

Background figures: investing in children in Greece

23.04.14

This document presents some key background data for the seminar "Investing in children in Greece: EU instruments and funding opportunities", taking place in Athens on 8 May.

Most data and graphs are taken from the recently published report Social Europe – Many ways, one objective - Report of the Social Protection Committee (2013) (19/03/2014), available [here](#) (see p. 248 for the Greece country fiche).

They can also be found on Eurostat, in particular under "[investing in children](#)", "[income, social inclusion and living conditions](#)", "[labour market](#)" as well as "[social protection](#)".

1. Child poverty and social exclusion: key figures

Child poverty and social exclusion: trends and households at risk - Children are more at risk of poverty and social exclusion than the overall population in Greece. They have also been particularly hit by the crisis: the share of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion¹ increased from 28.7% to 35.4% between 2008 and 2012 (against an EU average of 28.0%). More specifically (2012 data):

- 26.9% of children are at risk of poverty² (EU average: 20.8%).
- 20.9% of children are severely materially deprived³ (EU average 11.8%).
- 38.4% of children live in a house with overburden costs (EU average: 10.9%).

People living in a single parent household face a risk of poverty of 35,7% (EU average 34.2%).

In work poverty among families - Children living in households with very low work intensity⁴ are particularly exposed, with a risk of poverty of 84.4% (EU average of 68.6%). Besides, up to 22.1 % of children living in a medium work intensity household (typically a one breadwinner household) are at risk of poverty (EU average: 27.2%).

Women's labour market participation – The employment rate of women aged 20-64 (at 45.2%) is lower than the EU average (62.3%), along with a very high rate of involuntary part-time work among women (62.2% of total part time employment for women is involuntary EU average of 24.3%).

The role of social protection and family benefits – Overall social protection has a rather low impact in reducing child poverty (the difference between the child poverty rate between and after social transfers -excluding pensions- is 9.7%, against an EU average of 39.4%). Among the range of social protection instruments, expenditure on family policy is below EU average (1.8% of GDP, EU average of 2.2%) and has a relatively low impact on reducing child poverty.

¹ This indicator corresponds to the sum of children who are: at risk of poverty, severely materially deprived or living in households with very low work intensity.

² I.e. live in a household with an income below 60% of the national median income.

³ E.g. live in a household which cannot afford at least 4 items out of the following: 1) to face unexpected expenses, 2) one week's annual holiday away from home; 3) pay for arrears; 4) a meal with meat, chicken, or fish every second day; 5) keep the home adequately warm, 6) washing machine; 7) colour TV; 8) a telephone; 9) a personal car.

⁴ The work intensity of the household refers to the number of months that all working age household members have been working during the income reference year as a proportion of the total number of months that could theoretically be worked within the household.

Early childhood education and care services – in 2011 only 18% of children under 3 are in formal childcare (EU average 35%). The 2012 European Quality of Life Survey⁵ identified apart from cost access (distance and opening hours) to and availability (waiting lists) of services as a particular challenges for Greece.

2. EU policies

2.1. Europe 2020: a call to improve access to childcare and social transfers

Among others, the assessment of the 2013 national reform programme for Greece⁵ mentions that:

“The Greek social welfare system is poorly targeted and coverage of the poorest is inadequate. The limited social benefit system in Greece contrasts with systems elsewhere in the euro area and is unable to reduce the high poverty rate. Eurostat calculates the rate of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion before social transfers, (excluding pensions). In 2011, the euro area average rate was a little higher than in Greece (25.4 % and 24.8 % respectively). But after accounting for social transfers, the poverty rate falls to 16.9 % in the euro area compared with 21.4 % in Greece. Families, especially single parents, need more support. For this reason, the single allowance child support was brought in in January 2013.”

2.2. Structural and Investment Funds

European Investment and Structural Funds (ESI Funds) are the main financial pillar provided by the European Union for implementing the EU 2020 recommendations.

For the programming period 2014-2020 structural funds' resources allocated to Greece are € 11.702 million⁶. More specifically, the minimum share to the European Social Fund (ESF) to be respected by Greece at national level amounts to €3.335 million.

