless poverty is reduced. Thus, the connection between sustainability and poverty reduction must be properly understood if economic assistance for the poor is to be successful." (Pal, 1998: 457)

In support of Pal's argument, a cursory overview of the concept of sustainable development, as understood following the publication of the landmark report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987[1] (The Brundtland Report), will immediately reveal that environmental concerns are continually interlinked with wider concerns over development, chief amongst which the alleviation of poverty. Since anything close to a detailed overview of the vast amount of literature on the subject of sustainability would fall outside the scope of this paper, a closer look at parts of the Brundtland Report should suffice to introduce the link between sustainability, poverty and future generations.

The World Commission's overview of the global condition led it to identify three major challenges: (a) environmental degradation; (b) economic inequality and poverty; and (c) the inadequacy of current institutional set-ups (national and international) to effectively guarantee justice and equity for future generations. The WCED's success can perhaps be measured by its ability to popularise the notion of sustainable development and extend its use beyond (but not in lieu of) the environmental agenda. The concept gained greater legitimacy with the political recognition it received during the 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and the subsequent publication of 'Agenda 21', which served as an international blueprint for sustainable development and a precursor to many key international documents as well as local, national and regional strategies. More specifically, it raised the red flag on the need to ensure simultaneous action aimed at finding the right balance between economic growth and respect for the natural environment. At the same time, it addressed the social conditions which were affected by economic activity and the state of the environment. The Brundtland Report, and later Agenda 21, have popularised today's standard definition of sustainable development: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED: 43). It is indeed inconceivable how, in spite of the above qualifications, many today still insist on giving a narrow interpretation of sustainable development, relegating it exclusively within the sphere of environmental protection.[2]

While the above-mentioned definition provided by the WCED is cited in practically any document dealing with any area of sustainable development, the two qualifications that immediately follow it are usually less publicised. The Brundtland Report speaks of two key concepts behind sustainable development: Firstly, "the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and [secondly] the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation" (WCED: 43). Sustainability thus constitutes a normative as well as a constraining concept based on ethical principles of justice and equity. We ought to meet the needs of present generations (especially the poor) with

[1] The Brundtland Report.

[2] At the end of this paper, I will refer to the National Commission on Sustainable Development of Malta. It is interesting to note that despite the wide-ranging interests of, and representation on, the Commission, this body was set up under the Environment Protection Act (Chapter 435 of the Laws of Malta).

the restrictive proviso (often called the 'sustainability proviso') that this is done in ways that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Brundtland Report qualifies poverty as a major cause and effect of environmental degradation.[3] It also notes the 'industrial divide' between developed and developing countries, to which we can also add the more recent concern of the 'digital divide' in a global setting with a more pronounced reliance on information and communication technology. The WCED was also critical of the 'power imbalance' evidenced in the predominance of industrialised countries in the international political and economic scenario. These and other forms of inequality are found at the roots of the problems of both the environment and socio-economic development, most notably poverty. The greatest challenge as far as the alleviation of poverty is concerned is that of improving the social and economic welfare of affected individuals and communities in ways that "can eventually function without external assistance and that … will have a long-term impact on the quantitative (measured by income) and qualitative (measured by quality of life) aspects of the beneficiaries' lives" (Pal 1998: 457). This challenge relies heavily on the political will of decision-makers and policy-setters as well on the active participation of the wider public.

Bearing the above in mind, my discussion will now focus on justifying the need to introduce more long-term approaches on the political plane and on how Civil Society can contribute in this regard. In the light of the above qualifications, it is assumed that even though the present discussion does not focus directly on the problem of poverty and its various forms, its attempt to address a fundamental challenge of sustainability (intergenerational equity) will have a bearing on the means and structures employed in the 'fight against poverty'.

Intergenerational Justice

The poor and future generations have a lot in common. Both groups are disadvantaged and, albeit in different ways, they can both be said to be 'voiceless', in that they never (or almost never, in the case of the poor) have the means to effectively contribute to those decision processes which directly or indirectly affect them. In addressing this disadvantage, one can employ the language of rights (of the disadvantaged) and duties (of those who affect them). Before we can move on to speak of the problem with short-termism in policy and planning, and of the need to address the inadequacy of institutional structures so as to guarantee justice and equity for future generations, we have to highlight some of the major challenges faced when claiming any rights whatsoever for future generations, or when imposing any responsibilities on present generations. In doing this, I support the idea that the guiding principles of solidarity and social justice can be extended in time to apply to future generations due to their disadvantaged position. Partly for this reason, I prefer approaching the question of justice towards future generations informed by ethical, legal and political theory, rather than by more abstract metaphysical theories, some of which have the merit of shedding light on the problem but do not necessarily serve as the best guide for choosing between specific courses of action.

The literature on the subject (not so voluminous, considering the extent of the 'problem'), whether supportive or critical of his views, suggests that John Rawls is probably the contemporary philosopher who most significantly raised the difficulty of 'the problem of justice between generations' (Rawls 1971: 252) in the ambit of contemporary legal and political theory. In *A Theory of Justice* (1971), Rawls described the 'difference principle' as the guarantee that inequalities are arranged in such a manner as to not only benefit those who are already well-off but also to ensure "the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, consistent with a just savings principle" (Rawls 1971: 266). The 'just savings principle' places the requirement on every generation to:

a. preserve "the gains of culture and civilization" (Rawls 1971: 252)
b. "put aside in each period of time a suitable amount of real capital accumulation" (Rawls 1971: 252)
c. "bring about the full realisation of just institutions" (Rawls 1971: 257)

Rawls does not discuss (a) in any great detail and instead focuses on (b) and (c) as the means through which society can hope to satisfy the basic needs of the disadvantaged future generations. It emerges clearly from

[3] Pal's claim that "environmentally sustainable development cannot be achieved, let alone maintained, unless poverty is reduced" can thus be seen as more of a two-way relation, which in practice turns out to be really a vicious circle.

the above summary that, in 1971, Rawls had not referred to the natural environment. The reason for this is that his approach, grounded in the contractarian tradition, is restricted to relations between persons on the grounds of justice and equity. In her seminal work, *In Fairness to Future Generations* (1989), Edith Brown Weiss extends the principle of intergenerational equity to include the requirement for "each generation [to] leave to its successor a planet in at least as good a condition as that generation received it" (Brown Weiss 1989: 14). This addition became inevitable with the growing awareness of the harm caused by man-made technology and activity to the natural environment, and the ensuing adverse effects on the livelihoods of so many living and future people. It also coincided with the emergence of the concept of sustainability. The basic need for a safe environment (and the ensuing rights emanating from such needs) came to be seen as interlinked with the need for economic and social/political stability.

Rawls had already clearly perceived what is till today one of the most disputed fundamental questions on intergenerational justice, that is "the absence of the injured parties, the future generations" (Rawls 1971: 261).

In his earlier work, Rawls very clearly felt the burden imposed by the utilitarian claim that the 'identifiable' needs of present generations outweigh the 'unidentifiable' or 'less identifiable' needs of future generations. Rawls' suggestion was for each generation to take good care of the next generation or two, assuming that it could interpret their needs fairly easily, thus overcoming the crucial 'identity' problem. Critics of Rawls (rightly, perhaps) accused him of proposing a long-term dimension to basic questions of justice and equity which was itself too temporarily restricted. Beyond this problem, however, Rawls has been overall successful in framing the problem of intergenerational justice within the long-standing tradition of the 'social contract'. His approach gradually moved away from the more metaphysical theory of relation, burdened as it is by the problem of identity, and employs instead an ethical and legal relational theory between persons. This argument somewhat manages to circumvent the debate on 'identity' and absence, relying more on the legitimate assumption that, in all likelihood at least, there will be persons in the future. The prior knowledge that their present actions will have an impact on the welfare of posterity places a moral responsibility on present generations to respect the basic rights of 'unknown' individuals who are downstream. This idea, not always very well articulated in *A Theory of Justice*, emerged with greater clarity thirty years later in Rawls' last great work, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (2001). Here he revisits his original claims on the just savings principle, maintaining that "[t]he correct principle, then, is one the members of any generation (and so all generations) would adopt as the principle they would want preceding generations to have followed" (Rawls 2001: 160). This statement, of a distinctive Kantian tone, still relies heavily on a relational theory which Rawls seems to take for granted. Like the social contract, it fundamentally assumes that agreements for action in society can only be reached between members who can actively affect one another. In our situation, on the other hand, we have become increasingly aware that our actions can affect future generations, but many would still find it hard to surmise how future generations can affect us.

The 'other' form of social contract, the 'generation contract' - as Häberle (in Tremmel ed. 2006, 215-229) calls it, is still defective in that it assumes a high level of altruism which is not always factually discernible. Even Rawls' improved elaboration of the just saving principle in his later work is too conditional in addressing the unconditional needs of future generations. One might suggest that this lacuna is due to Rawls' insistence on agreements between fully cooperative members of any given society.[4] It might be helpful to distinguish between what Joel Feinberg[5] (quoted in Patridge, 1990) and others call "active rights" and "passive rights". Active rights refer to the right to do such and such a thing (e.g. I have the right to vote, to speak freely and so on) and are related to an individual. Passive rights refer to the right not be deprived of opportunities and not to be harmed (e.g. the right to a peaceful existence) and are therefore applicable to future persons. This could be argued because generally, morally and legally, the option of observing or violating passive rights falls upon the 'duty bearer' – in this case the present generation. So, if we can affirm responsibility (duty) we can see the observance of rights in this sense as a consequence. Not without difficulty or contestation, one can say that even though we cannot name *individuals* we can still argue for

[4] This is also one of the common criticisms levelled at Rawls' liberal view of social justice. However, in this paper, I am restricting the discussion to his contribution to the idea of intergenerational justice. Incidentally, Rawls' arguments are framed within the right context, i.e. an ethical, legal and political framework. Some other authors and sources lack such an elaborate framework.

[5] Joel Feiberg is an American legal and political theorist who contributed extensively to the discourse of human rights.

moral rights of *people* (even if unidentified) who will be negatively affected by someone else's decisions. One could shed some light on this position by referring to H. L. A. Hart's principle that "to have a [moral] right entails having a moral justification for limiting the freedom of another person and for determining how he should act" (Hart, 1955: 183).

The liberal global context of modern-day societies enables them to enjoy a measure of freedom and wealth which would have been inconceivable previously. However, the law (and perhaps even current philosophy of law) is still presented with key problems insofar as the global and intergenerational aspects of justice are concerned. This is mainly due to the fact that the law generally regulates situations of conflict between people living ('now') in the same country or region ('here').[6] What is needed is a notion of justice which in a way transcends space, so as to cater for global notions of justice, and time, i.e between generations. There can also be conflicts between taking a global approach and an intergenerational approach: for instance, it should not be taken for granted that certain measures, such as economic growth to alleviate poverty, will not have adverse effects on future generations. The concept of sustainability, which has risen dramatically in importance across the sphere of policy and practice, provides a framework aimed precisely at addressing the problem of global justice versus intergenerational justice. Put more simply, when analysing how to deal with poverty today, one has also to factor in how methods of dealing with poverty today will affect future generations. One could further argue that if such measures are likely to cause greater poverty in the future, then alternatives should be found.

We can move on to better understand what this means for development policy as a response to the problem of poverty by applying Rawls' adaptation of the Kantian maxim. We can feel the need to regulate our action in accordance with how we would have wanted or not wanted preceding generations to act by looking at the causes of poverty today. Otherwise put, our immediate concern with problems of poverty today puts us in a position to respond to it today and plan better for the future. In this respect, addressing the problem of poverty is not merely contingent to the current situation, but extends itself in time towards a more general concern for the well-being of future generations. At this point, it might be worth stating that the consideration of the fate and demands of future generations widens, rather than shifts, the focus on disadvantaged groups who are at a greater risk of falling victim to poverty. This broader vision is essentially one which transcends the temporal limits posed by living generations: it introduces a 'time horizon', to which I will return below.

In his interpretation of the WCED Report, *Our Common Future*, Langhelle (1999) argues that mainstream interpretations of the report have misguidedly over-emphasised the relation between sustainable development and economic growth, leading to the risk of sustainability becoming subservient to economic growth. Against this, Langhelle offers an interpretation which integrates social justice (within and between generations), solidarity, a concern for the world's poor and ecological conservation. This follows on those views that see social justice as an intergenerational demand and, at the same time, intergenerational justice as a demand rooted in and sustained by social justice.

Evidence suggests that attempts to address the question of poverty (in policy and practical terms) which do not effectively incorporate a vision which extends beyond the living generation is bound to fail miserably. This is irrespective of whether the demands for equity, justice and solidarity are more or less demanding. The inadequacy and evident shortcomings of such endeavours expose the need for a stronger theoretical foundation which would allow the formulation and implementation of long-term approaches; which necessarily look at the desired well being of both living and future generations. It can therefore be argued that the ethical principles mentioned above, which are all too often invoked in the 'fight against poverty', are completely worthless and useless if they fail to transcend the short-sightedness of standard social and political discourse.

What is needed (as an important first step rather than as a solution to the whole problem, I should hastily add) is an intergenerational approach which considers justice, equity and solidarity as desirable not only between members of the present generation (for instance, political/economic leaders and those suffering all forms of poverty) but also between living and future generations. As Brian Barry aptly puts it:

[6] Although the regime of international law is an obvious exception, its scope remains generally limited.

> "As temporary custodians of the planet, those who are alive at any given time can do a better or worse job of handing it on to their successors … to preserve conditions that will make life worth living (or indeed liveable at all) in the future, and especially in the time after those currently alive will have died ('future generations')" (Barry, 1997: 43).

Barry argues that one cannot make an absolute distinction between inter-generational and intra-generational justice. In a general sense, one could argue that certain fundamental notions (such as social justice and solidarity) establish a link between living and future generations. This further sustains the view that the eradication of poverty is not only a matter of social or global justice but also one of *intergenerational* justice. Moreover, Barry argues that measures aimed at improving "the prospects of future generations … do not represent optional benevolence on our part but are demanded by elementary considerations of justice … the application of ideas about justice that are quite familiar in other contexts have radical implications when applied to intergenerational justice, and … there is no reason why they should not be" (Barry 1997: 65).

Langhelle sees social justice as "equivalent to the satisfaction of human needs, which in turn is what constitutes the primary goal of development in sustainable development". He also sees the 'proviso of sustainability'[7] as a "precondition for social justice between generations, since violating the sustainability constraint would undermine the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Langhelle, 1999: 140). While recalling the WCED's claim that social equity can "logically be extended to equity within each generation" (WCED4: 3), Langelle admits that this logic is not self-evident. He uses precisely the problem of poverty to explore the coherence of this logic in spite of its lack of self-evidence. He argues that if sustainable development aims to meet the needs of all human beings (present and future), it cannot *ex definitione* exclude an intra-generational understanding of equity, as this

> "runs counter to the overriding priority … to meet the essential needs of the world's [present] poor - but also to sustainable development as an aspirational goal since sustainable development would [seem to] be consistent with massive poverty and miserable living conditions for the majority of the world's population today. Aside from offering an extremely bad bargain for the world's poor, this conceals the fact that living conditions, to a large extent, determine both individual life-chances and the very composition of future generations. Why bother about inter-generational equity if your own children have very poor chances of reaching adulthood?" (Langhelle 1999: 141)

This implies that, on the basis of social justice, the demand for intergenerational equity can only be grounded in the context of living generations. Considering that the principle of social justice is adopted in an array of laws, strategic plans and reforms, this line of thinking is an intelligent way of promoting intergenerational justice 'by way of extension'. A major problem, however, persists. In legal terms, the concept of sustainable development is more of a 'general guideline' proposed in soft law documents (Cassese, 2001: 384) and the principle of intergenerational equity is still debatable and open for discussion (Birnie & Boyle, 2002: 92) even though they underpin a number of international treaties as well as domestic policies and legislation in a variety of fields. This quandary makes it even more difficult to persuade decision-makers to develop and adopt long-term policies which guarantee the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. 'Short-termism' can only be overcome by a culture change. This, I propose, can be done with the introduction of a 'time horizon' into policy and decision-making, while ensuring that there is an adequate institutional arrangement to promote, sustain and further develop such a shift. A sound theory of intergenerational justice is required if one hopes to persuade others about both the substance of this change and the need for adequate institutional structures to facilitate it. Before moving on to amplify further the idea of the 'time-horizon', I would like to explain more specifically what it seeks to replace.

'Short-Termism'

In a few words, 'short-termism' refers to the tendency of policy-setters and decision-makers to plan for the very immediate future without taking into consideration the long-term effects of their decisions and actions. This tendency is arguably most evident in the political scenario, with parliaments and governments effectively planning until the end of their legislature. One should note with appreciation that in many areas, governments are gradually introducing future-oriented planning, but at the same time one should carefully

[7] See pages 5, above.

examine the principles upon which such planning is based and, even more importantly, the soundness of their projections and the reliability of their long-term evaluations. One would also have to keep a watchful eye for all the abrupt pre-electoral ploys or sudden decisions which could well undermine any fervently declared long-term visions and plans.

