



**From in-work poverty
to Decent Work –
Think European.
Act in solidarity.**

#inworkNOpoverty

**Conference
Berlin, 25 September 2019**

as of 12th August 2019

From in-work poverty to Decent Work – Think European. Act in solidarity.

Date 25 September 2019
Location Hotel Stadtbad Oderberger, Oderberger Straße 57, 10435 Berlin
Moderation Dr Julia Kropf

Throughout the conference (including the workshops), simultaneous translations will be provided in English ↔ German.

Temporary Programme

-
- 8.30 am – 9.30 am** **Arrival and Registration**
-
- 9.30 am – 9.35 am** **Conference Welcome**
Dr Julia Kropf, Moderation
-
- 9.35 am – 9.45 am** **Welcome Address**
Michael Müller, Governing Mayor of Berlin
-
- 9.45 am – 10.00 am** **Welcome and Introduction**
Elke Breitenbach, Senator for Integration, Labour and Social Services, Berlin
-
- 10.00 am – 10.45 am** **In-work poverty in comparative theory**
Keynote I
Prof Dr Heinz Bontrup, Professor of Economics at the Westphalian University of Applied Sciences
-
- 10.45 am – 11.15 am** **Table Talks**
All participants at their tables.
-
- 11.15 am – 11.30 am** **Coffee Break**
-

11.30 am – 11.45 am In-work poverty from the perspective of the people affected**Talk in Pairs**

Erika Biehn, Verband alleinerziehender Mütter und Väter, (VAMV), Berlin (Association of single mothers and fathers)

Sarah Jochmann, Spokeswoman of the Facebook campaign “Liefer am Limit”, Düsseldorf

11.45 am – 12.30 pm In-work poverty – What answers does Europe have?**Panel I**

Dr Katherine Duffy, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), Brussels

Prof Dr Henning Lohmann, University of Hamburg

Alexander Friedrich, ASB Germany, AWO Germany and Volkshilfe Austria, Brussels

Jereon Jutte, European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Brussels

Dr Annette Niederfranke, International Labour Organisation (ILO) (tbc), Berlin

12.30 pm – 01.30 pm Lunch

01.30 pm – 02.00 pm In-work poverty

(German book title: Arm trotz Erwerbstätigkeit)

Keynote II

Dr Wolfgang Strengmann-Kuhn, MdB (Member of Parliament) and author

02.00 pm – 02.15 pm In-work poverty from the perspective of employees and employers**Talk in Pairs**

Johannes Jakob, German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), Berlin

Alexander Schirp, Confederation of Employers and Business Associations of Berlin and Brandenburg (UVB e. V.)

02.15 pm – 03.45 pm **Parallel Workshops****Workshop 1 – Precarious employment and in-work poverty**

Elke Ahlhoff, ArbeitGestalten, Joboption Berlin

Dr Christian Pfeffer-Hoffmann, Minor – Projektkontor für Bildung und Forschung gGmbH, Berlin

(Project Office for Education and Research)

Workshop 2 – Digital transformation and in-work poverty

Prof Mark Graham, Oxford University Internet Institute

Dr Konstantin Vössing, Hans-Böckler-Foundation, Berlin

Workshop 3 – Service sector and in-work poverty

Veronika Bohrn Mena, Trade Union of Private Employees, Printing, Journalism, Paper; Vienna

Benedikt Franke, Helpling GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin

Workshop 4 – Vocational education and train and in-work poverty

Dr Alexandra Bläsche, Brandenburgian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family Affairs, Potsdam

Dr Michael Dörsam, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), Bonn

03.45 pm – 04.00 pm **Coffee Break**

16.00 pm – 16.45 pm **In-work poverty – What answers exist for Berlin?****Panel II**

Alexander Fischer, Secretary of State for Labour and Social Services, Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services, Berlin

Christian Hoßbach, German Trade Union Federation, District Berlin-Brandenburg

Prof Ingrid Stahmer, Spokeswoman of the “Landesarmutskonferenz” in Berlin and former Senator of Berlin

Prof Dr Michael Hüther, German Economic Institute (IW), Köln

Lutz Mania, Representative of the Federal Labour Office, Jobcenter Berlin-Mitte

Kerstin Oster, Berliner Wasserbetriebe (Water Utilities)

16.45 pm – 05.00 pm Conclusion

Alexander Fischer, Secretary of State for Labour and Social Services,
Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services, Berlin

From 05.00 pm Get Together

Enclosures

- Abstract
- Registration
- Technical information
- Contacts

Conference Abstract

“From in-work poverty to Decent Work – Think European. Act in solidarity.”

Details of the conference

Organiser: Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services

Date and Time: 25 September 2019, full-day conference including evening get-together

Venue: Hotel Stadtbad Oderberger, Oderberger Str. 57, 10435 Berlin

Participants: approx. 150

Languages: English and German

Abstract

An increasing number of people in Europe are poor, even though they work. Germany is the European country with the largest increase in in-work poverty over recent years. This is an indefensible situation in a wealthy country where the economy has been booming for years.

