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Policy paper

2010 to 2015 government policy: poverty and social justice

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This is a copy of a document that stated a policy of the 2010 to 2015 Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government.

The previous URL of this page was

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-to-reduce-poverty-and-improve-social-justice>. Current policies can be found at the GOV.UK [policies list](#).

Issue

Poverty, as measured by a household's income relative to the national average, is often a symptom of deeper, more complex problems. Many of these problems are passed on from one generation to the next.

For example, there are almost 300,000 households in the UK where none of the adults has ever worked, and 300,000 children have parents with serious drug problems. Children in families affected by these problems have reduced chances of success in their own lives.

We want to make a real and lasting difference, to help people change the course of their lives. To do this, we need to deal with the problems that cause people to end up living in poverty, rather than dealing with people's incomes in isolation.

Actions

On 13 March 2012 we published '[Social justice: transforming lives](#)'. It explains the government's plans for giving individuals and families facing multiple disadvantages the support and tools they need to turn their lives around.

We published the [‘Social justice outcomes framework’](#) on 31 October 2012. It explains what the government wants to achieve and how we will measure success.

On 24 April 2013 we published [Social justice: transforming lives – one year on](#). This progress report looks at how social justice principles influence service delivery at national and local level, in government and across the private and voluntary sectors.

We have published a [series of reports](#) showing how we are achieving the outcomes set out in the ‘Social justice outcomes framework’. We will update these reports regularly.

Our strategy includes action to:

- help troubled families turn their lives around
- improve mental health
- reduce child poverty and make sure that children are properly supported so that they complete their education
- make work pay, and help people to find and stay in work
- help people recover and become independent if things have gone wrong
- work with the voluntary, public and private sectors to deal more effectively with complex problems

Improving family stability

The government is introducing new measures to help [improve family stability](#). The aim is to help families to provide a safe, stable and nurturing environment underpinned by effective relationships, whether parents are together or apart.

Helping troubled families turn their lives around

The government is working with local authorities and their partners to help 120,000 troubled families in England turn their lives around by 2015 – our policy on [helping troubled families turn their lives around](#) explains this work in more detail.

In March 2013 we announced that [150 specialist Jobcentre Plus advisers will work with troubled families](#). The advisers will work with existing teams in councils to support troubled families and track their progress into work.

Improving mental health

The [government's mental health policy](#) concentrates on outcomes - what actually happens to the health of the patient as a result of the treatment and care they receive.

Reducing child poverty

Helping children overcome poverty will make a huge difference not only to their lives but to the lives of their families, communities and to society as a whole. We are committed to ending child poverty in the UK by 2020.

On 5 April 2011, we published the UK's [first national child poverty strategy](#), which set out the actions we would take between 2011 and 2014 to meet our aim.

After consulting on the [draft strategy](#) for the period between 2014 and 2017,

we published the UK's [second national strategy for reducing child poverty](#) on 26 June 2014.

Improving social mobility

The government wants to [create a socially mobile society](#) so that no one is stopped from achieving their potential.

Making work pay

Work for those who can is the most sustainable route out of poverty.

[Increasing the participation of 16 to 24 year olds in learning and employment](#) not only makes a lasting difference to their individual lives, but is central to the government's ambitions to improve social mobility and stimulate economic growth.

We are combining in- and out-of-work benefits within the new [Universal Credit](#). This will make the transition from benefits to work significantly easier. Universal Credit will dramatically simplify the process of applying for different benefits as people move in and out of work or between jobs, which will eliminate the insecurity caused by gaps in income. Because the system will be simpler, it will also be much easier for people to understand how much better off they would be if they were to move into work.

Helping people recover from drugs problems and become independent if things have gone wrong

The government intends to restrict the supply of illicit drugs, introduce a system of temporary bans on so called 'legal highs' and to promote recovery of drug users within their communities. Our [drugs policy](#) sets out how we will do this.

The ministerial working group on homelessness and [ending rough sleeping](#) brings together 8 government departments to deal with the complex causes of homelessness – not only housing, but just as importantly health, work and training.

The government outlined its proposals for how to better ensure offenders pay for their crimes and, just as importantly, don't go on to commit any more in their response to the '[Breaking the cycle: effective punishment, rehabilitation and sentencing of offenders consultation](#)' in July 2011. For more information, [see our policy on reducing reoffending](#).

Working with the voluntary, public and private sectors to achieve change

We recognise that the most effective solutions will often be managed locally. The government is working with local authorities and other public sector organisations to help them [share information securely](#) . This will help to improve services by offering guidance and examples of best practice.

