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CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY**

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Europe as agent that fills the gaps? The case of FEAD

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ABSTRACT

Given the inadequacy of minimum incomes and growing poverty in most European welfare states, this paper originates from the overarching questions *whether* and *how* the EU could counter these trends. The 'Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived' (FEAD), launched in 2014, appears to be a concrete case of a united anti-poverty programme with redistributive mechanisms. The fund aims to help people take their first steps out of poverty. It supports local programmes and initiatives providing nonfinancial assistance and social reintegration measures. According to the European Commission FEAD functions as an effective instrument to reduce poverty in Europe and, furthermore, to contribute to the implementation of the 'European Pillar of Social Rights'. This paper seeks to study the operation and impact of the fund in the light of these large-scale objectives. Our findings suggest a relatively high impact of FEAD in poorer countries and an at least noteworthy impact in some wealthier countries.

Keywords: minimum incomes, Europe, FEAD, inadequacy.

1. Introduction

Recent studies document a growing socio-economic divide in Europe over the past decades, intensified since the onset of the global financial crisis (OECD, 2017). In many European countries, minimum incomes for jobless households are lying under the national poverty lines for certain household types (e.g. Cantillon, Collado & Van Mechelen, 2015). Back in the fifties, the founding fathers of the European community assumed that more socio-economic cohesion between EU Member States could be reached by supranational economic cooperation – while leaving competences for social policies mainly to the national level (Vandenbroucke, 2015). However, since the financial crisis Europe has become more unequal while poverty (especially among the working age population) has increased in many countries (Cantillon, Goedemé & Hills, 2019).

Hence, an increasing number of scholars and observers pleads for a strengthening of the social policy dimension of the European Union (EU), while respecting the principle of subsidiarity (see e.g. Vandenbroucke, 2015). Yet the policy field of poverty reduction and social inclusion in particular is characterized by a strongly defended national sovereignty. Furthermore, there seems to be no political feasibility to demand more solidarity from wealthier EU Member States.¹ Consequently, the overarching questions arise *whether* and *how* the EU can counter the demand for reducing poverty in Europe.

Possibly as a reaction to increasing poverty and the lack of effective policies both at national and EU level, more and more decentralized local initiatives in the field of poverty reduction and social inclusion are emerging. Examples include food banks, food pantries and clothing distribution centers. These initiatives are mainly run by civil society, charity organizations and local churches. They arise in the margin of the welfare state and social protection schemes. In many cases, local social initiatives may be better tied into the 'life-world' of people living in poverty and better address different forms of social exclusion and deprivation in an integrated and customised way than centralized and often insufficient modes of state interventions (Oosterlynck, Novy, Kazepov, Cools, Saruis, Leubolt, & Wukovitsch, 2019).

Consequently, these local initiatives seem to fill a void that is left by governmental actions and may be seen as signs for a transformation of welfare arrangements. They are often related to 'social innovation' as an empirical phenomenon of diverse small-scaled initiatives, projects and programs which address unmet social needs (Oosterlynck et al., 2019).² In contrast to 'business innovation' socially innovative activities and services are defined by their social purpose (e.g. Mulgan, Tucker, Ali, & Sanders, 2007). Recent studies argue that, in principle, social innovation could help to empower individuals to (re)participate in society, strengthen the underlying social fabric, fortify society from the inside out, force public authorities to recognise emerging needs, and finally, help to create the social and political conditions for a more enduring poverty reduction (Cantillon et al., 2019).

Against this backdrop, European funding of local initiatives in the policy field of poverty and social inclusion is a remarkable phenomenon. Particularly interesting in this respect is the 'Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived' (FEAD). This fund aims to help people take their first steps out of poverty and social exclusion by supporting local programmes and initiatives providing nonfinancial assistance and social reintegration measures (European Commission, 2018a). These include the

¹ However, recent studies document a high degree of public support for a type of transnational solidarity. By conducting a representative survey in 13 EU Member States, a research team from the University of Amsterdam has shown that most of the surveyed European citizens were in favour of cross-border risk sharing in the domain of unemployment insurance (Vandenbroucke, Burgoon, Kuhn, Nicoli, Sacchi, van der Duin & Hegewald 2018).

² In general, 'social innovation' is often regarded as part of the 'social economy' (e.g. Defourney & Nyssens 2013). The broader term 'social economy' refers to non-profit enterprises, organisations, co-operatives etc. acting between the governmental and the market level (e.g. Moulaert & Ailenei, 2005).

distribution of food and basic goods as well as non-material social inclusion assistance. EU Member States and their national managing authorities can decide upon the types of assistance. But in the end, local social initiatives and non-governmental organisations are the main actors arranging provision of the assistance. Thereby, regarding the field of action, FEAD is at least partly bypassing the structural level of national social protection policies.

Furthermore, FEAD offers an example of solidarity between the EU Member States since the fund is financed by a common EU budget line. Besides, especially poorer countries are profiting from FEAD.³ Even though the amount of money is not high – it comes to EUR 3.8 billion for all EU Member States during the period of 2014-2020 (European Commission, 2015), corresponding to 0.4% of the total EU budget for that time interval – FEAD appears to be a concrete case of a united anti-poverty programme with redistributive mechanisms.

The question whether FEAD is a promising way to move towards a more social Europe is a complex one. It raises issues such as: Does FEAD add significant value to Member States' initiatives, in that it accomplishes more than what can be achieved with local, regional or national funds alone? Does FEAD in general maximise the impact of Member States' efforts to tackle poverty and social exclusion by increasing the types and volumes of assistance delivered? And in particular: Does FEAD successfully complement existing local measures and moreover, does FEAD facilitate better national social protection? Or on the contrary, does FEAD lead to stagnating – or even regressing – national social policies in support of their most deprived people? In this respect, the case of the US federal food aid programme 'SNAP'⁴ may be cited as an alarming example of providing states a financial incentive to cut back on their own social assistance. Thus, the question raises, whether FEAD's non-financial assistance could correspondingly motivate EU Member States to cut back on (or to restrain the further development of) their national anti-poverty measures.

The answers to these multifaceted issues require on the one hand in-depth research on how FEAD works in different EU Member States, into the interlinkages between European, national and local policies, into the evolving needs for food support in the EU, and on the other hand long-term studies how the FEAD programme evolves as well as simulations that demonstrate a possible correlation of FEAD and specific stagnating (or even regressing) national social policies.

As a first step, in this paper, we focus on (a) the underlying poverty problems in general and the increasing rate of food insecurity in particular, and (b) FEAD and its financial impact compared to its objectives. The outline of the paper is as follows. First, we sketch out the socio-economic context by comparing minimum income protection in the EU countries with national at-risk-of-poverty thresholds. Moreover, we illustrate the phenomenon of food insecurity in Europe (section 2). Thereafter, we point out the need for better social protection and the trend of a growing food bank sector (section 3). Subsequently, we focus on FEAD's objectives, instruments and financial scope, especially by examining the size of FEAD's efforts compared to national spending on social protection benefits to the most deprived (section 4). To widen our perspective, we briefly discuss the phenomenon of a steadily growing food voucher system in the United States (section 5). We conclude and give an outlook on further research in section 6.

³ See section 4.

⁴ See section 5.

2. Poverty and food insecurity in Europe

Poverty trends among the working age population in many countries are worrying and stand in significant contrast to the ambitious policy goals formulated ever since the Lisbon strategy was adopted in the year 2000. In the large majority of countries both in-work and out-of-work minimum income protection is still inadequate to prevent poverty (Cantillon, Marchal & Luigjes, 2019).

In the following discussion we will use the term ‘minimum income (protection)’ understood as *“essentially income support schemes for people of working age (whether in or out of work) which provide a means-tested safety net for those not eligible for social insurance payments or those whose entitlement to these payments has expired. They are in effect last resort schemes, which are intended to prevent destitution and to ensure a decent minimum standard of living for individuals and their dependants when they have no other or insufficient means of financial support”* (Frazer & Marlier, 2016, 6).

Figure 1 shows the guaranteed minimum incomes for three hypothetical families with non-working heads of active age relative to the national at-risk-of-poverty threshold, at 60% of national median equivalised disposable household income (AROP60)⁵ for the year 2017. In most EU Member States, a final safety net is in place for non-working people of active age, either through a general social assistance scheme or through categorical safety nets. Exceptions are Italy and Greece who only in recent years started to introduce a general social assistance scheme. Figure 1 shows the adequacy of the final safety net, taking account of all possible benefits the hypothetical families are entitled to, such as social assistance, housing allowances and child benefits (see Marchal, Siöland & Goedemé, 2018, for a complete overview). Since in reality not all families succeed in claiming all the benefits they are eligible for (see Van Mechelen and Janssens, 2017, for a discussion on non-take-up), the minimum income protection packages presented in figure 1 show a best-case scenario. However, even in this best case scenario rights-based safety nets in general are too low to lift eligible families above the at risk of poverty threshold. Only in the Netherlands minimum income protection packages for single person household are higher than the at-risk-of-poverty threshold for this family type.

⁵ The disposable income is the total income of a household, after tax and other deductions that is available for spending or saving. All monetary income received from any source by each member of the household are added up; these include income from work, income from capital and social benefits, plus any other household income; taxes, social contributions and regular inter-household cash transfers that have been paid are deducted (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:At-risk-of-poverty_rate).

