



UNIVERSITÄT HOHENHEIM



Hidden, and neglected: Food Poverty in the Global North – the case of Germany


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The hidden reality...

within an affluent society and on eof the most flourishing economies of the world.



There is nutritional poverty in Germany

Germany

No mass problem, but...
...existent and spreading.

Mostly overseen and neglected...
...in public and scientific awareness.

One reason for that:
No systematic and regular surveys on nutrition in Germany.

National Consumption Study (NVS)

Only two surveys:
↳ 1980s (NVS I)
↳ 2005-2007 (NVS II)

main problem / critique

- ↳ poorer population strata are largely lacking
- ↳ population groups at higher risk of nutritional poverty were deliberately excluded
- ↳ unemployed households are underrepresented.

The hidden reality

Around 6 million people in Germany cannot afford proper nutrition on a regular basis.

Unemployed people have more than 40% less money for Nutrition than the average.

Over million people in Germany are regular „customers“ at food banks.

German Association for Nutrition:

Healthy nutrition is impossible under conditions of ALG II (Hartz IV) for people aged 3+.

Kersting/Clausen 2007

Pfeiffer 2006

Qualitative data

How people are coping with food poverty

Qualitative longitudinal study

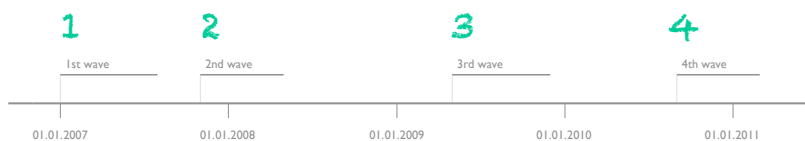
Biographic-narrative interviews at home.

106 initial interviews of 3 hours.

4 waves in 4,5 years.

All interviewing waves completed.

Overall 453 interviews and 81 „living“ cases.

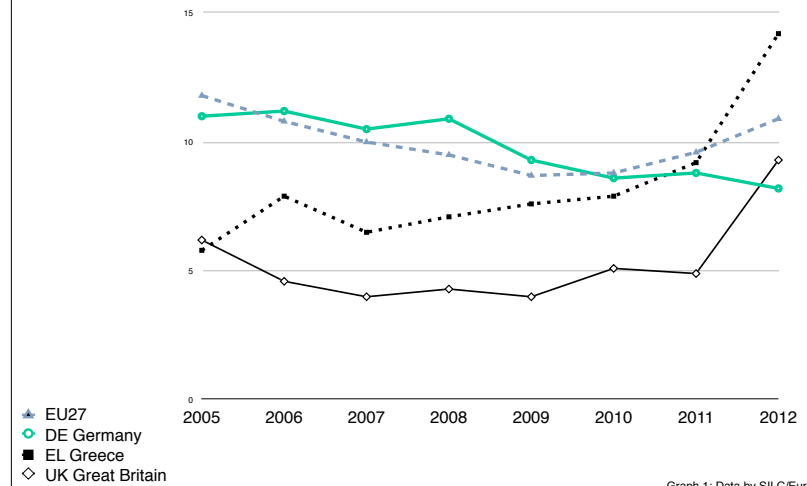


Quantitative data

Germany EU SILC

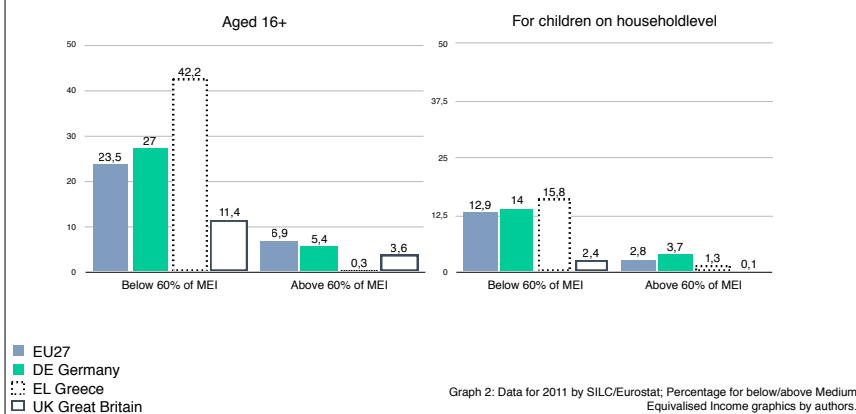
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% of population who cannot afford one decent meal every second day.
Germany: worse than EU27 in 2006 to 2010