Political short-termism is often found in the good [sic] company of economic short-termism. Companies may well think ahead in terms of the expansion of their services and the increase of their profits, but not necessarily in terms of their social and environmental responsibilities. The recent, gradual creation of a culture of corporate social responsibility should be fully utilised as a means of making those responsible in the economic field more sensitive to the need of holistic, long-term thinking. This applies, of course, to cases where corporate social responsibility comes not as a media stunt, but rather as a genuine effort to make a contribution to the social and natural environment within which a firm operates.

In both politics and economics there is a marked propensity to practically disregard the future. Economic 'short-termism' in the form of discounting should not come as a surprise to anyone who has studied economics, given that it is common practice to depreciate advantages and damages in the future.[8] Stephen Bayer has argued that in long-term decision-making, discounting should follow what he calls the technique of "Generation Adjusted Discounting" (GAD) (Bayer, 2003), which is based on an intergenerational discount rate based on a time preference approach. Such considerations are anything but popular in mainstream economics, as Talbot Page bluntly remarked: "In economics, 'sustainability' is sometimes dismissed as such a vague and ill-defined concept that it has no place in an economics journal" (Page, 1997: 585-6). The situation may have slightly improved in the past decade, but a concern with efficiency over any other value (such as equity) is still very clearly discernible in what Charles Taylor calls 'instrumental reasoning' (Taylor, 1992: Chapter 9) in contemporary society. The risks raised by this kind of reasoning are twofold: (a) the risk of ignoring the harm that can be done to ecological systems; and (b) the risk of damaging social relations and conditions. The equilibrium which sustainable development promotes is precisely that between concerns of economic efficiency, social well-being, and environmental conservation. For this balance to be found and respected, it is required that the future is not discounted.

A 'Time-Horizon'

A discussion of the 'time-horizon' factor forms the central argument of this paper. Paradoxically, in light of what was said above, the idea of a 'time-horizon' has its origins in economics, as it refers to the length of the period of investment of a sum of money. This expectation is related to the goals which the investment aims to achieve. For instance, the kind of long-term investment made in a private pension scheme is very different to the investment portfolio chosen to meet short-term goals, such as buying a new car. A time-horizon refers to the distance at which, when making economic decisions, one is ready and able to look ahead and think about the future. Any kind of long-term investment poses a problem to any investor: how can I know about the time horizon and what can I know about the risks involved? The risk arises from the 'unknown' factor of future planning, but this does not mean that one is hopelessly unable to make projections into the future. Time horizons have become very important tools for anyone working on futures research, not least in the field of economics and related activities (see Brier, 2005).

It will be recalled that short-termism has been described as the problem of not being able to look beyond five or ten-year political mandates, or as not taking into account the collective risks involved in policy and planning. The time-horizon, on the other hand, presents itself as an effective remedy to what Tremmel calls "the structural problem of demoracy", where:

> "[t]he need to appease the electorate every four or five years means that politicians direct their actions towards satisfying the needs and desires of present citizens - their electorate. The interests … of future generations are all too often neglect. Due to his limited time in office, a politician will not have to take responsibility for the consequences of his actions and also cannot be made liable for them" (Tremmel, 2006: 187 et seq.)

[8] For an introductory critique of the legitimacy of discounting see Ott, 2003.

In this context, the 'time horizon' introduces a deliberative process which in turn determines the actions that are taken. Those actions can be said to be either just or unjust on the grounds of whether or not they fulfil the needs of present and future generations, and on the basis of whether or not they do anything which compromises future generations' ability to meet their needs. A time-horizon can therefore be said to introduce a more informed ethical basis for any political action, as it urges political actors to consider values and the realistic ability to look ahead.

Some authors have compared the political ability to look into the future, and to include the interests of future generations in present-day decision-making, with the age-old way of thinking of the well-being of one's children and their children, or with the importance many societies give to the inheritance left to close relatives. In a very interesting study on the time horizon in Russian literature, Alexander Gerschenkron (1975) recalls how, in his novels on life in the Urals, Mamin-Sibiryak describes the compulsive energy (and ruthlessness) with which the natives built huge enterprises, accumulating both wealth and power, "possessed by the idea of sons and grandsons who would take over and administer what the forefathers had created" (Gerschenkron, 1975: 707). These hopes were shattered, however, due to what Mamin-Sibiryak construes as a tragic lack of discipline which made them unable to restrain their appetites, and which also affected the "physical and spiritual forces of their offspring". The acclaimed novelist stresses that degeneration is at once a cause and a symptom of the absence (or the destruction) of a time horizon.

Although written a century or so ago, Mamin-Sibiryak's narrative immediately brings to mind today's reality as far as future generations are concerned. While it has become commonplace for politicians to eagerly appeal to the welfare of our children and their children, this rhetoric is not always translated into measures that concretely take into account the interests of future generations. Notwithstanding how politically palatable they may be, 'the likelihood of these [far reaching agreements, policies and strategies] leading to significant positive changes … is questionable" (Dovers, 1996: 303). Today's inability to control 'appetites' takes the form of the instrumental reasoning described above, which manifests itself in unrestrained development in technology, construction and other industries. In quite a different way to what the Russian novelist had in mind, it is known that such lack of restraint in development can have an impact on the physical and moral welfare of future generations. The need for introducing a time horizon in policy and planning can be seen in terms of legitimising the claims for restraint in today's decisions, in the interest of safeguarding the integrity of future generations. Taking into account the earlier considerations that future generations are at a disadvantage due to their inability to participate in decision-making processes, the moral and political responsibility of present generations based on projections and prior knowledge becomes even more crucial. The 'absence' of future generations is what makes short-termism 'a structural problem of democracies'. It is at democratic structures that we should look if we hope to replace short-termism with the future-oriented approach of a time horizon.

Institutionalising Intergenerational Justice

The fact that problems related to development (including poverty) and the environment are gradually being integrated within the framework of sustainability has understandably created new demands on policy. The concept of sustainability has challenged the very basis of economic, social and environmental policy, as it stressed the need to address simultaneously developmental and environmental concerns in policy and programming. Even in the field of development itself, sustainability has led to a shift from a focus on individual projects to one which "places a greater emphasis on the continuity that an integrated, longer term programme can provide … This change has manifested itself in the reorganization and restructuring of many development agencies and institutions to provide stronger support for country-focused programming" (Pal, 1998: 454-6). With its emphasis on intergenerational equity, sustainable development has also emphasised the demand to add a time-horizon to the integrative framework through which intergenerational continuity can be improved. An integrated approach suggested by Talbot Page aims at fulfilling intergenerational continuity following two traditions:

> "the political philosophy of Rawls where equity and efficiency are interactive parts of the difference principle; [and] the principle-agent literature where there are multiple levels of decision-making, differing goals of actors at different levels of the process and the entire process is analysed interactively … where possibly multiple design objective (such as efficiency, fairness, stability, etc.) interact in alternative extensive form games (alternative institutional designs)." (Page, 1997: 581)

Page sees an integrative approach as involving three distinct stages (Page, 1997: 596):

1. achieving and maintaining a satisfactory combination of equity and efficiency;
2. identifying the most effective instruments and decision processes;
3. once instruments are in place in order to establish and maintain the constitutional tier, ordinary decision making takes place within this intergenerationally equitable decision environment.

What I have been attempting to trace so far is how the moral principles of equity and the need for economic growth can be better related within the framework of sustainability, and how this concept inevitably points us towards addressing intergenerational demands based on social justice. In this second part of the paper, I would like to focus precisely on a few options which can be considered to implement the 'time-horizon' approach on a more permanent and effective level of action, in fulfilment of our social responsibilities towards future generations.[9]

In its 1987 report, the WCED had highlighted the inadequacy of current institutional set-ups (national and international) to effectively guarantee justice and equity for future generations.[10] As the concept of sustainability has witnessed a dramatic increase in popular and political support, the question of institutionalisation of intergenerational justice remains generally unanswered. The fact that we can establish, in principle, that there is a fundamental connection between present and future generation does not, per se, guarantee any action in safeguarding the interests of future generations. It is only through concrete measures in the form of institutional safeguards that the interests of the 'voiceless' future generations can be looked after. The transition towards institutionalisation is not free of difficulties. On the conceptual level, the criteria of intergenerational justice are subject to consensus, as we do not always share a common conception of what is just and what is good. It is generally agreed, however, that through its institutions, the democratic framework should provide the opportunity for the public to discuss and share ideas of justice (including procedural justice, social justice, intergenerational justice, etc.). This would suggest that through a process of dialogue, criteria for intergenerational justice *can* be established within a democratic set-up. Discussion and shared ideas of justice can lead to consensus, which then acts as a basis for political obligation and the legitimisation of policy. This, in turn, leads to concrete action such as the institutionalisation of the shared concept of justice (including generational justice). It is in this way that the discussions about abstract concepts such as justice and fairness in political theory lead to the design of political institutions as guarantors of justice and fairness.

The inadequacy of institutions to safeguard the interest of future generations has its roots in the lack of representation of these interests. In general, the upholding of justice and equity in our democratic system substantially relies on the widest possible representation of the different parties affected by any given decision. The legislative institutions (parliaments) are the highest institutions of representative democracy, by means of which the people, through their elected representatives, partake in the formulation of the laws which govern the state. On a number of issues, the direct representation of the will of the people is sought by means of referenda and other forms of public consultations. Even in the juridical system, the right to legal representation is a cornerstone for the fair administration of justice. It follows, therefore, that a necessary requisite for the interests of future generations to be adequately considered in decision-making, there has to be some form of representation of this 'unknown' party. The problem of 'absence' makes this representation highly contentious, as some claim that no one can truly represent the will of future generation. As Ekeli (2006) notes, the legal representation of future generations cannot be based on *representation of agency*, which entails a legally capacitated subject appointing his/her representative to execute his/her will, such as in the case of the conferment of the power of attorney. Since future generations do not exist now, they have no will and, therefore, this form of legal representation remains ineffective and unachievable. One can still, however, consider legal representation in the form of *representation of interests*, which is operative in a legal context when human beings are not considered morally or legally competent. In such cases, the courts

[9] Robert Goodin's theory of responsibility based on the concept of vulnerability is particularly interesting as it widens the principle of social responsibility to international, intergenerational, and interpersonal responsibilities. In his later work, *Theories of Institutional Design*, Goodin frames these responsibilities within a discussion on institutional settings. (Goodin 1985; 1996).

[10] See page 4, above.

appoint a legal guardian or custodian to 'represent' those who are not legally competent (e.g. children) to represent their interests by way of speaking and acting on their behalf.

The suggestion of the model of guardianship of future generations has often surfaced in international fora over the last few decades. It is worth noting that since the 1970s, Malta has had an important role in formulating and carrying forward this suggestion, particularly at the United Nations. Briefly illustrated, the idea involves the appointment of a 'Guardian' of Future Generations (a person or an institution) who would have the right to represent the interests of future generations in international and bilateral settings. Unfortunately, till this day, no such international structure exists. This impasse may be due to a number of possible causes, of which I will just suggest a few. Firstly, the political response to threats facing future generations has been a form of 'buck-passing' (Gardiner in Tremmel ed., 2006: Chapter 8). Faced with present calamities, governments often prefer addressing problems with short-term plans. Secondly, when the suggestion was first put forward, there had been very little discussion on the moral, legal and political basis which could sustain it. A third reason may have been the lack of analogous institutions at the national level. The suggestion may have been very innovative, but it was not tested – a factor which could well explain the cold shoulder it received at the political level.

One notes that the situation today is noticeably different. In the first place, the dramatic long-term effects of present actions have been brought to the fore in ways that strongly intensified the demands on political actors. This does not mean that political short-termism and buck-passing no longer characterise many important decisions, but rather that there has been a build-up of demands for these attitudes to change. This can be particularly observed in the case of climate change and environmental degradation. At the same time, the last fifteen years or so have seen a considerable increase in the volume of serious works on the subject of intergenerational equity and its adequate institutionalisation within existing democratic settings. Moreover, also in the past decade or so, and partly as a result of the increased awareness and literature, there have been various attempts to institutionalise the representation of the interests of future generations. The models adopted in the few countries which have in some way or other institutionalised intergenerational justice vary considerably. From the early 1990s onwards, some countries have included general clauses in the preambles of their Constitutions to provide for the welfare of future generations. Examples can be cited from Estonia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Switzerland and Ukraine (source: Tremmel in Tremmel ed., 2006: 192). Others have done so more indirectly by including in their Constitutions clauses on sustainable development and intergenerationally fair measures in financial policy. In fewer countries, intergenerational justice has been safeguarded by the creation of institutions which would represent and safeguard the interests of future generations. All these initiatives are worth look into, as they fill a very important gap which might have led to the dismissal of the proposal of setting up a supra-national 'Guardian' for Future Generations. They provide different models in terms of institutional design and best practice. This possibly marks what can be seen as a strategic shift towards the pursuit of a supranational structure, based on an approach which integrates and increasingly relies upon bottom-up approaches to institutionalisation. Three noteworthy examples can be found in Finland, Israel and Hungary.

The Parliament of Finland set up a highly-organised 'Committee for the Future', which discusses proposed legislation referred to it and submits reports to other committees on future-related matters. The committee benefits from the expertise of researchers, enabling it to conduct future studies research and specific reforms in policy spheres such as health care, population, budget and science and technology.

The year 2001 saw the introduction in Israel of the Knesset (Parliament) Commission for Future Generations. The legislation, which is framed around the concept of sustainable development, gives the Commissioner for Future Generations the authority to *inter alia* assess those bills of the Knesset "which he considers to have particular relevance for future generations" and "present reports to the Knesset from time to time, at his discretion, with recommendations on issues with particular relevance for future generations" (see Shloam and Lamay in Tremmel ed. 2006: Chapter 13).

In Hungary, the initiative to institutionalise intergenerational justice came mainly from non-governmental quarters. In 2000, the association *Protect the Future!* set up 'REFUGE' (Representation of Future Generations) and started working to campaign for the political will which could lead to the establishment of the office of the Ombudsman of Future Generations. (see Javor in Tremmel ed. 2006: Chapter 14).

The Role of Civil Society

The Hungarian model is particularly interesting as it highlights the importance of ownership and awareness, particularly by the scientific and academic community and non-governmental Civil Society Organisations. Sustainable development strategies since Agenda 21 have repeatedly insisted that any action for sustainable development requires the active participation and ownership (of the cause) by various social groups (including those which tend to be underrepresented or unrepresented in many democracies), which we can collectively refer to as Civil Society. In its principle as well as in its methodology, sustainable development seeks to mainstream civil society actors alongside traditional political structures in a concerted effort to address the major problems that lie ahead.

Poverty being one of the major present and future predicaments, we are not doing enough to alleviate the hardships caused by poverty among the people of the world today. This makes it even more imperative for us to consider the even greater calamities that the lack of adequate action today can cause to the people of tomorrow. As stated earlier, the consideration of the fate and demands of future generations widens, rather than shifts, the focus on poverty. The meaning of disadvantage is extended to include those future generations who will suffer the consequences of present-day short-termism. In the face of the urgent need to address situations of poverty, some might be reluctant to introduce a time-dimension into the discussion, fearing it to be yet another outlet through which to postpone taking much-needed decisions. Some would certainly pose the question: "How can we expect an impoverished community to care about future generations, if it cannot even care for its own people today?" (Brown Weiss, 1989: 27). It is admittedly not easy to convince anyone that speaking about the threats to future generations within the context of present discussions will not somehow shift the attention from the "real" problems we are facing. After all, future generations do not 'really' exist (yet). This requires adequate articulation and persuasion. One may in fact recognise the validity of offering a theoretical defence for broadening the discussion not only as the addition of yet another facet of moral and political responsibility, but also as a form of inspiration to widen one's angle of vision.

In line with what has been discussed earlier, Civil Society can contribute to the universal project of poverty reduction by becoming more aware of *intergenerational* justice and solidarity and taking concrete action to campaign for, and contribute to, more long-term approaches in the fight against poverty. This would include concrete measures invoking our responsibilities towards future generations and advocating their rights to equal access to benefits from, and use of, the world's resources. In order to do this, civil society organisations ought to avoid the situation of fragmentation where they become "increasingly less capable of forming a common purpose and carrying it out … less and less bound … in common projects and allegiances" (Taylor 1992: 112-3). Civil society in general is constantly faced with the situation of citizens being unable or unwilling to identify with their political community, a situation that is caused by and results in "political powerlessness" (Taylor 1992: 118). Civil society organisations, especially those engaged directly in combating poverty and social exclusion, face the double challenge of mobilising and empowering effectively the groups of people they represent, while at the same time contributing to the formulation of long-term policy development. The political strength of these organisations when it comes to proposing future-oriented approaches is nurtured by their contact with the grassroots as well as by their ability (which cannot be taken for granted) to avoid falling into the pit of short-termism. They are also in a position to urge a more responsible and responsive attitude by those other political actors whose end-of-legislature fever often drags them into such pits. Civil Society organisations should also properly equip themselves with enough understanding of the ethical principles of intergenerational justice and equity in order to embark on a work of persuasion of those who tend to discount the future in politics as well as in economics.

