



Brussels, 28 October 2009

## Media can play a crucial role in eradicating poverty

*The European Commission is today reaching out to the press and media in the fight against poverty with two major events in Brussels ahead of the 2010 European Year Against Poverty – to be launched in Madrid on 21 January. The seminar on “Media and Poverty” and the conference on “Poverty: between reality and challenges” will bring together key media and stakeholders to discuss how communicators and the media can play a crucial role in helping to tackle poverty and exclusion.*

"We in the EU have the good fortune to live in one of the world's most prosperous regions, yet poverty remains a daily reality for nearly 80 million Europeans," said Vladimír Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. "In January, we will launch the 2010 European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion. Media and communication professionals have a crucial role to play in helping make this campaign a success and we invite them to join us over the coming year."

Today, the seminar on "Poverty and Media" will take journalists specialised in social poverty and social exclusion from around Europe on a study tour, accompanied by exchange of professional practice. Two workshops will be run by ATD Fourth World and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (UK), and three field visits will be organised in Brussels, giving journalists an opportunity to interview grass-roots practitioners.



The conference "Poverty: between reality and perception - the communication challenge" will take place on 29 October with over 400 journalists, policy-makers, NGOs and researchers. The latest Eurobarometer surveys on Europeans' perception on poverty and exclusion and on their perceptions of the social impact of the crisis will be unveiled (see IP/09/XXXX and MEMO/09/XXX).

The event will provide a forum for discussing how media sees the issue and how communication can act as a catalyst for social inclusion. It will be addressed by President José Manuel Barroso via video as well as by Commissioner Vladimír Špidla.

### **Background**

Ten years ago, EU leaders pledged to 'make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty' by 2010. Today however, a significant number of Europeans still live in poverty and have limited access to basic services such as healthcare. Poverty and exclusion affect not only the well being of individuals and their ability to play a part in society; they also impair economic development. With this in mind, the EU is stressing the importance of collective responsibility in combating poverty, involving decision makers and actors in the public and private sectors. The 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion will seek to give a voice to those suffering on a daily basis. The official website for the European Year Against Poverty will be launched on 29 October at <http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu>



### **Further information**

Event programme

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=88&langId=en&eventId=211&furtherEvents=yes>

Eurobarometer survey report

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm)

European Year Against Poverty

[www.2010againstopoverty.eu](http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu)

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