



**FEANTSA**

Flash

September 2012

## FEANTSA News

- ▶ [Annual Conference: This Year on Homeless Migrants](#)
- ▶ [Call for Papers EJH 7.1](#)
- ▶ [Contribution to "The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration"](#)
- ▶ [European Journal of Homelessness: Volume 6, Issue 1](#)
- ▶ [FEANTSA Attends Conference on "Eradicating Domestic Violence"](#)
- ▶ [Joint Press Release with Mental Health Europe on Suicide](#)
- ▶ [More Than 800 Likes on Facebook](#)
- ▶ [Policy Paper on Youth Homelessness Now in French](#)
- ▶ [Poverty is Not a Crime Campaign – Petition](#)
- ▶ [Research Conference on Access to Housing](#)

## News from the European Union

- ▶ [#6Seconds for Homelessness – Results](#)
- ▶ [HABITACT e-bulletin Online](#)
- ▶ [Housing First Europe Meetings](#)
- ▶ [Social Services Europe Event: Delivering Positive Change](#)

## News from the United Nations

- ▶ [Health Ministers Adopt European Policy for Health and Well-Being - WHO Health 2020](#)

## News from our Members

- ▶ [Austria: Human Rights Report](#)
- ▶ [Belgium: Election Statement](#)
- ▶ [Denmark: Homeless Migrants Coming Onto Political Agenda](#)
- ▶ [France: Hygiene Kits in Demand](#)
- ▶ [Italy: Results of Research into Homelessness Released 9th October](#)
- ▶ [Netherlands: Election Pamphlet](#)
- ▶ [Spain: Blog Documents Loss of Access to Health Care](#)
- ▶ [UK: Housing Advice for Over 50s](#)
- ▶ [UK: Website to Combat London's Rising Homeless Problem](#)

## Homelessness in the Headlines

- ▶ [Belgium: Second Federal Anti-Poverty Plan](#)
- ▶ [Czech Republic: Census Results on Homelessness](#)
- ▶ [France: Droit au Logement Highlights Plight of Homeless Children](#)

- ▶ **France: User Participation**
- ▶ **Ireland: Census Results on Homelessness**
- ▶ **Italy: Opposition to Putting Homeless People into Camps**
- ▶ **UK: Homeless Sector Fears Squatting Ban Will Increase Homelessness**
- ▶ **UK: Social Housing Evictions to Be Made More Difficult**

## Announcements

- ▶ **Crises and Disasters: Psychosocial Consequences**

## Publications

- ▶ **Family Histories in a Sample of Homeless Youth**
- ▶ **Homeless in Greece in the Current Financial Crisis**
- ▶ **Prisoners Fear Housing Problems**
- ▶ **Report on Homelessness and Employment**
- ▶ **Review of Public Health Capacities and Services in the European Region**

Visit the [Events Calendar](#) for information on events about homelessness across Europe.

## FEANTSA News

- ▶ **Annual Conference: This Year on Homeless Migrants** [01/10/2012]  
On Friday, 16th November 2012, FEANTSA will host its annual conference. Around 300 participants are expected. The conference will take place in Barcelona, Spain and will address the following theme: "Existing in Limbo: the conditions of homeless migrants in the EU". The programme and all other information about the conference are on the [FEANTSA website](#).
- ▶ **Call for Papers EJH 7.1** [01/10/2012]  
The [Call for Papers](#) for Volume 7, Issue 1 of the European Journal of Homelessness is now out. The theme of this issue is "Access to Housing for Homeless People in Europe". To be considered for inclusion in this edition of the Journal, papers must be submitted to Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan ([tosullvn@tcd.ie](mailto:tosullvn@tcd.ie)) before the 18th January 2013.
- ▶ **Contribution to "The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration"** [01/10/2012]  
FEANTSA contributed a paper on homeless children to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Day of General Discussion on "The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration", held on the 28th September in Geneva. It can be found on the UN [website](#) under « Fédération européenne des associations nationales travaillant avec les sans-abri ».
- ▶ **European Journal of Homelessness: Volume 6, Issue 1** [01/10/2012]  
Volume 6, Issue 1 of the European Journal of Homelessness, "Homelessness, Migration and Demographic Change in Europe", selected proceedings from a research conference in Pisa, Italy in September 2011, is now available in print and on the FEANTSA [research website](#). To order a copy, please contact the [FEANTSA office](#).
- ▶ **FEANTSA Attends Conference on "Eradicating Domestic Violence"** [01/10/2012]  
On the 21st September, to mark the International Day of Peace, the European Economic and Social Committee held a conference called "[Eradicating Domestic Violence](#)". FEANTSA attended the event, which included contributions from academic and institutional actors and from political actors and stakeholders. The European Commission and some European Union agencies, including the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, are currently working on this topic, collecting data. The Cypriot presidency of the EU will present a report on it in November and some recommendations will be presented at the EPSCO council at the end of the year.
- ▶ **Joint Press Release with Mental Health Europe on Suicide** [01/10/2012]  
Suicides are about people, not numbers – this is the message of a Mental Health Europe and FEANTSA [press release](#) calling for an EU Action Plan on Homelessness, in reaction to the high rates of suicide amongst the homeless population compared with the general population, a phenomenon that risks being aggravated by the current financial crisis and the austerity measures that governments have been introducing as a result.
- ▶ **More Than 800 Likes on Facebook** [01/10/2012]  
Thanks to you, FEANTSA now has over 800 fans on Facebook. Please help us keep more interested people up-to-date with social media news on homelessness by encouraging people in your networks to [like](#) us.
- ▶ **Policy Paper on Youth Homelessness Now in French** [01/10/2012]  
The FEANTSA policy statement that draws attention to the fact that youth homelessness is increasing in many EU Member States and raises a number of issues which need to be taken into account if youth homelessness is to be tackled efficiently is now available [in French](#).
- ▶ **Poverty is Not a Crime Campaign – Petition** [01/10/2012]

