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and their Well-being

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Abstract

CHILD POVERTY - A MULTIDIMENSIONAL MEASUREMENT

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Child poverty is a problem of major concern even in the industrialized world. In 2005 nearly one child in five was living in income poverty in the EU (EUROSTAT). In Portugal this number reached 24%.

The aim of this paper is to measure poverty among children using a multidimensional concept of child poverty. Data used comes from a survey applied to a sample of 5000 children living in the area of Lisbon. Our research considers the child as the central unit of observation. In light of this conceptualization, we apply a methodological framework that uses fuzzy set theory to evaluate deprivation intensity. We also investigate the socio-demographic and economic characteristics that most affect deprivation risk by estimating a discrete choice model. The analysis undertaken includes the definition of indicators specifically constructed to evaluate child well-being. Therefore our analysis is child-centered. Results show that children included in large families or with uncommon compositions are particularly at risk. Unemployment of parents also plays an important role in determining deprivation. Children's deprivation is particularly affected by issues related to education, health, housing and social integration.

Keywords: child poverty, child deprivation, fuzzy set, deprivation risk, composite deprivation index, probit.

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