FEANTSA NEWS

Registration Deadline 1st June: FEANTSA 2015 Policy Conference

Registration is open for the FEANTSA policy conference 2015: "*Homelessness, a Local Phenomenon with a European Dimension – Key Steps to Connect Communities to Europe*", taking place in Paris, France from the 18-20 June 2015. The deadline for registrations is the 1st June 2015.

Dublin Research Conference Registration Open

Registration is now open for the 10th European Research Conference on Homelessness, 'Families, Housing and Homelessness', taking place on the 25th September in Dublin, Ireland. Registration closes on the 10th September. To tweet about the conference, use the hashtag #eohconfdublin.

Call for Papers: European Journal of Homelessness Vol. 9, No. 2. 2015: Special Section on the Implementation of Homeless Strategies at the Local Level

The Editorial team of the European Journal of Homelessness, as a contribution to enhancing knowledge on aspects of homelessness and housing exclusion in Europe, seeks submissions, which provide case studies of the context and challenges in implementing national level homeless strategies at a city or regional level. It is envisaged that these contributions will form a special section in the European Journal of Homelessness. To be considered for inclusion in the Journal, papers must be submitted to the lead editor, Prof. Eoin O'Sullivan (tosullvn@tcd.ie) before the 5th of June 2015. Informal contact with the editor in relation to potential submissions is welcome.

Housing Rights Watch Conference

Housing Rights Watch is hosting an international conference entitled "Using international law in policy advocacy - examples from The Netherlands, Canada and the USA", on the impact of using human rights and jurisprudence to change housing and homelessness policy. With international guests from France, England, the USA and Canada, as well as European experts from the Council of Europe and Brussels, this event, taking place on the 18th June, will ask some provocative questions and stimulate debate about the impact of strategic litigation. Registration is required and closes on the 8th June. The conference will be in English and French.

Press Release: European Union Neglects Poverty in the 2015 CSRs

FEANTSA is disappointed that poverty has been sidelined in the 2015 Country Specific Recommendations. We call for urgent action at EU-level to better support progress in the fight against poverty.

Survey on Homeless Women

Following a call by the General Assembly for FEANTSA to work more on homeless women, FEANTSA has set up a member survey to find out who among the membership is working on women's homelessness issues and which members are interested in starting work or doing more on the issue.

EU Project: Aftercare Guarantee

The Erasmus+ Project, "ACCELERATE TO INDEPENDENCE: 'Aftercare Guarantee' in Youth Care via Personal Budget" was launched on the 29th April. The project aims to find out which policies are in place in the EU to support young people leaving state care and, if so, whether these are effective. After-care means all measures and services in place to prepare young people who are leaving care for the transition to adulthood. The lead partner in the project is the Flemish agency for youth welfare and partners include youth care agencies in Veneto (Italy), Carinthia (Austria), the Dutch ministry for Health, Welfare and Sport, ENSA (the European Network of Social Authorities) and FEANTSA. FEANTSA is drafting an overview of the state of play regarding policies and best practices in this area. AC members received a questionnaire and some have sent answers. If you have information about the situation of care leavers in your country, do not hesitate to contact María Aldanas, Project Coordinator.

FEANTSA Attends Active Inclusion Conference

FEANTSA presented its work on homelessness during a learning network conference on active inclusion held in Rome, Italy. Other attendees included the National Offender Management Service, an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice in the UK, the Social inclusion branch of the European Commission and Isfol, the Italian public research institute on training for social policy and employment.

UN NEWS

UN Rapporteur Priorities

The UN rapporteur on the right to housing, Leilani Farha, has listed her priorities for the 2014-2017 Mandate, Habitat III. For more details on her priorities see the report of the UN General Assembly in 2014 and her speech of the 6th May. FEANTSA supports her priorities.

EUROPE NEWS

European Commission 2015 Country Specific Recommendations

The European Commission has released its Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) for 2015. Only six countries have been issued recommendations linked to poverty – compared with 12 last year. The Commission argues that it wants to focus on the Annual Growth Survey priorities and on "improving employment policy and social protection". The reality is that the package focuses primarily on growth and competitiveness.

FEANTSA has expressed its disappointment with the CSRs in a press release.

The Semester Alliance has also published a press release criticising the fact that with these CSRs, the EU is further away from delivering an inclusive, sustainable, social and equal Europe.