Housing Rights Watch has launched a petition to ask local authority representatives not to punish homelessness. You can sign the petition [here](#), and follow updates on the campaign by searching for the #povertyisnotacrime hashtag.

---

► **Research Conference on Access to Housing** [01/10/2012]

FEANTSA and the European Observatory on Homelessness held its annual research [conference](#), in cooperation with the University of York and ENHR on the 21st September. The conference theme was "Access to Housing for Homeless People in Europe". Conference presentations are now on the FEANTSA [research website](#).

---

## News from the European Union

► **#6Seconds for Homelessness – Results** [01/10/2012]

The #6Seconds for Homelessness social media campaign gathered a list of organisations interested in social innovation in the field of homelessness. Social Innovation Exchange (SIX) will turn this list into a searchable, shareable [database](#) of examples. Those who missed the campaign but would like to contribute a socially innovative intervention that addresses the issue of homelessness can [contact SIX](#).

---

► **HABITACT e-bulletin Online** [01/10/2012]

The new HABITACT e-bulletin is [online](#) and, as usual, provides HABITACT news, local news, local trends and EU news. This time, the focus section is on sustainability and homelessness, meaning where homelessness projects reconcile both social and environmental objectives.

---

► **Housing First Europe Meetings** [01/10/2012]

On 13th and 14th September, the [Housing First Europe](#) partnership met to discuss the interim results of the five Housing First test sites in Amsterdam, Budapest, Copenhagen, Glasgow and Lisbon, as well as other aspects of Housing First approaches (forms of support, assessing needs and monitoring outcomes). The final conference of HFE will take place on 13th and 14th June 2013 in Amsterdam, and will be open to all practitioners interested in Housing First.

---

► **Social Services Europe Event: Delivering Positive Change** [01/10/2012]

The Social Services event "Delivering Positive Change: How Social Services Contribute to Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth", will take place in the European Parliament on the 9th October 2012. With this [event](#), hosted by Stephen Hughes MEP, Social Services Europe will bring together key experts in three panel discussions to talk about aspects of growth and the role of social services in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy. A new briefing paper will be launched. Registration is via the [SOLIDAR website](#).

---

## News from the United Nations

► **Health Ministers Adopt European Policy for Health and Well-Being - WHO Health 2020** [01/10/2012]

The WHO European Region recently [adopted](#) a sustainable policy to protect and promote the health of its 900 million citizens, particularly the most vulnerable. The comprehensive new policy, called Health 2020, targets the main health challenges in the 53 countries in the Region, such as increasing health inequities within and between countries, shrinking public service expenditure owing to the financial crisis and a growing burden of ill health from non-communicable diseases including obesity, cancer and heart disease. Its implementation will help mobilise decision-makers within and beyond the boundaries of the health sector.

---

## News from our Members

► **Austria: Human Rights Report** [01/10/2012]

The annual [report](#) on the state of human rights in Salzburg, produced by the Salzburg Platform for Human Rights, includes an article by Heinz Schoibl, BAWO representative, on the fact that Austria has not signed Articles 30 and 31 of the European Social Charter and two articles on the Austrian Constitutional Court's decision to repeal the ban on begging and the attempts by politicians to reintroduce it.

