



Confronting Homelessness in the Framework of the European Semester 2014

A FEANTSA Monitoring Report

2014

FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless is an umbrella of not-for-profit organisations which participate in or contribute to the fight against homelessness in Europe. It is the only major European network that focuses on homelessness at the European level.



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Introduction

Rationale

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Now is a decisive moment for the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the EU. A new Commission and Parliament are at the outset of their mandates. It is the mid point of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Commission is reviewing progress over the first 5 years.

Poverty and social exclusion are increasing and the social dimension of the European project is under considerable pressure. A fragile and uneven recovery from the financial and economic crisis is underway. Yet rising levels of poverty continue to threaten stability, growth and cohesion as well as negatively impacting on the lives of individuals. Homelessness, a persistent social challenge in Europe, is increasing in a large majority of Member States.

Against this background, public policies to address homelessness are developing rapidly and EU policymaking has become an increasingly important factor in the governance of these policies. As policymakers at EU, national, regional and local level look to 2020 and beyond, this report takes stock of how the EU's economic and social policy coordination is supporting progress in the fight against homelessness and what might be done better in the future.

This report explores the extent to which the European Semester is capturing and supporting Member States' efforts to tackle homelessness in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. It brings together the analysis FEANTSA has carried out throughout the 2014 Semester in order to draw conclusions about how various elements are orientating, monitoring and supporting Member States' homelessness policies¹. The analysis focuses primarily on reporting and recommendations in the area of poverty and social inclusion, rather than broader macroeconomic and budgetary policy coordination. Nonetheless, the latter clearly have an important role in determining the context for the fight against

homelessness. Drawing on input of FEANTSA's members, the report compares social reporting and analysis within the Semester to the reality of evolutions in homelessness and homeless policies. FEANTSA hopes that the report will influence the way social policymakers at EU-level and in Member States engage with the Semester and tackle homelessness as part of efforts to address poverty and in the context of broader structural reform agendas.

Europe 2020 Strategy

The Europe 2020 Strategy was conceived as a partnership to turn the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. It set quantitative headline targets in five key policy areas – employment; poverty and social exclusion; research and development; climate and environment; education. The targets are not exhaustive but exemplify the broad economic and social progress that the strategy aims to support.

The target on poverty is to reduce by 20million the number of people **at risk of poverty and social exclusion** (AROPE). The EU indicator for the target encompasses people living in income poverty (relative to a threshold of 60% of the median), material deprivation and/or jobless households. The introduction of the target was a political milestone because it put poverty and social exclusion at the core of the EU's agenda, strengthening the focus on social policy in line with the Lisbon Treaty². It underpinned a broader engagement with fighting poverty and social exclusion beyond the quantitative target.

However, implementation of measures to achieve the poverty target has so far been disappointingly weak. Firstly, the translation of the target into national targets has reflected limited ambition, shared ownership and strategic prioritization. Even if all Member States reached their national targets by 2020, the overall EU target would not be achieved.

1 FEANTSA has published the following positions in response to different elements of the Semester in 2014: [2014 Country Specific Recommendations: European Union Risks Leaving its Most Excluded Citizens Behind](#), [Review of the National Reform Programmes 2014](#), [Response to Public consultation on the Europe 2020 strategy](#), [10 Messages to Get the European Semester on Track in the Fight against Poverty and Homelessness](#), [FEANTSA Proposals for 2014 Country Specific Recommendations](#), [FEANTSA Reaction to the 2014 Annual Growth Survey](#). In addition, FEANTSA has contributed actively to the report of the [European Alliance for a Democratic, Social, Sustainable Semester](#)

2 Article 9 of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU

3 Frazer H, Guio AC, Marlier E, Vanhercke B, Ward T (2014), [Putting the Fight Against Poverty and Social Exclusion at the Heart of the EU Agenda: A contribution to the Mid-Term Review of the Europe 2020 Strategy](#), OSE Research Paper Series, N° 15 / October 2014, Brussels



The national targets (EU-27) adopted so far by Member States add up to a reduction in poverty or social exclusion by 12 million instead of the 20 million agreed upon by EU Heads of State and Government in 2010³. Secondly, poverty has actually been increasing since the launch of Europe 2020. Since its adoption in 2010, there are 6,6 million more people living in poverty or social exclusion in the EU. This represents an increase in more than 1/3 of Member States. Rising material deprivation has driven down living standards of significant parts of the population in a number of countries.⁴ The number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion seems likely to remain close to 100 million by 2020⁵. This lack of progress reflects both the impact of the crisis and the inadequacy of policies to fight poverty and social exclusion in many Member States. This context raises urgent questions about how the target should be pursued in the future and the role of the European Semester therein.

European Semester

Three pillars support delivery on the Europe 2020 Strategy: macroeconomic surveillance, thematic coordination and fiscal surveillance⁶. Thematic coordination is focused on the quantitative headline targets. It is supported by seven EU flagship initiatives, including the 'European Platform against poverty' (EPAP) and ten 'Integrated guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States', including Guideline 10 on 'Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty'.

In order to implement the Europe 2020 Strategy macroeconomic surveillance, thematic coordination and fiscal surveillance are brought together under the European Semester. This is an annual cycle that aims to coordinate structural (including in the social area), budgetary and macroeconomic policy reforms. The Semester was launched in 2011. Each year, Member States submit reports, which form the basis for Commission analysis and subsequent Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs). Recommendations address a range of policy fields including financial stability, public budgets, economic growth, job creation, productivity, com-

petitiveness, and (to a lesser extent) poverty reduction and social inclusion. The main steps of the cycle are summarized below.

- The Semester starts with the Commission setting out key challenges and priorities for the coming year through its **Annual Growth Survey (AGS)**⁷.
- The **Spring Council** takes stock of the overall macroeconomic situation and progress towards the Europe 2020 targets. It provides policy orientations covering fiscal, macroeconomic and structural reforms.
- By May, Member States submit 2 programmes:
 - **National Reform Programmes** which outline structural reforms to make progress towards the objectives of Europe 2020 strategy⁸
 - **Stability/Convergence Programmes**, which outline plans for sound public finances.
- By June, the Commission assesses the Member States' programmes and drafts **Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs)** for the next 12 to 18 months.
- The draft recommendations are then discussed with Council (via relevant committees). The Council formally adopts the Country Specific Recommendations in July.