EU Ministers will discuss the recommendations in June before EU Heads of State and Government endorse them on 25-26

June. Then they will be formally adopted in July. It will then be up to Member States to implement the CSRs by including them in their national policies and budget plans for 2015-2016.

The State of Housing in the EU 2015: A Housing Europe Review

Housing Europe, the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing has published a report on the state of the housing sector in Europe. It includes detailed statistics per Member State, the latest housing trends in a cross-country observation, a compilation of the most significant policy updates since 2012, case studies that feature energy efficiency, social integration, innovation in public policy and governance and an analysis of the interaction of housing policies and EU policies. The report highlights increasing homelessness across the EU.

Youth Employment Initiative 2015

A billion euros in EU funding have been promised by the European Commission to help member states get up to 650,000 young people into work in 2015. This EU Youth Employment Initiative funding tops up European Social Fund (ESF) money in the 20 member states with regions where youth unemployment exceeds 25%. The countries benefiting from the initiative are Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Overview of Integrated Social Services in EU

The European Commission has published a first overview of the integrated social services related to labour market and social (re)integration in the EU and identified best practices.

The Youth Guarantee on the Ground

In response to the growing number of unemployed youth and those not in employment, education or training (NEETs), the Council adopted the Recommendation on the establishment of a Youth Guarantee (YG) on the 22nd April 2013. With this Recommendation, all Member States committed to ensure all those up to 25 years old would receive a quality offer of employment, education, training or apprenticeship within 4 months of becoming unemployed or leaving school. This publication summarizes developments of the Youth Guarantee across the EU.

European Commission Debate on Social Policy

On 3 June, all 28 members of the European Commission will engage in an orientation debate on social policy. It is hoped that this debate will bring concrete proposals to implement the social "triple A" rating promised by its President Jean-Claude Juncker in July 2014.

ILO Report on European Social Model

The International labour Organization has published an extensive report on the European Social Model in times of crises and austerity policies.

MEMBER NEWS

Denmark: Report on Service Users of Migrant Homeless Support Centre

Kompasset, a service providing independent guidance for homeless migrants under Kirkens Korshaer, has released a report with numbers and a description of the problems facing their service users.

France: Against Shipwrecks in the Mediterranean: Build Bridges, Not Walls!

Following the shipwrecks in the Mediterranean which have caused the death or disappearance of at least 2,000 people since the start of the year, the Heads of State brought together at an emergency EU summit on the 23rd April made a choice not to save lives but to reinforce a security-focused arsenal largely responsible for these tragedies in the first place, say a group of French organisations. Over the past 20 years, more than 20,000 migrants have died at Europe's borders: French organisations are concerned by this policy of failing to assist people in danger. Against this repeated rejection of the European Union's founding values, the signatories to an appeal to the French President and his counterparts across Europe call on them to put another kind of policy in place, one which is in line with respect for life and human dignity.

Ireland: ICSH Allianz Community Housing Awards 2015

The ICSH Community Housing Awards sponsored by Allianz highlight best practice, innovation and partnership working in the social housing sector. The ICSH is seeking entries for the 2015 Awards. In a time of increased delivery expectation for the sector, there are numerous bodies and local authorities rising to the challenge. The 2015 Awards seek to encourage replication of workable housing solutions. Please contact Paula Kenny for further details.

Ireland: Simon Communities Welcome Report Recommending Rent Certainty

The Simon Communities have welcomed a National Economic and Social Council (NESC) report which recommends a range of measures which could have a significant impact on Ireland's homelessness and housing crisis. The report calls for a secure tenancy model which includes greater rent certainty for tenants and landlords. It identifies measures to increase the supply of permanent affordable rental housing, in particular clear and better incentives for the provision of good quality long term rental homes. It also calls for more favourable treatment for landlords with tenants in receipt of Rent Supplement and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).

Ireland: Simon Communities React to Rising Homeless Emergency Figures

The Simon Communities in Ireland have warned that the homeless and housing crisis is deepening in Ireland following the latest published emergency accommodation figures from March 2015. The March report shows that from February to March the number of adults in emergency accommodation increased by 111 whilst the number of children in emergency accommodation increased by 116 with an increase of 189 from January, representing a 22% increase.

Italy: Housing First Summer School – Registration

Registration is now open for the fio.PSD Housing First Italia network summer school session, entitled 'Housing First: Instruments for Implementation and Evaluation'. It will take place from the 1st-4th July. This year's summer school is the third high-level training event offered by the Network and is open to Network members, representatives of local government bodies that are interested in exploring the theme further, social workers and Italian and European professionals wishing to work in a Housing First team. Registration and more information are available here.

