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Sommario/riassunto	This study analyzes the performance of social assistance and family benefit programs in eight new member states of the European Union from the perspective of fiscal impact and effectiveness. It is based on household survey data for six of the countries, as well as budget data and information on program design collected at the national level. The paper finds that, although social assistance programs in the new member states are small in terms of coverage and expenditure levels

(reaching 2 to 5 percent of the population), the programs are an important safety net for the poor. Programs are relati