The government will encourage:

- service providers to be innovative by specifying outcomes and paying for effective results
- local agencies, services and service users to work together on services that take local needs into account through projects like Community Budgets

[social investment market](#)

the

and philanthropy to expand

Background

In the coalition agreement we said we will maintain the goal of ending child poverty in the UK by 2020. The government believes that the focus on income over recent decades has ignored the root causes of poverty, and in doing so has allowed social problems to deepen and become entrenched.

The government's new approach to reducing poverty in all its forms is not about income poverty alone. [‘Social justice: transforming lives’](#) explains the government's plans for giving individuals and families facing multiple disadvantages the support and tools they need to turn their lives around.

Welfare reform communications toolkit

Our [welfare reform communications toolkit](#) helps explain how DWP is changing the welfare system. It covers:

- what we are changing
- why we are making the changes
- when we are making the changes

Who we're consulting

We ran the [‘Consultation on measuring child poverty’](#) between 15 November 2012 and 15 February 2013. We sought views on changing the

way we measure child poverty to make sure we can get accurate data about how many children in the UK are affected. We published our response to this consultation on 27 February 2014 on annex E of our [consultation on the draft child poverty strategy](#).

From 27 February to 22 May 2014, we [consulted on the UK's national strategy for reducing child poverty](#) for the period between 2014 and 2017. We published the [national strategy](#) on 26 June 2014, and included our response to this consultation in annex E.

On 26 June 2014 we launched a [consultation on our target to reduce persistent child poverty](#), in compliance with the [Child Poverty Act 2010](#). The consultation will run until 14 August 2014.

Who we're working with

Social justice requires new and imaginative approaches to designing and funding services, and close partnership between the private, public and charitable sectors. We are therefore working with:

- national and local government
- the voluntary and community sector
- mutuals and private companies
- investors and philanthropists

Share your examples with us

We've published a [series of case studies](#) and invited organisations to tell us about other examples of social justice in action.

If you have a story you'd like to share or if you want to be involved, please email us at dwp.socialjustice@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.

Join the [social justice group on LinkedIn](#) to share learning and good practice.

[@socjusticegov](#) – follow DWP Social Justice on Twitter.

Keep up to date with social justice developments at the [Public Service Transformation Network Social Justice site](#).

Multi-Agency Information Sharing Hub (MASH) in Leicestershire

Find out how the Multi-Agency [Information Sharing Hub](#) (MASH) in Leicestershire is making it easier for people working with families to share information and coordinate their activities.



OnePlusOne – Getting it right for children

‘Getting it right for children’ is an innovative online programme from [The Parent Connection](#), specifically designed by OnePlusOne to deal with potential problems children face when their parents separate. They have developed this evidence-based resource to help people break cycles of negative behaviour and do things differently.




ESC – empowering prisoners to change lives



Find out how Belfast [film company ESC](#) empowers prisoners to turn their back on crime, transform their lives and become active citizens.

Appendix 1: improving family stability

This was a supporting detail page of the main policy document.

We are introducing new measures to help improve family stability. The aim is to help families to provide a safe, stable and nurturing environment underpinned by effective relationships, whether parents are together or apart. 

The family stability indicator in the [Social justice outcomes framework](#) shows that by the age of 16, 44% of all children do not live with both of their birth parents. This trend is predicted to increase if we do not introduce new measures.

In December 2013, we invited contributions to a review of family stability to:

- analyse evidence on what can affect family formation, stability and breakdown
- assess existing interventions
- make recommendations on further policy measures

[Family Stability review: invitation to contribute to the review of evidence](#) 

Outcomes of the family stability review

On 18 August 2014, the Prime Minister [announced the main outcomes of the review](#). These include:

Perinatal Pilots

These will provide information to couples expecting a baby on:

- the effect having a baby can have on their relationship
- how to deal with conflict in their relationship
- further support

Studies show that becoming a parent places particular pressure on a couple's relationship and is one of the biggest causes of separation.

Guidance for health visitors

This will help health visitors to:

- spot the early signs of relationship distress
- understand how to respond
- review the need for further support

Health visitors often have to deal with relationship issues in their regular contact with families. They are well placed to identify signs of relationship distress and show people where to get appropriate support.

Local 'family offer' trials

We will work with some of the [Early Intervention Foundation's Pioneering Places](#) to improve family support in local areas. This could include:

- improving data collection on the scale of relationship breakdown
- training staff to spot signs of relationship distress

Expanding the Troubled Families programme

We are expanding the [Troubled Families programme](#) to reach families:

- affected by domestic violence
- with vulnerable younger children
- with a range of health problems

This will increase the focus on supporting the safety, stability and nurturing nature of the family environment.

More information

For more information on the Family Stability review, email

family.stabilityreview@dpw.gsi.gov.uk

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