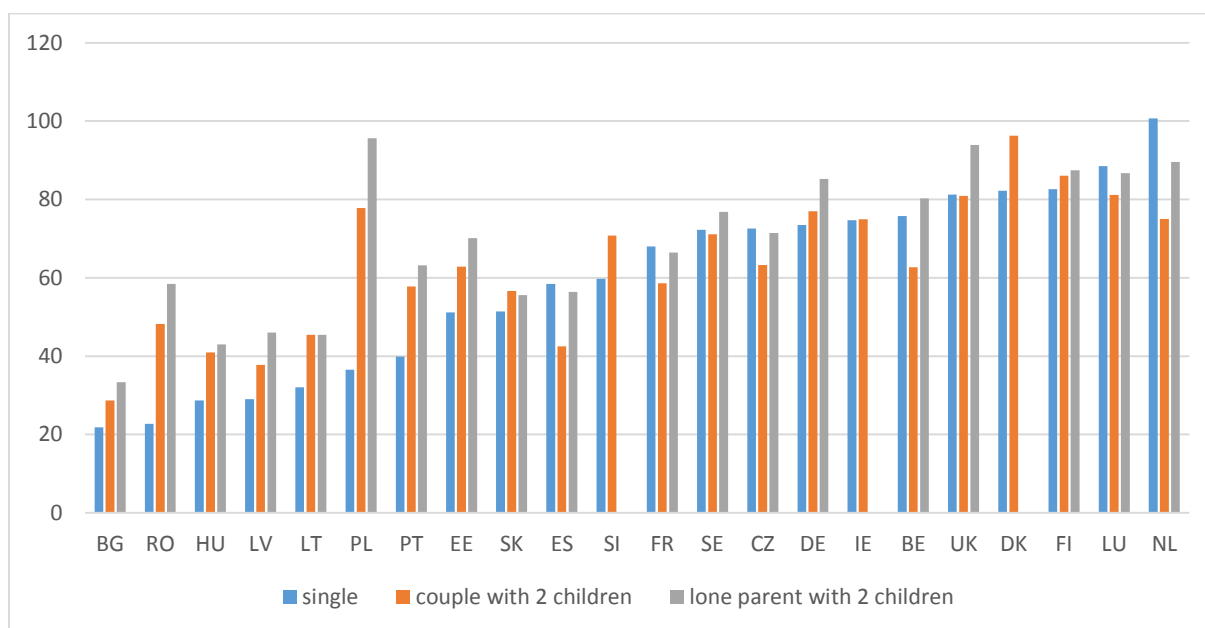


Figure 1. Minimum income protection packages as percentage of EU at risk of poverty threshold, 2017

Note: Minimum income packages for typical families with assumed characteristics (see Marchal et al., 2018). No estimates available for LP2C in DK and SI. No social assistance in IT and EL. AT, CY, HR and MT are not included in the MIPI-HHoT public release indicators.

Source: MIPI-HHoT indicators – Version 1.0.0 public release, Marchal et al. (2018).

Eurostat data illustrate that, in 2017, still 16.9% of the EU working-age population (16 to 64 years) were living in households below AROP60. What it could mean for people to live below AROP60 can be clarified by the issue of food insecurity. In 2017, 21.7% of the total EU population below AROP60 were not able to afford a full meal with meat, chicken, fish or a vegetarian equivalent at least every second day.⁶ Figure 2 demonstrates this indication of food insecurity for households living below AROP60 in the individual Member States. Bulgaria shows the highest rate (61.9%), particularly for single females (67.8%) and large households with adults and three or more children (76.4%). But also in wealthier EU countries the rates are still remarkable. In France, 35.7% of all single women with an income below AROP60 are food deprived, in Germany, the rate amounts to 31.1%, in Belgium to 24.8%.

⁶ Since 2009, the EU poverty indicators also include a material deprivation measurement that complements the income poverty indicators (Guio, 2009). The household deprivation information is collected at the household level and assigned to all household members (including children). This indicator considers nine deprivations: the household cannot (1) afford one week annual holiday away from home; (2) face unexpected expenses; (3) avoid arrears (mortgage or rent, utility bills or loans); (4) afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian equivalent every second day; (5) afford to keep their home adequately warm; (6) afford to have a car/van for private use (if wanted); (7) afford to have a washing machine (if wanted); (8) afford to have telephone (if wanted); (9) afford to have a television (if wanted). A person is deprived if his/her household lacks three or more items (standard definition) (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-working-papers/-/KS-RA-10-030?inheritRedirect=true>).

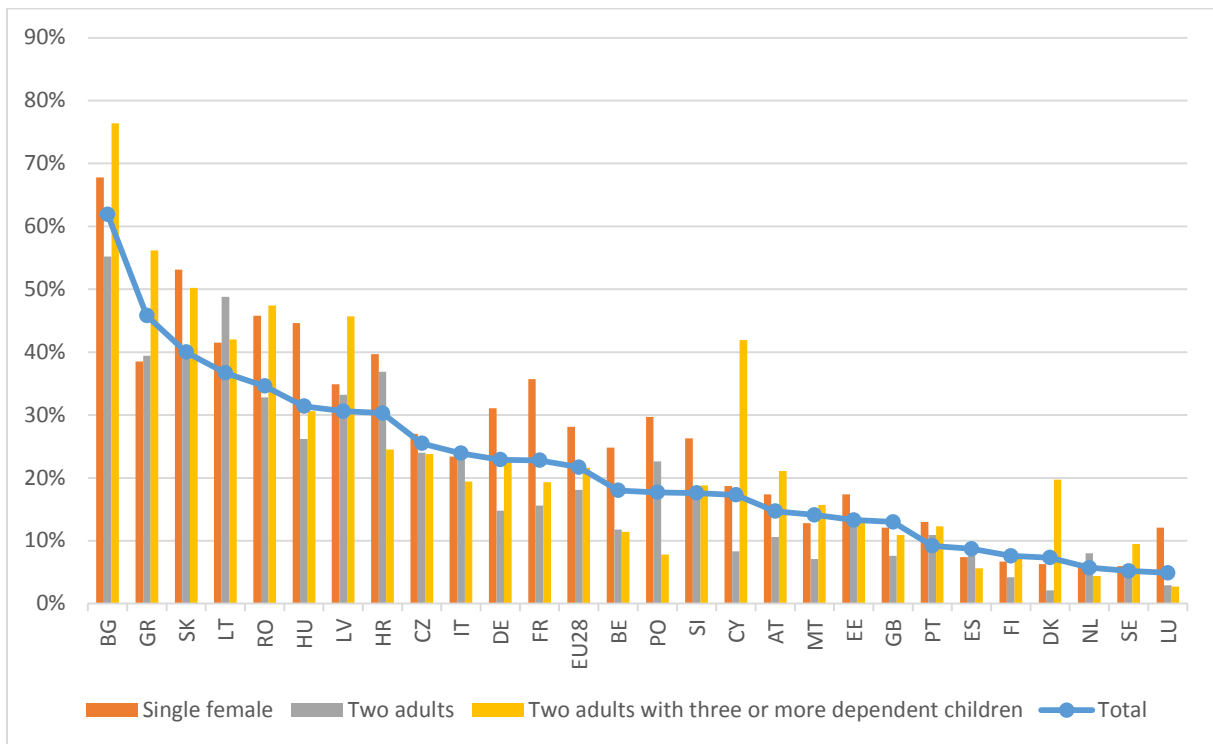


Figure 2 Percentage of different households below AROP60 not able to afford a full meal with meat, chicken, fish or a vegetarian equivalent at least every second day (year: 2017).

No data available for Ireland.

Source: Eurostat (extracted on 19/01/2019).

To complete the picture, we seek to illustrate the cost of a healthy diet in the different EU Member States. We refer to a recent European pilot project on reference budgets that was supported by the EU Commission and coordinated by the Herman Deleeck Centre for Social policy and that offers a first cross-nationally comparable attempt to assess the cost of a healthy diet for 26 EU Member States (Goedemé, Storms, Penne & Van den Bosch, 2015). Reference budgets are priced baskets of goods and services that illustrate a certain living standard for specific household types. Following the reference budget approach, the food baskets represent the minimum resources specific household types need to access an adequate diet in accordance with the national food-based dietary guidelines. The guidelines were translated into a concrete basket of essential food products by a nutritionist and research team in each country, supported by random citizens in focus group discussions. The baskets have been priced in the capital city of each country during the Spring of 2015.

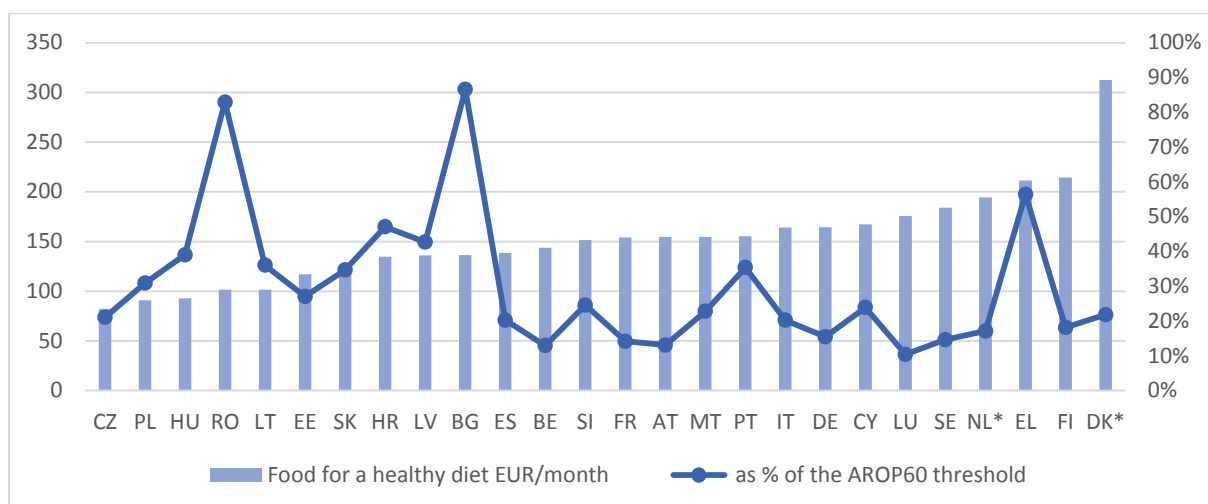


Figure 3 Total food baskets for a single woman in EUR/ month (left axis) and as a % of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold (right axis). Results refer to the capital city of each country. Prices and incomes year 2015.

