

Child poverty in rich countries 2005 ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

EXCERPTS from the media release

The proportion of children living in poverty since the early 1990s has risen in 17 out of 24 rich countries, a new report from UNICEF's research centre said today. Although it is widely assumed that child poverty in rich countries is on a steady downward track, the report finds that in only four countries – Australia, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States – has there been a significant decrease since the early 1990s. Among these, the UK has shown particular progress in reducing its child poverty rate. According to the report, released by UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre, Denmark and Finland have the lowest child poverty rates, at less than 3 per cent, while Norway is the only country where child poverty can be described as "very low and continuing to fall." In releasing the poverty survey of OECD member states, UNICEF noted that reducing poverty is one of the Millennium Development Goals agreed to by all nations. The survey looks at comparable data and presents comprehensive estimates on child poverty among rich countries. The report examines the available data from all countries, and asks what is driving child poverty rates upward in some countries while in other nations more progress is being made. The survey finds that three fundamental forces – social trends, labour market conditions, and government policies – are the key determinants of child poverty rates. In particular, the government commitment to fighting poverty among children and which policies are actually implemented can make a significant difference. The considerable variations even among governments with roughly similar levels of expenditures suggest that not only levels but also the nature of allocations matter. The report suggests that many OECD countries would appear to have the potential to reduce child poverty below 10 per cent without a significant increase in overall spending.

Region: International ^[3]

Tags: poverty ^[4]

international organizations ^[5]

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