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Kungsvägens skola in Nickby hjärta

## ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

*Music is on in the background all through the podcast*

### Reporter 1:

Hi everyone and welcome to our programme where we will be discussing one of the targets for Europe 2020 which aims at fighting social exclusion and poverty.

First we will try to define the terms social exclusion and child poverty, then we will introduce and comment on some of the findings about the issues in the EU as presented in the EU 2020 reports.

*Music from the background becomes louder for 3 seconds*

First of all, let's clarify the term "social exclusion".

According to the Collins dictionary, social exclusion is "the act of making certain groups of people within a society feel isolated and unimportant"

And what about the term Child poverty?

## **Reporter 2:**

According to the United Nations Children's fund (UNICEF), children living in poverty are those who experience deprivation of the material, spiritual and emotional resources that they need to stay alive.

This deprivation is leaving them unable to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potential, and participate as full and equal members of society.

What do you think this definition means?

## **Reporter 3:**

It means that the child doesn't get everything that it needs, money, emotional support and experiencing a carefree childhood.

## **Reporter 4:**

According to the EU, 22% of children living in lone-parent households, and 25% living in large families are most at risk for child poverty.

This might happen because in lone-parent households, the income is usually lower since only one parent is supporting the family.

This might also lead to the lack of emotional support/contact because a lot of the parent's attention goes to other things than the child, like worrying about the household economics.

The child might be left feeling ashamed that the family's money is tight and so they might distance themselves from their friends.

In big families the situation is quite similar, the money and attention from the parents must be shared between all the children, this leading to child poverty.

## **Reporter 5:**

Children growing up in migrant or minority households also face more difficulties than other children.

The reason for this might be the language difficulties, and these difficulties may lead to lack of education and a harder time getting a job.

This easily leads to child poverty, and child poverty leads to it being harder to make friends and getting connections.

A lot of minorities also may grow up discriminated against because they're different, which may lead to lower self esteem.

## **Reporter 6:**

This might be surprising but the EU report also states that children whose parents are below 30 have a considerably higher risk of being poor than those who live with older parents:

So a 27% higher risk when the mother is below 30, as against 19% when the mother is between 30 and 39 and 16% when she is between 40 and 49.

The fact that older people usually earn more than younger people can be one of the reasons that the age of the parents is a factor in child poverty.

Younger people can often be unemployed or working part-time while older ones tend to have more stable jobs. This easily affects the children.

## **Reporter 7:**

The educational level of parents also matter a lot according to the report: For 30% of poor children, neither of the parents had a secondary level of education (against 16% for all children).

It is also very different in different EU countries; the share of children with low-skilled parents ranges from under 10% in nearly half of the EU states, to up to 65% in for example Malta and Portugal.

With a higher education parents are able to get better jobs with higher salaries and through that bring more money to the family.

In countries that have better conditions, parents are able to get better education, than those that live in poor countries.

The population of the country may also play a role in this.

## **Reporter 8**

Of course joblessness is worse for households with children:

The report goes on: 62% of jobless households with children are at risk of poverty. Almost 10% of all EU-25 children live in households where no adult has a job.

If the parents are having trouble supporting the family and need to focus most of their energy on getting through the day without spending too much money (money that they don't have since they don't have a job), there won't be much energy left to see how the children are doing.

This may lead to the children getting more responsibility than they perhaps should, or feeling forgotten and that can lead to the children making radical decisions they might get in trouble for, just to get the parents attention.

The children might also grow up without getting all the things they need.

## **Reporter 9:**

As a conclusion, children growing up in poverty and social inclusion are less likely to do well in school, enjoy good health and realize their full potential later in life when they are at a higher risk of becoming unemployed, poor and socially excluded.

This seems to be a sad but logical conclusion.

But what can we do? As a society or as individuals?

### **Reporter 6:**

Hope you enjoyed listening to this, and perhaps you found some interesting ideas or thought-provoking facts in this.

The pupils involved in the talk were .....