* Pricing procedure for DK and NL is not fully comparable.

Source: AROP60 from Eurostat database (extracted on 17/12/2018), Food baskets from EU pilot project on Reference budgets (Goedemé et al., 2015; Carrillo-Álvarez et al., 2018).

Figure 3 shows the total food baskets for a single woman in 26 EU capital cities expressed in EUR/month. Clearly, the cost of a healthy diet varies largely across EU Member States differing from 82 EUR/month in the Czech Republic to 312 EUR/month in Denmark. The cross-national variation is mainly due to price differences as well to differences in food-based dietary guidelines (see Carrillo-Álvarez, Penne, Boeckx & Goedemé, 2018). At the right hand axis, we express the food baskets as a percentage of the AROP60 in each country. This illustrates how in many capital cities, people with an income at 60% of the median, face problems of food insecurity. Especially in Romania and Bulgaria, we see that a single woman living at the level of the poverty line, needs to spend nearly all her income if she wants to have access to a diet in accordance with the national dietary guidelines. This shows that the at-risk-of-poverty threshold is not only very low in some countries, but also means different things in terms of access to essential goods and services (Goedemé et al., 2019).

In figure 4, we express the food baskets as a percentage of the social assistance schemes in the different EU countries, again for a single woman (cf. Penne et al., forthcoming). The net income from social assistance is simulated taking into account all relevant benefits and taxes (Marchal et al., 2018). The figure shows that, in 10 of the 26 EU Member States, the cost of a healthy diet requires more than 50% of the monthly net disposable income of a single person living on social assistance. In Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Romania the reference food budget reaches even 100% or more of the social assistance level, pointing at largely inadequate minimum income protection and problems of food insecurity for people living on social assistance (Penne et al., forthcoming). Despite large cross-national variations, even in richer Member States, the cost of a healthy diet represents generally more than 15% of social assistance for a single person. Hence, even if the cost of a healthy diet would somewhat be over-estimated (even though leaving out all related costs and other functions of food), we can conclude that across Europe, social assistance recipients are often confronted with severe financial constraints to eat healthily.

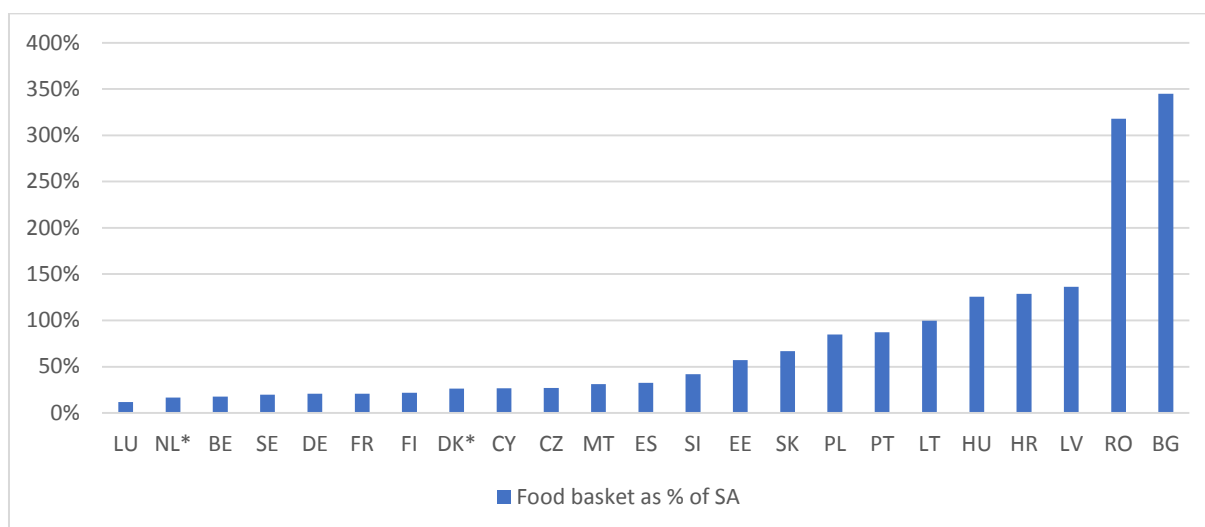


Figure 4 Total food baskets for a single woman as a % of their net social assistance income. Results of food baskets refer to the capital city of each country. Prices and incomes for year 2015. No minimum income data available for AT, EL & IT. *Pricing procedure for DK and NL is not fully comparable.

Source: Penne et al., forthcoming (net minimum incomes simulated using HHoT (Euromod) (Marchal, Siöland & Goedemé, 2018), food baskets from EU pilot project on Reference budgets (Goedemé et al., 2015; Carrillo-Álvarez et al., 2018).

3. The need for local solidarity – Do food banks provide the answer?

There appears to be a growing need for action to fill the void left by inadequate national social protection schemes. Consequently, it is not surprising that other drivers within the welfare states are entering the arena. Regional and municipal authorities are becoming more and more important actors in providing social protection. Recent studies speak of an on-going process of territorial re-organisation of welfare policies, vertical ‘subsidiarisation’, devolution and localisation (see e.g. Oosterlynck et al., 2015).

Regarding social protection for the most socially deprived people, particularly food banks play an ever-increasing role in Europe. Although quantitative research on food banks is rather scarce there is clear evidence for dramatic increases of the number of people in need of food assistance (Hebinck, Galli, Arcuri, Carroll, O’connor & Oostindie, 2018; Caraher & Cavicchi, 2014). Gentilini (2013) reports that almost 6% of the EU’s population turn to food banks. Apparently, these charitable organisations seem to alleviate a growing need among deprived people with little means of alternative support through the official welfare system. Remarkably, the profile of a ‘food bank beneficent’ has been evolving significantly in recent years. It not only includes homeless people, elderly, chronically poor people and other vulnerable groups but increasingly single parent households, young people, undocumented migrants as well as ‘working poor’ people and former middle-class family members with sporadic income and growing indebtedness (Gentilini, 2013).

Food bank systems are managed on a multilevel basis with regard to local distributions, provincial food bank networks, national federations and European support. Historically, the food bank phenomenon dates from 1967 when the first initiatives were taken in Arizona (US). Europe joined in with France taking the lead in 1984, followed by Belgium in 1985. Both in the US and in Europe the first consideration was, remarkably, to handle surplus food stocks, not to combat poverty (Riches, 1986). In 1986, the European umbrella organisation for national food banks, the Federation of European Food Banks (FEBA), was launched. Nowadays, FEBA consists of 344 food banks from 23 member countries distributing food to 8.1 million people.⁷ France’s food bank sector is the largest in

⁷ https://www.eurofoodbank.org/images/cont/feba-annual-report2017_file.pdf.

Europe, followed by Italy and Spain. Relative to their national population Eastern European countries (including Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Hungary) register the largest share of food bank beneficiaries (Gentilini, 2013).

Even though existing for many decades, the scale and logistics of food assistance delivery in general has changed a lot (Caraher & Cavicchi, 2014). It evolved to a complex and sophisticated system encompassing a broad range of actors and resources with many different suppliers like food pantries, soup kitchens, social markets, shelters, school distribution programs, religious and non-religious organizations, anti-hunger advocates and crowds of volunteers (Webb, 2013).

Furthermore, parallel to these traditional ways of food assistance other responses have been invented to tackle the needs of the most vulnerable groups in European societies (e.g. Hebinck et al., 2018). For instance, some local food distribution initiatives provide also other forms of social support besides food aid. Generally, locally organised supportive initiatives are presumed to help to empower individuals that are insufficiently supported by traditional social policies and to improve their capacity to participate in society (Oosterlynck et al., 2019).

However, the provision of food aid in general – via foodbanks or other civil society driven initiatives – is highly contested amongst researchers (Hebinck et al., 2018): On the one hand, food aid is interpreted positively as an extension of the welfare state. But on the other hand, it is critically evaluated as a social protection pathway not worth to continuing. Furthermore, critical studies argue that the current food aid system is not a construction of a social safety net but rather its breakdown (Riches, 2002).

Additionally, food banks and similar organisations are critically described as parts of a new ‘charity economy’ (Kessl, Lorenz & Schoneville, 2018). This term is used to illustrate the systemized distribution of elementary goods (provided for free or sold at discount prices) to people in need by public as well private actors that are (indirectly) related to a commercial system.⁸ The charity economy establishes the provision of benefits in kind as an addition or even substitute to social insurance schemes, social assistance and other benefit systems at state level. Consequently, welfare states and their formal social protection schemes are more and more complemented by a public-private poverty relief system (Kessl, Lorenz & Schoneville, 2018).