The Semester can exert considerable pressure on economic and fiscal policies. Strengthened macroeconomic and budgetary control introduced by the so-called "6 pack" and "2 Pack" are an integral part of the Semester. The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP) uses an early warning system based on a scoreboard of indicators. The 'preventive arm' of the MIP allows the Commission and the Council to give recommendations to correct imbalances. These are issued as part of the CSR package. The 'corrective arm' of the MIP is the Excessive Imbalance Procedure, which can lead to financial sanctions. Fiscal surveillance under the Stability and Growth Pact has been strengthened. An Excessive

⁴ Council Conclusions 7655/14

⁵ COM(2014) 130 final/2

⁶ Frazer et al *Op.cit*

⁷ COM(2013) 800 final

⁸ Some years, including 2014, Member States have also submitted further strategic social reporting in the form of National Social Reports

Deficit Procedure can be applied to Member States deemed to have excessive levels of deficit or debt. It is important to note that Member States going through a macroeconomic adjustment programme linked to EU financial assistance do not receive CSRs.

Homelessness on the EU's Social Agenda

This section briefly maps out how homelessness fits into the EU's social policy agenda. It shows that whilst policies to address homelessness are primarily determined at national, regional and local level, the EU has played an increasingly important role in shaping these policies in recent years.

In 2010 when the Europe 2020 strategy was launched, the European platform against poverty (EPAP) flagship initiative was created to support delivery. The EPAP aims to support policy development; promote use of structural and investment funds; promote social innovation and evidence-based policies; promote partnership with civil society and provide a framework for policy coordination. It has thus contributed to multi level dialogue on homelessness within the European Union. The Commission communication on the EPAP included a number of specific activities on homelessness⁹.

In 2013, the European Commission launched the Social Investment Package (SIP). This urged Member States to prioritize better performing active inclusion strategies and a more efficient and effective use of social budgets to manage the social impact of the crisis and enhance progress towards the Europe 2020 targets. The SIP included the first ever detailed EU policy guidance on confronting homelessness. It addressed trends in homelessness, good practices, and core elements of integrated homelessness strategies. Most significantly, the Commission called on Member States to 'confront homelessness through comprehensive

strategies based on prevention, housing-led approaches and reviewing regulations and practices on eviction, taking into account the key findings of the guidance on confronting homelessness provided in this Package¹⁰.

Crucially, the SIP put forward the European Semester as a key mechanism for policy coordination on homelessness. Member States were asked to report on homelessness 'by addressing the issue in the National Reform Programmes', whilst the Commission committed to **'further integrating homelessness into the Europe 2020 governance process, possibly complementing the efforts of the Member States with Country Specific Recommendations'**¹¹. The SIP also reiterated the supporting role of the EU in terms of data collection, analysis and monitoring, transnational exchange, and use of EU funding instruments, particularly the structural funds.

Since 2001, the social open method of coordination for social protection and social inclusion (social OMC) has facilitated voluntary cooperation between Member States via benchmarking, mutual learning and transnational exchange. Homelessness gradually emerged as a thematic priority through this process. The social OMC has been very much diluted since 2010 but has continued to provide a forum for joint working on homelessness through, for example, Peer Reviews and reports of the Social Protection Committee.

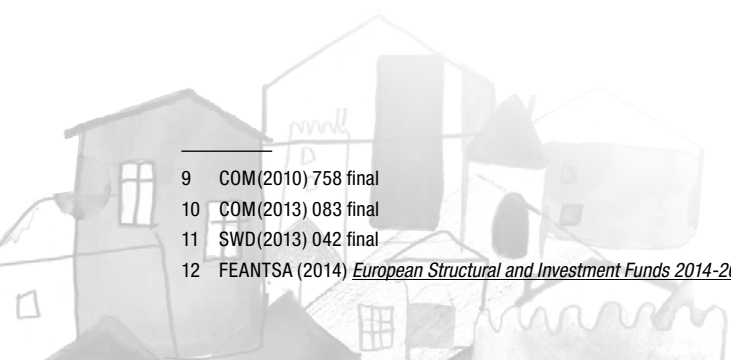
Furthermore, the potential for cohesion policy to play an important role in the fight against homelessness has been considerably strengthened in the 2014-2020 period¹². Homelessness has also emerged as a key topic in the EU agenda for social innovation, supported by the European Programme for Social Change and Innovation and by the Horizon 2020 programme. In addition, homelessness increasingly overlaps with various areas of EU policy beyond

9 COM(2010) 758 final

10 COM(2013) 083 final

11 SWD(2013) 042 final

12 FEANTSA (2014) *European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020: Supporting pathways out of homelessness*.





social affairs, including fundamental rights, migration, free movement, internal market, regional development, health and youth inclusion.

In the context described above, the EU-level has gradually become more important in the governance of homelessness policies in recent years¹³. European cooperation has supported consensus building on the nature and causes of homelessness as well as the policies and services required to address it. A European dynamic on fighting homelessness has been reflected in various high level policy events, including the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness organized by the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2010, and the Roundtable of Ministers Responsible for Homelessness organized by the Irish Presidency in 2013. This dynamic has also driven major EU projects on homelessness, such as MPHASIS¹⁴ and Housing First Europe¹⁵, which have made an important contribution to the evidence base for policies. The dynamic has also been reflected in the European semester, with many MS reporting on their homelessness policies.

Various institutions and bodies have called for an EU homelessness strategy to consolidate policy support and coordination in this field. Most recently, the Committee of the Regions adopted an own-initiative opinion to this effect in 2014¹⁶. Prior to that, the European Parliament adopted two Resolutions with this request – one in 2011¹⁷ and one in 2014¹⁸. The European Economic and Social Committee adopted an own-initiative opinion calling for a strategy in 2012¹⁹. The EPSCO also invited Member States and the European Commission to develop schemes for people who are homeless²⁰.

In conclusion, homelessness is a priority on the EU's social agenda. It has been highlighted in all relevant strategic policy documents since the launch of Europe 2020. Moreover, there is growing practical engagement of policymakers from multiple levels on the issue within the EU policy arena. It follows that the European Semester might be expected to support progress in the fight against homelessness as part of the social dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy.

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Homelessness and Homeless Policies in the EU in 2014

Homelessness is a complex phenomenon and there is no universally accepted definition. FEANTSA developed ETHOS – the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (see annex 1) as a conceptual definition to enable transnational exchange. ETHOS is based on four conceptual categories: rooflessness; houselessness; insecure and inadequate housing. ETHOS is increasingly used as a reference in a range of European and international contexts.