The fact that, in recent years, Civil Society has been fairly successful in making inroads for its greater recognition and participation in decision-making processes and formal political structures and institutions, places it in an advantageous position to link its direct activity in various fields of development (e.g. the fight against poverty and social exclusion) with its role in policy formulation and decision-making. This in turn places upon Civil Society organisations the moral and political responsibility to act as advocates of intergenerational justice and solidarity.

Conclusion: the Maltese Scenario

The *National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006-2008* (2006) is a rather rare example of a Maltese policy document which makes repeated and substantial references to future generations and to notions of intergenerational solidarity and responsibility. It refers to "Malta's long-term vision ... to promote a better quality of life for all persons, social groups and future generations" (1.1) and to "the philosophy [guiding the document] that social inclusion, pensions, healthcare and long-term care are not for the privileged few but for all individuals, social groups and generations particularly those who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances that expose them to the risk of poverty and social exclusion" (1.3). It is not immediately clear whether the latter reference to "generations" refers to both living and future generations. On social cohesion, the document states that a "long-term strategy, focusing principally on the effective and enduring integration of future generations within Maltese society is thus requisite" (2.2), while it refers to the agreement that "the [Pension] Reform was a matter of paramount importance that warranted early redress so as to secure adequate and sustainable pensions for future generations" (3.1). It is worth noting that any references of this kind are completely and conspicuously absent in the National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion (Government of Malta, 2004, 2005). Sporadic references found in a handful of policy documents are likely to be the only form of structured acknowledgement of our responsibilities towards future generations which goes beyond political rhetoric. Even though the sceptic would quickly charge that references in a policy document are not too far off from political rhetoric, I would consider this to be at least a step in the right direction. It is, however, clearly not enough.

It has been recalled earlier that ever since Ambassador Arvid Pardo delivered his historic address to the United Nations General Assembly on November 1, 1967 (which led to the establishment of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea), Malta has been at the forefront of advocating the setting up of a supranational 'Guardian' for Future Generations. This initiative has so far failed to materialise but the work (both intellectual and practical) done within that context has been critically useful in inspiring and sustaining the individual initiatives in some of the countries mentioned above. As these initiatives keep developing, to date, Malta's Constitution lacks any explicit reference whatsoever to future generations and there is no state institution designed or mandated to effectively represent their interests.

An opportunity to address this unfortunate lacuna arises through the proposed *National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Maltese Islands* (NCSD, 2006), which had been drafted by the National Commission on Sustainable Development during the previous legislature (2003-2008) and which is presumably to be reviewed by the new administration following the March 2008 elections. It is no coincidence that such an opportunity should arise within the framework of a Sustainable Development strategy, as it has already been shown above that both in theory and in practice, the institutionalisation of intergenerational justice and solidarity is best brought about within the conceptual framework of sustainability.[11] References to future generations are only to be expected in a strategy of this kind. Beyond this, however, the proposed strategy introduces some innovative suggestions.[12] Section 4.1 of the final version of the proposed NSSD, which proposes a permanent structure to be set up under the direction of the NCSD in order to institutionalise the development of the strategy, includes the task of "promot[ing] our responsibility towards future generations". Moreover, and more importantly, within this context the NSSD is the first strategic document of its kind to concretely propose, in section 5.2 (Ongoing Consultation), the appointment of "a 'Guardian for future generations' on the Commission to represent the interest of future generations." This suggestion follows my first recommendation (De Lucca, 2005) to the Commission, which further suggested that ""[a]n adequately restructured NCSD could be given the additional task of serving as the body representing the interests of future generations at an institutional level" and that "[a] think-tank on this matter [i.e intergenerational solidarity and justice] should be created within the NCSD itself once the strategy starts being implemented." This was followed by a second submission (De Lucca, 2006) proposing that "due to the nature of its activities and the proximity of the concepts of sustainability and intergenerational justice and solidarity, the Commission would be the most suited entity to serve as an

[11] See, for instance, the example of the Knesset Commission cited above.

[12] I had presented these ideas, together with some others, as my contribution in the drafting of the National Strategy on Sustainable Development for Malta, when I was a member of the National Commission on Sustainable Development from 2003 to 2006 (De Lucca, 2005, 2006). At the invitation of the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations and the Bertelsmann Foundation, I presented and discussed these ideas at a symposium entitled 'Demographic change, intergenerational justice and the implementation of long-term thinking', held in Berlin in November 2006.

institutional "Guardian" for Future Generations." This second recommendation was not included in the final version of the proposed strategy. My suspicion is that this was due to the fact that it was still not clear what form of permanent structure the NCSD would have, and making any such commitments might have had certain implications in terms of financial and human resources to which the NCSD was not ready to commit itself. In the light of the developments that have been taking place in other countries and of the principles acknowledged by the NSSD itself, it is hoped that these and other ideas will be discussed and followed up in the near future.

The realities of Malta and Appalachia are evidently different. Beyond these differences, and beyond the paradox of inequality which this remote region in the United States highlights, there is one lesson which all countries can learn. Not *any* action aimed at reducing poverty will reap success. Conventional policies, based on a sense of urgency which considers the immediate needs to be addressed, often fail in the long-run because of their inability to look beyond the problem. The institutionalisation of intergenerational justice and solidarity, built on the basic principles of social justice, equity and solidarity, can contribute to the challenging of short-termism and to replacing it with long-term strategies. Underlining the importance of the 'time-horizon' in this endeavour shows with greater clarity that this is an indispensable tool to effectively address poverty and other forms of social exclusion.

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HUMAN RIGHTS, DEVELOPMENT AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

OMAR GRECH

The relationship between human rights and development has attracted increasing attention over the past two decades. The UN General Assembly's Declaration on the Right to Development of 1986 proved to be a spur to academics and civil society practitioners to explore the interface between human rights and development. The debate around this issue intensified following the Millennium Declaration which some human rights advocates have criticized as a process used by governments to distract attention from the real human rights issue. Others have emphasized the complementarities that exist between the MDGs and human rights. The discussion has also extended to the issue of extreme poverty as a gross violation of human rights and therefore the notion of freedom from poverty as a human right.

The purpose of this paper is to attempt to examine some of the ways in which the two impact on each other. Furthermore the extent to which the MDGs have incorporated human rights principles and frameworks will also be given some attention.

The efforts to create an international consensus on the need to protect and promote certain human rights and fundamental freedoms are directly attributable to the Second World War. The war's contribution to the crystallization of human rights in international law can be traced in several layers. The holocaust was clearly a leading contributor to the realization that the way in which a state behaves towards its own citizens is a matter for the international community if that behaviour falls short of the standards required by human dignity. The Universal Declaration of Human rights speaks of "barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind" in an explicit reference to the various crimes against humanity and genocide that occurred prior to and during the war.

However the Declaration also makes reference to certain basic rights and freedoms such "freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want". Apart from massive denials of civil and political rights, the end of the war also witnessed populations suffering from lack of food and shelter, healthcare and sanitation. Thus the reference to freedom from want which echoed the thoughts previously expressed by US President Roosevelt. One may therefore note that the struggle against poverty was a founding principle of the international human rights framework.

Human Rights and Development

International Development Aid has traditionally been the arena for development economists, development specialists and civil servants who happen to be serving in their countries development aid agencies. In the 1960s when development studies and development aid started to gain momentum the human rights community was either absent or only tangentially present in the process. This led to a number of regrettable consequences. The major consequence was that of creating a *forma mentis* in the developed and developing states that looked at development aid in a context of charity or perhaps moral righteousness. Nevertheless it useful to remind ourselves that human rights and development are both rooted in the concept of human dignity. The rationale underlying human rights expressed as civil rights, economic rights or social rights revolves around the concept of human dignity. The Universal Declaration gives clear guidance on the fundamental importance of the inherent dignity of the human person as the "foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world".

The necessity of integrating human rights into development is made with great lucidity by Mohammed Bedjaoui who writes that "the satisfaction of the needs of a people should be perceived as a right and not an act of charity. It is a right which should be made effective by norms and institutions."[1]

[1] Bedjaoui Mohammed, *International Law: Achievements and Prospects*, Martinus Nijhoff (Netherlands 1991).

This encapsulates what might be considered as the most crucial contribution of human rights thinking and discourses to development studies i.e. the move from considering development as a morally desirable objective to considering development as an individual right. The move from charity to rights is not simply a matter of terminology. A rights-based approach to development requires answers to a set of questions which are complex and not amenable to straight-forward replies. Among the questions that need to be answered are:

- What is the legal basis for the right to development?
- Who is/are the beneficiary/ies of the right?
- Who is/are the duty-bearer/s in relation to the right?
- How is the right implemented?
- What are the consequences if the right is not implemented?

However international organisations and governments have shied away from approaching development from such a legalistic angle.

The UNDP has led the way in focussing on the relationship between human rights and human development. Its 2000 Human Development Report concentrated on human rights and development and concluded that human rights should not be considered as a reward of development but rather that human rights are critical to achieving development. The report emphasizes a number of linkages between human rights and development in that they both seek to ensure the freedom, well-being and dignity of all people everywhere. The report concludes that "human development is essential for realising human rights, and human rights are essential for full human development".

The report contains a series of recommendations which seek to ensure that global human development and human rights progress *pari passu*. Amongst these recommendations I would emphasise the following:

- Legislation alone is not sufficient; there is a need for all countries to strengthen their social systems for securing human freedoms. Human rights require appropriate institutions and mechanisms that enforce legislation as well as a cultural and social context that reinforces, rather than threatens, the legal system;
- The fulfilment of all human rights requires democracy that this inclusive with a separation of powers and public accountability. Elections are not sufficient;
- The eradication of poverty is not only a challenge to development; it is also a central goal for human rights;
- Accountability should not be limited to states but also extend to non-state actors;
- Achieving universal human rights will require action and commitment from each and every societal group - governments, NGOs, the media, business communities and other opinion formers;
- Stronger international action is required: development cooperation must be rights-based and free of conditionality while international human rights mechanisms need to be reinforced.

The latter recommendation made by the UNDP focuses in effect on development aid programmes and the way in which they reinforce (or not) the human rights agenda in the country where the programme is funded and in the country where the programme is delivered. There has been increasing international attention devoted to human rights-based approached to development programming. The UNDP itself is pioneering these efforts[2]:

> "Human rights does not only provide a vision of what development should strive to achieve (to secure the freedom, well-being and dignity of all people everywhere), but it also provides for a set of programming tools and essential references (human rights standards and principles) that ensure pertinent analysis, focus on important human development goals, ownership by the concerned people and sustainability of development efforts."

[2] http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/HR_Pub_Missinglink.pdf.

The essence of such an approach is that development aid programmes should achieve two linked objectives:

(i) allow duty-bearers to fulfil the rights they are obliged to fulfil; and
(ii) allow rights holders to claim effectively the rights they possess.[3]

However it may be suggested that in this context of creating a human rights approach to development programming some attention ought to be paid also to what I would term as the donor-dimension. Development aid programmes are funded by the taxpayer in the developed states. All too often this taxpayer is left out of the equation. Increasingly the local populations of recipient countries are being included in the development programming equation. Local decision-making, respect for local knowledge and working with and through local partners have all become hallmarks of a modern, human rights-conscious development programme. But what about the participation in development programming of the donor populations? I would argue that a human rights-based approach to development programming needs to include this perspective. For decades the only contribution to the development debate from the developed world came from civil servants and experts, academics and activists. Recent thinking in development education has shown that there needs to be a more vibrant contribution to thinking on and about development from local communities in the developed world. Development education "has come to recognise more fully the role, the rights and the entitlements of citizens here in the developed world as much as those in the developing world".[4] I suggest that human rights also offers this perspective to development aid.

Civil and Political Rights and Development

> "Sustained poverty reduction requires equitable growth, but it also requires that poor people have political power. And the best way to achieve that in a manner consistent with human development objectives is by building strong and deep forms of democratic governance a all levels of society. This means ensuring that institutions and power are structured and distributed in a way that gives real voice and space to poor people and creates mechanisms through which the powerful - whether political leaders, corporations or other influential actors - can be held accountable for their actions."[5]

This quotation from Mark Malloch Brown referred to in a UNDP Report is a succinct statement of why civil and political rights are relevant to and important for development. The importance of a free exercise of civil and political rights in developing countries needs to be reiterated. The role of human rights in development is not simply that of reminding the developed world of the massive denial of the economic and social rights of people in the developing world. Developing states themselves need to comprehend that the notions of accountability, transparency and democratic legitimacy are crucial components of their development strategy. Corruption in the developing and in the developed world is impacting negatively on aid programmes and the capacity of donor countries to translate aid into better standards of living. One example should be enough to illustrate the nature of the problem: "The Kibaki government had spent [US] $12.5 million on luxury cars, largely for personal use by top Kenyan officials. That is enough to pay for eight years of school for 25,000 children"[6].

Freedom of expression and a free media for example are civil and political rights that create the necessary framework for accountability and transparency that in turn are formidable tools in the fight against corruption. The importance of political participation and of building political pluralism at all sectors of society (local, regional and national) also needs to be emphasised. Indeed it has been suggested that "it is now recognised that building up local democracy, accountability and participation is one of the most effective ways to tackle corruption. Supporting and strengthening local groups campaigning for democracy is

[3] In this context the duty-bearers can be defined as those persons or entities who have the primary duty to provide the right to food, housing, health etc (i.e. in short the right to development). Rights holders are those persons who have these rights.
[4] Regan, C., *80:20 Development in an Unequal World*, 5th edition, 2006, p.110.
[5] UNDP, Poverty Reduction and Human Rights: A Practice Note, June 2003 p. 12 available at: http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/HRPN_(poverty)En.pdf.
[6] Baltimore Sun, 28 February 2006. Based on TI Kenya's Report "Living Large: Counting the Cost of Official Extravagance in Kenya", co-produced with the Kenyan Human Rights Commission.

fundamental."[7] Thus the right to participate in political life as established in Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights becomes an important tool in tackling corruption and therefore in realising the development goals set nationally and internationally. In fact the UK's Department for International Development lists good government as one of the methods of fighting poverty:

> "Good governments depend on elected representatives, trade unionists, farmers, journalists, business people, and citizens in all walks of life. Voters must play their part by making sure that politicians and officials answer for their actions…Good politics is about being open and fair in making decisions. Without good government, the fight against poverty can't be won."[8]

Moreover a legislative framework that protects and promotes civil and political rights is conducive to creating the context in which private investment and growth (both crucial to development) can flourish. In particular adherence to the notion of 'rule of law' with its emphasis on equality before the law, is widely recognised as a pre-requisite for a stable, prosperous and modern country. Investment and long-term trade is less likely to flourish in societies where laws are more honoured in their breach than in their observance or where the institutions that are supposed to enforce the law are not independent and impartial.

Another link between civil rights and development can be seen in the concept of empowerment. International development aid has steadily moved towards making empowerment of the poor (or other marginalised groups) as its bedrock. The work of Amartya Sen on human capability has led the way in this respect. Civil and political rights provide tools which the poor and the marginalised can use to empower themselves in their efforts to reach out of the circle of deprivation they find themselves in. The Millennium Declaration acknowledged this fact:

> "An adequate conception of human development cannot ignore the importance of political liberties and democratic freedoms. Indeed, democratic freedom and civil rights can be extremely important for enhancing the capabilities of people who are poor. They can do so directly since poor people have strong reason to resist being abused and exploited by their employers and politicians, and they can do so indirectly, since those who hold power have political incentives to respond to acute deprivations when the deprived can make use of their political freedom to protest, criticize and oppose."[9]

Women's Rights and Development

"Most of the world's poorest people are women. What makes them poor is the discrimination they face because of their gender."[10]

A key contribution that human rights thinking has made to development relates to the issue of women's rights. Women's rights have become a key component of the international human rights framework. Since the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) the international community has devoted ever increasing attention to women's rights. The number on local and international NGOs inspired by the women's rights movement has grown drastically, including in the developing world.

What has this international attention and grass roots women's rights movement contributed to the development agenda? I would suggest that women's rights has increased the awareness of a number of factors related to development. These include the following:

(i) that women have not benefited from development processes, projects and programmes to the same extent as men;
(ii) that women are very often not included in the planning or implementation of development;

[7] Regan C., op cit., p.223.
[8] http://www.dfid.gov.uk/howwefightpoverty/government.asp.
[9] UN General Assembly Res. 55/2 (2000).
[10] http://www.dfid.gov.uk/howwefightpoverty/women.asp.

(iii) that development programmes have sometimes impacted negatively on the human rights of women.