Particularly, the immense support by civil society and volunteers to fill the void left by inadequate social protection systems may offer an incentive for governments to de-politicise food insecurity and consequently, to reduce own investments: *“[The] institutionalisation and corporatisation [of charitable food banking] allow the public and politicians to believe that hunger is being solved. It reinforces the notion of hunger as a matter for charity, not politics. If there is to be a strong public commitment to eliminating hunger and reducing poverty in the wealthy states, there is an urgent need for governments to think and act outside this charitable food box.”* (Riches, 2011, 768).

A recent study opens up another critical aspect of food aid related to the social function of food (Carrillo-Alvarez et al., 2018). The authors stress that eating and drinking plays a crucial role for social activities and gatherings with family, friends and colleagues in all different cultural contexts. Cooking and dining together but also eating out are important in order to maintain social relations and to socialize. Furthermore, food can be a means to show care and respect, to create hospitality and a

⁸ For example, supermarket chains use food banks or similar organisations for marketing purposes, to save money they otherwise would have to pay for waste disposal and in order to get tax credits. Furthermore, food banks are an economy themselves since they are run like enterprises and create a secondary economy of its own (Schoneville, forthcoming).

feeling of belonging as well as to express a certain cultural, religious or personal identity. Although these functions are not essential for a healthy diet, the study shows that (according to focus groups) they are evaluated as important to participate adequately in society. Consequently, when ensuring food security, the study pleads to take into account a broader bio-psycho-social understanding of each person.

To conclude, tackling the problem of food insecurity in Europe is a complex issue and demands at least a critical scrutiny of the current food aid system. However, the question how to face this problem adequately is not easy to answer. As long as there is a need of food assistance due to insufficient social protection systems, food aid currently appears to be non-negligible. Furthermore, to evaluate food aid in general, the question has to be posed, whether food aid only offers an 'emergency system of last resort' that has to be overcome, or after all represents an instrument to foster local solidarity, force public authorities to recognise emerging needs, and in the end, help to create the social and political conditions for a more enduring poverty reduction.

In the light of these considerations, FEAD is an interesting case to focus on since it supports local initiatives to provide food aid and basic material assistance in particular. The European Commission describes FEAD as an instrument to reduce poverty in Europe and, furthermore, even to enhance implement the 'European Pillar of Social Rights'⁹. In the following, we take a closer look at FEAD against the background of the discussions above. We start with a brief overview over the general European funding landscape in the field of social policy.

4. FEAD – the EU and local solidarity

European funding in the framework of EU cohesion policy – as defined in the 1987 Single European Act and widened in the 2007 Lisbon Treaty¹⁰ – has since long taken a prominent role in supporting deprived regions and the local level. The 'European Regional Development Fund' (ERDF), the 'European Social Fund' (ESF), and the 'Cohesion Fund' (CF) are dedicated to support the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the EU and to reduce disparities between European regions and countries. Furthermore, the 'Youth Employment Initiative' (YEI) is one of the main financial resources to support the implementation of the 'Youth Guarantee', aiming to support young deprived people to get employed.¹¹ Another instrument in the field of 'EU social funding' is the 'European Globalisation Adjustment Fund' (EGF), which provides ad-hoc financial aid to people losing their job as a result of major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalisation effects.¹²

More recently, by launching the 'Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived' (FEAD), the EU supports place-based local initiatives to fight against poverty, without interfering in national structural redistributive mechanisms. Therefore, FEAD presents a unique example of European supranational support for local social solidarity. Initiated in 2014 as an instrument to alleviate severe material deprivation, FEAD was originally intended to stem the harshest social consequences of the economic downturn as well as a way to increase the visibility of EU action in the social field (Madama, 2016). However, FEAD is a relatively small fund that only represents 1% of the EU budget for cohesion policy (European Commission, 2018a).

⁹ See section 4.

¹⁰ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:a519205f-924a-4978-96a2-b9af8a598b85.0004.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

http://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/688a7a98-3110-4ffe-a6b3-8972d8445325.0007.01/DOC_19

¹¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1176&langId=en>

¹² <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=326>

FEAD supports two types of operational programmes (OP) that EU Member States have to decide on (European Commission, 2014). Firstly, there is a type of programme supporting the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived persons, combined (where applicable) with accompanying measures aimed at alleviating social exclusion (OP I). Secondly, there is an operational programme supporting activities outside active labour market measures, consisting in non-financial and non-material assistance (OP II). The OPs are implemented through ‘partner organisations’, namely public bodies and/or non-profit organisations that deliver food and/or material assistance (OP I) or that carry out activities aiming at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons (OP II).¹³

97.56% of FEAD allocations are spent to OP I and the remaining 2.44% to OP II, adopted by 24 and 4 Member States respectively (European Commission, 2018b).¹⁴ 10 OP I countries are spending their entire FEAD budget to food support (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, Poland, Slovenia, Malta and the United Kingdom), while 14 Member States provide also material assistance, the most relevant in terms of budget being Greece and Italy (European Commission 2018b).

FEAD’s forebear, the Food Distribution Programme to the Most Deprived (MPD), respectively the ‘Programme européen de distribution des denrées alimentaires aux personnes les plus démunies de la communauté’ (PEAD), was inaugurated by Jacques Delors in 1987. It had been conceived on request of French and Belgian local NGO’s (e.g. Restos du Coeur) that were active in the field of poverty alleviation, following the indignation about the mass destruction of EU surplus food stock (Caraher, 2015). Distribution was assured through a network of foodbanks with FEBA as key actor and end-of-chain NGOs. The MPD/PEAD programme was reformed in 2008 allowing for market purchases due to unpredictability of surplus food stocks. The voluntary participation of EU Member States increased (19 in 2008). Nonetheless, a political conflict on food aid policy emerged, more precisely a conflict between expanding supranational competences in the social field and the defence of national sovereignty. Additionally, there was a clash between EU Commission and Parliament in re-framing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) between market-making and market-correcting positions (Madama, 2016). This culminated in a focus on the sustainability of agricultural markets and in placing MPD/PEAD outside the remit of CAP. A compromise was reached in a transition period and phasing-out of the fund by December 2013. However, thanks to creative agency of the EU Commission and bottom-up mobilisation (through FEBA, religious leaders and civil society organisations) the then Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor, launched FEAD in March 2014 (European Commission, 2014).

FEAD differs from the MPD/PEAD essentially. It imposes mandatory participation – compared to Member States’ voluntary participation in the former MPD/PEAD programme. In total, the EU budget for FEAD in the period of 2014-2020 amounts to EUR 3.8 billion. Member States are obligated to co-finance the programme by at least 15% (compared to no mandatory co-financing of MPD/PEAD). The EU budget rates for the individual Member States vary widely (figure 5). According to the EU regulation, each Member State receives an amount of at least EUR 3.5 million for the 2014-2020 programming period (European Commission, 2014). The allocation depends on the population suffering from severe material deprivation and the population living in households with very low

¹³ The implementation of OPs is monitored in annual implementation reports and in evaluations, including a mid-term evaluation and evaluations by the Managing Authorities (European Commission, 2014).

¹⁴ OP II countries are Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. Germany accounts for the larger share by far of FEAD funding, with Denmark and the Netherlands having chosen the minimum allocation set out in the FEAD regulation (European Commission 2018b).

work intensity. Furthermore, the allocation also takes into account the different ways of assisting the most deprived persons in the Member State. Yet Member States are authorized to decide about the final sum.

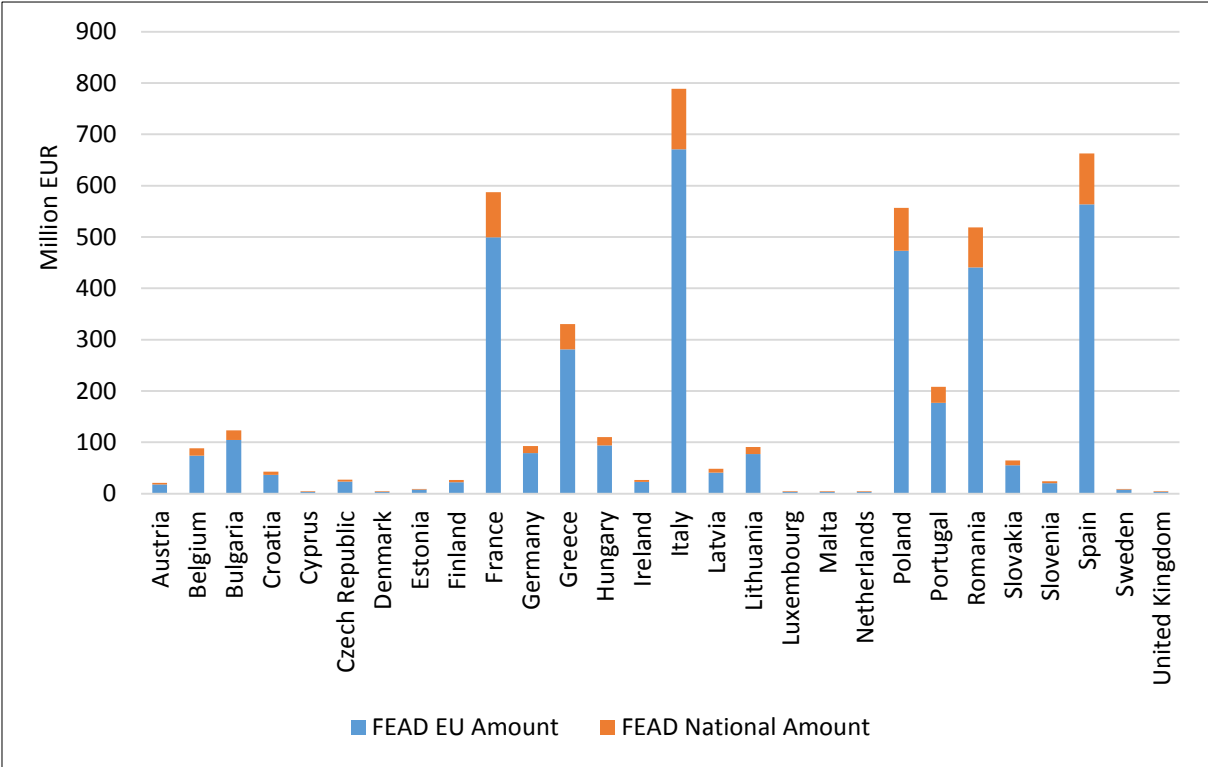


Figure 5 FEAD EU budget and national co-financing 2014-2020
 Source: European Commission (2015).