There are no official statistics on homelessness at EU level. However, the European Commission has suggested that about 4.1 million people experience homelessness (ETHOS categories 1 and 2) each year²¹. A general trend of increasing homelessness in much of the EU has been highlighted by FEANTSA²² and by recent reports of the Social Protection Committee (SPC). In 2014 the SPC reported 'an ongoing trend of increasing homelessness in many contexts'²³. The table below summarizes recent trends identified by the European Observatory on Homelessness in a comparative analysis of 15 Member States²⁴.

13 Gosme, L (2014) *Key steps towards a European Union homelessness policy*, *Journal of European Social Policy*, July 2014, vol. 24 no. 3 289-299

14 See here for more information: <http://www.trp.dundee.ac.uk/research/mphasis/>

15 See here for more information: <http://www.socialstyrelsen.dk/housingfirsteurope>

16 2014/C 271/07

17 P7_TA(2011)0383

18 P7_TA(2011)0383

19 2012/C 24/07

20 Council of the European Union 11639/12

21 SWD(2013) 042 final

22 FEANTSA (2014) *On the Way Home: FEANTSA Monitoring Report on Homelessness and Homeless Policies in Europe Monitoring report*, available at: <http://www.feantsa.org/spip.php?article854&lang=en>

23 Social Protection Committee (2013), *Social Europe: Current challenges and the way forward*, Annual Report of the Social Protection Committee (2012), Brussels: European Commission. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=fr&pubId=7405>

24 Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK

Table 1 : RECENT TRENDS IN HOMELESSNESSSource: Busch-Geertsema et al 2014²⁵

Country	Trend	Extend	Remarks and reasons for trends
Czech Republic	Increase	+ 44 % between 2010 and 2014 in one large city (Brno) where data allow trend analysis	No regional or national data allow trend analysis. Part of the recorded increase in Brno (about 20 %) is due to an increase of services for homeless people. Structural factors and political changes like rising unemployment, deregulation of rents, social benefit changes are seen as linked to a general increase in homelessness
Denmark	Increase	+ 16 % between 2009 (4,998) and 2013 (5,820) national counts	While the number of shelters remained almost constant, increases of homeless people staying temporarily with friends and relatives are being reported, particularly in larger cities. More young people are being found homeless, possibly linked to decreases in affordable housing supply and lower welfare benefits for young people.
Finland	Decrease	- 8 % between 2009 (8,153) and 2013 (7,500) national survey results	Numbers of long-term homeless people in dormitories and hostels, and homelessness among people about to be released from institutions has decreased due to national strategy to reduce long-term homelessness by replacing shelters and hostels by apartments with regular leases and support using a Housing First model. Short-term homelessness and number of homeless people sharing with friends and relatives has increased because of economic crisis and tight housing market, especially in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area area. Young people and immigrants have particular problems to find affordable housing, their number has increased.
France	Increase	+ 44-50 % between national surveys in 2001 (87,000) and 2011 (142,000)	Numbers include homeless children and migrants. Part of the increase is due to technical improvements of the survey and increase of homeless migrants, but strong influence of structural factors such as long-term unemployment, housing shortage and reduction of long-term hospitalisations is emphasised by national experts.
Germany	Increase	+ 21 % between 2011 (16,448) and 2013 (19,823) according to statistics in NRW regional state. + 21 % between 2009 (234,000) and 2012 (284,000) according to national estimates by BAG W	Part of increase in North Rhine-Westphalia may be due to better coverage of the recently introduced statistics, but housing shortages in large cities and an increase of young homeless people is seen as an increasing problem by many experts. Increases in rent levels, high poverty rates despite the economic boom, and deficits in local prevention systems are mentioned as well. Increases in youth homelessness are reported.
The Netherlands	Increase	+ 17 % between 2010 and 2012 national estimations (from 23,300 to 27,300)	Cuts in benefits and social services and increased barriers to using (mental) health care are seen as linked to increases in the numbers of vulnerable homeless people. Young people, people with a psychiatric illness and those with a learning disability are mentioned as particularly affected.
Spain	Increase	+ 5 % between national surveys in 2005 (21,901) and 2012 (22,932)	Higher increases are reported from some local surveys like in Barcelona (+ 45 % between 2008 and 2013) and Madrid (+13.5 % between 2010 and 2012). Reasons given are the economic crisis and increased unemployment, shortage of affordable housing and increases in homeless immigrants.

25 Busch Geertsema, V, Benjaminsen, L, Filipović Hrast, M and Pleace, N (2014) *Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States, A statistical update*, EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness No 4, Brussels http://feantsaresearch.org/IMG/pdf/feantsa-studies_04-web2.pdf



Country	Trend	Extend	Remarks and reasons for trends
Sweden	Increase	<p>+ 29 % for rough sleepers, shelter users, hostels and homeless people in institutions with no home to go to between 2005 (6,600) and 2011 (8,500)</p> <p>+ 55 % homeless people sharing with friends, relatives and others between 2005 (4,400) and 2011 (6,800)</p>	<p>The number of longer-term housing solutions in the secondary housing market is not included here, as it has grown by almost 600 %, due partly to better coverage of this type of accommodation but also because this sector has grown in size.</p> <p>Reasons given for these increases are mainly related to the housing shortage and increased barriers to access regular housing, with a requirement for steady income becoming widespread.</p>
United Kingdom	<p>Increase of homelessness presentations and homelessness acceptances</p> <p>Increase in people living rough</p> <p>Decrease in supported housing activity</p>	<p>Presentations (seeking assistance under homelessness law):</p> <p>England: 09/10: 89,120 – 12/13: 113,520</p> <p>Scotland: 09/10: 57,288 – 12/13: 40,050</p> <p>Wales: 09/10: 12,910 – 12/13: 15,360</p> <p>Northern Ireland: 09/10: 18,664 – 12/13: 19,354</p> <p>Acceptance as homeless and in priority need under homelessness laws:</p> <p>England: 09/10: 40,020 – 12/13: 53,770</p> <p>Scotland: 09/10: 37,151 – 12/13: 30,767</p> <p>Wales: 09/10: 5,565 – 12/13: 5,795</p> <p>Northern Ireland: 09/10: 9,914 – 12/13: 9,878</p> <p>Rise from 1,768 counted and estimate rough sleepers in 2009/10 to 2,414 in 2012/13 (England only).</p> <p>Use of supported housing by homeless households in England 2009/10: 86,973 – 2012/13: 49,126 (supporting people statistics covering single homeless people with support needs, homeless families with support needs and people sleeping rough).</p>	<p>Indicators based on administrative data from the statutory homeless system have increased on a national level between 2009/2010 and 2012/2013 (but they were marginally higher in 2008/2009 than in 2012/2013). Increases have not occurred across the UK, but are evident in England and to a small extent in Northern Ireland and Wales. Note that the statutory systems in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are distinct, operating under different laws²⁶.</p> <p>High increases are reported from rough sleeper counts in England (+36.5 % between 2009/2010 and 2012/2013).</p> <p>The fall in supported housing services for homeless people in England may reflect a reduction in funding levels for these services. However, the reduced number also reflects some reduction in data collection, as government funding for the collection of these statistics ceased during this period. Other indicators do not suggest these forms of homelessness are falling in England.</p>