Regulations on ESI Funds⁷ foresee several thematic objectives (TO) and intervention priorities (IP) related to children:

- TO 8 "promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility", in particular through the ESF IP supporting reconciliation of work and private life;
- TO 9 "promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination, through the following IPs;
 - (i) Active inclusion, including with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability;
 - (ii) Socio-economic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma;
 - (iii) Combating all forms of discrimination and promoting equal opportunities;
 - (iv) Enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high- quality services, including health care and social services of general interest;
 - (v) Promoting social entrepreneurship and vocational integration in social enterprises and the social and solidarity economy in order to facilitate access to employment.

⁵http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_greece_en.pdf

⁶ not including the Youth Employment Initiative allocation. (EUR 567 511248)

⁷ Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 - Official Journal of the European Union L 347/2013 - OJ L 347, 20/12/2013 - <http://new.eu-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:TOC>

- TO 10 "investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning".

2.3. Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)

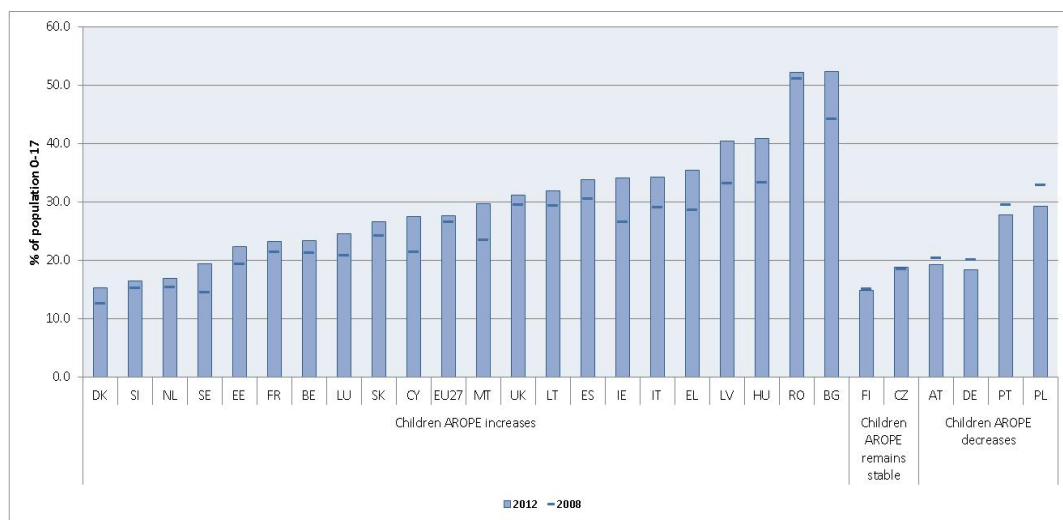
The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) supports EU countries' actions to provide material assistance to the most deprived. This includes food, clothing and other essential items for personal use, e.g. shoes, soap.

Material assistance needs to go hand in hand with social inclusion measures, such as guidance and support to help people out of poverty.

National authorities may also support non-material assistance to the most deprived people, to help them integrate better into society.

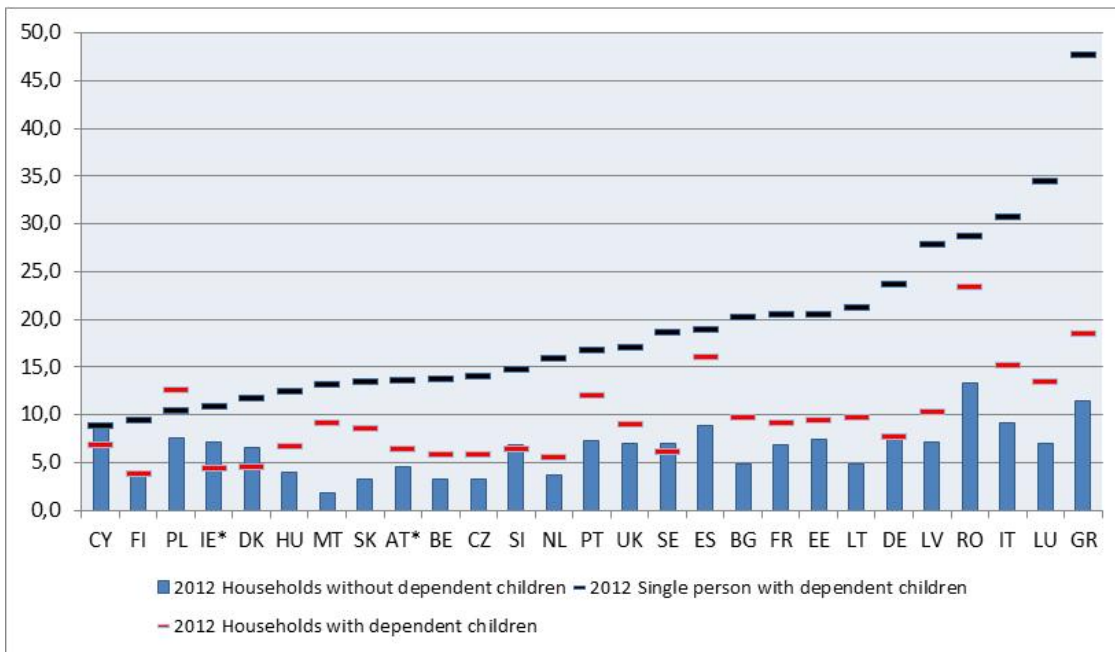
The FEAD allocation for Greece is established at €249 million for the 2014-2020 programming period.