---

► **Belgium: Election Statement** [01/10/2012]

AMA has published an election [statement](#) in light of the forthcoming local elections, maintaining that the number of homeless people, in all categories and for a number of reasons, is increasing, and calling for stronger cooperation between the provinces, the communes (administrative districts) and the Centres publiques d'action sociale (Social assistance centres for people in need) and the homeless services amongst the AMA membership, in order to work together to improve the situation of people in difficulty. They also stress the need for people to have access to their fundamental rights, with an emphasis on housing.

---

► **Denmark: Homeless Migrants Coming Onto Political Agenda** [01/10/2012]

The debate about finding solutions for the growing number of homeless migrants on the streets of Denmark has so far been met with a wall of silence by politicians, say projekt UDENFOR. The silence, however, was broken during last month's conference on the Danish homelessness strategy, where politicians talked about ensuring vulnerable homeless people get help regardless of their nationality. projekt UDENFOR finds this development promising, as it shows that there is increasing awareness among politicians and professionals that the growing number of migrants among vulnerable people in Denmark cannot be ignored. projekt UDENFOR have worked closely with homeless migrants to develop sustainable solutions for them and have produced several reports on the situation of homeless migrants in Denmark, which they hope politicians will refer to, such as their [report](#) on social work with migrants, their [report](#) on homeless migrants' problems and needs and [proposals](#) for future action. More [information](#) is also available about the homelessness strategy.

---

► **France: Hygiene Kits in Demand** [01/10/2012]

A study carried out by the Croix-Rouge has concluded that homeless people desperately need hygiene products but that obtaining them is extremely difficult, because of monetary difficulties and a lack of

knowledge about where to get them for free. The Croix-Rouge distributed 40,000 hygiene kits as part of its study but, owing to high demand, will distribute 100,000 next-time round, in winter. 91% of the recipients asked for another kit. For homeless people, hygiene is essential for health but also for self-esteem and social inclusion, say Croix-Rouge. However, very few homeless services provide showers, hygiene and skincare products or contraception, preferring to stick to food and clothing distribution. The kits distributed by the Croix-Rouge contained shower gel, toothpaste, a toothbrush, a hairbrush, moisturiser, condoms, sanitary towels, a razor and shaving foam – enough for three days. The kit also contained a booklet with advice about preventing the most common complaints experienced by homeless people (dry skin and skin diseases, mouth and dental problems, respiratory problems).

---

► **Italy: Results of Research into Homelessness Released 9th October** [01/10/2012]

The results of the [research](#) into the numbers and profile of homeless people in Italy, carried out by Istat - the Italian Statistical Institute - the Ministry for Welfare, Caritas Italiana and fio.PSD between 2011 and 2012, will be [presented](#) at the Istat Headquarters on the 9th October. The research examined the number and types of services available to homeless people and interviewed around 5,000 homeless people in order to understand how the phenomenon is changing and to create a framework which not only gives a picture of the present situation but also gives indications as to how to make interventions more effective and prevent people from falling into extreme poverty in future. One of the conclusions of the study is that it seems that, in Italy, it is much more difficult for Italian homeless people to get out of homelessness than for non-Italian homeless people, even though access to services is often more difficult for foreigners than for Italian people.

---

► **Netherlands: Election Pamphlet** [01/10/2012]

Federatie Opvang has produced an election [pamphlet](#) entitled "A Positive Future and Safety at Home for Everyone". With this pamphlet, the federation asks politicians, stakeholders and media to give attention to five themes that are of the utmost importance for service users of the shelter network. The themes are: every family should have a house, everyone should be safe in the family setting, care structures should be accessible and affordable for everyone, every young person must have the chance to have a decent future and everyone should be given the chance to participate in society.

---

► **Spain: Blog Documents Loss of Access to Health Care** [01/10/2012]

All the information about the loss of access to healthcare and the right to health by some vulnerable groups (not only migrants) in Spain is to be found on the *Nadie Sin Futuro* (Noone without a future) [blog](#), a Caritas initiative. In related news, PICUM has issued a [press release](#) that calls upon the Spanish government to make healthcare accessible to all without discrimination and regardless of immigration status, in line with European and international human rights laws that uphold the right to health as universal and fundamental.

