The European Commission’s science and knowledge service

Joint Research Centre

What makes a fair society?
Insights and evidence

23 October 2017
What makes a fair society? Insights and evidence

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Recent income inequality developments in the EU

Income inequality *has decreased* in the EU27(*) by 2.7%

Source: JRC calculations based on EUSILC (2006-2013)

Different patterns at the two ends of the income distribution

Figure 3. Changes in the EU wide distribution of equivalised disposable income

(*) Croatia is not included
Income Inequality in Europe during the crisis - a closer look

- Large income gains for the poorest households in Central and Eastern Europe Member States
- Households across the entire income distribution in Mediterranean and North West Europe lost over the same period

Source: JRC calculations based on EUSILC (2006-2013)
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Inequality of Opportunity in education: Does Family Background matter?

Source: JRC calculations based on PIAAC (2011/2012)
Inequality of Opportunity in health: Does Family Background matter?

Figure 14. Family circumstances and self-reported poor health – multivariate analysis

- Ratio of the share of respondents reporting a poor health status by parental education
- Equal opportunity if ratio equal to 1

Source: JRC calculations based on ESS (2014)
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Spatial aspects of Fairness: Does where you reside matter?

- Unequal access to **basic services** within and across regions
- Individuals living in poor neighborhoods during childhood underperform on a large set of outcomes
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Perceptions of inequality in the EU?

The majority of people in Europe believe that income differences in their country are too large and governments need to reduce them.

Measured and perceived income inequalities are only weakly correlated.

Source: JRC calculations based on ISSP (2009) and Eurostat (2009)
Perceptions of inequality - are they aligned with reality?
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Conclusions – Ways forward

- Fairness should be addressed in a **multidimensional** context

- **JRC multi-year research agenda**
  - Second report on Fairness foreseen by 2020 & Series of policy briefs
  - Research papers

- A Better understanding of the **drivers of inequality perceptions** is needed

- Upcoming Eurobarometer survey on **Fairness, inequality and intergenerational mobility**
Conclusions – Ways forward

Purpose

Sharing knowledge & fostering an informed dialogue on the multidimensional aspects of fairness

1. Knowledge sharing
2. Knowledge production & Knowledge management
3. Network of experts

Upcoming workshops

- Social mobility and the role of education – scheduled on 05 December 2017
- Segregation, marginalized groups and intergenerational spatial inequality
- Income inequality and its policy determinants – beyond a MS level analysis
- Spatial disparities: access to services
Stay in touch

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