Evolution of share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion (0-17) between 2008 and 2012

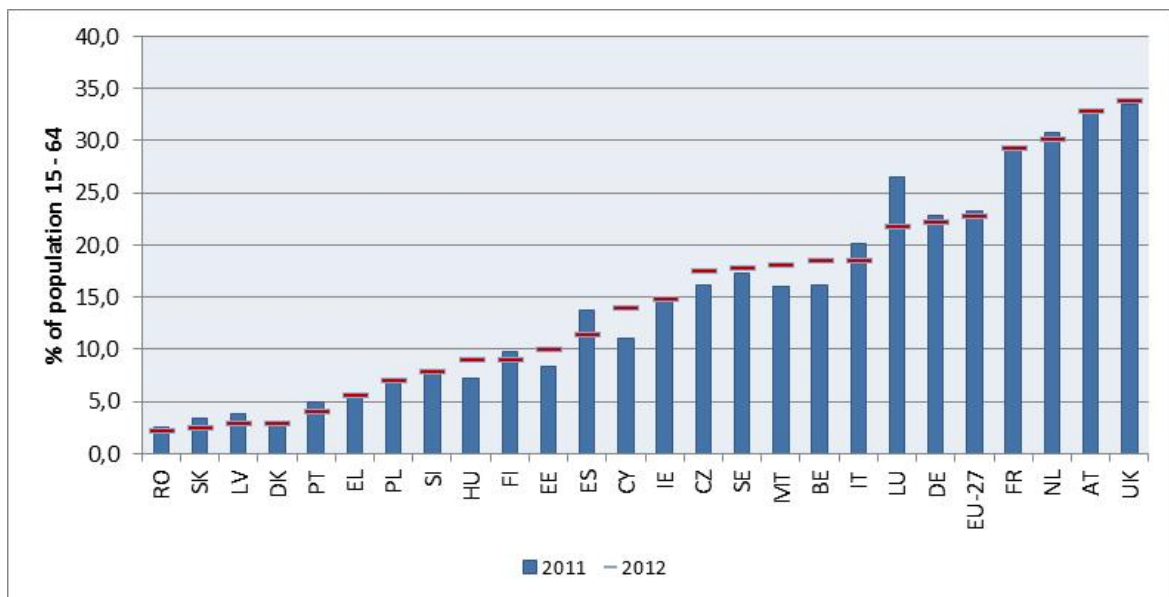


Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC), no 2012 data for BE, IE, AT, UK