---

► **UK: Housing Advice for Over 50s** [01/10/2012]

Shelter Cymru's new project Cyngor 50+ Advice aims to reduce homelessness and housing issues for the over 50's in Carmarthenshire by providing information, advice and support with issues relating to their current housing.

---

► **UK: Website to Combat London's Rising Homeless Problem** [01/10/2012]

The latest UK Government statistics show a 27% rise in homelessness in London since 2011 (46% since 2010), while the national average is 9%. Homeless Link has therefore re-launched a website that helps those at risk of homelessness in London access the advice they need. The website, [www.homelesslondon.org](http://www.homelesslondon.org), offers a one-stop-shop for information on the rights of those who are homeless and links to services that may be able to help.

---

## Homelessness in the Headlines

► **Belgium: Second Federal Anti-Poverty Plan** [01/10/2012]

The Belgian government has approved its second Federal Anti-Poverty [plan](#). The plan is subdivided into six strategic objectives that find their origins in the Belgian National Reform Programme, National Social Report and previous Federal Anti-Poverty Plan. The Service public fédéral de programmation Intégration sociale (Federal Planning Service for Social Integration) will follow up and evaluate the plan.

---

► **Czech Republic: Census Results on Homelessness** [01/10/2012]

According to [results](#) of the 2011 census, which included homeless people for the first time, a total of 11,496 homeless people use shelter services and other services for homeless people in the Czech Republic. The census was carried out by the Czech Statistical Office (CSU). The real number of homeless people in the 10.5 million Czech Republic may be up to three times higher, a CSU representative said, as the count did not include people who live on the street, in squats or in inadequate structures rented privately, for example. According to the data, a typical homeless person is a man aged 45 to 49 who is a Czech citizen. Women account for about 21.5% of the shelter users. About a half of the people counted (47.2%) had done an apprenticeship or had followed secondary education without finishing the leaving exams. Another 28.5% had followed primary education. About 10% of the people had completed secondary school leaving exams and 2.6% of them are university graduates. Almost half of the homeless people are single, another 38% are divorced and 9.5% are married.

---

► **France: Droit au Logement Highlights Plight of Homeless Children** [01/10/2012]

As the new school year starts, the NGO Droit au logement has drawn attention to the fact that homeless children's education will be harmed by their situation. Homeless children living with their parents in hotel rooms (temporarily provided by the government) are often very far away from their schools, some having to travel 1.5 hours to get there. Often, when they lose their homes, families are sent from pillar to post, shuttled between different districts by the government service in charge of finding accommodation for homeless people. Some families have given up and choose no longer to send their children to school, but this risks the children being taken into care.

---

► **France: User Participation** [01/10/2012]

The French Housing Minister has asked the interdepartmental delegation for accommodation and access to housing (*Dihal*) to organise a consultation of professionals working in the housing sector and specified that this should give an “opportunity to strengthen the involvement of service users in creating and evaluating policy by giving real space to the people affected [by housing exclusion].” The *Dihal* and its partners are thus encouraged to increase their activities relating to “user participation” and make a real commitment to it. The *Dihal* will meet the representatives of user organisations, and the *Conseil consultatif national des personnes accueillies ou accompagnées* (National advisory board for people in shelters or receiving social support) will be heavily involved in the *Dihal* working groups.

---

► **Ireland: Census Results on Homelessness** [01/10/2012]

A special census [report](#) on homeless persons in Ireland has been [released](#) by the Irish Central Statistics Office. The report shows that 3,808 persons were either sleeping rough (64) or in accommodation designated for homeless people (3,744, of which 1,648 in emergency accommodation) on the night of April 10th 2011. Homeless people were identified based on where they were on Census Night rather than by self-identification. This was the first time such a comprehensive approach to identifying homeless people was undertaken as part of the census in Ireland.

Simon Communities and Focus Ireland welcomed the census report but warned that the figures should be treated with caution as they provide a point in time “snap-shot” rather than the whole picture of homelessness. Simon Communities also mentioned that given the methodology used the figures don’t include all rough sleepers, those living in squats and ‘sofa surfers’. Both charities said the homeless problem still requires urgent government action, for example because 1 in 8 people who are homeless are children under 14 years of age, and access to medical services and other vital lifeline services for homeless people is still in need of improvement.

---

► **Italy: Opposition to Putting Homeless People into Camps** [01/10/2012]

A comment made during a press conference by the social policy representative of Rome City Council, in which he suggested that camps where Roma people will be sent could also be used for homeless people, has met with opposition. The president of the homeless centre at Termini Station in Rome protested that sustainable, personalised solutions should be found that do not trivialise the problems experienced by homeless people and that homeless people should be involved in decisions that affect them. He also voiced the opinion that innovative solutions are the way forward. “We need houses, not camps”, he concluded.