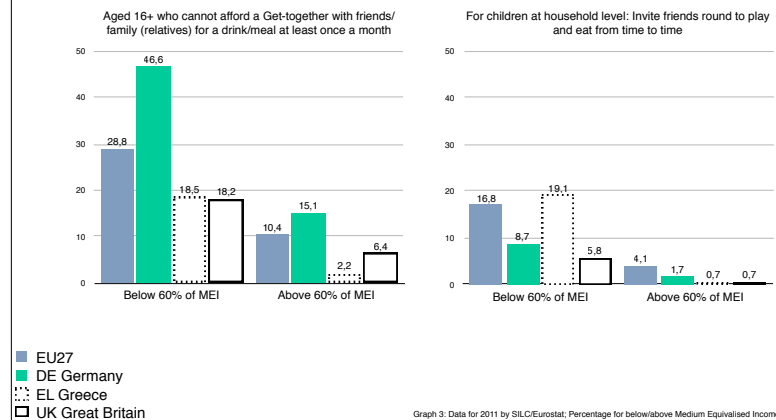
Graph 1: Data by SILC/Eurostat 2013

% of population who cannot afford one decent meal every second day.
Comparison below and above 60% Media Equivalised Income.
Germany: Worse than EU27 and UK.
For kids far less worse than for +16.



Graph 2: Data for 2011 by SILC/Eurostat; Percentage for below/above Medium Equivalised Income graphics by authors.

% of population who cannot afford eating with others on and off.
Comparison below and above 60% Media Equivalised Income.
Germany: Worse than EU27 and UK.
For kids far less worse than for +16.



Graph 3: Data for 2011 by SILC/Eurostat; Percentage for below/above Medium Equivalised Income; graphics by authors.

Although Germany is one of the richest economies in the world, millions live under the „bread line“. Conditions for poor people in Germany are somewhat worse than in EU27.

The problem is underestimated because we lack appropriate data.

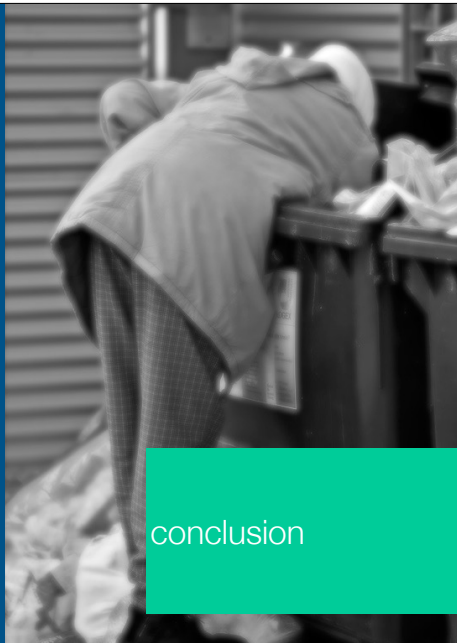
The problem is neglected as people develop a variety of coping strategies.

The problem is hidden because food banks step in, minimizing with symptoms but not healing the problem.

Poor people try effectively to lessen the burden for their kids – by worsening their own conditions.

To have no „food choice“, not being able to afford social eating occasions (inviting friends, eating out) – these are not only a nutritional but a social problems.

Food consumption is a question of inclusion and capabilities in an affluent society.



conclusion

Thank you!

 soeb.de

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Pfeiffer/Ritter/Hirsland (2011): Hunger and nutritional poverty in Germany, *Critical Public Health* 21(4) 417-428.

Pfeiffer/Ritter/Oestreicher (2015): Food insecurity in German households, *Social Policy & Society*, Special Issue Food Poverty in the Global North (*forthcoming*)

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