

ERLAI Network Seminar
MIGRATION: a challenge for more
EQUALITY in HEALTH

15 January 2010

Rationale

As stated by the European Commissioner Vladimír Špidla " The fight against poverty and social exclusion is one of the EU's central objectives and our shared approach has been an important tool to guide and support action in the Member States".

Solidarity is a principle that characterizes the European model of society and welfare. Recognizing people in poverty and social exclusion and integrating them through the commitment of actors involved at all level of governance, are among the specific objectives of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Although the efforts already made, poverty and social exclusion are still serious challenges in all Member States, further highlighted by the global framework of economic crisis. In this context, vulnerable groups, such as migrant groups and ethnic minorities, suffer a greater burden of deprivation and health related challenges , which need to be tackled.

On the 20th of October, the European Commission issued a Communication COM(2009) 567 final on "Solidarity in Health: Reducing Health Inequalities in the EU"¹, stressing the differences and gaps existing at European level in the health sector. In general terms, welfare and health level has increased in the EU, but, in parallel, the disparities between people and the different areas of the same country have increased too. Vulnerable and socially excluded groups seem to experience a higher degree of inequalities in society mainly due to worse living conditions and health related behaviors, poor education, precarious occupation or illegal employment, lack of access to services. The mixture of poverty and other vulnerable factors, such as childhood or old age, disability or different culture also increase health risks. At the same time, the absence of comparable and regular data on these issues prevents the formulation of a comprehensive approach to the problem.

¹

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/socio_economics/documents/com2009_en.pdf



Aims of the Seminar

The Seminar will offer the opportunity of analyzing and discussing the “inequality in health” issue and will set the context of the future feasible actions to be taken in this respect, as it foresees the participation of European Institutions and regional authorities willing to present their points of view and specific experiences.

In particular, the seminar intends to:

- discuss the role of Regional Authorities in public health and access to health services to migrants;
- help in improving the exchange of information and knowledge among the stakeholders and identify specific actions towards vulnerable groups;
- share experiences in coordination of policies and makes examples of effective partnerships with strategic actors aiming at improving health conditions for marginalized groups;
- show how to better use Cohesion Policy and related structural funds to promote initiatives in favour of health conditions of vulnerable groups;
- raise awareness and promote actions at different levels of governance.

The ERLAI Network welcomes the participation of local and regional authorities, European institutions officials and representatives of the civil society and encourages the debate and the exchange of good practices on the conference themes.

Contact for more details

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