---

► **UK: Homeless Sector Fears Squatting Ban Will Increase Homelessness** [01/10/2012]

The UK government has passed a law making squatting illegal, saying that it will “protect hard-working home-owners” from “the tyranny of squatters”. Breaking the law will carry a maximum sentence of six months in jail, a £5,000 fine or both. However, homeless service providers have voiced fears that banning squatting will lead to an increase in homelessness and rough sleeping, and maintain that the ban does nothing to address the underlying reasons why vulnerable people squat in the first place - homelessness and a lack of affordable housing. They say it will only serve to criminalise homelessness.

Previously, squatting was treated as a civil matter meaning that landlords had to go to court to prove that squatters have trespassed onto their property to get an eviction. The Act governing the ban also restricts access to legal aid to instances where households could be, or have been, made homeless.

---

► **UK: Social Housing Evictions to Be Made More Difficult** [01/10/2012]

Social landlords will be required to help tenants in rent arrears before evicting them under new Scottish legislation. In an attempt to prevent evictions in the social rented sector, the Scottish government now requires landlords to take proactive steps to help tenants cope. This could include offering benefits advice and putting a reasonable payment plan in place. Only once these things are in place and if nothing changes can landlords move to evict a tenant. Tenants will also get a final chance to reach agreement with the landlord on repayments after a court eviction order has been granted.

---

## Announcements

► **Conference: Crises and Disasters: Psychosocial Consequences** [01/10/2012]

Financial crises have a significant impact on vulnerable groups. The [Conference](#), “Crises and Disasters: Psychosocial Consequences” will address this issue and will be held in Athens, Greece from the 6th-9th March 2013.

---

## Publications

► **Family Histories in a Sample of Homeless Youth** [01/10/2012]

Our society often stresses personal success, often unrealistic standards of achievement, and little tolerance for those who fail to measure up. This emphasis on individual responsibility ignores the structural forces that shape the lives of vulnerable populations. Childhood abuse, family conflict, mental health and addictions are the forces that can have an influence on the lives of youth. Still, homeless youth are largely considered, by mainstream society, to be responsible for their misfortunes. These are the conclusions of a [series](#) of research summaries on youth homelessness published by the Homeless Hub in Canada.

---

► **Homeless in Greece in the Current Financial Crisis** [01/10/2012]

A [report](#) produced by Georgios A. Stamatis from Athens School of Medicine addresses some aspects of homelessness in Greece during the crisis, including the problem of measurement, European policies, citizens’ awareness and strategies, NGO action and the role of welfare systems.

---

► **Prisoners Fear Housing Problems** [01/10/2012]

Thirty-nine per cent of prisoners awaiting trial or sentencing believed they would have housing problems upon release, a report carried out by the UK Prisons Inspectorate found. The survey of 4,868 prisoners at 33 prisons also discovered that just 20% of prisoners on remand knew who to contact for help on housing issues when released. The [report](#), *Remand Prisoners*, revealed that although they were entitled to housing benefit, only 33% of unconvicted prisoners reported that they were asked if they needed help with benefits to help maintain housing when they came into prison. However, 27% of remand prisoners had housing

problems when they arrived in prison. Often they were homeless, in unstable accommodation or had accommodation they did not wish to lose. The report also said housing providers find it difficult to work with remand prisoners who are homeless or will not work with unsentenced prisoners. The report suggests prisoners should have suitable, sustainable and safe accommodation arranged before they are released.

---

► **Report on Homelessness and Employment** [01/10/2012]

A new Australian [report](#), entitled "Finding work: homelessness and employment", is a pilot study designed to address the following questions: "1. What are the personal, social and structural barriers to employment faced by homeless jobseekers?, 2. What actions can help to overcome these barriers?, 3. How did homeless and employment services assist homeless jobseekers address these barriers?, 4. What are the implications of the research findings for policy in relation to homeless jobseekers?"

---

► **Review of Public Health Capacities and Services in the European Region** [01/10/2012]

This [document](#) aims to provide an overview of the current status of public health services across the WHO European Region, in order to strengthen the development of future public health services and capacities.



**The FEANTSA Flash is supported by  
the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013).**

This programme was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

To that effect, PROGRESS purports at:

- providing analysis and policy advice on employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

For more information see:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=327&langId=en>

**FEANTSA is supported financially by the European Commission. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.**