Serbia: Social Housing Services for Female Victims of Violence

A one-day [training](#) session entitled "Development of Social Housing Services for Female Victims of Violence" was held in Apatin, Serbia on December 3, 2014. The aim was to familiarize the participants with experiences and existing practices in providing women who have suffered violence with accommodation in social housing in Serbia and with the development of social housing services in European countries, as well as to consider specific possibilities for improving the state in this field. Part of the training related to social housing services in supportive environment and violence against women was held by Milena Timotijević, sociologist at FEANTSA member Housing Center.

Spain: Political Parties Asked to Include Homeless People

FEPSH has asked Spanish political parties to include a guarantee of housing for the thousands of people who live on the streets in their electoral manifestos. Even though the authorities officially recognise the existence of 23 thousand homeless people, humanitarian organisations such as Caritas estimate that the actual number is 40 thousand and that there are 1.5 million families living in inadequate housing.

Arrels Fundació produced a document (in [Catalan](#) and [Castillian Spanish](#)) with three proposals for election candidates.

HEADLINES

Belgium: Memorial Service for Homeless People

As it does every year, the Collectif Morts de la Rue held a [memorial service](#) for the rough sleepers who died in 2014.

Bulgaria: Round Table and Report - "Poverty Among Us - Developing Social Services"

Caritas Bulgaria recently held a [round table](#) entitled "Poverty among us - the development of social services". Representatives from the Bulgarian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Health, the city of Sofia, state institutions, Caritas and other NGOs were among the participants. During the round table, the main conclusions of the study "Poverty among us - the development of social services", which consulted 84 employees from the Caritas network, other structures of the Catholic Church in Bulgaria, NGOs and municipal social services working with vulnerable people from 30 cities, was presented. Through their activities in various centres and mobile teams these employees meet, listen to, help and support of more than 5,500 people in need, including children and youth at risk, older people, homeless people, people who use psychoactive substances, single parents, people seeking and receiving international protection and people with disabilities.

France: Initial Results of Housing First Experiment Promising

Early results of the "Housing First" programme in France, which began in 2011, have been presented. The experiment is being carried out in Paris, Marseilles, Toulouse and Lille and compares the effects of the interventions on quality of life, health, care and social service use of Housing First recipients with a similar group receiving traditional services. After 24 months, 86% of participants are still in their housing. After 12 months their health shows a significant reduction in the number of symptoms and a 50% reduction in the length of hospitalisation compared with the control group. The programme also allows for a reduction in spending. The beneficiaries are better able to cope with illness, have greater self-esteem and improved relationships with their families. Their quality of life has improved both in terms of wellbeing and independence. Regarding access to housing, the results of the programme show that there are no factors that predict a persons' ability or inability to function in a housed environment, which means it is not possible to decide whether or not a person will be able to live in a house or not. The programme should continue until April 2016.

Greece: Police Abusing Marginalised People

A [Human Rights Watch report](#) has shown that police in Athens frequently harass and abuse homeless people, sex wokers and people who use drugs. The police stop and detain these people as they walk down the street, wait for a bus, or visit a day centre where they can eat, wash or get support, Human Rights Watch found. Police even stopped outreach workers and a

Human Rights Watch researcher on several occasions, detaining them and strip-searching the outreach workers during one stop. Police stops and arbitrary detention of people who live or spend considerable amounts of time on the streets interfere with their access to healthcare and support services, say Human Rights Watch. In early February 2015, shortly after coming to power, the government of Alexis Tsipras announced the end of abusive anti-migrant police sweeps in Athens. Human Rights Watch had documented abusive stops and searches, police ill-treatment, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty during the sweeps. On April 6, the alternate minister of citizen protection emphasized the need for a non-repressive approach to issues of social exclusion, including by supporting vulnerable populations such as homeless people.

Ireland: Rental Property Supply Lowest in a Decade

A new report from property website Daft.ie shows the supply of rental homes in Ireland is at its lowest point in almost a decade. The report also finds that the national average rent between January and March was just over €960. That is 8.2% higher than at the same point last year, but down from the 10.4% increase in mid-2014. Year-on-year rents in Dublin continued to show the biggest increase up 8.3% - with the average monthly rent now just over €1,350. Reacting to the report, the Simon Communities in Ireland said that rising rents are pushing people into homelessness. They also said that far too many people are stuck in emergency accommodation for far too long because they have no other option.