Despite continuous economic growth and increasing employment, around 10% of people employed in Germany can be classified as poor. This means that more than four million people and their families receive an income that is not sufficient to provide an appropriate standard of living and are therefore dependent on additional government benefits. Across EU member states the proportion of people living in in-work poverty also amounts to roughly 10%. For these people and their families, in-work poverty is a bitter reality that often ends in poverty in old age.

Women, particularly if they are single mothers, are particularly affected by and vulnerable to in-work poverty in Germany. In addition, women are far more likely to work

in precarious or atypical employment, such as mini-jobs or (poorly paid or involuntary) part-time work. There is also the ongoing problem of the gender pay gap. The problem of child poverty is closely linked to this. Roughly 21% of all children in Germany live in permanent or recurrent poverty for a period of at least five years. 50% of these children are in single-parent families.

In-work poverty is reaching alarming proportions in large cities such as Berlin. Berlin's growing labour market is home to a comparatively large amount of atypical employment, and the proportion of people who receive additional benefits in accordance with the SGB II (German Social Code Book II) is particularly high. At the same time, Berlin-based companies are increasingly searching for employees and skilled workers. Berlin and other major European cities in which the service sector plays a significant role are paying increasing attention to certain industries, professions and jobs that are poorly paid and often feature precarious and atypical working conditions.

The main reasons behind this shift in focus are social inequality and the ever increasing gap between rich and poor, issues that are closely linked in global capitalism. In-work poverty is often blamed on excessively low pay. Nowadays, almost one in four employed people in Germany works in the low-paid sector.

Other factors that contribute to in-work poverty include the increase in atypical employment, in particular part-time and mini-jobs, the pressure on unemployed people to find a job as quickly as possible, inadequate government benefits, strict conditions for obtaining transfer payments, high rents (particularly in major cities), and a low standard

of education. These factors play a role in the creation of in-work poverty throughout Europe, and some of them became more acute as a result of structural reforms following the European debt crisis, for example in Greece, Spain and Portugal.

From the German Anti-Poverty Conference to economic and social partners, political parties, European member states and European Union institutions, all relevant stakeholders have been in agreement for years that political action is required to combat poverty, and especially in-work poverty. However, there is still major progress to be made when it comes to strategic focus, effective policies and the specific implementation of tools and measures.

At its core, this is an issue concerning money and tools and, above all, the value of work and the dignity of people, which in our knowledge- and work-oriented society are best served when the transition from in-work poverty to decent work – and thus a self-determined life with a positive outlook and possibilities for development – is achieved.

Better education, fewer mini-jobs, faster wage and salary growth, and an increase in the minimum wage and/or social benefits are all frequently mentioned as possible means of fighting in-work poverty. An increase in employment with mandatory social security contributions and good working conditions (as opposed to precarious or atypical employment), the declaration of the general applicability of collective agreements, the reduction of (involuntary) part-time work, and the construction of more social housing are other recommended remedies.

On a European level, in Germany and particularly in Berlin, there are numerous

approaches and tools that have helped and continue to help to combat (in-work) poverty. The task is to keep developing and expanding such approaches, but also to replace or complement them with more radical ones, as it is clear that the existing strategies and approaches are not (yet) sufficient to effectively and sustainably eradicate in-work poverty, and by so doing also put an end to a socially unacceptable situation with indirect consequences including populism and extremism.

Maximum effort is therefore required to build on what has already been achieved by committed people and initiatives in the areas of politics, public administration and civil society:

For years now in Berlin, the Jobcenter and the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services (SenIAS) have been taking active steps to successfully integrate the long-term unemployed in the world of work, to reduce the number of mini-jobs in favour of work with mandatory social contributions, and, as part of the “Work 4.0 – made in Berlin” process, to analyse the positive and negative effects of digitalisation on the labour market and on vocational education and training policies.

The dialogue between social partners also plays an important role in this regard. Such dialogue makes it possible to continually reassess and redefine the possibilities for action between the SenIAS and the social partners with regard to collective agreements and social partnerships.

The coordination unit for tackling illegal employment, also based at the SenIAS, helps to combat in-work poverty by preventing or limiting the permanent loss of legal jobs due

to illegal employment, which in turn reduces unemployment, exploitation and human trafficking.

The EU Office for the Equal Treatment of EU Workers at the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration reaches out to both employers and employees (and their families) from the EU as well as experts from the existing advisory structures, so that EU employers and employees (and their families) do in fact receive equal treatment with regard to employment, pay and other working conditions.

Migrants are also particularly affected by in-work poverty. The Berlin Counselling Centre for Migration and Decent Work (BEMA) offers advice and education to make migrants more aware of their employment and social rights.

The 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights, proclaimed in 2017, are an important foundation and at the same time a means of support in the fight against in-work poverty on a European level. This is especially true for the requirement for equal opportunity and access to the labour market as well as the implementation of fair employment conditions. These principles provide a framework for binding and non-binding measures for all EU member states in the area of European employment and social policy as well as a foundation upon which to build strategies for tackling in-work poverty. The same applies to the United Nations' sustainable development goals, in particular goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth).

