



## **NEW LABOUR'S SOCIAL POLICIES 1997-2010:**

### **A MIXED ASSESSMENT**

Edited by Anne Daguerre

Just after the Parliamentary elections of May 6, 2010, how can one review the New Labour government after thirteen years in power (1997-2010)? The voters' verdict is simple: it could have done better.

On health issues, disparities still remain, despite a general improvement in medical care, thanks to massive investments in the National Health Service (NHS).

On the fight against exclusion, child poverty went down — 550.000 less poor children between 1999 and 2009 — but 4 million children still live below poverty line.

On Work Policies, unemployment declined spectacularly between 1997 and 2003 but the Labour Party did not succeed in massively reducing the economic inactivity: in 2010 there are 2.63 million Invalidity Pension holders as against 2.7 million in 1997.

What can be expected from David Cameron and Nick Clegg Conservative-Liberal coalition government? Certainly not a conservative revolution but intensified plans for the revival of employment and clear cuts in public utility services.

The £6 billion savings announced by Chancellor George Osborne concerned the Future Jobs Fund, and Child trust Funds, which allow every child to receive a small capital when entering the adult world.

No major breach then, since the most important public services are protected, mostly by the NHS. But modest households and young people will probably be the big losers of the new government economic measures.