Norway: Housing for Welfare Strategy

Last year, five Norwegian Ministries launched a joint strategy, 'Housing for welfare (2014-2020)'.

Spain: Catalan Parliament Approves Homeless Count

The Catalan Parliament has unanimously agreed to begin drawing up a census of homeless people and people experiencing housing exclusion. The census, which will be repeated every two years, must be carried out in cooperation with local councils and specialist civil society organisations, and will give more information about the homeless population, the causes of the issue and the resources used to deal with it. The motion also requested the creation of a platform as part of the Poverty and Social Inclusion Working Group that would include organisations providing homelessness services, basic social service providers and local authority representatives. The only point of the motion that was not approved was an increase the resources available for the Anti-Poverty Agreement that would allow for the introduction of specific measures for homeless people.

Spain: NGOs Want to Test Constitutionality of 'Public Security Law'

NGOs such as Amnesty International, Caritas and the Spanish Refugee Commission have submitted a formal request to the State Ombudsman, asking that the constitutionality of the recently introduced 'Public Security Law' be tested, as it could represent a breach of fundamental rights.

The bodies also presented a document which explores the possible unconstitutional nature of some articles of the law, such as stop and search, freedom of information and expression and forced removal of migrants in Ceuta and Melilla back to neighbouring countries.

UK: English Supreme Court Ruling on Vulnerability

The English Supreme Court has ruled that English councils will be obliged to provide housing to people who are vulnerable and homeless. Until now, case law has suggested that councils only had to provide housing if they decided someone was 'more vulnerable' than the average homeless person. This test, outlined in government guidance, excluded many people with complex problems from housing help. The Supreme Court has made clear that councils must consider how vulnerable someone is compared to an ordinary person if made homelessness, not with an ordinary actual homeless person. The judgement means that councils are likely to have to extend their criteria for who counts as 'vulnerable'. This means single people – who are not ordinarily considered a priority for housing assistance – will find it easier to receive housing help.

The ruling also means local authorities will have to examine their own procedures for assessing whether someone has

deliberately made themselves homeless and therefore does not have to be housed. Councils will have to take into account events or circumstances which take place after an applicant leaves or loses their home before they can decide if someone is intentionally homeless. The Court also made clear that while councils are often under financial strain, this must not be used as an excuse for avoiding their legal duties.

Politicians have warned that pressure on temporary accommodation is likely to surge following a landmark Supreme Court ruling widening help for vulnerable homeless people.

UK: Homelessness Prevention

A new law has come into effect in Wales, putting a duty on local authorities to prevent homelessness. Changes to the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 mean that authorities must take "all reasonable steps" to prevent someone from losing their home within 56 days. The Welsh government said it is "the most fundamental reform to homelessness legislation in over 30 years". Councils now have to use privately rented accommodation where necessary and work more closely with government and housing associations. Local authorities have been provided with additional funding and training programmes from the Welsh government to introduce the changes. Even those with no local connection and who do not fit any of the 'priority need' categories are entitled to help.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

World Women's Shelter Event – Registration Open

Registration is open for the 3rd World Conference of Women's Shelters, taking place on the 3rd-6th November in the Netherlands. At the end of the registration form there is space to submit abstracts to the "Call for proposals".

Appeal for Information

A new organisation, IMPOSSIBLE - Passionate Happenings, wishes to create a hostel for homeless people who are working part- or full-time, where every single resident would have a bedroom, bathroom, and kitchenette. The idea of the hostel is to support work and trigger access to permanent housing and that homeless people that work need a different approach. People would stay in the hostel for 12 months. At the end of that period, a more permanent place should be found. The organisation would like to have contact with other organisations that have experience of creating temporary hostel/shelter accommodation just for working homeless people. They wish find out whether it makes sense to have separate hostels for working homeless people and, if so, why? If you have any information, please contact freek.spinnewijn@feantsa.org

Save the Date: ELOSH Event

An ELOSH event celebrating the project's work will be held on the 15th September 2015 in Brussels - mark the date in your diaries now!

Save the Date: Social Innovation 2015: Pathways to Social Change

The conference, "Social Innovation 2015: Pathways to Social Change" will take place on 18th-19th November in Vienna, Austria.