²⁶ While levels of statutory homelessness acceptances have increased in England, they are in a state of long term decline from much higher levels (the most recent peak in 2003/4 was 135,430 compared to 53,770 in 2012/13). This long term shift downwards is because of the rise of preventative services, which helped 165,200 homeless households in England in 2009/10 and 202,400 households in 2012/13. In Scotland, the more recent decline acceptances in the statutory system is also widely thought to be linked to a marked rise in preventative activity. Some researchers have suggested that preventative services may in some instances be a barrier to the statutory systems, but this has not yet been clearly established, see: Pawson, H. (2007) Local authority homelessness prevention in England: empowering consumers or denying rights? *Housing Studies* 22, 6, pp. 867-883.

Both the crisis and inadequate policies have contributed to exposing a growing number of households to (risk of) homelessness in various MS in recent years. EUSILC data shows that the proportion of households reporting to be overburdened by housing costs in the bottom income quintile increased in the EU-27 from 30.9% in 2008 to 35.2 in 2012. In as many as 17 countries, increases were larger than 2.5 percentage points. In Austria, Lithuania, Denmark, Bulgaria, Ireland, Greece, Spain and Estonia increases vary between 11 and 26.5 percentage points²⁷.

Homelessness has emerged as a specific target of public policies relatively recently in most Member States. The extent to which solid policy frameworks have been established varies considerably across the EU. Primary responsibility for tackling homelessness rests at the local level of government in most contexts. National and regional governments play an important role in determining the overall legislative, funding and policy framework. A growing number of Member States are developing integrated national or regional strategies to tackle homelessness. The importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach has been well documented²⁸. These strategies are diverse and further comparative analysis is required to explore their strengths and weaknesses. However, it is already clear that such strategies can provide a framework to improve outcomes for homeless people and to reduce homelessness over time. FEANTSA has defined key elements of integrated strategies to tackle homelessness²⁹. The European Commission has called on all Member States to develop strategies based

on the principle of social investment. In this context, the Commission has underlined the need for housing-led approaches (i.e. those which effectively support pathways out of homelessness into adequate housing as soon as possible) and prevention, as well as temporary accommodation and other supports for people whilst they are homeless. This is in line with a shift from 'managing' to 'ending' homelessness, as advocated for by FEANTSA³⁰ and recommended by the Jury of the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness³¹. It also reflects parallel developments in other contexts, such as the development of local '10 year plans to end homelessness' in North America.

Policies and services to tackle homelessness in the EU are evolving constantly. Such evolution is driven by trends in homelessness (levels, profile of people affected); changes in the structural context for homelessness (social protection, labour market, housing market, demography); and by political engagement with the issue. Change also results from efforts of policymakers and stakeholders to improve policies and services taking account of experience, knowledge and evidence. These efforts constitute an ongoing process of innovation to enhance positive social outcomes for homeless people. Innovative models such as Housing First are contributing to a transformation of policies and service provision in various European contexts. At the same time, negative trends such as the criminalization of homelessness and the repressive control of public space are also emerging in a number of MS³². In this context, the potential and added value of transnational cooperation is considerable.

27 Frazer et al *Op.cit*

28 Frazer H. and Marlier E. (2010), *Homelessness and housing exclusion across EU Member States, Analysis and suggestions on the way forward* by the EU Network of independent experts on social inclusion, European Commission, Brussels

29 FEANTSA *Toolkit for Developing an Integrated Homelessness Strategy*

30 See FEANTSA *Ending homelessness campaign*

31 Jury of the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness (2011) *European Consensus Conference on Homelessness: Policy Recommendations of the Jury*, Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU, Brussels

32 Jones, S (Ed.) (2014) *Mean Streets: A Report on the Criminalization of Homelessness in Europe*, Housing Rights Watch, Brussels



Analysis

Annual Growth Survey: Priorities for 2014

The Annual Growth Survey 2014 (AGS) was published on 13 November, launching the fourth cycle of the European Semester³³. The AGS takes stock of the economic and social situation in Europe and sets out broad policy priorities for the EU as a whole for the coming year. In 2014, the Commission maintained the five priorities from 2013:

- Pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation
- Restoring lending to the economy
- Promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow
- **Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis**
- Modernising public administration

2014 was thus the third time that tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis was a key objective. Its inclusion sent an important message to Member States regarding the urgency of growing poverty and social exclusion resulting from the crisis. Nonetheless, FEANTSA joined other social NGOs in highlighting the risk that the continued drive towards fiscal consolidation and competitiveness could contribute to worsening social situations in various Member States. By focusing on the social impact of the crisis rather than the need to tackle poverty, the AGS arguably took a restrictive approach that is not fully in line with the broader, more integrated agenda of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The AGS put forward some key elements of policies required to address unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis in 2014. Amongst the most relevant to homelessness were:

- 'Maintaining the employability of the labour force including the long term unemployed and the most vulnerable groups, including through active support and training of the unemployed and making sure that social safety nets fully play their role'
- 'Active inclusion strategies should be developed, encompassing efficient and adequate income support, activa-

tion measures as well as measures to tackle poverty, including child poverty, and broad access to affordable and high-quality services, such as social and health services, childcare, housing and energy supply'.

- 'The link between social assistance and activation measures should be strengthened through more personalised services ("one-stop shop") and efforts to simplify and better target benefits will help improving the take-up of measures by vulnerable groups and their effectiveness'.
- 'Member States should swiftly adopt Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans, and related funding programmes (Youth Employment Initiative and European Social Fund) should be finalised as soon as possible'

These policy orientations are all potentially important to preventing and addressing homelessness. They could support positive evolutions at policy and service level. For example, many homeless people experience long term unemployment and can benefit from active support and training in combination with social safety nets.