Another significant change with regard to the re-launching in 2014 is the fact that FEAD is administered by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion instead of DG Agriculture and Rural Development – an institutional shift which is in itself significant (Caraher, 2015). Above all, it adds a dimension of social cohesion to the distribution of food aid: from passive to active support, and from broader material support (food, hygiene, clothing, school supplies) to additional psychological counselling and strengthening skills and capacities, debt mediation and networking. This shift has been labelled the ‘social cohesion turn’ (Madama, 2016). Consequently, FEAD was linked by the Commission to the overall EU goal of reducing poverty within the framework offered by the EU2020 strategy. Against the backdrop of experiencing significant social shocks caused by the financial and economic crisis (2008), FEAD was emphasised as a novel instrument within the EU toolkit to help to break the ‘vicious circle of poverty and deprivation’ (European Commission, 2015). The ‘re-framing’ of the fund in 2014 – institutionally as well as ideally – may be interpreted as advocacy for a broader range of support to deprived people than just the distribution of food.

Also noticeable in this respect is that FEAD – as part of the proposed post-2020 funding merger ‘European Social Fund Plus’ (ESF+)¹⁵ – is getting more and more established and institutionalized within the European social funding landscape. Additionally, as part of the funding merger framework the European Commission expects FEAD to shape synergies with the other ESF+ funds (European

¹⁵ The proposed ESF+ merges the following funds and programmes, the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme and the Programme for the Union’s action in the field of health (the Health Programme) (https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/budget-may2018-european-social-fund-plus-regulation_en.pdf).

Commission, 2018a). Moreover, FEAD is also presented as an instrument to foster the implementation of the 'European Pillar of Social Rights' (EPSR). This legally non-binding EU initiative, proclaimed in 2017, sets out a number of key principles to support (a) equal opportunities and access to the labour market, (b) fair working conditions and (c) social protection and inclusion.¹⁶ FEAD's contribution in delivering the principles of the EPSR is being focused in particular on fostering and delivering education, training and lifelong learning (Principle 1); equal opportunities (Principle 3); childcare and support to children (Principle 11); access to healthcare (Principle 16); inclusion of people with disabilities (Principle 17); housing and assistance to the homeless (Principle 19); and access to essential services (Principle 20) (European Commission, 2018a). For example, by measures such as provision of training and/or educational support FEAD is expected to strengthen the right to quality education, training and lifelong learning.

In light of the above mentioned categorization of FEAD, two main – conflicting – issues are arising. On the one hand, FEAD's objectives as well as its instruments are set within a much broader social policy framework compared to its forerunner programme. For this purpose, the assisting measures supplementing food aid are being emphasized. On the other hand, FEAD's budget is still primarily used to support local food aid and basic good initiatives (European Commission, 2018b). Moreover, compared to its ambitious objectives its budget is quite limited. In contrast to the ESF both the FEAD EU contributions and the national co-financing are much lower (Table 1). For the period 2014 to 2020, the (planned) ESF EU budget amounts to EUR 83.9 million (according to 8.71% of the total EU budget) and a national co-financing to EUR 37.1 million – compared to a FEAD EU budget of EUR 3.8 million (according to 0.40% of the total EU budget) and a national co-financing of EUR 0.6 million. Furthermore, benchmarked against the national GDP's (2014) the FEAD EU budget appears to be very low (Table 1).

Nevertheless, some countries seem to benefit from FEAD over-proportionally with respect to the national spending on social protection benefits to the most deprived (table 1 and figure 6). The type of benefits we refer to at this point is the Eurostat function 'social exclusion not elsewhere classified (n.e.c.)'. It collects benefits in cash or in kind (except health care), including non-taxable income support paid to people with insufficient resources or other safety-net payments to alleviate destitution¹⁷ as well as benefits in kind such as food, clothing and fuel (Eurostat, 2016).¹⁸ In poorer countries, the share of FEAD EU budgets runs up to over 24% (Romania, 2014) of the national net expenditures on social protection benefits to the most deprived.¹⁹ In contrast, in most of the wealthier countries, this share is negligible (e.g. 2014: 0.007% in the Netherlands and 0.018% in Denmark). Yet it is noticeable that in some wealthier countries the FEAD EU budget is non-negligible (e.g. 2014: 0.37% in Belgium, 0.35% in France, 0.24% in Luxembourg and 0.19% in Germany).

Table 1 - ESF and FEAD: EU amount and national co-financing (2014-2020)/ Percentage of FEAD EU amount of national GDP/ Percentage of FEAD EU amount of net national spending on social protection benefits to the most deprived ('social exclusion n.e.c.'). Source: Eurostat (extracted on 19/01/2019)/ European Commission (2015).

¹⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en.

¹⁷ These may include shelter for the homeless, means-tested legal aid, and counselling for alcohol and drug abuse.

¹⁸ There are shortcomings concerning our reference data 'social exclusion n.e.c.'. For example, these data may also include cash benefits paid by private non-profit (charity) organisations. The share of private funding is not identifiable in the data and varies between the Member States (Eurostat, 2016).

¹⁹ Our calculations are based on hypothetical EU FEAD allocations to Member States in 2014 (one seventh of the total planned EU amount for the 2014-2020 period).

	2014-2020 ²⁰						2014	
EU Member State	ESF EU amount (million euro)	ESF national amount (million euro)	ESF total amount (million euro)	FEAD EU amount (million euro)	FEAD national amount (million euro)	FEAD total amount (million euro)	% FEAD EU amount of GDP ²¹	% FEAD EU amount of net national spending on social protection benefits to the most deprived ²²
Austria	442,1	433,7	875,7	18,0	3,2	21,2	0.00077%	0.168%
Belgium	973,4	1.201,0	2.174,4	73,8	14,4	88,2	0.00263%	0.371%
Bulgaria	1.466,4	256,5	1.722,9	104,8	18,5	123,3	0.03501%	12.306%
Croatia	1.414,7	249,7	1.664,4	36,6	6,5	43,1	0.01205%	6.064%
Cyprus	114,3	20,2	134,5	3,9	0,7	4,6	0.00316%	0.278%
Czech Rep.	3.416,4	786,2	4.202,6	23,3	4,1	27,4	0.00212%	0.679%
Denmark	213,0	197,9	411,0	3,9	0,7	4,6	0.00021%	0.018%
Estonia	581,1	102,5	683,7	8,0	1,4	9,4	0.00578%	5.743%
Finland	518,3	518,3	1.036,5	22,5	4,0	26,5	0.00156%	0.176%
France	5.553,7	4.269,6	9.823,3	499,3	88,1	587,4	0.00332%	0.353%
Germany	7.495,6	5.074,9	12.570,5	78,9	13,9	92,8	0.00038%	0.194%
Greece	3.899,9	1.139,6	5.039,4	280,9	49,6	330,5	0.02246%	6.530%
Hungary	4.662,4	982,4	5.644,8	93,9	16,6	110,5	0.01271%	10.695%
Ireland	476,4	476,4	952,7	22,8	4,0	26,8	0.00167%	1.051%
Italy	10.192,9	7.516,9	17.709,8	670,6	118,3	788,9	0.00591%	2.666%
Latvia	609,5	107,6	717,1	41,0	7,2	48,2	0.02480%	19.609%
Lithuania	1.095,5	193,3	1.288,8	77,2	13,6	90,8	0.03016%	7.035%
Luxembourg	20,1	20,1	40,1	3,9	0,7	4,6	0.00111%	0.240%
Malta	105,9	26,5	132,4	3,9	0,7	4,6	0.00659%	2.495%
Netherlands	510,3	520,5	1.030,8	3,9	0,7	4,6	0.00008%	0.007%
Poland	12.923,3	2.280,4	15.203,8	473,4	83,5	556,9	0.01645%	12.220%
Portugal	7.319,8	1.518,7	8.838,4	176,9	31,2	208,1	0.01460%	6.559%
Romania	4.622,9	811,1	5.434,0	441,0	77,8	518,8	0.04190%	24.440%
Slovakia	2.045,4	415,9	2.461,3	55,1	9,7	64,8	0.01035%	2.840%
Slovenia	718,8	179,7	898,5	20,7	3,6	24,3	0.00786%	1.102%
Spain	7.087,2	3.135,0	10.222,2	563,4	99,4	662,8	0.00776%	3.127%
Sweden	719,9	719,9	1.439,9	7,9	1,4	9,3	0.00026%	0.034%
UK	4.763,6	3.994,1	8.757,6	3,9	0,7	4,6	0.00002%	0.004%
EU28	83.962,8	37.148,3	121.111,0	3.813,4	674,2	4.487,6	0.00388%	0.746%
% of total EU Budget²³	8.71%			0.40%				

²⁰ Budget planned for 2014-2020.

