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Sommario/riassunto	There is no shortage of incentives to study and reduce poverty in our societies. Poverty is studied in economics and political sciences, and population surveys are an important source of information about it. The design and analysis of such surveys is principally a statistical subject matter and the computer is essential for their data compilation and processing. Focusing on The European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), a program of annual national surveys which collect data related to poverty and social exclusion, Statistical Studies of Income, Poverty and Inequality in Europe: Computing and Graphics in R presents a set of statistical analyses pertinent to the

general goals of EU-SILC. The contents of the volume are biased toward computing and statistics, with reduced attention to economics, political and other social sciences. The emphasis is on methods and procedures as opposed to results, because the data from annual surveys made available since publication and in the near future will degrade the novelty of the data used and the results derived in this volume. The aim of this volume is not to propose specific methods of analysis, but to open up the analytical agenda and address the aspects of the key definitions in the subject of poverty assessment that entail nontrivial elements of arbitrariness. The presented methods do not exhaust the range of analyses suitable for EU-SILC, but will stimulate the search for new methods and adaptation of established methods that cater to the identified purposes--

Preface A majority of the population in the established members of the European Union (EU) has over the last few decades enjoyed prosperity, comfort and freedom from existential threats, such as food shortage, various forms of destruction of our lives, homes and other possessions, judicial excesses or barred access to vital services, such as health care, education, insurance and transportation. New technologies, epitomised by the internet and the mobile phone, but also micro-surgery and cheap long-distance travel, have transformed the ways we access information, communicate with one another, obtain health care, education, training and entertainment, and how public services and administration operate. Our economies and societies have a great capacity to invent, apply inventions and package them in forms amenable for personal use by the masses. These great achievements have not been matched in one important area, namely, tackling poverty. Poverty is about as widespread in our societies as it was a few decades ago when, admittedly, our standards for what amounts to prosperity were somewhat more modest (Atkinson, 1998). Yet, there is no shortage of incentives to reduce poverty in our societies. The purely economic ones are that the poor are poor consumers, and much of our prosperity is derived from the consumption by others; the poor are poor contributors to the public funds (by taxes on income, property and consumption), which pay for some of the vital services and developments. More profound concerns are that the poor are a threat to the social cohesion, are more likely to be attracted to criminal and other illegal activities, and represent a threat to all those who are not poor, because we would not like ourselves and those dear to us to live in such circumstances--