Indeed some research has indicated that poverty is affecting women to a greater extent than man. The phenomenon referred to as the 'feminization of poverty' indicates that women are affected by a higher incidence of poverty and also that women's poverty tends to be more severe than that experienced by men. It has been suggested that some of the reasons underlying this phenomenon are in fact a denial of human rights to large categories of women. Amongst the human rights abuses that are connected to the feminization of poverty are a lesser access to food, education and healthcare relative to men and also certain legal and societal structures that disadvantage women such as unequal inheritance rights or unequal payment for labour.

The comments above highlighted some (and only some) of the ways in which human rights approaches to development can impact on each other. In particular the focus has been on the ways in which human rights can enrich and to an extent democratise the development process. The scope of this paper is naturally too limited to enter into a detailed analysis of the relationship between human rights and development. What I focused upon are the elements which I consider to be most important in the interplay between development and human rights, namely the shift to a more rigorous analysis that a legal framework enables; the role of civil and political rights within development (an area which is so often neglected); and the role of the women's rights movement in spurring the gender and development discussion.

Human Rights and the MDGs

The Millennium Declaration referred to human rights in its preamble where freedom was placed first in the list of values that underpin the Declaration:

"Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights."

In the UN MDG Reports however little or no attention is paid to civil and political rights. In the 2007 UN MDG Report which is, in effect, the UN's interim report (given that the MDGs span the period 2000-2015) no reference is made to the term 'human rights' at all. There are two references to the word 'rights' in the whole document. One reference is in page 30 where the availability of jobs for young people is being discussed. Here the report states that the jobs in developing states available to young people are ones with "meagre earnings, reduced labour protection and diminished rights". The other reference to the word rights is on page 36 where the UN asserts it's copyright over the report and states, "All rights reserved."!

Unfortunately the development community at large still seems to eschew normative language and displays a continuing preference from non-normative terminology. There seems to be a preference for terms such as good governance and local participation which although closely connected to human rights avoid the 'rights-duties' language which must lie at the heart of any legal process. Philip Alston makes this point:

> "Terms such as governance, equity, participation, dignity have much to be said for them but unless rooted in identified standards their meaning is conveniently open-ended, contingent, and too often subjective".[11]

For states the attraction of employing such words is obviously great. The looser the words the less likely it is that they will have to keep to their promises. If the language employed is precise legal terminology operating at the level of rights and duties then states (and the international community as a whole) will not, in the case of failure, simply be portrayed as having failed in achieving a goal or an aim but of having breached an obligation. The difference is therefore not simply one of words but of consequence too.

[11] Alston Ph., "What's in a Name: Does it Really Matter if Development Policies Refer to Goals, Ideals or Human Rights?", in H. Hemich *Human Rights in Development Cooperation*, Utrecht OECD Development Centre and Netherlands Institute of Human rights, 1998.

Within the MDGS themselves one may detect an inherent tension with human rights. The title itself refers to Goals and not obligations. Some of the targets are couched in terms which imply a continuing violation of human rights for at least part of the word population. A concrete example may be given by referring to Goal No. 1. This Goal states:

- Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day;
- Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people;
- Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Within this one goal we have the acknowledgment that for half of those living in poverty and in hunger there will be no fulfillment of the right to food, housing or sanitation. The goal is admitting that for the 'other' half of the world living in hunger there will be a continuing violation of their right to food (article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights and Article 11 International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights).

Defenders of the MDGs point out the fact that the economic and social rights that are closely connected to the MDGs are couched in terms of a progressive realization of such rights. The argument made in this case runs as follows: the rights to food, health, sanitation and more are rights capable of progressive realization and thus to be fulfilled over a period of time. In effect this is the same attitude taken by the MDGs. In defence of this argument one may refer to Article 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which states:

> "Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to *achieving progressively the full realization of the rights* recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures."

Another of the key critiques levelled at the MDGs from the human rights community is based on the perceived lack of enforcement mechanism/s pertaining to the Goals. Human rights lawyers, academics and activists have constantly criticised the international enforcement mechanisms available in human rights law. Slowly (in some cases very slowly) these mechanisms have either been sharpened up (as in the case of the various human rights committees established under the auspices of human rights treaties) or created afresh (as in the case of the International Criminal Court). With the MDGs there is no international mechanism that can effectively monitor and enforce the goals. What is even more disturbing for human rights advocates is that even on the domestic level MDG monitoring and reporting mechanisms are poor:

> "The existing arrangements for reporting on progress made in relation to the MDGs are relatively primitive and not especially convincing by most standards. As noted above, some 60 national MDG reports have now been completed. Notwithstanding rhetorical insistence that such reports will play an important role at the national level, their main 'consumer' seems to be the UN Development Programme which has a procedure for assessing the reports 'especially with regard to participation, disaggregation and presentation'."[12]

Human rights activists and lawyers have built considerable expertise at the national and international level on reporting mechanisms. The shadow reports produced by human rights NGOs in the context of the national reports presented periodically by states parties to the UN human rights treaties are one instance of such expertise. These reports have on several occasions highlighted sloppy statistics or misleading information provided by states in their national human rights reports. MDG reporting is not immune to statistical deficiencies. Indeed some have commented that "ongoing lack of reliable data or statistics continues to undermine MDG monitoring and UN progress charts are peppered with phrases such as 'insufficient data'…"[13] In this context using human rights - 'inspired' shadow MDG reporting could be one way in which

[12] Alston P, *A Human Rights Perspective on the Millennium Development Goals*, Paper prepared as a contribution to the work of the Millennium Project Task Force on Poverty and Economic Development**,** p.53.
[13] Regan C., op. cit. p.219.

to address these difficulties. Greater coordination by the development community and the human rights community would clearly be useful also in this perspective.

The MDGs have focused, at least in terms of public awareness, on the reduction of poverty. The Making Poverty History Campaign was a key example of MDG marketing. Setting aside the net effect of such publicity campaigns on the ground, it is clear that poverty has been firmly established as an item on the agenda of the international community and also to an extent in the public consciousness. This in turn has led to an examination of poverty from several angles. From a human rights perspective there are a number of issues that arise with respect to poverty. Some of these issues may be summarised in these two broad themes:

i. the relationship in the values base that underlies the fight against poverty and the struggle for human rights; and
ii. the question whether the existence of poverty is itself a denial of human rights.

On the first issue it is clear that poverty is a denial of human dignity and that this human dignity is the corner stone of human rights. The Universal Declaration in its Preamble speaks of the "recognition of the inherent dignity …of all members of the human family". Poverty is perhaps the term most associated with the lack of human dignity. Images of the starving, the dying and the dispossessed immediately evoke a response from the international community precisely because they are against our most fundamental notions of the intrinsic worth of the human person. The Vienna World Conference on Human Rights highlighted this point by stating that "extreme poverty and social exclusion constitute a violation of human dignity."[14]

The second question is of a more complex definition. It has become fashionable to state that poverty is a denial of human rights. In principle this is clearly true. After all do we not have the right to food, the right to sanitation and the right to housing as part of economic and social rights embedded in international human rights treaties? At a deeper level of analysis the statement that poverty is a denial of human rights may be a more difficult proposition. Philip Alston has commented on this issue and suggests that while in certain contexts the statement is valid, at the same time "*in legal terms this maxim is true to the extent that a government or other relevant actor has failed to take measures which would have been feasible ('to the maximum extent of available resources etc. as the language of the ICESCR puts it) and which could have had the effect of avoiding or mitigating the plight in which an individual living in poverty finds him or herself.*" One can argue that in most cases (certainly in all of the developed countries and in most developing states) states can take some if not all steps with their available resources to fulfil or start fulfilling the relevant rights.

Finally a thought on how human rights changes our thinking *vis a vis* poverty. A human rights approach to poverty reduction places the poor not as victims that are targets of poverty-reduction programmes but as full participants. Human rights thus bring a participatory approach to the fight against poverty.

> "The notion of participation is at the centre of a human rights-based approach to poverty reduction. The poor must be considered as the principal actors of development; they can no longer be seen as passive recipients; they are strategic partners rather than target groups. Human rights change in a fundamental way the relationship between service providers and service recipients, and between claim-holders and duty-bearer".[15]

Conclusion

Naturally in the confines of this paper a number of pertinent points had to be omitted (for instance the role of corporations which are relevant to human rights and the MDGs). This paper only sought to comment on some salient issues in the ongoing debate between human rights and development. In concluding however there is one point of convergence that needs to be stated.

[14] UN, *Report of the World Conference on Human Rights: Report of the Secretary General*, 13 October 1993.
[15] UNDP, Poverty Reduction and Human Rights: A Practice Note, June 2003 p. iv is available at: http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/HRPN_(poverty)En.pdf.

The struggle for universal human rights and the efforts to achieve the MDGs have one common characteristic which I have failed to mention so far. This common thread is the long road still to be covered in fully realising the rights and goals that have been established and set. The human rights situation in Darfur should be enough to illustrate the magnitude of the problem in the efforts to stop massive and gross violations of human rights. In the case of the MDGs the gap between the goals and the progress achieved is equally wide:

> Sub-Saharan Africa is the epicenter of crisis, with continuing food insecurity, a rise of extreme poverty, stunningly high child and maternal mortality, and large numbers of people living in slums, and a widespread shortfall for most of the MDGs."[16]

In this context discussions around the interplay between human rights and the MDGs may seem inapposite. However, an exploration of the ways in which the MDGs and human rights may reinforce each other may be one of the avenues which lead to a fuller achievement of the rights and goals the international community has established and set.

[16] http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/index.htm.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

VINCE CARUANA

1. Introduction

The world we have created poses new challenges for us. Just recently we learnt that in less than a year, the price of wheat has risen 130 per cent, soya by 87 per cent and rice by 74 per cent (McKie, Robin and Stewart, 2008). This in a new scenario where according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation FAO), there are only eight to 12 weeks of cereal stocks in the world, while grain supplies are at their lowest since the 1980s. Supermarkets give us all we want all the year round but then we learn that a kiwi fruit flown from New Zealand to Britain emits five times its own weight in greenhouse gases (Williams, Jessica 2004). Our lives are totally dependent on electricity but we get to know that just one coal-fired power plant in Yorkshire - that provides 7% of Britain's electrical power - emits more CO2 (22.8 million tonnes) annually than the 100 least-industrialised nations combined. A further analysis shows that in each case a decision taken in one part of the world has an impact - often an adverse impact - much further off. Bio fuel to supply the energy needs and lifestyle choices of the rich world has put tremendous pressure on global grain prices. According to FAO actually 36 countries are in crisis as a result of higher food prices (Wahid Bhutto, A. 2008). The geographical location of Bangladesh, locked between the Himalayas in the north and the Bay of Bengal in the south, makes the country the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change but of course its emissions are very low. According to the recent World Development Indicators (2006) report of the World Bank the per capita carbon emission from Bangladesh has been 0.3 Mt only, while these were 20.2 Mt and 9.2 Mt per capita for the USA and the UK. No wonder that Geoff Mulfgan argues that the biggest difference between our lives and those of our great great grandparents is not in terms of technologies, big cities, material wealth, television or women's rights, even though all of these have transformed the way we live. Rather he argues that it lies in the connectedness of life, the ways in which our lives are now bound up with each other.

2. The World We Live In - What Role for Education?

If as we have seen lifestyle choices within the developed world (and therefore within the EU) impact on the livelihood and survival of people from the developing world, what can be the role of education in face of such a reality? Can the education systems within the EU member states remain the same as say a few decades ago or is it necessary that they face up to the reality that we are tied to each other? Interdependence and Globalisation do not automatically make people more tolerant, responsible, or understanding, but they do constitute a new environment that demands a creative response not least from education.

2.1 The European Consensus on Development

The Presidents of the Commission, Parliament and the Council signed the European Consensus on Development on The 20th December 2005. For the first time in fifty years of cooperation the European Institutions defined the framework of common principles within which the EU and its Member States will each implement their development policies in a spirit of complementarily. The consensus on Development identified the eradication of poverty and the promotion of a sustainable model of development as of vital concern in the early part of the 21st Century, adding that the context within which these concerns are addressed is one of an increasingly globalised, interdependent and changing world. Furthermore the EU Consensus on Development recognizes the importance of development education and awareness-raising among EU citizens in addressing such concerns and commitments. While there are various definitions of Development Education, one that has been gaining recognition is that provided by CONCORD - the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. According to CONCORD:

> *Development education is an active learning process, founded on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions.*

> *Development education fosters the full participation of all citizens in worldwide poverty eradication, and the fight against exclusion. It seeks to influence more just and sustainable economic, social, environmental, human rights based national and international policies.*

As a contribution towards the implementation of the European Consensus on Development, a common European strategy on Development Education and Awareness Raising was launched in November 2007 during the Development days. This strategy aims to provide a framework for the development of Development Education and awareness raising at local, regional, national and European levels. According to Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, this consensus on development education is as important as the European Consensus on Development. Young people are unaware of poor people suffering. Raising awareness amongst the young people is a day-to-day effort. Development education is a long-term process to prepare the young people for the debates of tomorrow. This strategy was elaborated with the contributions from the stakeholders of civil society, Euro-parliamentarians, national governments and the European institutions.

2.2 Global Citizenship

The new context of globalisation and interdependence implies the need to better understand the international dimension of citizenship. If as seen our lifestyle choices impact on the livelihood and survival of people from the developing world there is a strong need to strengthen global citizenship. Some would argue that strengthening global citizenship is actually a necessity if the various commitments to eradicate poverty, not least the Millennium Development Goals, are to be achieved. There have been various attempts to define a global Citizen. One which encompasses most issues is provided by DEEEP and based on the work of Oxfam:

> *Global citizenship goes beyond simply knowing that we are citizens of the globe to an acknowledgement of our responsibilities both to each other and to the earth itself. Global citizenship is about understanding the need to tackle injustice and inequality, and having the desire and ability to work actively to do so. It is about valuing the Earth as precious and unique, and safeguarding the future for those coming after us. Global citizenship is a way of thinking and behaving. It is an outlook on life, a belief we can make a difference. A global citizen is someone who is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen; respects and values diversity; has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally; is outraged by social injustice; participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global; is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place; takes responsibility for their actions.*

From the provided definition of a Global Citizen it is clear that Education has a primary role to play. It is education that helps us to understand the complexity of global issues - the political, the social, the environmental, the economic, the local, the global, the glocal - and to develop the critical skills necessary to tackle injustice and inequality. It is education that can help equip young people with knowledge, skills and values to participate as active citizens.

2.3 A Whole School Approach

Global Citizenship Awareness and Action is a lifelong process. However various educators consider the school to be a privileged arena to educate for global citizenship in that it has an enormous strategic value and as such ought to be sustained in all possible manners for it to assume a positive and active role in facing up to the challenges of an interdependent and globalised world. This requires a 'whole school approach' in that sustainable development and global citizenship are to be integrated throughout the formal sector curriculum in a holistic manner rather than being taught on a stand-alone basis. Whole school approaches also advocate for active and participatory learning and call for the entire school, including students, educators, and administrators to be actively engaged in working towards a school with sustainable development and global citizenship fully integrated into the curriculum as the driving factor.

2.4 Creativity, Active Citizenship and Social movements

Civil Society Organisations do not lack creativity, and an increased awareness of interdependence and globalisation has led to some interesting actions worldwide.

In 2000, Garstang in Lancashire was recognized as the first fair trade town, and since then hundreds of towns have followed suit. A fair trade town is a town, city, village, county, zone, island or borough that has made a commitment to supporting fair trade and using products with the fair trade mark. However a fair trade town is also a declaration of interdependence and a commitment to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Fair Trade towns mark the success of the various efforts of civil society organisations who invested in development education and in education for global citizenship, and helped raise the awareness of community organisations, faith groups, businesses, schools and individuals who can all contribute to making their area a fair trade town by pledging to do what they can to support fair trade. In fact one of the criteria for becoming a fair trade town is to create a local steering committee that meets on a regular basis to increase awareness of and demand for fair trade products, through education, outreach and events.

This creativity is also seen in the various new social movements that have emerged over the last decades and that have tried to experiment with new strategies, new styles of actions, new combinations of intellectual work and research and grassroots actions. In fact according to Vandana Shiva (2003) social movements are the only places where there *is* energy - at least energy that deserves to be called energy. What is interesting is that often the aim of these movements is not to take power itself, but to ensure that power is exercised differently and democratically, with women, young people and indigenous peoples' movements well at the fore. Again the role of education has proved to be crucial. In a recent interview, Sousa Santos - a professor at the University of Coimbra who has in his public life vigorously defended strong social and civic movements as essential for participative democracy - has singled out the vast popular education movement as having enormous virtues.

2.5 Global Citizenship Awareness in Malta

Maltese NGOs active in Development have since 2000 been networked together under an umbrella platform called SKOP (*Solidarjeta u Koperazzjoni*). For at least four years before Mata joined the EU, SKOP had been busy preparing its members for the new opportunities in Development Education that membership would bring. NGOs were quick to respond and since Malta became a member of the EU have availed themselves of funding opportunities through the European Commission from what was previously known as the NGO co-financing budget line (currently the Non State Actors Local Authority call for proposals issued by EuropAid.). This short article does not intend to give an overview of projects linked to Global Citizenship currently running in Malta but rather to illustrate progress in the field through two case studies funded through the EC NGO co-financing budget line.