However, there is a risk that Member States design policies with a "creaming" effect and thus fail to address the multiple exclusions that are frequently encountered by homeless people. Indeed, one of the weaknesses of the Europe 2020 strategy so far has been its failure to capture the more extreme forms of poverty and social exclusion that persist and have actually increased in various countries following the crisis. It might therefore be useful to highlight homelessness as a thematic priority in the AGS in order to encourage Member States to develop targeted measures as required. This would be justified by the call of the European Commission for all Member States to develop homelessness strategies in the Social Investment Package.

A welcome new element of the 2014 AGS was a call for enhanced participation of civil society in the European Semester process at Member State level. The AGS focused on the role of civil society in promoting public understanding and acceptance of reforms within MS. However, it is important to underline that the role of both national and EU level civil society organizations is also as a source of expertise on the social situ-

ation in Member States. This is particularly true of non profit service providers who are at the 'front line' of the fight against poverty and social exclusion. In areas such as homelessness where there is a lack of comparable data at EU level, this role could be critical to the success of the Semester process.

The AGS is accompanied by the Draft Joint Employment Report (JER), which aims to provide an initial analysis of the employment and social situation in the EU at the outset of the Semester³⁴. As well as outlining overall labour market and social trends, the JER provides an overview of reforms and measures introduced by Member States with regard to the Employment Guidelines³⁵. The 2014 JER reported briefly on new 'special inclusion programmes for people in situations of particular disadvantage and for people affected by homelessness and housing exclusion'. Some measures, like the introduction of a new integrated national homelessness strategy in Luxembourg are positive social inclusion measures, which it is useful to highlight. However, the JER covered only a few countries and it was unclear why some measures were included and others not. For example, FEANTSA members were surprised to see Hungary listed as having introduced affordable housing measures to tackle discrimination without any reference to constitutional changes to facilitate the criminalization of homeless people.

The JER was an early reminder within the 2014 Semester process that capturing the reality of Member States' efforts to deal with homelessness remains a challenge, even if it has been identified as a thematic priority within the EU's fight against poverty. Given the strategic importance of the JER, there is a need to improve the quality of inputs. Even taking account of the lack of comparable data on homelessness (further addressed below), more transparent processes with clear opportunities for input from stakeholders could help improve the situation. It might be useful, for example, for the SPC to engage in more structured exchange with key stakeholders regarding its two annual reports. The 2013 report 'Social Europe – Many ways, one objective' included a fairly in-depth analysis of trends in homelessness³⁶. In contrast, the report 'Social policy reforms for growth and cohesion: Review of recent structural reforms 2013' provided limited insight into homeless policies in the Member States,

making it difficult for the AGS to act as a starting point for high-quality analysis during the 2014 Semester³⁷.

Monitoring Frameworks used in the European Semester

The European Semester necessitates the enhanced use of social statistics and qualitative analysis for EU-level policy making. A range of tools have been developed since 2010. These are summarized below. The extent to which they can help monitor developments in homelessness and homeless policies is briefly reviewed.

1. Joint Assessment Framework (JAF)

The Joint Assessment Framework (JAF) was adopted by the Employment Committee (EMCO) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC) at the end of 2010 to provide a transparent, understandable framework for tracking progress and monitoring the Employment Guidelines under Europe 2020. The JAF puts forward 3 complementary streams:

- a) quantitative and qualitative assessment tools for identifying key challenges;
- b) a "device" for tracking progress towards the Europe 2020 headline targets on employment
- c) an Employment Performance Monitor (EPM).

The JAF identifies policy areas that should be monitored in the framework of Europe 2020. Under guideline 10 it includes 'social inclusion of groups at special risk and antidiscrimination', and commits to 'monitoring social inclusion and anti-discrimination measures in place help reduce poverty amongst groups **most at risk** from social exclusion, including **the homeless**'³⁸. This acknowledges the importance of monitoring homelessness policies in the Semester framework, including through qualitative policy analysis. Unfortunately, concrete progress towards monitoring of adequate quality in this regard has been so far been very limited within the Semester. It remains to be seen whether the JAF will be further developed.

34 COM(2013) 801 final

35 These guidelines provide common priorities and targets for MS' employment policies and include the 10th guideline on social inclusion and combatting poverty

36 SPC (2013) *Social Europe – Many ways, one objective*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

37 SPC (2013) *Social policy reforms for growth and cohesion: Review of recent structural reforms 2013 - Report of the Social Protection Committee*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

38 Council of the European Union 16984/10



2. Social Protection Performance Monitor (SPPM)

The SPC developed the Social Protection Performance Monitor which is composed of the following:

- a) a graph of the movement towards the AROPE target;
- b) a “dashboard” of key EU social indicators covering social inclusion as well as pensions, healthcare and long-term care. This is designed to establish major trends and developments.
- c) country profiles, examining the progress towards the national 2020 poverty or social exclusion targets as well as other major social developments as revealed by the indicators.

Although it does not include any specific indicators on homelessness, the SPPM dashboard does include the housing cost overburden indicator³⁹, which is useful in capturing trends in the pressure housing places on household budgets.

3. Social Scoreboard

An additional “scoreboard” was proposed by the Commission in its Communication on Strengthening the Social Dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in order to better monitor and coordinate employment and social policies in the Member States⁴⁰. The scoreboard was included in the 2014 JER (see above) and is supposed to support the identification of major employment and social trends that require closer follow-up within the European Semester.

The scoreboard consists of five headline indicators:

- a) the unemployment rate (15-74 age group);
- b) the NEET rate in conjunction with the youth unemployment rate (15-24 age group);
- c) real gross household disposable income;
- d) the at-risk-of-poverty rate (15-64 age group)
- e) income inequalities (S80/S20 ratio).

The scoreboard does not capture homelessness or housing exclusion.

Despite its inclusion in the JAF, homelessness is not currently captured by the suite of social situation assessment tools used to underpin the European Semester. This reflects the overall lack of comparable data available on homelessness at EU level. People who are homeless fall outside the scope of the European Union’s Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EUSILC), which are collected through household surveys. The European Parliament has repeatedly called for homelessness to be integrated into the social scoreboard to allow proper assessment of the social situation in the EU⁴¹.