²¹ Percentage of FEAD EU amount 2014 (= planned EU budget for 2014-2020 / 7) of national GDP 2014.

²² Percentage of FEAD EU amount 2014 (= planned EU budget for 2014-2020 / 7) of net national social protection benefits in millions of euros for 'social exclusion n.e.c.' function 2014.

²³ Total EU budget 2014-2020 (commitment appropriation, 2011 prices): EUR 963.512 million.

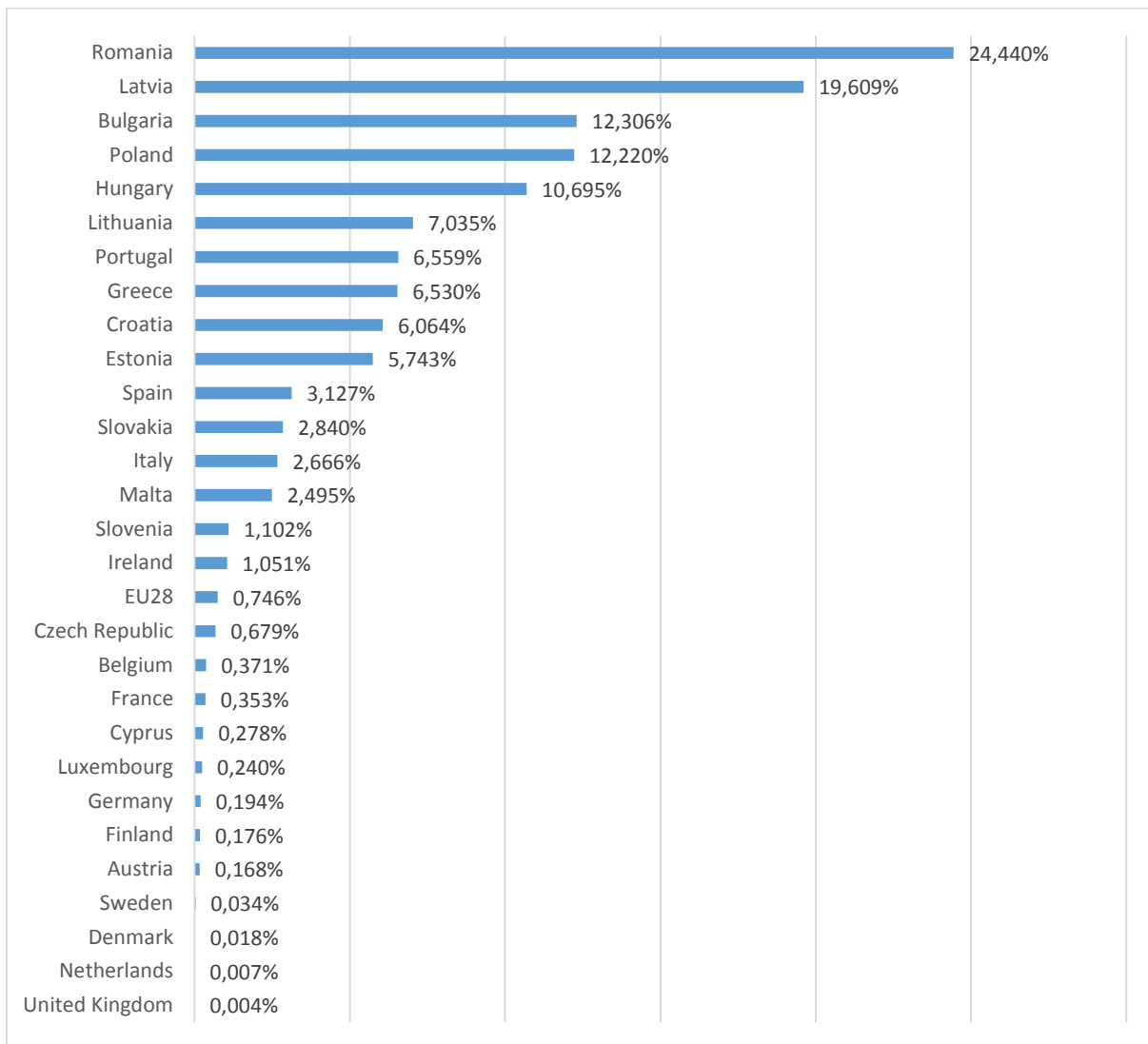


Figure 6 - FEAD EU amount as percentage of net national spending on 'social exclusion n.e.c.' in 2014.
 Source: Eurostat (extracted on 19/01/2019)/ European Commission (2015).

Firstly, these findings illustrate that the share of FEAD EU budget in national social benefit spending to the most deprived is especially high in poorer Member States. Secondly, they also indicate an at least noteworthy financial impact of FEAD in some wealthier Member States. Consequently, the question may be raised whether FEAD, despite its narrow-scoped budget, could lead to any effects regarding anti-poverty and social inclusion policies. Particularly, if some Member States persist in opposing more EU influence in supporting the structural distributive mechanisms in individual national welfare states, FEAD's approach may gain weight in the future.

Hence, does FEAD open up new pathways to local solidarity in the margins of national welfare states and should the EU proceed in this direction? Or, on the contrary, does Europe risk a scenario where local solidarity is more and more becoming an excuse for underinvestment in social protection, education, health care and employment policies at the state level? Moreover, could FEAD – if more and more institutionalized – even provide an incentive for Member States to downgrade their national social protection schemes? These issues can obviously not be answered on the basis of the above presented findings. Nevertheless, in the following section, we seek to broaden the view on FEAD's possible evolution by briefly describing the case of a federal organized food aid programme in the United States.

5. SNAP – disturbing prospect for Europe?

Just like FEAD, the US ‘Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program’ (SNAP), formerly known as ‘Food Stamp Program’, started with a relatively small budget but currently is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net.²⁴ From figure 7 we derive a continuous increase of the total budget, with an over-proportional increase since the outbreak of the 2007 financial and economic crisis.

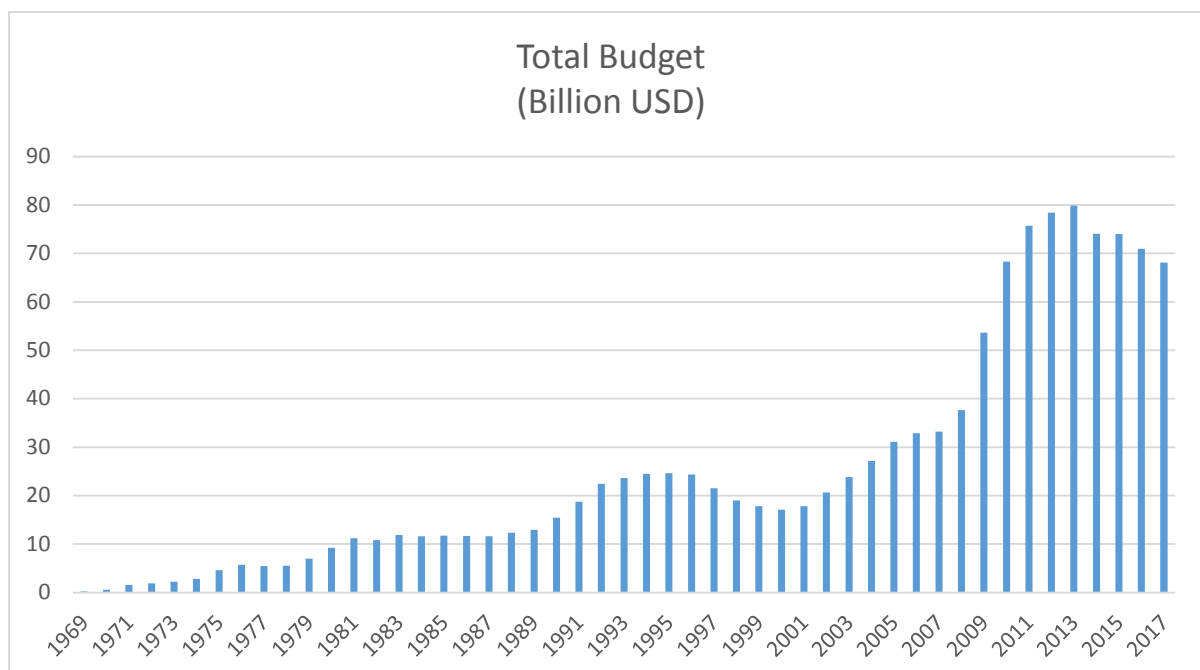


Figure 7 Evolution of SNAP Budget (1969-2017).

Source: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

SNAP serves low-income families with benefits earmarked for food as well as basic necessities. Benefits are given to people in need each month in form of an ‘electronic benefits transfer card’ which works like a debit card.²⁵ The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) governs SNAP at the federal level. SNAP interacts with the state-administered program ‘Temporary Assistance for Needy Families’ (TANF)²⁶ with regard to eligibility and benefit levels. TANF is designed to help socially deprived families recover from temporary difficulties, e.g. concerning housing, home energy and job training.

Figure 8 shows the substantial but cyclical increase of the average SNAP participation over the 1969-2017 time-frame. We hypothesize this to be in accordance with the economic conjuncture. Periods of economic downturn lead to a relative increase of the average participation, whereas periods of economic boom lead to a relative decrease of the average participation. Equally so, SNAP’s impact can be derived from figure 9 which shows the average benefit participants receive.²⁷

²⁴ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>.