2.5.1 Conectando Mundos

Conectando Mundos is a transnational project with partners from Italy, Spain, Malta and Portugal. The principal aims of *Conectando Mundos* are:

- Encouraging and supporting intercultural dialogue among youths from different social and geographical contexts.
- Creating a two-way working environment through information and communication technology - an effective means through which people can get to know each other and, consequently, makes way for them to share diverse realties and to discover common problems within the context of the slogan "Think global, act local".
- Becoming aware of the causes that impede the majority world from satisfying its own basic needs and that effectively take away their opportunities and rights**.** Together, elaborate a proposed pact on how to change this reality setting off by considering the local context and by understanding the realities of the other participants.

A draft position paper "GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN TODAY'S SCHOOLS" written by the members of the Conectando Mundos International Scientific Committee notes that awareness about an

unsustainable development pattern has increased exponentially over the last forty years - together with a better understanding of the fact that we are living beyond our own means and beyond our planet's and our ecosystem's capacity to sustain us. Specifically the paper identifies:

- The challenge posed by globalization
- The challenge posed by the media
- The multicultural challenge
- The challenge posed by the relationship between technology and ethics
- The environmental challenge
- The challenge posed by violence and war
- The challenge posed by governance

In facing such challenges, the project strives to be an alternative space where students from different regions in the world, each with their own geographical, cultural, economic and social backgrounds, are able to participate in activities and to share their experiences. At the time of writing around 13,500 students - aged between 6 and 17 years - are experimenting in concrete ways on how to respond to some of these challenges by participating in a seven week range of activities to look for collective solutions to climate change. *Conectando Mundos* puts forward some resources and educational activities that enable schools and teachers to include global citizenship in the aims of the school's projects and of the curriculum. The activities proposed by the project include: coaching of teaching staff, class work carried out through the internet, online discussion and sharing through the creation of virtual communities and the presentation of results. The work carried out in class and that carried out through internet will enable the students to elaborate a consensus that would then be used by us to formulate the conclusions. *Conectando Mundos* allows two complementary perspectives: the presentation of the theme in the classroom on one hand, and the use of information and communications technology on the other. Together these offer new educational methodologies to the schools.

2.5.2 Global Action Schools

Global Action Schools is a unique partnership of seven organisations working with schools across Austria, Czech Republic, England, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic and Thailand. This project supports schools to integrate global issues into the classroom, link with schools around the world and find ways of contributing to sustainable development. During the first phase of the project, schools were involved in learning about global issues such as children's rights, climate change and fairer trade, measuring their school's 'global footprint' using a simple investigation tool and undertaking a 'global challenge', for example to support fairer trade or to use energy and water more efficiently. In this sense the school as an institution is a central objective of change - where the school itself strives to become part of the solution to some of the world's biggest challenges. In making connections between what they study and the impact their school has on people and environments locally and globally, students in a participative and democratic manner are able to create innovative and effective ways of linking their learning to responsible action. Perhaps the strongest point of such a project is the recognition that a crucial place to start the long journey towards a more sustainable and just world is within everyday life at school, and that any reflection and learning needs to translate into action, however small and seemingly trivial.

3. Concluding Remarks

Putting Global Citizenship Education firmly on the agendas of educational institutions - whether within the formal, non-formal or informal sector - is not going to be an easy task. The very success of civil society has produced a backlash. According to Mayo (2005) this backlash has been gathering momentum internationally. As Mowbray has argued, on the basis of his study of free market advocacy groups, "because of their very effectiveness NGOs are now faced with a resurgent and serious challenge". Furthermore Mayo notes that free market advocacy groups have been attacking NGOs concerned with civil or human rights, industrial and labour issues and the environment. The international business press has reinforced these messages, carrying articles that caricature global advocacy organisations and groups.

As European citizens become more and more aware of global issues it becomes progressively more unacceptable that more than a billion people live on less than $1 a day, and half the population of developing

countries on less than $2 a day. Just last year the total number of people standing up against poverty was a massive total of 43,716,440, spread over at least 6,540 events around the globe spanning 127 countries. However any real progress will depend on whether we are able to think out of the box or what is sometimes called systems thinking or else try and solve problems within the same frame of mind that created them. For example if we are to grapple properly with the issue of climate change, we need to develop and apply a systemic analysis that goes beyond the fixation with cost or even carbon dioxide, and promote synergies with other important struggles in the areas of trade, finance, human rights, biodiversity, environmental justice and democracy (Smith, K 2008). The quality of links will be a determining factor. According to Mayo (op cit) far from being in competition with each other, local organisations can be strengthened via involvement in wider social movements, just as international mobilizations also depend upon the strength of their local roots.

Pro-environment and pro-social attitudes are strongly linked to green and fair consumption. The successful emergence of fair- trade practices is an outward manifestation of redirecting economic systems to more just and associative ones (Bloom, J. 2007). In fact according to Bloom, without recognising our inextricable connection to the whole world through our economic lives, to our dependence on others' capacities whether growing food, making clothes, or educating children, we miss an important and daily opportunity to connect more deeply with ourselves and to work in whatever way possible to practise social finance towards a more just economy. Educational processes are necessary to help us make the necessary connections.

While inequality continues to widen - with 40% of the world's population reaping a diminishing 5% of global wealth while the richest 10% account for 54% - the battle of ideas between the protagonists of neoliberalism and civil society organisations that are tackling the causes of social inequality and injustice is being waged. Globally aware citizens need to respond to these challenges and be part of this debate and battle of ideas. Shiva advises activists to have sustainable energy - it's a long, drawn battle. She encourages activists to stay cheerful, to have joy in their struggle, not to be overburdened by the struggle itself, to relish their humanity, and not let political activism dehumanise them. To be engaged passionately, but be detached while engaging passionately.

In the opinion of the author the quality of engagement in the debate will ultimately depend on whether global citizenship education, under its various forms, and as encompassing the various adjectival educations such as development education, environmental education and education for sustainable development, will carve for itself a strong space. Within the formal curriculum this means that while the debate on whether this will be interdisciplinary, a stand-alone or a combination both needs to continue, it cannot stall the process of starting right now. Within the non-formal and informal sector it is necessary to reach out to as wide a range of people as possible, focusing in particular on those who are traditionally excluded. We have enough good experimentation and good practice. The challenge is now to make them more widespread, more known and to link better sustainability with the practice of every day life.

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CULTURAL POVERTY AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE
A CASE FOR CHRISTIAN RELEVANCE?

JOSEPH P. ELLUL

> Liberal democracy is in danger. Britain and the other nation states of the West are becoming places where free speech is increasingly at risk, non-political institutions are becoming politicized, university campuses are turning into ideological arenas, and a combination of political correctness and ethnic-religious separatism are eroding the graciousness of civil society. Religious groups are becoming pressure groups, focusing on sectarian interests rather than the common good. Boycotts and political campaigns are infecting professional bodies. Culture is fragmenting into non-communicating systems of belief in which civil discourse ends and reasoned argument becomes impossible. The political process is in danger of being abandoned in favour of the media-attention-grabbing gesture, with the threat of violence never far from the surface. The politics of freedom risks descending into the politics of fear. This has already begun to happen, and if we do not take countermeasures collectively, and soon, it will happen increasingly in the future.[1]

The above reflection makes sober reading, and yet it portrays the reality of an all too familiar cultural landscape of European societies, in which we are presently living and what its future might well have in store for us. The struggle we are facing today is not one between competing ideas and principles that inspire human imagination and help instill courage in the face of adversity. It is, rather, a struggle for the very preservation of European identity. In order to understand our present situation it is necessary to trace its root causes and how they have led to this crucial moment in history.

The Roots of the Problem

Already in the late 1950s the renowned theologian Romano Guardini had made a compelling argument regarding the historical process that has led to the present state of modern European societies. Medieval man centred his faith in Revelation as it had been enshrined in Scripture, in that Revelation which affirmed the existence of a God who holds his being separate from and beyond the world. Since he creates and sustains all things in being and fills them with his presence, God is in His world, but he does not belong to the world because he is its sovereign. The independence of God is fixed in the absoluteness of his being. An irreducibly personal God cannot be merged with any universe; he exists solely in himself, Lord of his being.[2]

Within this framework the sciences were organized in a hierarchy in such a way that the process from the lowest, known as the natural sciences, to the highest, which was metaphysics (also known by the term *scientia divina*), ultimately led to the one who is supremely *being*, and that was God. This line of reasoning had its most illustrious advocate in St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). According to him wisdom belongs to God alone who, out of his infinite love, bestows it upon his creatures according to their capacity to receive it. Man begins life with wisdom lent by God and ends by possessing that wisdom. For him the idea that faith and science led separate existences made no sense. Reality is the way things are and truth is the intelligibility of reality which is articulated in science. Good science and true religion are not in conflict because they articulate and teach the same reality. There cannot be two truths, because there is just one reality.[3]

In this way Aquinas provided a way to understand faith and science as integrated into Man's life as a rational being - the life for which God created him. Both science and faith concern the same factual reality: the reality of creation and its creator. Both science and faith arise out of the same human capacity for knowing factual reality: the human intellect. Both science and faith address the same questions: What is real? Why does it exist and work the way it does? How and why is it good? Distinct sciences rationally study their proper objects, but these objects are all part of the same reality. What is valuable and spiritually meaningful is the truth and the truth is what is known when we scientifically know the facts about reality. As Pope John

[1] Jonathan Sacks, *The Home We Build Together: Recovering Society*, Continuum, London 2007, p. 11.
[2] Romano Guardini, *The End of the Modern World*, ISI Books, Wilmington Delaware 1998, p. 7f.
[3] See *Exposition of the "De Trinitate" of Boethius*, q. 2, art. 3.

Paul II put it succinctly in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio*: "Thomas recognized that nature, philosophy's proper concern, could contribute to the understanding of divine Revelation. Faith therefore has no fear of reason, but seeks it out and has trust in it. Just as grace builds on nature and brings it to fulfillment, so faith builds upon and perfects reason."[4]

In this manner the mediaeval world view flourished within a system of thought according to which the cosmos was sustained within the order set up by an omniscient God and in a state of interior harmony by way of an all-encompassing divine providence that was leading it towards fulfillment in Christ, the New Man.

However, this picture of the world along with the cultural order which it supported began to dissolve during the fourteenth century. The process of dissolution continued throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[5] By the seventeenth century it was complete, and a new picture of reality dawned clearly and distinctly upon Europe. Human passion for knowledge independently of its divine origin began to lead away from a *theocentric* view of the world, wherein humanity participates as co-creator and also as steward of creation, towards a radically *anthropocentric* view wherein humanity became the centre towards which the whole of creation gravitates with the consequent gradual exclusion of the divine. Man chose to probe things with his own intelligence and to reach established judgments which were independent of any pattern of divine enlightenment. In doing so he gave birth to the modern preoccupation with experiment and rational theory in the physical sciences as a means to be rid of the yoke of religion and the constraints of its resulting morality. They came to be seen as a competing source of knowledge to revelation.

It is well-nigh impossible to pinpoint when and why the first person singular went into independent orbit, but there are significant moments in which it could be detected: when in the sphere of literature authors embarked upon the new literary genre of autobiography; when painters started to experiment with self-portraits; or when playwrights began to explore the inner workings of the character and the psyche of their *dramatis personae*. Eventually the idea of the individual as a reality in itself, apart from its social roles and its accountability to the divine began to emerge. The independent self was about to change the course of metaphysical and moral thought.

Severed from the older religious unity of life and work, science stood alone and at one with its essence. Meanwhile, a broader and more independent culture was born and bred upon an economics which adhered only to its own strict laws. Whereas earlier political goals were subordinated by the felt need to conform to Divine Will, with the advent of the modern world the political goal became an end in itself. Indeed the modern world has increasingly seen political activities as autonomous. Not only practically but also theoretically the acquiring, maintaining and exercise of power admitted every possible means. Politics became a law unto itself.[6]

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[4] John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, n. 42.

[5] In the year 1492 the Florentine philosopher Giovanni Pico della Mirandola heralded the dawn of the modern age by way of a personal interpretation of the Book of Genesis:

> God creates pleasure in man as a being that has no clearly discernible image. God put him in the midst of the world and said to him: we have given you no particular dwelling, no face of your own, no special gift of one kind or another. O Adam (=man), so that you can have and possess any dwelling you like, any face you like and all the gifts that you could desire, also in accordance with your will and your own opinion. The nature of other beings is determined by the laws laid down by us and they are kept within bounds of these laws. However you (man) are not restrained by any boundary that you may not pass, but you shall determine your own nature yourself, in accordance with your own free will, and I have put your fate in your own hands. We have created you as neither a heavenly nor an earthly being, as neither mortal nor immortal; rather as your own self, wholly free and working as a sculptor and poet for your own honour, you shall give yourself that form in which you want to live.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *De dignitate hominis*, E. Garin, Florence 1942, quoted in Edward Schillebeeckx, *CHURCH - The Human Story of God*, The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York 1990, p. 1.

[6] Guardini, *op. cit*., p. 29f.

The Drama of Modern Europe

Today we conceive Europe as the continent that is currently organizing itself through the European Union and unifying itself from Spain to Greece (and possibly Turkey), to the very frontiers of Russia. It is now officially conceived to be a wholly secular culture to the seemingly deliberate exclusion of its Christian origins. It is the modern world of technology, science, freedom, and leisure. Many even propose to replace the term "modern" with "post-modern" because of the radical differences in conception of human purpose and the human person that now appear to motivate European societies. The modern era was fond of justifying technology and based its defense upon the argument that technology promoted the well-being of humanity. In doing so it masked the destructive effects of a ruthless system centred on the acquisition of power for its own sake. Dominating the growth of modern culture as it did, this new outlook was (and still is) either indifferent or openly hostile to Christianity. At times the defenders of Christianity (especially in the Reformation and post-Reformation period) complicated the problem by committing numerous blunders, which made Christianity seem to be an enemy of the human spirit. A bizarre situation emerged, when the enclosed world picture of the Middle Ages was erased by the modern picture of a limitless world of unlimited possibilities. The result was that, in the words of Guardini, "God lost His dwelling place; thereby man lost his proper position in existence."[7] Europe no longer knows where to begin looking for its identity. It cannot even speak with a common voice or affirm a common strategy.

The spiritual residue of Christian culture that went along with the aftermath of the two great wars of the twentieth century has largely disappeared. Already after World War I we heard themes of "the decline of the West." Many authors in the 1940s, however, thought the time was ripe for a reaffirmation of Christian and rational culture, as was the case after the fall of Communism (symbolized by the dramatic fall of the Berlin Wall) in 1989.

Yet, today Europe seems in many ways to be dying. Even without war, its population is becoming more immigrant and less indigenous. The former are increasingly in demand for labour and services to a rapidly aging population. European military impotence, as well as the impotence of political will, appears also related to its demography. All through recent decades there were many who warned of the disastrous results of anti-natal mentality, something everywhere visible today, though few appear inclined to delve into its spiritual causes. Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, has appropriately and succinctly described this sad and continually unfolding situation in the following way:

> At the hour of its greatest success, Europe seems hollow, as if it were internally paralyzed by a failure of its circulatory system that is endangering its life, subjecting it to transplants that erase its identity. At the same time as its sustaining spiritual forces have collapsed, a growing decline in its ethnicity is also taking place.
> Europe is infected by a strange lack of desire for the future. Children, our future, are perceived as a threat to the present, as if they were taking something away from our lives. Children are seen as a liability rather than as a source of hope. There is a clear comparison between today's situation and the decline of the Roman Empire. In its final days, Rome still functioned as a great historical framework, but in practice it was already subsisting on models that were destined to fail. Its vital energy had been depleted.[8]

Our European societies have lost confidence in the power of reason. Modern Europeans do not trust that through reflection and argument we can discover the meaning of human existence, and what the purpose of our human lives is. There are many ways which evidence this sorry state of affairs. We find it in the atmosphere of moral relativism, in an attitude of intolerance towards authority and reasoned opposition, as well as in what one might term "the clash of fundamentalisms".

[7] Romano Guardini, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
[8] Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spiritual Roots of Europe: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, in Joseph Ratzinger and Marcello Pera, *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*, Basic Books, New York 2006, p. 66f. See also John Paul II, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*, n. 95.

