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## In Focus

NEW! ImPRovE research-based article on reference budgets in Europe, by Tim Goedemé, Bérénice Storms, Sara Stockman, Tess Penne and Karel Van den Bosch (Herman Deleeck Center for Social Policy, University of Antwerp)

In Europe, reference budgets are increasingly recognised as a helpful tool for policy making and monitoring. If developed in a cross-country comparable way, reference budgets could, in addition, prove to be useful for cross-national learning and contextualising the EU social indicators. This article reports on the first results of a concerted effort to construct comparable reference budgets for adequate social participation in Antwerp, Athens, Barcelona, Budapest, Helsinki and Milan. Results indicate that adequate social participation requires access to different goods and services in the six cities, but that, at the same time, the needs to be fulfilled are rather similar, such that the variation in the level of reference budgets is less than what would be expected on the basis of differences in median household incomes. Results also show that constructing comparable reference budgets requires substantial and intensive coordination. We suggest directions in which our approach to their construction could be improved.

Goedemé, T., Storms, B., Stockman, S., Penne, T., and Van den Bosch, K. (2015),

[‘Towards Cross-country Comparable Reference Budgets in Europe: First Results of a Concerted Effort’](#) in [European Journal of Social Security](#) (EJSS), 17(1): 3-31.

Reference budgets have developed as part of work package 13, six teams of ImPRovE researchers in Belgium, Finland, Hungary, Greece, Italy, and Spain and has been awarded the [Intersentia/FISS Best Paper Prize 2014](#).

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## Next Conference

The final ImPRovE conference will take place in Antwerp hosted by the coordinating team , Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy (University of Antwerp).

**Date: 3-5 February 2016.**

More information will be on [our website](#) soon.

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## The Project

ImPRovE is a research project financed by the **7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme** of the European Commission. It is coordinated by the [Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy](#) (University of Antwerp) and brings together ten outstanding research institutes in a concerted effort to study poverty, social policy and social innovation in Europe.

The **two central questions** driving the ImPRovE project are:

- How can social cohesion be achieved in Europe?
- How can social innovation complement, reinforce and modify macro-level policies and vice versa?

The project runs from March 2012 till February 2016.

[More information on the contents and output of the project here.](#)

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## Overview of publications

The ImPRovE [Policy Brief Series](#) aims at distributing research findings with a high policy relevance in an accessible way. The policy briefs are based on state-of-the-art research within the ImPRovE project. More detailed information and more findings can be found in the [ImPRovE Working Papers](#) that form the basis of the policy briefs.

The ImPRovE Working Papers aim to disseminate as quickly and as widely as possible the output of the ImPRovE project. The paper series contains both methodological and discussion papers. The ImPRovE Working Papers published in 2014, 2015 are indexed and available in [Repec](#) also. The most recently published are the followings:

**[WP 15/13](#): Mobility into and out of poverty in Europe in the 1990s and the precrisis period: The role of income, demographic and labour market events.**

*Eirini Andriopoulou and Panos Tsakloglou*

**[WP 15/14](#): A fresh look at an old question: is pro-poor targeting of cash transfers more effective than universal systems at reducing inequality and poverty?**

*Abigail McKnight*

**[WP 15/15](#): Local social innovation and welfare state restructuring: analysing their relationship**

*Stijn Oosterlynck, Yuri Kazepov, Andreas Novy, Pieter Cools, Tatiana Sarius and Florian Wukovitsch*

**[WP 15/16](#): Chronic material deprivation and long-term poverty in Europe in the pre-crisis period**

*Fotis Papadopoulos & Panos Tsakloglou*

**[WP 15/17](#): Welfare systems, governance and social innovation: case study**

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*Stijn Oosterlynck, Yuri Kazepov, Andreas Novy, Pieter Cools, Tatiana Sarius and Florian Wukovitsch*

**WP 15/18: Stemming the tide: what have EU countries done to support low-wage workers in an era of downward wage pressure?**

*Sarah Marchal & Ive Marx*

**Case studies**

In work package 11, we aim to assess local socially innovative policies and practices that address new and growing inequalities. In order to assess the extent to which socially innovative policies and actions help those (social groups of) European citizens that are identified as poor and socially excluded, special attention will be paid to the governance dimensions of successful socially innovative policies and actions.

In this context, about 30 case studies are carried out in order to assess the governance challenges faced by local actions of social innovation directed at people confronted with poverty and social exclusion. On our project page now you can download the first published studies

from Hungary:

**[Case Study 17: Study halls \(tanoda\) for Roma and vulnerable children in Hungary](#)**

**[Case Study 15: Charity shops as employment alternatives in Hungary](#)**

**[Case Study 06: Housing First in Hungary](#)**

from UK:

**[Case Study 16: Roma engagement strategies in Manchester: the MigRom project](#)**

**[Case Study 14: Camden Housing First](#)**

**[Case Study 13: Energy poverty and social entrepreneurship: strengthening pre-financing models for energy efficient electrical appliances through the 'Energy for All' programme](#)**

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from Belgium:

[Case Study 09: Domo vzw Leuven: Family support by volunteers](#)

[Case Study 08: De Kringwinkel: A symbiosis between jobs for the long term unemployed and waste reduction?](#)

[Case Study 07: Ten for Cooking: Learning trajectories to work in the catering sector for people on minimum subsistence income in Leuven, Belgium](#)

from Italy:

[Case Study 04: SEI – Sportello contro l’Eccessivo Indebitamento \(Over-indebtedness Help Desk\)](#)

[Case Study 03: Cohousing: Io Cambio Status \(Cohousing: I change status\)](#)

[Case Study 02: A project to support Roma children in education and social inclusion pathways in Lecce-Italy](#)

from Austria:

[Case Study 01: Vielfalter – Diversity as Chance](#)

[Case Study 05: Housing First Vienna](#)

[Case Study 10: ERfA – Experience for All: Sewing Workshop](#)

[Case Study 11: Hippy – Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters](#)

### **Latest journal articles:**

Notten, G. (2015), '[How Poverty Indicators Confound Poverty Reduction Evaluations: The Targeting Performance of Income Transfers in Europe](#)' in Social Indicators Research: 1-18. doi: 10.1007/s11205-015-0996-4.

Goedemé, T., Storms, B., Stockman, S., Penne, T., and Van den Bosch, K. (2015), 'Towards Cross-country Comparable Reference Budgets in Europe: First Results of a Concerted Effort' in [European Journal of Social Security \(EJSS\)](#), 17(1): 3-31.

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## Partners

[Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy](#) (University of Antwerp), Belgium | [Centre on Inequality, Poverty, Social Exclusion and the City](#) (OASeS), Belgium | [Athens University of Economics and Business](#) (AUEB), Greece | [TÁRKI Social Research Institute](#) (TÁRKI), Hungary | [Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion](#) (CASE), UK | [Institute for Social & Economic Research](#) (ISER), UK | [Institute for the Environment and Regional Development](#) (RUW), Austria | [Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien](#) (WU), Austria | [Universita' degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo](#) (UNIURB), Italy | [Turun Yliopisto/ University of Turku](#) (TURKU), Finland | [Research Group of Social Pedagogy and Information and Communication Technologies](#) (PSiTIC), Spain | [Center for Research in Participation, Social Movements and Collective Action](#) (NEPAC), Brazil

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