In the context of implementing the Social Investment Package, the European Commission is currently investigating how to integrate a question on retrospective experience of homelessness in EUSILC. This is an important development but is unlikely to be introduced before 2020, and although it would enhance understanding of experience of homelessness amongst the housed population, it could not capture current levels of homelessness and would be unlikely to have the policy responsiveness required for indicators in the framework of the Semester. It is unlikely that new EU indicators will become available on homelessness in the near future.

³⁹ Percentage of the population living in a household where total housing costs represent (net of housing allowances) more than 40% of the total disposable household income (net of housing allowances).

⁴⁰ COM(2013) 690 provisoire

⁴¹ P7_TA(2013)0515 and P8_TA(2014)0038

Despite the lack of comparable data at EU level, the risk of “creaming” in relation to the poverty target arguably necessitates that the Semester accounts in some way for the most severe poverty and social exclusion (e.g. homeless people, very long-term unemployed, Roma and other excluded groups, people with disabilities, some migrants)⁴². It is therefore important to explore measures that could be taken to support more in-depth social situation analysis by the Commission within the Semester in order to take proper account of homelessness. The use of non-comparative national indicators would be a viable and useful option for many Member States. Stakeholders such as FEANTSA can play a very important role in providing expertise on the reality of homelessness in Member States but this requires clear channels and opportunities to do so. Various social inclusion experts have highlighted that ‘indicators should not, and cannot, be used as a substitute for evaluations of policy’⁴³. It is imperative that the Semester go beyond indicators to take account of policies and their impact, including making full use of the Member States’ reporting to cover homelessness.

Member States’ Reporting on Homelessness

Member States submit National Reform Programmes (NRPs) every year. These are the main tool for analysing structural reforms and progress towards the Europe 2020 targets. In addition, Member States are asked to submit National Social Reports (NSRs). The latter has been a more piecemeal process and the reports have not been made public every year. FEANTSA hopes that efforts to strengthen the social dimension of the Semester process will include more consistent social reporting mechanisms in the future. Both sets of reports from 2014 are analysed below.

NATIONAL REFORM PROGRAMMES⁴⁴

The following analysis focuses on the extent to which Member States prioritise homelessness in the context of implementing Europe 2020. In 2014, most MS continued to prioritise confronting homelessness as an important part of their efforts to tackle poverty and promote social inclusion.

FEANTSA has identified four main approaches to homelessness in the 2014 NRPs:

1. Reporting on national homelessness strategies
2. Reporting on national social inclusion or anti poverty plans, which include targeted measures to tackle homelessness
3. Reporting on broader social/housing policy reforms that impact on homelessness
4. Little or no information on homelessness policies in the NRP

1. Reporting on national homelessness strategies

A growing number of Member States report on national strategies to tackle homelessness in the NRP, demonstrating that they consider the fight against homelessness to be an important part of tackling poverty and social exclusion in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. This indicates that the priorities of the Social Investment Package, in which the European Commission called on Member States to develop comprehensive homelessness strategies, are being pursued via the Semester.

There is a general trend towards an increase in the number of national/regional homelessness strategies to confront homelessness in the EU. The role of these strategies is to complement broader social and housing policies with targeted measures to address homelessness in an integrated fashion. Such strategies provide an implementation framework for local authorities. Decentralized competence means that such strategies are developed at regional level in some Member States. Member States are at different stages in developing homelessness strategies. Some have well established and operational strategies, whilst others are taking first steps towards a more strategic approach. Several face difficulty in implementing an existing strategy. At least 7 Member States (Bulgaria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Portugal) provided some update on the state of development of strategies to tackle homelessness in their 2014 NRP. All of these Member States specifically cite homelessness as a priority issue.

⁴² Walker, R. (2010), ‘The potential of Eurotargets: reflecting on French experience’, in Marlier, E., Natali, D. with Van Dam, R. (2010/eds.), *Europe 2020: Towards a more Social EU?*, P.I.E. Peter Lang, Brussels

⁴³ Frazer et al *Op.cit*

⁴⁴ NB this section of the report is adapted from FEANTSA (2014) *Review of the National Reform Programmes 2014*, published in June



Bulgaria's NRP appears to pave the way for a future strategy by committing to seek out a more effective way to tackle the problem of homelessness by providing access to housing⁴⁵.

The **Czech Republic** reports on its new 'Concept of Prevention and Addressing Homelessness in the Czech Republic until 2020'. This is a new national homeless strategy, which was adopted in August 2013. In addition, the Czech Republic is developing a Social Housing plan, has committed to increasing availability of social work, to the promotion of rental housing and to the modification of the system of social services⁴⁶.

Similarly, **Luxembourg** provides an update on its national strategy to counter homelessness and housing exclusion. In March 2014, a presentation on the implementation of the national strategy was made to civil society. The Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region carried out two censuses of persons staying at twenty homeless accommodation facilities. A pilot project on Housing First was launched in May 2013. The government has begun preparatory work on setting up a permanent housing structure for long-term homeless persons. An in-depth review of the situation of homeless young people is also underway. A conference with professionals in the youth sector was held in mid-June 2014. The 2014 draft budget for this effort amounts to 423,000 Euros⁴⁷.

Denmark gives detailed information on homeless policies in its NRP for the first time in 2014, explaining its rate adjusted funding pool earmarked for disadvantaged groups⁴⁸. The pool allocates DKK 72.5 million to strengthen efforts to fight homelessness, focusing on prevention and early intervention for young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. A further DKK 20 million a year for 2014 to 2017 has been allocated for initiatives to fight homelessness amongst young people. Denmark has set specific national social targets to supplement its commitment on the EU poverty target⁴⁹. These include reducing the number of homeless people by at least 25 per cent to a level of no more than 4,000 people; and ensuring that the share of citizens who return to a shelter or care home for homeless people within 1 year of being assigned to their own home must not exceed 20 per cent. In 2011, this share was 31 per cent. Frazer et al have highlighted the relevance of setting national-subtargets 'in relation to the specific aspects of poverty or social exclusion on which they most need to make progress'⁵⁰. Denmark provides a useful case-study of how this can be developed in the area of homelessness⁵¹.