²⁵ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>.

²⁶ <https://www.usa.gov/benefits#item-36602>.

²⁷ See table 2 (appendix) for a global view of SNAP budget and participation.

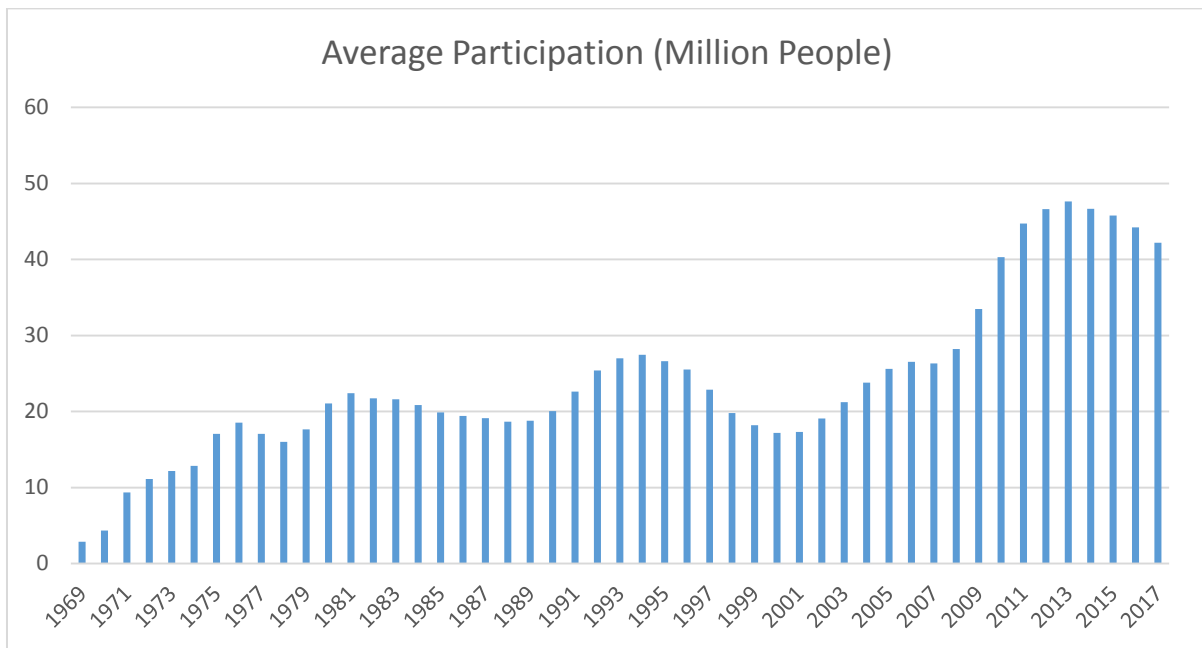


Figure 8 – Evolution of SNAP Participation (1969-2017)

Source: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

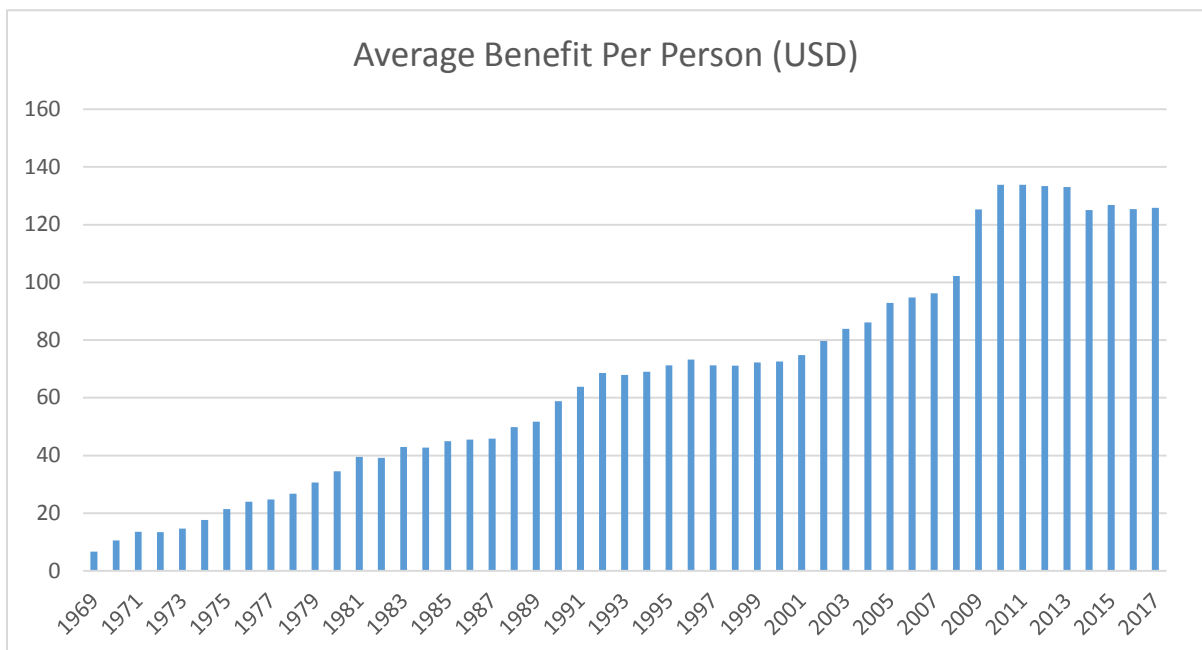


Figure 9 – Evolution of SNAP Benefits per Participant (1969-2017)

Source: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

During the timeframe 1997 to 2014, caseloads for the federally-funded SNAP have increased. Parolin and Luigjes (2018) illustrate the trends in participation rates among single-parent households, the primary target and beneficiary of the TANF program (figure 9). TANF caseloads have fallen from about 30% of single parents in 1997 to around 10% in 2014. The participation rate in SNAP steadily increased until 2008, then experienced a sharp rise from 2008 onward (due to an expansion of benefits and an increase in demand for social assistance after the onset of the economic recession). Although TANF's decline is complex, Parolin and Luigjes (2018) found evidence that SNAP provides state governments with a financial incentive to cut back on TANF cash assistance.

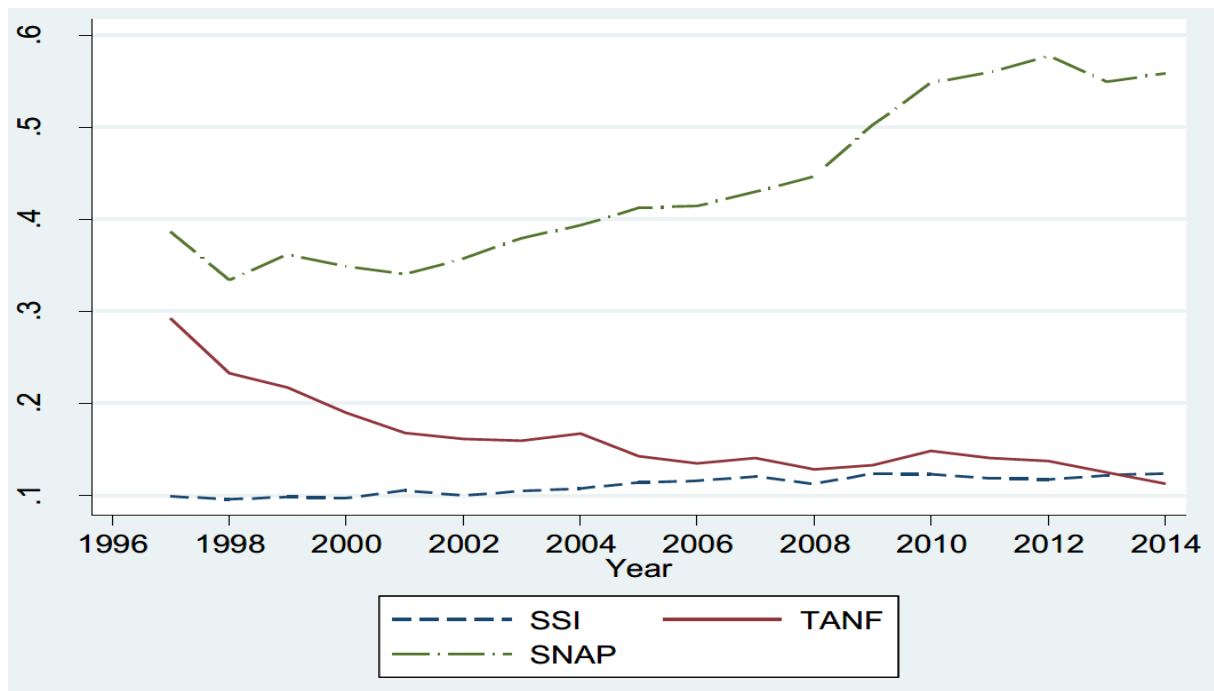


Figure 10 Benefit Participation Rates Among Single-Parent Households (1997 – 2014).

Note: The federally-funded SSI (Supplemental Security Income) is a form of disability assistance. We do not further mention it in our section on TANF and SNAP since it provides mainly other forms of assistance than food aid and basic good assistance. Source: Parolin & Luigjes (2018).

In their study, Parolin & Luigjes (2018) build on the theoretical framework of ‘Institutional Moral Hazard’ by Vandenbroucke, Luigjes, Wood, & Lievens (2016). This framework conceptualises that there are two level of governments involved in the governance of a social risk. One governmental level (A) covers a social risk, which could, in principle, also be covered by the other governmental level (B). Policies implemented by B can influence the actual incidence of that social risk (at the level of B), and therefore influence the cost to be covered by A. In the context described by Parolin & Luigjes (2018), the federal US government is the insurer and the state governments are the insured actors. The provision of social assistance is the ‘risk’ being insured.