Moral Relativism and its Consequences

Our media and self-proclaimed opinion leaders relish the prospect of branding people instead of ideas, manipulating quotes and extrapolating them from their context in order to create maximum effect and in the process boost the number of viewers, listeners and readers. Far from presenting an objective account they thrive upon the dictum: don't let the facts get in the way of a good story. If it concerns taking a religious stance, then its presentation must be all the more appealing to sensationalism. Jonathan Sacks describes the situation in the following manner:

> Lacking a shared language, we must attack the arguer, not the argument. This is done by ruling certain opinions out of order, not because they are untrue - there is no moral truth - but because they represent an assault on the dignity of those who believe otherwise. So Christians are homophobic. People on the political right are fascist. Those who believe in the right of Jews to a state are racist. Those who believe in traditional marriage are heterosexist. Political correctness, created to avoid stigmatizing speech, becomes the supreme example of stigmatizing speech.[9]

If it entails unleashing a witch-hunt, then so be it. Sacks later refers to the case of Rocco Buttiglione, former Minister for European Affairs in the Italian Government and in private life a devout Catholic. He was chosen by the president of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, to be its commissioner for Justice. While being interviewed for the post by the Commission he affirmed that, as a Catholic, he believed that homosexual behaviour is sinful but that it should not be a crime. His statement was declared outrageous and pressure was put to bear on the president to withhold his candidature. The reason brought up by the Commission was that his private moral convictions were 'in direct contradiction of European Law'. Eventually, Buttiglione took the initiative and withdrew. But one need not go that far. Here in Malta controversy erupted a few months ago when it was revealed (by way of a letter to the editor) in a local English-language newspaper, that the chairman of the Bioethics Committee set up by the government was a member of *Opus Dei*, which was described as "an ultra-conservative wing of Catholicism".[10] One opinion leader saw it fit to declare that belonging to such an organization was reason enough to make a person ineligible for the post.[11] Speaking in such a condescending manner is no less discriminatory than the very attitude one is condemning in the other. It appears that one is free to express one's opinion as long as it is not in direct conflict with the present trends of society. When a contrary opinion is presented, it must be demolished without any regard whatsoever to its value and to its possible contribution to public debate. It appears that the new tolerance is much more repressive than the old intolerance.

Two years ago, during a series of surveys concerning respect run by the BBC World News website, Roger Scruton, former professor of aesthetics at Birbeck College, London, had this to say:

> The loss of respect in our society has a simple cause, which is that respect is no longer taught. Children are encouraged to think that they are the equals of their parents, their teachers and people in authority. They are not taught to address adults correctly or to defer to adult opinion. Insolence is seldom punished, and certainly not given the stigma that it deserves. The respect-free playground leads to the respect-free adult community. You see this especially on the BBC, in which news programmes, chat shows and interviews are conducted entirely without deference towards the knowledge, culture or social standing of the people who appear on them. The purpose of interviewing some public figure is not to gain instruction but to catch him out; the purpose of discussing some difficult issue is not to resolve it but to generate a heated exchange. It is regarded as wholly permissible to make personal remarks and *ad hominem* arguments, and the normal titles to respect, such as knowledge, expertise and high office, are deliberately brought down to a level where they can be laughed at.[12]

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[9] Sacks, *op. cit*, p. 42.
[10] See 'Fertilization and personhood' by Mark Azzopardi, in *The Times*, Friday, 16th November 2007.
[11] See 'The Bioethics Committee is no place for Opus Dei' by Daphne Caruana Galizia, in *The Malta Independent on Sunday*, Sunday, 18th November 2007.
[12] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4589586.stm published on 9th January 2006.

This has recently become clear to all with the incident that led Pope Benedict XVI to cancel his visit and address to the Academic staff and students of La Sapienza University because of protests led by a group of 67 academics who, together with some of their students, alleged in a letter written to the Rector of the aforementioned academic institution that the Pope had in one of his writings justified the manner in which the trial of Galileo had taken place, and was consequently accused of obscurantism and hostility toward science. The issue degenerated into more specifically anti-religious arguments challenging the presence of the head of the Catholic Church in a secular university. Eventually the Pope canceled his visit to the university and opted instead to send in the text of his proposed speech.

Fundamentalisms in Conflict

This leads us to contemplate another scenario that is unfolding in Europe today and which is intimately linked with the above-mentioned problem of lack of respect, namely the clash between religious fundamentalism and secular fundamentalism.

Religious fundamentalists are fundamentally lazy as believers. This does not mean that they are not zealous; quite the contrary, they are zealous in the extreme. Their laziness lies in the false sense of security, which they find in their religious convictions. Their interpretation of scripture lacks dynamism, their doctrinal teachings lack insight, and their moral instruction is laden with norms and precepts. There is no room for diversity or dissent, personal initiative or creativity. The world appears to be divided into two opposing positions: those "out there", who are destined to perdition, and those "in here" who are called to be saved. Religious fundamentalism does not accept faith as a dynamic principle that gives life and movement to the human spirit. It does not allow space for the human soul to pose searching questions about life and about the human situation and that the answers given might not be satisfactory.

Secular fundamentalists, on the other hand, dismiss religion *tout court* as the bearer of obscurantism. Their outright refusal to understand faith and Europe's faith heritage denies to all the opportunity to understand why religious people act the way they do in response to issues ranging from the Muslim headscarf, to the Danish cartoon controversy, to the now defunct European constitution, to Madonna's aping Christ crucified, to the broadcasting of *Jerry Springer: The Opera*.

Contrary to secularity, secularism is not happy with the mere drawing of the distinction between religion and state and the necessity on the part of both to maintain their autonomy while at the same time collaborating for the common good. As a movement secularism is bent on desecrating all those symbols and beliefs that religious people hold dear, and which they consider an integral part of their life and role in society. It does not limit itself to criticizing religious beliefs and attitudes; it enthusiastically holds them up to public ridicule in order to humiliate them and, subsequently, edit them out of existence *permanently*. At the height of the Clinton-Lewinsky affair, the *Jyllands-Posten* came up with a cartoon depicting St. Joseph pointing an accusing finger at the Virgin Mary with the child Jesus in her arms. The caption below it read: "I did not have sexual relations with that woman!" Long before the film *Submission* was aired on Dutch television, Theo van Gogh had already caused many an uproar by pouring scorn and abuse on Dutch Jews[13] and by calling Jesus Christ "that rotten fish from Nazareth".[14]

Secular society does not allow for openly religious people to be seen as normal and well-adjusted. There always seems to be a desire to pigeon-hole them as semi-rational, spiritual fifth columnists. This attitude has been painfully made clear by former Prime Minister Tony Blair's admission during an interview on the BBC One series *The Blair Years* that "you talk about it [religion] in our [British] system and, frankly, people do think you're a nutter". This was confirmed by his former spokesman Alastair Campbell - known for having once told reporters: "We don't do God" - when he stated that the UK electorate was "a bit wary of politicians who go on about God".[15]

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[13] He once attacked Leon De Winter, a filmmaker and novelist and the son of orthodox Jewish parents, in an article which he penned for the movie magazine *Moviola*. In it he wrote that De Winter could only satisfy his wife by wrapping barbed wire around his penis and crying "Auschwitz!" when he reached climax. See Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*, Atlantic Books, London, 2006, p. 90.

[14] See *op. cit.*, p. 91.

[15] See http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/politics/7111620.stm published on 25th November 2007.

Christianity and European Societies

Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, has frequently manifested his disappointment at the lack of sensitivity on the part of European politicians and legislators to address religious concerns, especially their refusal to mention the all-too-obvious contribution Christianity has made to European society and culture. The reason given for this lacuna is that today Europe is a multi-cultural society and one must not seek to give precedence to one religion over another, the latter being presumably Islam. On this point, Ratzinger made the following reflection:

> Muslims feel threatened, not by the foundations of our Christian morality, but by the cynicism of a secularized culture that denies its own foundations... it is not the mention of God that offends those who belong to other religions; rather it is the attempt to construct the human community in a manner that absolutely excludes God.[16]

Nowhere is this fear more greatly felt than in the realm of education and in the increasing popularity of faith-based schools in a profoundly secular culture. As Jonathan Sacks has rightly pointed out, more and more parents are refusing to have their children taught by fashionable methods that leave them bereft of knowledge and skills. They do not want their children to have self-esteem at the cost of self-respect, won by hard work and genuine achievement. Parents do not want their children to be taught that every difference of behaviour reflects an equally valid lifestyle. They do not want their children to be moral relativists, exploring all cultures without being at home in any of them. Parents do not want to take the risk of their children taking drugs or consuming alcohol or becoming sexually promiscuous, still less becoming teenage parents. Many parents do not entertain the scenario of an ever widening gap between their children's values and their own. They do not want moral values undermined by a secular, sceptical, cynical culture. Nor do they believe that the latter can be counteracted by places of worship, supplementary schooling and domestic life. The values of wider secular culture are not confined to school. They are present in the increasingly obtrusive media of television, the internet, YouTube, MySpace, and the icons of popular culture. Consumerism, relativism, a moral free-for-all - these are not the values which they want their children integrated *into*. On the contrary, these are what they want their children to be protected *from*.[17]

The answer to this crisis in European culture is not the return to mediaeval times and to those religious and societal norms that regulated human behaviour. It is not a return to the concept of *Christendom*; it is rather a question of according the Christian faith its legitimate role in the construction of a healthy and more human society. We cannot go back to what we were, but neither are we condemned to stay as we are. In many ways we have come to realize that there exists, after all, a connection between the values of faith and the construction of a healthy society. To isolate Christian faith from its involvement with social reality amounts to a loss of its practical relevance to human life.[18] Europe has a soul, a soul which is also imbued by the Christian faith, and the neglect of that soul is drying up the vitality of our continent to the detriment of all. Christianity has much to contribute to the revival of that culture based upon the healthy balance between faith and reason, which was once coextensive with European identity. Christianity is being continually challenged by European societies, and it is called to challenge these same societies. Uncomfortable questions call for uncomfortable answers.

Paradoxically, one of Christianity's contributions to Europe at this moment should be to believe in reason, to believe that we are called to seek the truth. This was the main thrust of the arguments put forward by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Fides et Ratio* and in Pope Benedict XVI's now famous *Regensburg Lecture*. In the former it was held that the Church serves humanity with the service of truth, whereas in the latter it was argued that "a reason which is deaf to the divine and which relegates religion into the realm of subcultures is incapable of entering into the dialogue of cultures". The great obstacle to such recognition of Christianity's role in European culture is the belief that religion has no intellectual significance; that it may, at best, be good for morals and satisfying to one's emotional needs, but that it corresponds to no objective reality. It is the task of Christian education to recover those channels of communication of religious truth that were

[16] Joseph Ratzinger, *Christianity and the Crisis of Cultures*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2006, p. 33.
[17] Sacks, *op. cit.*, p. 83. See, also the article by Neil MacFarquhar entitled *Many Muslims Turn to Home Schooling* in *The New York Times*, 26th March 2008.
[18] See *Gaudium et Spes*, nn. 42-43; 57-58.

instrumental in resurrecting European culture from the ashes of the fallen Roman Empire, such as art and architecture, music and poetry and drama, philosophy and history. This would again pave the way towards the restoration of contact between religion and modern society. This implies that Christians today are faced with a double task: first, to recover their own cultural inheritance, and secondly to communicate it to a secular world which is, in the best of cases, neo-pagan. This second task is not as difficult as it may appear at first glance. In attacking and marginalizing religion and Christianity in particular, secularism has done nothing but create an abyss in modern society; in its militant rejection of the Christian roots of Europe, secularism has only succeeded in creating a schizophrenic society. It has not created another alternative because it does not believe in permanence, still less in absolutes. Everything is in continuous flux. People are becoming increasingly aware that something is lacking in today's secular culture; and there are many who are still far from positive religious belief but who possess a good measure of intellectual curiosity about religion, which may become the seed of something more.

For better or for worse, Christianity has grounded the life of Europe on principles drawn from the gospel, traces of which are evident in art, literature, thought and culture of all European nations. It would be a grave mistake to consider that such a heritage belongs solely to the past; it is a project in the making, to be passed on to future generations, since it has indelibly marked the lives of those (both individuals and peoples) who together have forged the continent of Europe.[19] Pope John Paul II consistently brought these issues to the fore, especially with the recent rise of radical secularist movements who have sought to deny any role for religion - and especially for Christianity - in the life of Europe:

> Communities of believers, an expression of the religious dimension of the human being, exist in all societies. Believers, therefore, legitimately expect to take part in the public dialogue. Unfortunately, it must be noted that this is not always the case. In recent times, we have witnessed in some European countries an attitude that could endanger the effective respect for religious freedom.
> Everyone may agree to respect the religious sentiment of individuals but the same cannot be said of the "religious factor", that is, the social dimension of religions; here the engagements made in the context of what was formerly known as the "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe" have been forgotten. People often invoke the principle of secularity, legitimate in itself if it is understood as the distinction between the political community and religions (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 76). But distinction does not mean ignorance! Secularity is not secularism! It is nothing other than respect for all beliefs on the part of the State that assures the free exercise of ritual, spiritual, cultural and charitable activities by communities of believers. In a pluralistic society, secularity is a place for communication between the different spiritual traditions and the nation. Church-State relations can and must, on the contrary, lead to a respectful dialogue conveying fruitful experiences and values for the future of a nation. There is no doubt at all that *a healthy dialogue between the State and the Churches* - which are not rivals but partners - can encourage the integral development of the human person and harmony in society.
> The difficulty of accepting the religious factor in a public forum was revealed on the occasion of *the recent debate on the Christian roots of Europe*. Some people reinterpreted history through the prism of reductive ideologies, forgetting what Christianity has contributed to the culture and institutions of the Continent: the dignity of the human being, freedom, the sense of the universal, schools and universities, social services. Without underestimating other religious traditions, it remains a fact that Europe was consolidated at the same time of its evangelization. And in all fairness it should be remembered that only a short time ago Christians, by promoting

[19] In his Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* Pope John Paul II issued the following invitation to the European continent:

> Taking up anew this invitation to hope, I repeat to you again today: *Europe*, as you stand at the beginning of the third millennium, "*Open the doors to Christ! Be yourself. Rediscover your origins. Relive your roots*". Down the centuries you have received the treasure of Christian faith. It has grounded your life as a society on principles drawn from the Gospel, and traces of this are evident in the art, literature, thought and culture of your nations. But this heritage does not belong just to the past; it is a project in the making, to be passed on to future generations, for it has indelibly marked the life of the individuals and peoples who together have forged the continent of Europe.

Op. cit., n. 120.

> freedom and human rights, contributed to the peaceful transformation of authoritarian regimes as well as to the restoration of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.[20]

The challenge of secularism must be met on the cultural level, if it is to be met at all; and if Christians cannot assert their right to exist in the sphere of higher education, they will eventually be pushed out not only of modern culture but out of physical existence.

The role of the Christian, however, should not be reduced to that of a tenacious apologist obsessed with preserving Christianity from extinction. God does not need believers to defend him. He is perfectly capable of doing that on his own, without any human interference whatsoever. In this heartless world that humanity has constructed on the European continent the Christian is called to demonstrate that the human being is not reduced to what he or she shows or produces; that the family is the natural environment in which one learns how to love; that simple gestures are enough to restore hope to those who consider themselves marginalized or, even worse, forgotten. The role of the Christian in helping construct the future of European societies - and of societies worldwide for that matter - is to be an attentive listener to the cries of anguish which betray a haunting emptiness and meaninglessness that lie at the heart of humanity today, as well as an impassioned and coherent witness of a faith that is forever new, dynamic and relevant. Europe is suffering from a deficit of hope, that hope which enables its citizens to give meaning to their lives and history, and to look ahead and continue on their way *together*.[21] The Christian model of life must therefore be manifested as a life in all its fullness and freedom, a love that does not experience the bonds of love as dependence and limitation but rather as an opening to the greatness of life. Christianity has a future because it has always possessed seeds of renewal together with faithfulness to Tradition. The Christian is convinced that his or her faith opens up new dimensions of understanding, and above all that it helps reason to be itself. What is demanded of Christians is that they be coherent in their daily lives and confident that each moment in history is above all God's moment. Modernity should not be the cause of fear, but a challenge to live up to one's faith and find in it the realization of human dignity and purpose. Here we would do well to constantly recall the timely and insightful words of Ignace Lepp:

> The Christian's attitude to all other creatures must be like that of the priest at the altar. He knows that through him, through his daily activity, the whole world is consecrated to God. The sorrows and failures of life are for him no meaningless vexations, for he knows that they also contribute to God's great work: we know, with St. Paul, that all things work together for good for those who love God.
> The believer must never be complacent, for complacency is closely akin to death. Because he is aware of his mission as God's collaborator the believer can be content with no given or contrived situation. The present must forever be overtaken by the new. The Christian, in a truer and greater sense than the Trotzkyist, is a "permanent revolutionary."[22]

[20] John Paul II, *Address to the Diplomatic Corps*, Rome, January 12, 2004, published in *L'Osservatore Romano* (English Language Edition), January 21, 2004.
[21] See John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Europa*, n. 4. Cf. n. 109.
[22] Ignace Lepp, *The Challenges of Life*, Alba House, Staten Island, New York 1969, p. 197.