Talk on Collective Complaint on Social Housing Conditions in Ireland

Cecilia Forrestal (Community Action Network) and Dr. Rory Hearne (NUI Maynooth) will present on the 'Collective Complaint

on Social Housing Conditions in Ireland' at 1-2pm on Thursday 11th June 2015 as part of the Focus Ireland and School of Social Work & Social Policy's June Lunchtime Talks. The Collective Complaint, which is the result of five years of evidence gathering, outlines the sub-standard housing issues affecting thousands of people across 20 Local Authority housing estates. The Collective Complaint states that Irish law, policy and practices on social housing do not comply with European standards, and the European Committee of Social Rights has deemed this Collective Complaint admissible. The talk will take place at Focus Ireland, The Chapel, George's Hill, Halston Street, Dublin 7. Please RSVP here.

Call for Partners: "The Art of Homelessness"

A project intending to enhance and support the artistic expression and language of homeless people, raise awareness about homelessness, make an educational and human process for homeless people, engage them to rebuild their dignity, find their skills and professional competences, give them new challenges, courage and willingness to live and start a permanent project in collaboration with the Biennale Art exhibition, involving policy makers, civil societies and social bodies in a homelessness strategy is looking for partners. All interested parties please send a declaration of interest in participating to the coordinator, Michele Trabucco, michele.trabucco@caritasveneziana.it, micheletrab@hotmail.com by the 15 June 2015.

Conference: Housing and Welfare Regimes After The Global Financial Crisis

Registration is open for a research conference on Housing and Welfare Regimes After the Global Financial Crisis, to be held in Dublin, Ireland on the 26 and 27 November 2015. Abstracts and enquiries should be sent to michelle.norris ucd.ie by 15 June 2015.

PUBLICATIONS

Protecting the Right to Housing in England: A Context of Crisis

The UK government is failing to discharge right to adequate housing obligations as outlined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, says a report by The Just Fair Consortium.

Journal of Law and Social Policy Special Issue on the Right to Housing

A special issue of the Journal of Law and Social Policy focuses on the Right to Housing in Canada and internationally (France, Scotland, South Africa, United States). "A Road to Home: The Right to Housing in Canada and Around the World" is an open access online journal.

The Journal welcomes new submissions from community legal clinic practitioners, students, the private bar, the academic community, activists, organizations, and community members with direct experience of law's impact. In addition to scholarly articles (which are peer reviewed), the Journal encourages critical commentaries, reflective essays, and book reviews. Non-traditional and creative works are welcomed.

"Homelessness Among EU Mobile Citizens" – Results

The results of a Vienna university study, "Homelessness Among EU Mobile Citizens", are now available online.

Veteran Homelessness Master List

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) in the USA has published a sample master list that is meant to serve as a model for communities following the Alliances "Five Steps to End Veteran Homelessness". Creating and maintaining a master

list of homeless veterans in your community will ensure that service providers and partners that are working together to end veteran homelessness are on the same page and have a clear set of people who require housing, says NAEH. Also included with the sample list are answers to several frequently asked questions.

Association of Childhood Abuse with Homeless Women's Social Networks

Childhood abuse has been linked to negative outcomes for women later in life including drug and alcohol use and violence as victim or perpetrator and may also affect the development of women's social networks. Childhood abuse is prevalent among at-risk populations of women (such as homeless people) and thus may have a stronger impact on their social networks. This study developed a typology of sheltered homeless women's social networks; determined whether childhood abuse was associated with the social networks of sheltered homeless women; and determined whether those associations remained after accounting for past-year substance abuse and recent intimate partner abuse.

Social Networks of Homeless Youth

Little is known about the social networks of homeless youth despite the importance of this information for interventions to reduce health risks. This study examined the composition of social networks, and the risks and supports present within them, in a random sample of 349 homeless youth between the ages of 18 and 24. The report concludes that interventions may need to recognize the importance of intimate relationships during the developmental stage of emerging adulthood by enhancing supportive bonds and reducing substance use and risky sex in these relationships.

The Structural Drivers of Homelessness in Australia 2001–11

This study shows that homelessness is highly concentrated in particular regions of Australia, especially those with high proportions of men, sole parents and indigenous persons—suggesting policy-makers need to target these groups and locations. Contrary to expectations, rates of homelessness were lower in areas with weak labour markets and higher where there was affordable housing. Even so, longer term solutions for homelessness should consider ways formerly homeless people might access affordable housing in stronger labour markets.

Click here to unsubscribe