France describes a package of measures to fight homelessness and housing exclusion. It details recent reforms that aim to lower house prices by promoting supply (land release, removal of restrictions, support for the construction of housing, optimization of stock), tax incentives, regulation of fees. Funding has been earmarked to create or make permanent 7000 places in shelter and for the creation of 7,600 places in "adapted" housing for excluded people from 2013. Finally, the investment plan for housing, presented March 21 2013, sets a production target of 150,000 social rented homes a year⁵².

45 Republic of Bulgaria Ministry of Finance (2014) *National Reform Programme, 2014 Update*, Sofia

46 Office of the Government of the Czech Republic (2014) *National Reform Programme of the Czech Republic*

47 Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (2014) *National plan for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth Luxembourg 2020: National Reform Programme of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg under the European Semester 2014*

48 The Danish Government (2014) *The National Reform Programme Denmark 2014*, Copenhagen

49 Measured in terms of people with income below 60% of the median; people experiencing material deprivation, and people living in very low work intensity households

50 Frazer et al *Op.cit.*

51 NB, although it is not covered in the NRP, Austria has also developed a new indicator on « registered homelessness » in the framework of implementing the Europe 2020 strategy. Details of this are given in the NSR.

52 French Republic (2014) *Programme National de Réforme* [National Reform Programme]

Belgium's NRP provides details of a broad range of measures on homelessness and housing exclusion at national and regional level. Although there is no overarching national strategy (largely because of decentralized competence), steps have been taken towards a more strategic and integrated approach. These include launching a pilot project to test Housing First in five major cities: (Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels, Liège and Charleroi); a cooperation agreement on homelessness between the Federal State, the Communities and the Regions; changes to housing benefit entitlement in Flanders (now available to anyone on a social housing waiting list for one year); promotion of Social Rental Agencies; a housing grant to support people who are facing homeless/housing exclusion and move into a decent home; and various measures to address energy costs⁵³.

Portugal's NRP describes measures to safeguard the most economically vulnerable through measures to increase income, ensure minimal resources and satisfy basic needs. Homeless people are mentioned as a specific target group. Preventative measures include the Social Insertion Income and social tariffs (transport, gas and electricity), exemption from user fees in health and exemption changes to personal income tax⁵⁴.

2. Reporting on social inclusion or anti poverty plans which include targeted measures to address homelessness

At least 7 Member States' NRP's refer to national action plans/strategies to promote social inclusion and fight poverty, which in turn include specific measures on homelessness. In several of these Member States, a national/regional

homelessness strategy is in place or being developed, and there is a clear focus on housing-led approaches and prevention in several contexts.

Ireland has an ambitious and well established integrated national homelessness strategy. The NRP⁵⁵, reports on the 'National Action Plan for Social Inclusion' (NAPSI) 2007-2016⁵⁶, which includes this homelessness strategy. In addition to the NAPSI, Ireland's 2014 NRP reports on the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), introduced in July 2013, which will transfer responsibility for recipients of rent supplement with a long-term housing need from the Department of Social Protection to local authorities. Payments under the HAP scheme will be based on the local authority differential rent means test under which the full-time employment restriction does not apply and therefore will remove a key barrier to persons on social welfare in getting back to work.

Spain's NRP⁵⁷ reveals that it is launching a homelessness strategy in the context of its 'National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2013-2016'⁵⁸. Spain commits to 'the design and roll out of a Comprehensive National Strategy for the Homeless, in line with European recommendations', indicating a genuine engagement with the issue of homelessness in the context of Europe 2020. Key priorities include developing best practices, continuing to collect data and evidence to inform policy, and a range of service developments. In addition, the NRP gives details of a State Housing Plan 2013, which includes measures to facilitate access to rental housing for vulnerable households; and to protect vulnerable people from eviction.

53 Belgium (2014) *National Reform Programme*

54 Government of Portugal (2014) *Anexos: Estratégia Europa 2020 Ponto de Situação das Metas em Portugal [Annexes: Europe 2020 Status Report of the Goals in Portugal]*

55 Government of Ireland (2014) *National Reform Programme 2014*

56 Government of Ireland (2007) *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 2016*, Dublin, Stationary Office

57 Government of Spain (2014) *Programa Nacional de Reformas de España*

58 Government of Spain, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality (2013) *National Action Plan on Social Inclusion for the Kingdom of Spain 2013-2016*



Some Member States simply highlight homelessness as a priority without detailing specific actions. **Greece's** NRP⁵⁹ refers to the 'Green Paper on National Strategy for Social Inclusion'. This document defines homeless people as a distinct group that has been neglected in terms of social support in the past. Although no strategy has been developed, homelessness is flagged as a priority to be urgently addressed. In addition, the World Bank is supporting a pilot minimum income scheme in two regions of Greece, which aims at alleviating extreme poverty. **Hungary** reports⁶⁰ on its implementation of the 'National Social Inclusion Strategy' (NSIS)⁶¹. The NSIS commits to ensuring that interventions to fight poverty reach those living in extreme poverty, and particularly children and Roma. One of the specific objectives of NSIS is to improve housing conditions and housing security, and to extend housing opportunities, particularly by developing rented accommodation. The NSIS states that there is currently 'no effective response to the problems of those affected or endangered by the challenge of homelessness and other forms of housing exclusion'. Furthermore, it claims that 'the Government is in the process of identifying a short- and medium-term action plan for the prevention and management of housing exclusion'. **Lithuania's** 'National Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion 2014-2020' commits to promoting the social integration of homeless people, although it does not specify any targeted measures. The NRP additionally reports on measures to expand social housing, plans for the implementation of the prepared Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European aid to the most deprived persons; plans to promote deinstitutionalization in relation to child/youth care; plans to support households acquire housing through provision of state-funded housing credits and compensation of a part of costs incurred for the rent of housing leased on the market or of lease expenses for families (individuals) entitled to social housing⁶².

Several of the social inclusion/anti poverty plans outlined in NRPs include the provision of targeted services for homeless people. **Poland** reports on the 'National Programme for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2014-2020'⁶³, which includes homelessness and housing exclusion. **Croatia's** '2014-2020 Strategy for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Republic of Croatia' is being adopted and will be followed by the creation of a three-year Implementation program⁶⁴. It includes specific measures to address homelessness, notably an obligation for large cities and county towns to fund accommodation and meal services for homeless people.

3. Reporting on broader social/housing policies that have an impact on homelessness

A third group of Member States do not specifically highlight measures to address homelessness directly in the NRP or by citing a broader anti poverty strategy. However, they mention broader social or housing policy measures which impact (positively or negatively) upon homelessness and housing exclusion.