ERADICATION OF POVERTY AS A MORAL COMMITMENT

GEORGE GRIMA

One may think that the central moral issue regarding the eradication of poverty lies in keeping the commitments that have been undertaken at world, regional and local levels.[1] The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, established by the ILO, notes that globalization is not actually creating opportunities of development for all, partly because the international community "makes more commitments than it is prepared to implement".[2] It does not argue, however, that what is required is simply to take commitments more seriously and to try harder to put principles into practice. The issue is more complex. Moving from principles to action is problematic, because the task is not of a coercive nature, even if social policies and legislative action carry an element of coercion and are surely an essential instrument in the fight against poverty. The task remains ultimately in the hands of human beings that can act effectively and authentically, if they act fully aware of the value and significance of what they are doing and if they are acting in freedom and so doing the thing, because they want to do it.

The moral issue, therefore, cannot be reduced simply to the presence or otherwise of the strength of resolution or will power. The issue concerns, in the first place, the way we *see* poverty or the way we *look at* the poor and, secondly, the importance of actually *deciding* to participate in action against poverty. In speaking about the moral dimension of any action, it is crucial to grasp the significance both of *vision* and *freedom* for action to acquire that breadth and depth which only a moral sensibility can give. The aspect of obligation, which is certainly an integral part of moral life, is, we may say, secondary, in the sense that it comes at a later or a second stage. It manifests itself originally in the depths of man's conscience where man "detects a law which does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience"[3] and subsequently in appropriate personal and social action.

The way in which society is organizing itself on the political and civil as well as on the local and global level to eradicate poverty, apparently within a more or less definite time frame, is in a sense prejudicial to a fuller understanding of the moral dimension of the fight against poverty. It tends to make one believe that the fight consists essentially in agreeing on certain goals and drafting appropriate strategies. Strategic thinking and acting are surely important for an efficient way of organizing and reviewing social action. But again strategies for social change, however adequate they may be in themselves, depend on moral resources that come from the *vision* that we have and the *freedom* that we enjoy in embarking on a course of action. It is this aspect that I would like to explore in this paper. I shall consider (i) the social and (ii) cultural aspects of the vision that can adequately support our commitment to eradicate poverty as well as (iii) the eradication of poverty as a task of freedom..

Beyond A Market - Driven Social Vision

The early phase of free market modern economies was characterized by something like a religious belief. It was assumed that a free market economy would not only release and develop individual and group potential, giving economic growth the boost that it required to sustain itself, but it would also benefit the poorer sections of the population due to the presence of a hidden hand in economic processes that works somehow

[1] The eradication of poverty has been a constant matter on the agenda of the United Nations, featuring in the plan of action and follow-up programme of practically every world conference on development and constituting one of the major goals of the United Nations Development Programme. On the goals, commitments and strategies agreed at the United Nations' world conferences and summits since 1990 see: *The United Nations Development Agenda: Development for All,* New York, 2007. On a regional level, the European Union has been working on a very elaborate and systematically coordinated strategy for poverty reduction and social inclusion. The strategy requires Member States to adopt periodical national strategies for social protection and inclusion. The current National Report on *Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006 - 2008* has been published by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, in April 2007.

[2] *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All, Geneva*, 2004, par. 44.

[3] "The Church in the Modern World" in *The Documents of Vatican II*, edited by Walter M. Abbott, S.J., and Joseph Gallagher, London, 1967, par. 16. The quotation, being from a Church document, presupposes a theological framework for the sense of obligation and what it affirms may, therefore, be contested in a secular context.

in everyone's interests. How false was this assumption emerged with the advance of industrialization and capitalism. Industrialization brought about profound changes in society through the movement of the population from rural to urban industrialized areas, creating new housing problems and progressively degenerating neighbourhoods. The capitalist economic system opened new job opportunities but generally laid no decent conditions of work. A free market economy is a decisive factor in shaping people's way of life but its logic is not necessarily responsive to social needs. A free labour market involves the freedom of employing as many workers as one decides and to select whom one wants but remuneration and conditions of work are fixed in accordance with the law of supply and demand in the absence of adequate labour legisltation. Free trading is obviously an essential part of economic freedom. But who is to establish the criteria and parameters of fair trading, if not the state acting on behalf of society? The problem, however, is that societies have to find a new way of protecting themselves from the negative impact of the economy, since the *limits* that they have been setting to the operation of the market through their respective states have become fluid and rather weak with the opening up of local economies to the world market where the dominant, if not exclusive, language is that of costs and profits.[4]

One of the very important and significant lines of action against poverty is the integration of economic with social concerns. Integration does not mean the abolition of social spheres where we live together in different ways. An economy that is not trying to be increasingly more competitive and more profitable will serve neither the individual nor society. But making an economy more competitve at the cost of jobs, decent conditions of work or social cohesion, as the European Union has clearly seen in drafing the Lisbon strategy, is disastrous.[5] Speaking about globalization as a market-driven process, the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization appeals for "a stronger ethical framework". It argues that globalization has developed "in an ethical vacuum, where market success and failure have tended to become the ultimate standard of behaviour, and where the attitude of 'the winner takes all' weakens the fabric of societies and communities".[6]

This assessment of market operations may be too negative. As Amartya Sen observes, markets should not be judged by the *results* that they produce, although what they do to people is ethically significant, but rather by the *reasons* for wanting to have them. The outcomes of free market economies, operating as they are today on a world-wide level, are evidently negative - and very much so - for some countries and sections of the population. But we still want free markets, because of the basic importance of market freedom. In fact, to deny that freedom in general would be in itself "a major failing of society".[7] The freedom of entrepreneurship as well as the possibility to choose one's own work and to choose between a variety of products and services are part of the kind of freedom we all would like to enjoy in democratic societies, even if particualr economic and social conditions restrict the actual range of freedom in these matters. Besides, the market itself is part of a social set-up where people can interact with each other on the basis of what Anthony Giddens calls "ontological trust",[8] that is, the trust that we take for granted in our everyday life and that is essential for our normal functioning in every sphere of life. It is this trust that people and organizations in business need to inspire in and through their operations that can sustain business activity in the long run.

An appropriate and effective legislative framework, enabling or prohibiting certain kinds of action, maps out the space for business activity in society, as it provides for the regulation of free and peaceful economic transactions and for sanctions against improper business conduct. But again the problem lies in the impact of markets competing with each other for financial gain on people world-wide, especially those who are in a vulnerable position. It is well known that a country can attract foreign investment, if the packet of social costs that it can offer is a competitive one. In this sense, the growing pressure on individual countries to remain competitive in attracting foreign investment by reducing the social costs, through lower taxes, fewer environmental restrictions and looser labour conditions, is a major social problem, as it may condition the capability of particular countries to deal with poverty in an effective manner.

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[4] On the limits of States *vis-à-vis* national economies in the context of a global economy see *The Global Transformations Reader, ed. By* David Held & Anthony McGrew, 2nd ed. Cambridge, 2003, pp.299 - 420.

[5] The Lisbon strategy is meant to make the European economy not only the most competitive in the world but also to make it generate more and better jobs and lead to social cohesion.

[6] *A Fair Globalization*, par. 37.

[7] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York, 1999, p.112.

[8] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, paperback ed., 1991, reprinted, 1997, pp. 35-69.

There is the danger, however, of losing sight of a very important point about the role of free market economies in fighting poverty and social exclusion, if we see them simply as amoral agents, driven only by self-interest and greed or weakening the power of individual states and the international community to create a more socially inclusive society. Economic activity has an ethical dimension, like any other human activity, that cannot and should not actually be expressed and articulated exclusively in terms of legally binding norms. Ethics presupposes freedom in quite an original sense of the word. It unfolds, in fact, as a manifestation of freedom, as a way of thinking and behaving that one adopts and follows out of sheer freedom or the satisfaction of doing something that is worth doing in itself. I shall be elaborating this point in the third part of this paper. What I wish to emphasize in this context is that behind markets and business organizations there are people who are or can be sensitive to certain values and who are or can be capable to act in accordance with certain principles. It is precisely this point that is presupposed and yet not sufficiently appreciated in assessing the importance of so much work that is being done today by so many bodies on various levels to promote a sense of justice, freedom and solidarity in business activity. Of so many initiatives being taken I wish to mention only two:

Kofi Annan, former General Secretary of the United Nations, called on business leaders taking part in the World Economic Forum in 1999 to subscribe to nine principles of action and form part of what he named "a global compact". The idea was to establish some kind of partnership between business, states and civil society groups and movements for the protection of universal human rights, the creation of decent conditions of work and the promotion of the environment. The global compact has now developed into a network, consisting of several hundred companies, a number of NGOs, major labour federations and several UN agencies. In the words of Georg Kell and David Levin, the Global Compact Network has been "an historic experiment in learning and action". While it cannot resolve all the deficiencies of global capitalism, "it can make a significant contribution by laying a foundation of shared values and harnessing the skills and resources of the private sector".[9]

The ILO, which is particularly adapted to forge a closer alliance between governments, workers and employees, adopted in 1999 a programme of action that could give a clearer and a more effective direction to its work. In response to the transitions through which the world is moving everywhere and at a very fast pace, its three constituent parties have agreed that they should collaborate to secure decent work for women and men everywhere. The priorities include: safeguarding the rights of working people, including fair wages and the elimination of child labour; consolidating social protection and social security, including the challenge of global migration and strengthening social dialogue not only between the social partners but also with civl society groups and organizations. A co-ordinated programme of action, focusing on decent work, adopted and carried out through government action in co-operation with workers and employers, is certainly a good base for effective action against poverty.[10]

The outcomes from the UN sponsored 'Global Compact' and the ILO 'Decent Work' programme as well as those from so many other similar initiatives may not be as encouraging as we would like them to be. In a world where people and organizations are capable of seeing the importance of having the right kind of priorities and yet decide to follow the wrong ones in practice, only hope can keep alive our vision of a new society and sustain our struggle for jusitce. Our ethical challenge, however, remains that of *seeing* poverty and social exclusion as a task that belongs to everyone and holds for every sector of life, even if what one should expect from the private (i.e economic) sector is different from what one should expect from governments, families, churches and civil society groups. This is why we should not envisage the struggle against poverty as a struggle against the abusive power of a free-market global economy, although we should by all means expose and condemn abuse. The fight against poverty can only be won if it is motivated by a common vision of a truly human society.

The discourse on poverty is today rightly being developed in relation to social exclusion, presuming that whatever else poverty may mean for the individuals concerned, it is one of the ways, indeed a very serious way, in which people are effectively being excluded from something (i.e. social life) to which they have a

[9] Georg Kell and David Levin, "The Evolution of the Global Compact Network: An Historic Experiment in Learning and Action", paper presented at the Academy of Management Annual Conference "Building Effective Networks, 2004, p.2, available online at: http://www.unglobalcompact.org/doc/news.

[10] For information on the ILO's Decent Work agenda, see: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/decent.htm.

fundamental right. Social protection is now taking the form of a complex set of initiatives and actions on the part of the state, in collaboration with civil society and the private sector, to provide adequate structures for people to participate actively in their own well-being and that of others. It is understood as protection against the risk of exclusion and a help for the excluded to regain their self-esteem and form an active part of society again. The goal of social protection, as is being emphasized in social policy documents, is *social cohesion* or the transformation of society into a society that is capable to include rather than exclude people. This overarching goal needs to be further specified in terms of the things that are desirable for society to achieve and the principles that should guide social action.

It is perhaps more illuminating to discuss the problem of a set of common values in a world context, as we may fairly assume that it is more difficult to come to some kind of common agreement on a global than on a local level, even though the local, with its increasingly pluriform character, has become a microcosm of the whole. Significantly enough, the Report on *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*, appeals for *a stronger ethical famework* for globalization, assuming, therefore, that the current framework is a weak one. "Cohesive societies", it says, "are built around shared values, which create a moral and ethical framework for private and public action".[11] At present we are in a period of transition: "Globalization has not yet created a global society, but the increased interaction between people and countries throws into sharp relief the urgent need for a common ethical framework".[12]

The kind of common ethical framework that can promote cohesive societies is actually a framework of values and principles, "repeatedly echoed in the public debate on globalization" and expressing "the concerns of people at a time of great change and uncertainty".[13] The ethical framework needs not to be constructed, but only recalled from "the declarations and treaties of the multilateral system of the United Nations" and reaffirmed as "the common ground of the world's spiritual and secular beliefs".[14] A common ethical framework, therfore, stands for a *vision of society* that is already resonating in people's hearts and that the international community has already recognized in its principal declarations. Keeping this vision alive in our thoughts and deeds is what gives depth to our lives. To what kind of society do we all desire and seek to belong, if we wish to find our true sense of humanity? As I shall be saying shortly, the intellectual climate today, based on respect for everyone's right to live one's own life, is not altogether favourable toward any talk about thick concepts concerning the good society, assuming that one should not go much further than that a good society is one where everyone is free to live one's own life in peace. Before I take up this point, which has an obviously direct and considerable bearing on the eradication of poverty as a moral commitment, I would like to present how the Report on *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All* is envisaging a good society on the global level.[15] Against this background, I hope, the argument about the eradication of poverty as a task of freedom and for freedom will be clear.

The contours that the Report draws of an authentically human society in an age of globalization carry the traces of what humanity has gone through in recent history. It should, in the first place, be a society founded on respect for human dignity and human rights. Read in a historical perspective, this is a reminder of the atrocities that have torn humanity apart in the course of two world wars within less than fifty years. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is the outcome of the collective historical awareness of the pain and misery that awaits mankind in the absence of respect for every human being. Living in dignity is what human rights are meant to ensure and what actually gives life a human face. The civil and political rights, on the one hand, and the economic, social and cultural rights, on the other, specify the basic aspects of social life that enable one to live a truly human way of life. In the context of this social vision, the problem about the definition and indicators of poverty, as I shall be saying in the third section of this paper, acquires a new meaning and relevance, for the concept of poverty as privation includes but goes beyond a purely economic definition.

[11] *A Fair Globalization,* cit. par. 39.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., par. 41.
[14] Ibid., par. 41-42.
[15] In what follows the shared values and principles mentioned by the Report on *A Fair Globalization* are placed in a historical perspective so that their meaning as ethical guidelines for the present globalized world may emerge more clearly.

Yet the awareness that humanity is one, even if it has proved to be a powerful idea for the reconsturction of the world in mid-twentieth century, represents only one side of the picture. A true vision of human society has to refect the richness of mankind as a pluriform reality. The presence of so many different cultures and religions as well as the existence of so many diverging political and social opinions is not a deficit in but an asset to democratic life. This side of the story is emerging in different versions. The fundamentalist as well as the uniformization version are untenable and place life in society at risk, as terrorist and imperialist acts in recent years, have tragically shown.[16] Dialogue is the path to follow for living a dignified life in a multicultural and religiously pluralistic world. The massive waves of migration of people from poor countries is posing a new and urgent challenge to local strategies for the eradication of poverty. Immigrants represent a highly vulnerable group because in addition to economic privation they are generally subject to racial and sometimes religious prejudice.

The modern history of economic thought and practice began not only with a vision of increasing economic growth but also with a presumption that economic benefits would be fairly distributed. But again this has been a vision that has had to be continually recovered and reaffirmed in the course of what can be called a struggle for justice. In an age of globalization the notion of fairness has not lost any of its original significance, as "a notion felt and clearly recognized by people in every country", and it is, in fact, being reasserted as a "a standard of justice ... to judge globalization and the equitable distribution of its benefits".[17] Unfortunately, the existence of so many poor people across the world, even in the relatively richer countries, is a continuing indictment of the current social injustice.

What is perhaps most frustrating in working for the eradication of poverty is the obvious absence of solidarity, the lack of awareness that a true development is an inclusive one, embracing all basic dimensions of the human personality and extending to everyone. One may justify the need of solidarity by arguing that living in an interdependent world requires common action to protect each other from common threats. The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization follows this line of thought, saying that solidarity is based on "recognition that in an interdependent world, poverty or oppression anywhere is a threat to prosperity and stability everywhere".[18] One may also take a stronger view of solidarity and speak of it in terms of a universal moral obligation that is binding on both an individual and a collective level. In the words of Pope John Paul II, "the obligation to commit oneself to the development of peoples ... is an imperative which obliges *each and every* man and woman, as well as societies and nations ... a duty of *all towards all*, and must be shared by the four parts of the world" [19]. Enormous strides forward have been made in recent years in the way in which action on poverty is coordinated at different levels and organized to bring various actors together and make such an action more effective.Yet only a powerful and a consistent sense of solidarity can sustain collective effort, because it alone can actually empower people to work together for a common cause, especially in the case of poverty, which calls for a long- term commitment.

What else should a vision of society include in an era of globalization? The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization includes in its vision another value, namely respect for the environment. In this respect too the social vision that it is advocating bears a trace of what mankind has lost under the pretext of scientific and economic progress. In view of the very rapid rate at which the resources of the earth are being depleted and the alarming damage being done to the natural diversity of life on earth and the viability of the planet's eco-system, the ecological dimension has emerged as a priority area of social concern across the world, even if in this respect also commitment to a safer and healthier environment, generally speaking, is still too weak.

Having, at least, a basic picture of what we would like society to be for us all can provide the necessary impetus and give a fairly clear and definitive direction to individual and collective action against poverty.