In the same sense as Parolin and Luigjes (2018) mention the Institutional Moral Hazard framework as an explanation for the withdrawal of individual States from investing in TANF because of the development of SNAP, we propose to raise the question if in the long run the same mechanisms may apply to the setting in the EU. In that case, the EU level covers a social risk – notably the lack of food security by means of replacement measures – which could also be covered by the national level. In doing so, it is important to point out a significant difference between the US and the EU case with regard to general social assistance schemes. While in all European welfare states a final safety net is in place, in principle, for all non-working people of active age, either through a general social assistance scheme or through categorical safety nets²⁸, the US has no general national program of cash assistance for poor individuals without children, except for disabled or ill people. However, despite this difference between the US and the EU regarding social assistance schemes, the case of SNAP motivates in our view to raise the question whether FEAD’s assistance eventually could provide EU Member States the incentive to cut back on their national anti-poverty policies.

²⁸ Italy and Greece only in recent years started to introduce a general social assistance scheme.

6. Conclusion

This research paper sought to contribute to the debate *whether* and *how* the EU can counter the demand for reducing poverty in Europe. We raised the question if the 'Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived' is a way to go. In order to frame the debate on FEAD and set it into the current European socio-economic context, we outlined the underlying poverty problems in general and the increasing problem of food insecurity in particular.

Firstly, our study showed that even in the best case scenario rights-based safety nets are in most EU countries too low to lift eligible families above the national at-risk-of-poverty threshold. Consequently, there is a high number of people (16.9% of the EU working-age population in 2017) living below the poverty line.

Secondly, following the reference budget approach our findings illustrated that in many European capital cities people with an income at 60% of the median face problems of food insecurity.

Thirdly, we pointed out that food banks play an ever-increasing role in Europe. Food banks and also other forms of food distribution initiatives appear to be a relevant player in society trying to encounter insufficient social protection and food security for the most vulnerable people in society.

In the light of our findings and statements, the EU food aid programme FEAD appears to be an interesting policy approach. Therefore, we raised the questions whether FEAD is able to contribute to existing local anti-poverty measures and to national social protection systems.

As a first step of research, we illustrated FEAD's financial impact by comparing it to national expenditures on social protection benefits to the most deprived. Our findings show that the share of FEAD EU budget in national spending is especially high in poorer countries. Additionally, our findings also indicate an at least noteworthy financial impact of FEAD in some wealthier countries.

Nevertheless, all in all, FEAD's budget currently is still very limited. Consequently, we pointed out another critical issue. Regarding FEAD's little financial scope as well as its operational focus on food aid, it is remarkable that FEAD is directly linked to the EU objectives of poverty reduction and the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Generally, the European Commission expects FEAD to add significant value to Member States' policies of poverty reduction by accomplishing more than what can be achieved with local, regional or national funds alone (European Commission, 2018a). Particularly, FEAD may enable groups to be assisted that would otherwise not receive support. According to the Commission, food distribution and material support by FEAD constitute a valuable first point of contact for 'hard-to-reach groups'. FEAD is supposed to be able to complement existing national measures and programmes, even to enable them to scale up and, in particular, deliver larger volumes of food and/or material. To stress this point, the Commission emphasizes that in some cases, FEAD is the only – or at least a very significant – source of funding for organisations working in the field of extreme poverty (European Commission, 2018a).

Besides, FEAD is also supposed to offer immediate assistance based on a social assessment rather than a financial one, meaning that FEAD fills the gap left by inaccessible national social security systems (European Commission, 2018a). Moreover, FEAD is considered to maximise the impact of Member States' efforts to tackle poverty and social exclusion by fostering mutual learning, networking and dissemination. Particularly, FEAD will according to the Commission strengthen local aid networks through increased collaboration and partnerships between organisations (European Commission, 2018a).

So conceived, as a united project with little budget but redistributive mechanisms, FEAD seems to offer an interesting case regarding the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. However, further research is needed to examine FEAD's other forms of non-financial assistance besides food aid in order to see the broader picture of FEAD. This could open up new perspectives on FEAD and its possible impact on the underlying social fabric, its ability to force public authorities to recognise emerging needs and to help to create the social and political conditions for a more enduring poverty reduction.

In the end, FEAD could turn out to be a factor in facilitating a political consensus on common social goals and better social protection standards in Europe. In this respect, FEAD may even provide a stepping stone for the creation of a 'European Social Union' (Vandenbroucke, 2017) since such a framework presupposes a sufficient degree of consensus between EU Member States on the goals of social policy.

Yet the opposing scenario is also conceivable. FEAD could turn out to be a factor in providing welfare states an incentive to reduce (or restrain the development of) their national structural anti-poverty policies. The phenomenon of SNAP in the US might yield a preview of the role of the EU as an agent that 'fills the gaps'.

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8. Appendix

Table 2 SNAP budget and participation²⁹

Year	Average Participation (Million People)	Average Benefit Per Person (USD)	Total Benefits (Million USD)	All Other Costs (Million USD)	Total Budget (Million USD)	Total Budget (Million EUR) ³⁰
1969	2,878	6,63	228,80	21,70	250,50	193,26
1970	4,340	10,55	549,70	27,20	576,90	445,08
1971	9,368	13,55	1.522,70	53,20	1.575,90	1.215,81
1972	11,109	13,48	1.797,30	69,40	1.866,70	1.440,16
1973	12,166	14,60	2.131,40	76,00	2.207,40	1.703,01
1974	12,862	17,61	2.718,30	119,20	2.837,50	2.189,13
1975	17,064	21,40	4.385,50	233,20	4.618,70	3.563,33
1976	18,549	23,93	5.326,50	359,00	5.685,50	4.386,36
1977	17,077	24,71	5.067,00	394,00	5.461,00	4.213,16
1978	16,001	26,77	5.139,20	380,50	5.519,70	4.258,45
1979	17,653	30,59	6.480,20	459,60	6.939,80	5.354,06
1980	21,082	34,47	8.720,90	485,60	9.206,50	7.102,81
1981	22,430	39,49	10.629,90	595,40	11.225,20	8.660,24
1982	21,717	39,17	10.208,30	628,40	10.836,70	8.360,51
1983	21,625	42,98	11.152,30	694,80	11.847,10	9.140,04
1984	20,854	42,74	10.696,10	882,60	11.578,80	8.933,04
1985	19,899	44,99	10.743,60	959,60	11.703,20	9.029,02
1986	19,429	45,49	10.605,20	1.033,20	11.638,40	8.979,03
1987	19,113	45,78	10.500,30	1.103,90	11.604,20	8.952,64
1988	18,645	49,83	11.149,10	1.167,70	12.316,80	9.502,41
1989	18,806	51,71	11.669,78	1.231,81	12.901,59	9.953,58
1990	20,049	58,78	14.142,79	1.304,47	15.447,26	11.917,56
1991	22,625	63,78	17.315,77	1.431,50	18.747,27	14.463,52
1992	25,407	68,57	20.905,68	1.556,66	22.462,34	17.329,70
1993	26,987	67,95	22.006,03	1.646,94	23.652,97	18.248,27
1994	27,474	69,00	22.748,58	1.744,87	24.493,45	18.896,70
1995	26,619	71,27	22.764,07	1.856,30	24.620,37	18.994,62
1996	25,543	73,21	22.440,11	1.890,88	24.330,99	18.771,36
1997	22,858	71,27	19.548,86	1.958,68	21.507,55	16.593,07
1998	19,791	71,12	16.890,49	2.097,84	18.988,32	14.649,49
1999	18,183	72,27	15.769,40	2.051,52	17.820,92	13.748,84
2000	17,194	72,62	14.983,32	2.070,70	17.054,02	13.157,18
2001	17,318	74,81	15.547,39	2.242,00	17.789,39	13.724,51
2002	19,096	79,67	18.256,20	2.380,82	20.637,02	15.921,46
2003	21,250	83,94	21.404,28	2.412,01	23.816,28	18.374,26
2004	23,811	86,16	24.618,89	2.480,14	27.099,03	20.906,90
2005	25,628	92,89	28.567,88	2.504,13	31.072,01	23.972,06
2006	26,549	94,75	30.187,35	2.715,72	32.903,06	25.384,71
2007	26,316	96,18	30.373,27	2.800,25	33.173,52	25.593,37
2008	28,223	102,19	34.608,40	3.031,25	37.639,64	29.038,98
2009	33,490	125,31	50.359,92	3.260,00	53.619,92	41.367,77
2010	40,302	133,79	64.702,16	3.581,30	68.283,47	52.680,70
2011	44,709	133,85	71.810,92	3.875,62	75.686,54	58.392,17
2012	46,609	133,41	74.619,34	3.791,75	78.411,10	60.494,16
2013	47,636	133,07	76.066,32	3.792,74	79.859,06	61.611,26
2014	46,664	125,01	69.998,84	4.062,54	74.061,37	57.138,35
2015	45,767	126,81	69.645,14	4.302,11	73.947,24	57.050,30
2016	44,219	125,40	66.539,35	4.370,93	70.910,28	54.707,28

²⁹ Source: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

³⁰ Exchange rate: 1,00 USD = 0,7715 EUR (31/12/2011). We refer to the exchange rate of December 31 in 2011 because of the expression of FEAD budgets in prices of 2011.