The phenomenon of in-work poverty will be explored in depth at the conference. Current research, which highlights causes and effects, in particular in the context of

digitalisation, plays a decisive role. It is necessary to take the perspectives of those affected into account, but most important of all is to elicit and develop practical solutions for overcoming in-work poverty. There are many promising approaches throughout Europe, and it is important to identify, exchange, and further develop good practice projects from across the continent.

What can the political and administrative organisations, the economy, society as a whole but also each of us as individuals do to help solve this problem?

The following issues and courses of action lie at the heart of the conference. When it comes to these issues, causes and effects as well as possible solutions will be addressed:

1. Precarious employment and in-work poverty

The in-work poverty that many people face is the result of precarious employment in the low-pay sector (for example, mini-jobs, multi-jobbing, solo self-employment, involuntary part-time work, fixed-term contracts). What adjustments are necessary to change, improve or overcome this situation?

2. Digital transition and in-work poverty

In its "Work 4.0 – made in Berlin" process, the Berlin Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services has long been developing approaches to ensure that the digitalisation of work proceeds in accordance with the concept of "Decent work 4.0". What effects does digitalisation have in particular on employed people who are affected by in-work poverty?

3. The service sector and in-work poverty

As in other major European cities, the service sector plays a defining role in Berlin. Of 1.4 million people who had jobs in Berlin with mandatory social contributions in the period 2017/2018, 85 % worked in the service sector, with women making up the majority. Which groups are particularly affected by in-work poverty and what needs do they have?

4. Vocational education and training and in-work poverty

Qualifications and educational aspirations, as well as good education and training that is available to as many people as possible are essential if in-work poverty is to be overcome. What role does education and training play in the transition to decent work and the prevention or overcoming of in-work poverty?

Registration

Please fill in the enclosed registration form and send it to:

europaagentur@gsub.de

Please register until 8th September 2019.

Please note that the number of participants is limited. After your successful registration you will receive a confirmation email.

Technical information

Conference venue

Hotel Stadtbad Oderberger
 Oderberger Straße 57
 10 435 Berlin
 Tel. +49 (0)30 780 089 760
 Whatsapp: +49 (0)179 403 2550

How to get to the conference venue

A Taxi ride from Berlin **airport Schönefeld** costs ca. EUR 45, from **airport Tegel** ca. EUR 25 and from the **main station** ca. EUR 15. But you can easily get to Hotel Oderberger by public transport:

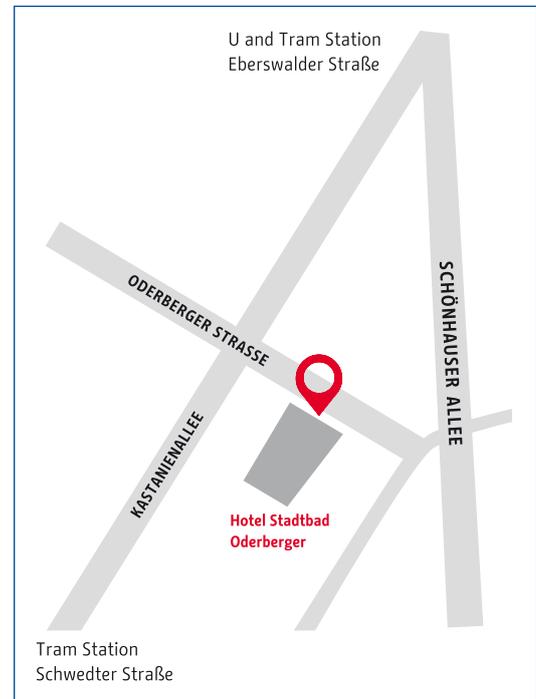
Airport Tegel TXL: Jet Express Bus TXL to Alexanderplatz (leaving every 15 or 20 minutes), from Alexanderplatz 2 stops with metro line U 8 till Rosenthaler Platz. Then take tram M1 or M12 until “Schwedter Str”, 150 m walking distance to the hotel.

Airport Schoenefeld SXF: Airport Express train to Alexanderplatz (leaving every 30 minutes), from Alexanderplatz 2 stops with metro line U 8 till Rosenthaler Platz. Then take tram M1 or M12 until “Schwedter Str”, 150 m walking distance to the hotel.

Hauptbahnhof/Main Station: Take metro line M10 until tram station “Eberswalder Straße”, 200 m walking distance to the hotel.

Parking

A limited number of parking spaces are available on our premises for EUR 25 per night (check-in from 3 pm / check-out until 11 am). Alternatively, we recommend the car park in the Kulturbrauerei on Sredzkistrasse (EUR 2.00 per hour or EUR 20.00 per day).



Contacts

**Senate Department for Integration,
Labour and Social Services, Berlin**

Karin Reichert

email: Karin.reichert@senias.berlin.de

Europe Agency

Antje Reimann

Tel: +49 (0)30 284 09 129

email: antje.reimann@gsub.de