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[16] The emergence of fundamentalism in recent years can be explained as an extreme form of reaction on the part of certain religious groups against a liberalism that wants to confine religion to the private sphere. The problem with fundamentalism is obviously that it exacerbates conflict in a secular and religiously pluralistic society. The uniformization view is equally untenable as a basis for living together in modern society, because the search for a common ground among people, professing different religious and world views, is actually a search in and through dialogue and not compliance with some *a priori* comprehensive view of life.

[17] *A Fair Globalization,* cit. par. 41.

[18] Ibid.

[19] John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis,* Vatican, 1987, par. 32.

Two moral principles can prove particularly helpful in passing from vision to action. One is the principle of social solidarity which suggests that alleviating poverty will require fundamental changes in social and economic structures that perpetuate obvious inequalities and prevent millions of people from full participation in the economic and social life of their country. The other is the principle of participation that points to the most appropriate and far-reaching solutions to poverty, namely, those that enable people to take control of their lives. In other words, poverty is not merely lack of financial resources. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops of North America adopts a far more comprehensive definition of poverty:

"It entails a more profound kind of deprivation, a denial of full participation in the economic, social and political life of society and an inability to influence decisons that affect one's life. It means being powerless in a way that assaults not only one's pocketbook but also one's fundamental human dignity. Therefore we should seek solutions that enable the poor to help themselves through such means as employment. Paternalistic programmes which do too much *for* and too little *with* the poor are to be avoided".[20]

The eradication of poverty involves concretely the empowerment of the poor to participate in a social life that affirms their own self-esteem and expands their freedom. This is not a small task. What kind of commitment can sustain it? I shall argue that this can only be a commitment to our common humanity and that our problem is basically that of breaking away from general ways of thinking that block our vision and weakens our commitment.

Commitment to Our Common Humanity

I do not think that too many of us would feel, at best, more than a fleeting sense of compassion for poor people in metropolitan cities searching in dustbins for something to eat or to drink. The sight has become too familiar to attract any special attention. Nobody, of course, would question that they are our fellow human beings. But the sense of fellowship that we may have does not, generally speaking, move us to do anything substantial for or with them. If this is so, what is the point of affirming our belief in a common humanity?

The point is not just that of affirming that we all share something in common, irrespective of who or where we are, distinguishing us from other beings. The point is rather the practical or moral implication of the distinguishing feature. If the distinguishing mark of human beings is their rational capability, they are expected to live and treat each other in a reasonable way. But what constitutes a reasonable way of life? This has become, for obvious historical reasons, a rather 'touchy' question. It is understandable that one should personally grapple with this problem and try to find a satisfactory answer to it in view of its importance for individual self-fulfilment. It is understandable also that society be based on some kind of vision of the good life with which people, whatever their background and beliefs, can essentially identify themselves. Putting it mildly, however, we should be wary of imposing more than the minimum required for a decent life. Let us say that the picture of society, as suggested by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, does not have a stronger ethical framework than is required in a democratic society today. But how is the modern culture of tolerance affecting our social commitment?

The relevance of this question to the fight against poverty is obvious: society may adjust its policies and strategies to respond to the plight of the poor but people, bent on living their own life, as an individual project, are generally unable to see why they should at all "go out of their way" to help the poor. This is one of the reasons, perhaps the most decisive reason, why the fight against poverty cannot be easily won. Yet the problem is not about the aspiration of people to live their life in their own individual way. This is a legitmate aspiration in itself. It is also an important cultural gain, as it can lead toward more personal responsibility in choosing the kind of person one decides to become and a greater sense of creativity in developing a personal lifestyle. By all means, society needs to be tolerant in order to enable people to satisfy this basic aspiration. But there are problems that, in the words of David Hollenbach, "tolerance cannot handle". Speaking of urban poverty in America, he says that "tolerance, taken by itself, is not a sufficient resource for addressing the urgent problems confronting American public life today".[21] The range of problems he mentions - economic deprivation, unemployment, single parenthood, homelessness and drug-related violence - show the intricate

[20] Pastoral Letter of US Catholic Bishops on Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy, *Economic Justice for All,* 1986, par. 188.
[21] David Hollenbach, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics*, Cambridge, 2002, p.34.

web of social problems lying behind poverty. But in what sense is tolerance lacking in the moral resources that we need to confront poverty and its related problems?

Briefly, the answer is that tolerance presupposes that people should be free to live their own individual life as independently as possible from each other. People, of course, live together and establish a variety of relationships among themselves. But if the purpose of social life is to allow the individual to live his or her own life in freedom, one's obligations to the other become minimal. They would essentially be obligations that articulate the no-harm principle. In this sense, they would lay down what one should not do rather than what one should do with and for the other. We may argue, as I shall be doing, that 'doing no harm to the other', however basic as a moral principle, constitutes the minimum moral requirement for people to be able to live with each other. The fact, however, remains that for so many people to live and let live has become a central moral ideal. Why has this outlook taken such a hold of the social imagination and become such an attractive moral ideal?

The reason seems to lie in the way we have come to look at the meaning of life. Robert Bellah and the co-authors of *Habits of the Heart*, a national bestseller in America, affirm that "the meaning of one's life for most Americans is to become one's own person, almost to give birth to oneself".[22] This is actually the way in which modern culture is conditioning us to define the meaning of life, as Charles Taylor explains in his perceptive and wide-ranging study on the making of the modern identity.[23] The route to self-discovery and self-becoming is largely assumed to be one of disengagement from family ties as well as from community and inherited ideas as points of reference in life.The two most important areas for people today are those of work and relationship with a sympathetic other or sympathetic others. The authors of *Habits of the Heart* link these two areas or realms to the utilitarian and the expressive side of modern individualism. The occupational world gives men and women the opportunity of showing that they "can stand on their two feet and be self-supporting".[24] A good relationship with another or others that are sympathetic to us provide "a lifestyle enclave" where "we can spend our leisure time in an atmosphere of acceptance, happiness, and love".[25]

What holds for people in America seems to hold also for people in Europe. A very recent Eurobarometer survey shows that, for the great majority of people, having a good job and having a good relationship with a partner constitute the core aspects of a good life in today's world.[26] These findings may be interpreted as an indication of where we need to focus our attention when dealing with poverty. One may argue that giving the poor access to decent work is the key to enable them to find their place in society and become increasingly more self-supporting. In practice, every strategy adopted for the eradication of poverty includes job creation as an important, if not the most important, goal. The task generally involves expanding the economy in certain well-defined areas as well as investing in suitable education and training. But if the purpose of this collective effort is to bring about a society of individuals, that are self-supporting and are sharing their life with a chosen one or few, the end result can hardly be a truly inclusive society. It will be rather a society that is creating barriers between those inside and those outside our circle, in this way isolating people from each other.

It is this individualist slant in modern culture that is making tolerance increasingly less adequate as a way of creating a participative society. Peaceful coexistence is certainly a fundamental social value. But we can really live together as human beings, if we are capable to go beyond self-interest. What does "going beyond one's self-interest" mean? Does it mean, as a fairly wide opinion claims, seeking one's self - interest in an enlightened manner by allowing the other to pursue his or her own interests peacefully? This is already a kind of self-transcendance that a juridical framework, establishing rights and duties *vis-à-vis* each other, would presume. The law, however, can only reach out to a certain extent. As an instrument of coercion, law can only be required and expected to lay down the minimum conditions necessary for reciprocal respect in social relationships. But a society in which one is responsive to the needs of the other, whether on an inter-personal or institutional level, calls for a stronger form of self-transcendance.

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[22] Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler and Steven Tipton, *Habaits of the Heart*, updated edition with a new introduction, paperback ed. 1996, p.82.
[23] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity, Cambridge,Mass.*, 1989.
[24] *Habits of the Heart,* cit. p.83.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Eurobarometer, *Poverty and Exclusion*, September 2007, pp.4-11.

Richard Rorty suggests that we can open ourselves to each other, if we are sensitive to each other's pain.[27] Surely, the prospect of suffering alone in an impassible world would be a sign of social decadence. The problem in reality is that solidarity as a moral attitude, based on the belief that 'the self is somehow in the other' in virtue of our common humanity, does not, generally speaking, move people to feel and do something for one another. In pratice, compassion is shown for those whom we have come to consider as being *one of us*, maybe a family member, a colleague, a neighbour or someone with whom we are acquainted. There is nothing deeper in solidarity, Rorty claims, than a set of contingent historical circumstances. It is not because Peter and Paul share a common humanity that they are able to share in each other's suffering but because they happen to identify themselves with each other under some particular description (because they happen to be friends, family members, fellow country men and so forth). This implies that "our sense of solidarity is strongest when those with whom solidarity is expressed are thought of as 'one of us', where 'us' means something smaller and more local than the human race".[28] Solidarity with every human being, whoever and wherever one may be, would still retain its relevance as a moral principle in that it can and should motivate us to try "to extend our sense of 'we' to people whom we have previously thought as 'they'.[29] But we are not moved to action simply by a sense of *a moral obligation* flowing from the belief in our common humanity but by a sensitivity to people going through varieties of pain and humiliation.

I think that Rorty is emphasizing a very important point and one that is relevant to the discourse on the reduction of poverty. In fact, this is not a discourse about a social reality about which we can talk and with which we can deal in a general way, even if statistical information, identification of goals and targets and adoption of adequate strategies have their own importance. It is primarily a discourse about *the poor*, that is, people who have a face, a biography, a community, even if this is in a very sharp contrast with those communities or enclaves in which those who are more or less self-supporting, financially or otherwise, are actually living. It is this original layer of thinking and action that we need to cultivate in and among ourselves, if we wish to flesh out our commitment to the poor. But this implies *a conversion*, that is, a change in our self-perception and in our perception of the other.

Rorty is right in saying that if are not moved to action by the pain and humiliation of the other, as a particular human being, one cannot expect that we would be able to act on the principle of moral solidarity as a universal moral obligation. The problem, however, is that we can only open ourselves to the suffering of other people if we understand self-transcendence in a fairly strong sense as *a self-transformation*. More specifically, this would entail, among other things, a change in the way we look at the financial and relational aspects of life. Utilitarian individualism looks at work primarily as a means of being financially capable of realizing one's individual life project. A higher and a broader perspective would allow oneself to look not so much at the financial independence one could obtain by having a good job but at one's capability to develop a genuine sense of responsibility for onself and the other. Similarly, expressive individualism values relationships in so far as they can serve one to find oneself in the other. It tends to dispense of these relationships the moment they begin to call one to think and act differently, initiating thereby a patient and often painful decentering of oneself. It is precisely this side of the story that is elided in the case of action plans and strategies for the eradication of poverty. How can this aspect be retrieved and promoted? I have no easy and simple answer to this complex problem. In the following section, I shall try to limit myself to what seems to be a very important and a rather evident point in the whole debate about poverty and yet its importance is, at best, only vaguely seen in the eyes of the general public today.

Opting for the Poor

The anti-poverty plans of action and strategies, adopted on global, regional and national levels, presuppose that countries and states as well as the international community have an obligation in justice to reduce and hopefully to eradicate poverty. This constitutes a very important step forward in the history of moral consciousness. It reflects a significant strand in modern and contemporary culture, namely, the responsibility of society to identify the causes of poverty and social exclusion and to take the necessary action to re-structure and reorganize itself into a truly inclusive society. An egalitarian kind of liberalism, therefore,

[27] Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity,* Cambridge, paperback ed.,1992, p.192.
[28] Ibid., p.191.
[29] Ibid. p.192.

would require not only that everyone should enjoy the fundamental liberties but also that there should be no socio-economic inequalities except those that can be shown to be ultimately in the interest of all, including the poorer sections of the population.[30] In practice, this principle may not actually provide any clear guidance for accepting a particular social policy or rejecting it in view of the practical difficulties of determining its overall impact even for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, if the justice of social institutions is judged on the basis of their impact on the poor, poverty and social exclusion have a much more than a purely sociological significance: they constitute the test of the fairness or otherwise of the ways in which we are structuring our life together.

The problem with social action programmes, targeting the roots of poverty, does not lie generally in the analysis they are making or in the remedy they are suggesting. It lies rather in the fact that such programmes are presupposing something over which they have no control. This is that the task they are placing on different agents, individual or collective, can be ensured only to a certain extent through a regulatory framework. The task can begin and achieve its objective, only if the participants are not merely drawn into a programme of action, sometimes without knowing the implications or even against their will, but if they are actually being responsive in ordinary and yet creative ways to the plight or, to use a biblical expression, the cries of the poor. Such responsiveness can only come from within oneself as a manifestation and testimony of what one believes in and wants to live for. At this point we are touching the heart of what the eradication of poverty means as a moral commitment.

The eradication of poverty is not an *optional* matter. It is a matter to which society today, whatever its moral and spiritual resources, is expected to give priority, even if the results are not so encouraging in practice. It is, however, an *option* or a *decision* in the sense that it remains always a matter that is in our hands, depending ultimately on what we decide to do. This is the reason why the initiatives, projects and activities that the voluntary sector has taken over the years in response to the plight of the poor continue to offer inspiration and motivation. This sector is surely limited in what it can offer, as its resources depend on the generosity of ordinary people and they are certainly not enough to meet the needs of people without food, shelter, health care and educational facilities. But it represents a resourceful site for the regeneration of the will to respond sensitively and faithfully to a sense of justice and, beyond that, to the promptings of love.

Justice is an indispensable virtue or principle for the proper regulation of human relationships, as it articulates these relationships in terms of mutual rights and duties. In so far as poverty is a matter of social justice, the poor cannot be considered as simply pleading for help. In fact, they are only crying for justice. They are demanding what is their due as members of society. This is the point which the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is clearly making in article 22: *"Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of the State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality".* So if the poor can rightfully claim those conditions they need to develop themselves, any form of paternalism or assistence that makes them dependent on the giver, whether this is an individual or an institution, should be excluded. Justice as equality implies basically that everyone should be given the opportunity to realize oneself.

One may look at the voluntary sector as a field for the cultivation of *a sense of justice* within society by providing concrete experiences of working with and for those who are being excluded. These people may happen to be near or far away; they may be living in one's own country, perhaps temporarily as is the case with illegal immigrants, or they may be living in other parts of the world. The voluntary work of so many people, coming from a variety of socio-economic background and sometimes belonging to different religious groups, on behalf of immigrants or the poor in Egypt, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and so many other countries provides participants with an opportunity to cultivate and promote in themselves a sense of justice. They learn through their own personal and group experience that *everyone,* irrespective of one's country of origin, colour or creed, has a fundamental right to live a dignified life. In this way, the notion of justice, as the constant will of giving the other, whoever he or she may be, his or her due, would shape the way one thinks and actually feels about the other. It is this cognitive and affective side of justice that the expression "sense of justice " is meant to convey.

[30] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice,* paperback ed., Oxford, 1973, reprinted.1980, pp. 60-65.

The eradication of poverty as a moral commitment includes precisely a commitment to manifest, in a concrete manner, a sense of justice with *every* person living in poverty. This is a crucial aspect of the fight against poverty, as the challenge is to work for a truly inclusive society without discriminating between those who are inside or outside, local or foreigner, near or far away, similar or different. The challenge is a complex and a difficult one. Parents can make an incredible sacrifice to support their children. But what kind of support are we expected to give to the children who are not ours? States can provide a fairly good system of social security to their subjects. But what kind of assistance are they bound to provide to illegal immigrants? There are millions of victims of abject forms of poverty and misery living away from our shores. Again how do I or we enter? Is this not a problem for local governments and especially those responsible for the international order, including multi-national enterprises, to solve?

We assume that the answer to these questions is an easy and a straightforward one. In fact, while we should not discriminate, we may differentiate between one person and another in the exercise of our responsibility. But this is precisely the reason why the *option* to work with and for the poor is particularly significant. It means *liberating* oneself from a way of thinking that may be understandable in itself and yet that can not only limit but also distort the manner of understanding our responsibility for the poor. The voluntary work that people around the world are doing with and for the poor, alone or in association with others, in one's own country or abroad, is a visible sign of the change of mentality and the kind of outreach that are required so that *everyone*, whoever and wherever one may be, can actually have an opportunity to realize oneself.

The liberation of the poor, therefore, requires our self-liberation. We can hope to reach out for the poor, only if our sense of justice is strong enough to let us see in the poor one, whoever and wherever one may be, a human being who is entitled to self-realization. How can this sense of justice be strong enough? It can be strong enough, if the motivation includes but goes beyond justice. In other words, the option for the poor calls for a higher motivation, namely, that of love. Justice demands that the respect to be shown to the other should be that which is due to *everyone* else. But the way through this universal imperative is the poor one whose face calls for a loving response. The re-organization of society is undoubtedly essential to ensure an effective process of social inclusion. But no process of social inclusion can be adequate to the human condition and sustain itself for any length of time, if people do not learn to include each other in their lives. The eradication of poverty is indeed a very big challenge because it can only come about on condition that the process of social inclusion does not stop on the doorstep of our hearts.

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