In-work poverty risk for different household types, 2012

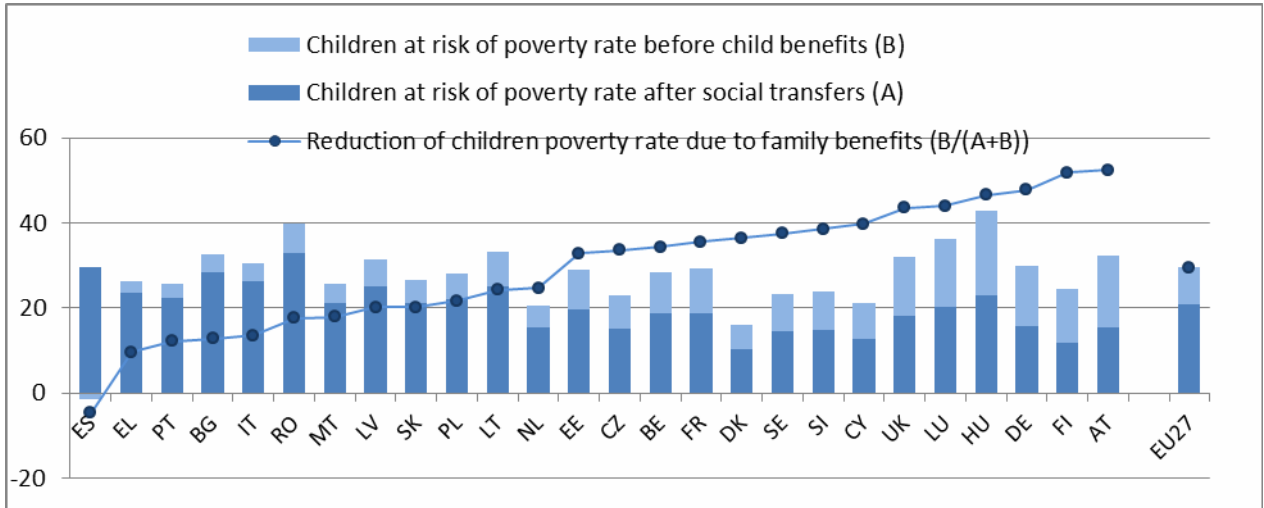


Part-time employment of population (15-64) due to looking after children or incapacitated adults responsibilities, 2011 – 2012



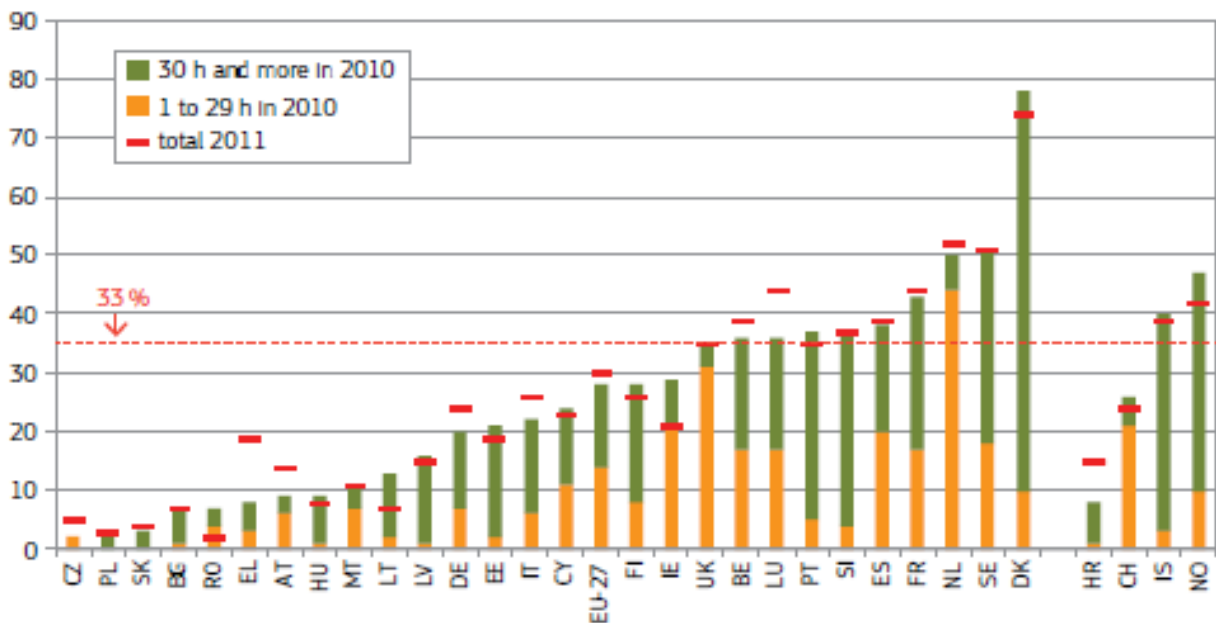
Source: Eurostat (EU-LFS), Note: no 2011 and 2012 data for BG, LT

Poverty reduction effect of family and child benefits for children aged 0-17



Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC UDB 2011), Calculations by DG EMPL

Percentage of children under 3 cared for in formal structures (and by weekly time spent in care) 2010-2011



Source: Eurostat — EU-SILC 2010-11.

Note: Some of the data have been compiled from small samples and are statistically unreliable, including the total for: AT, BG, CY, CZ, EL, HR, LT, MT, PL, RO and SK.