

## **State-of-the-Art Measurement of Poverty and Social Exclusion: Comparison of UK and Japan Seminar**

### **Description of Project**

Despite their relative wealth, poverty, inequality and social exclusion are major issues of concern for both the UK and Japan. The main objective of the collaborative seminar project was to advance the theory and practice of poverty and social exclusion measurement from a comparative UK/Japanese perspective. The event held in Japan in January 2012, involving a research workshop and two large public seminars, brought together some of the leading researchers in the UK and Japan as well as younger academics to:

- review the ‘state of the art’ of poverty and social exclusion measurement in each country;
- discuss and compare the evidence from recent surveys; and
- consider their implications for public and social policies.

Politicians, policy-makers and practitioners working in the public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as activists, journalists, and members of the general public attended the public events held in Tokyo and Kyoto.

### **Departments and Institutions Involved**

The project was a collaboration between Christina Pantazis and Professor David Gordon from the Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research at the University of Bristol, England and Dr Aya Abe, Director of the Department of Empirical Social Security Research at the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Tokyo, Japan.

### **How the Collaboration Started**

The collaboration consolidates an existing working relationship between the partners. Dr Aya Abe is an international advisory board member on a major research project into Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK. The project, led by Professor Gordon and involving Christina Pantazis and others, aims to provide the most detailed assessment of the experience of poverty and social exclusion among the UK population following the recession and subsequent financial crisis (<http://www.poverty.ac.uk>).

### **Amount of money awarded**

£30,000 in total

### **How participants are benefitting from the scheme**

The event facilitated an exchange of knowledge about comparative approaches on the theory and practice of poverty and social exclusion measurement. It contributed to improved understandings of public policy responses to the pressing issues of poverty,

inequality and social exclusion in each country and what lessons, if any, could be learned.

**What have been the collaborative developments since the project started.**

The project consolidated existing collaborations and also created new working relationships. Several of the participants are collaborating on research which will further comparative UK/Japanese understandings of poverty, inequality and social exclusion. This includes research on the necessities of life, the minimum income needed to avoid poverty and social exclusion, the extent of inequality, the role of parenting in poverty alleviation, and child poverty and social security.

In March 2012, Professor Uazuhasi from the Department of Social Work at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan and his research team visited Bristol, York and London as part of the project 'The Development of A Welfare-Education Programme enhancing "Competency" of Children in Poverty'. They met a number of child welfare organisations and with several of the seminar participants and other academics working in the field of child poverty and welfare.



Seminar participants