Italy reports on the introduction (initially on an experimental basis in 12 major cities) of a Labour Market Inclusion Programme ('sostegno per l'inclusione attiva' - SIA) to fight extreme poverty⁶⁵. The programme focuses on poor households with children, and priority must be given to a range of vulnerable groups, including those **in poor housing conditions**. There are plans to extend the scheme throughout Italy by the end of 2014. In terms of housing policy, Italy has developed a programme of investments in social housing for more disadvantaged families. This includes a € 100 million increase in the national fund for supporting access to homes for rent, a €226 million increase of the fund for tenants in rental arrears through no fault of their own; changes to flat tax rate on controlled rent agreements; and resources of the Rent Fund being used to develop social rental agencies.

59 Greek Council of Economic Advisors, Ministry of Finance (2014) *The 2014 National Reforms Programme*

60 Government of Hungary (2014) *National Reform Programme 2014 of Hungary*

61 Hungarian Ministry of Public Administration and Justice, State Secretariat for Social Inclusion (2011) *National Social Inclusion Strategy – Extreme Poverty, Child Poverty, the Roma (2011–2020)*

62 Government of Lithuania (2014) *Lithuania: National Reform Programme 2014*, Vilnius

63 Poland, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (2014) *„Krajowy Program Przeciwdziałania Ubóstwu i Wykluczeniu Społecznemu 2020. Nowy wymiar aktywnej integracji”*, [National Programme for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2014-2020]

64 Republic of Croatia (2014) *2014-2020 Strategy for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Republic of Croatia*, Zagreb, March 2014

65 Italy, Ministry of Economy and Finance (2014) *The National Reform Programme Part 1: National Strategy and Key Initiatives*

Sweden's NRP describes changes to housing benefit. In 2014 the housing allowance for households with children was increased by SEK 466 million, which together with the increase in 2012 has given a total increase of 48 per cent compared with 2011 for an average family⁶⁶. **Finland's** NRP includes a range of measures that could help to address tight housing markets in metropolitan regions, notably an increase in the housing allowance maximum⁶⁷. Additional measures include a 5-year plot reserve with possible sanctions; greater scope for pension funds to fund housing projects from 2015; a 20-year rental housing construction model. **Malta** is renewing investment in social housing⁶⁸. Between January and February 2014 the Housing Authority paid € 164,005 in rent subsidy to private rented residences. The budget allocated for 2014 is being set to € 970,000 in view of the increasing demand on this scheme. **The Netherlands** has taken a number of important measures to reform its housing market, including social rental housing. Rent increases based on income have been introduced with a view to encouraging move on of higher income households. Low income households will be (partially) compensated for rent increases through housing benefit. Tenants whose income falls after an income based rent increase will be granted a rent reduction. Social housing companies will also have to separate their SGEI and non-SGEI activities⁶⁹. The **UK** NRP describes various interventions in the housing market including changes in rental regulation, changes to building regulation and planning processes⁷⁰.

Some Member States that do not focus on homelessness describe broader social policy reforms, which are indirectly related. **Austria** describes measures to improve employment opportunities for recipients of the means-tested minimum income benefit and qualification measures for low-skilled or unskilled workers⁷¹. In **Cyprus**, the economic and social crisis has led to substantial increases in poverty and social exclusion; creating pressure on the Social Welfare System (SWS), which the Government has now committed to reforming as part of the Economic Adjustment Programme⁷². One of its main stated aims is to minimize the consequences of the economic crisis on the most vulnerable groups. **Estonia's** NRP refers to the development of social services, and to measures to help the low-skilled unemployed people enter vocational training⁷³. **Latvia** is reforming its social security system and social assistance system, and will determine a new minimum income level⁷⁴. It also commits to improving the social services and social work systems, with a particular emphasis on deinstitutionalization. The Netherlands' NRP also cross-references its National Social Report (NSR), which provides detailed information on its integrated strategy to tackle homelessness (see below). The **UK** reports on the introduction of Universal Credit and other welfare reforms.

66 Government Offices of Sweden (2014) *Sweden's national reform programme 2014 Europe 2020 – the EU's strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*

67 Finland, Ministry of Finance (2014) *Europe 2020 Strategy: Finland's National Programme*

68 Malta, Ministry of Finance (2014) *Malta's National Reform Programme under the Europe 2020 Strategy*

69 The Netherlands, Ministry of Economic Affairs (2014) *National Reform Programme 2014 The Netherlands*

70 HM Government (2014) *Europe 2020: UK National Reform Programme 2014*

71 Austria Federal Chancellery (2014) *National Reform Programme*

72 Cyprus, Directorate General European Programmes Coordination and Development (2014), *Cyprus National Reform Programme 2014: Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth*

73 Government of Estonia (2014) *National Reform Programme "Estonia 2020"*

74 Government of Latvia (2014) *National Reform Programme of Latvia for the Implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy: Progress Report*



4. Little or no information on homelessness in the NRP

Several countries pay little or no attention to homelessness or related issues in the NRP. There are various explanations for this. In some Member States, political engagement with homelessness may be inadequate and targeted policies are insufficient or lacking. In several Member States, decentralized competence for homelessness makes reporting more challenging as strategic policy frameworks are at regional rather than national level (Germany). A number of MS are in reality developing or implementing integrated strategies to tackle homelessness, which are not reflected in the NRP. For example, **Finland's** long term homelessness strategy is described in the NSR but not referred to in the NRP. **Austria** has developed a specific indicator on registered homelessness in the context of the national Europe 2020 poverty target. This is described in the NSR, along with a range of policy measures but is absent from the NRP. Some MS like **Germany**⁷⁵ and **the Netherlands** explicitly refer the Commission to the NSR for details on measures to tackle poverty, including homelessness. In the NRP, they limit reporting to progress on the poverty target and very brief descriptions of measures although for both countries increases in homelessness numbers have been reported in recent years.

The above analysis shows that most Member States consider homelessness a priority for the fight against poverty in the main reporting mechanism on structural reforms in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy. At least seven Member States specifically refer to homelessness and outline the implementation of/progress towards integrated strategies (Bulgaria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal). A further seven refer to broader strategies to promote social inclusion/fight poverty that focus on homelessness (Ireland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Greece, Lithuania, Spain, Poland). Some of these, such as Ireland and Spain, have integrated national homelessness strategies in place or have committed to launching them. At least a further nine Member States outline broader social or housing policy reforms which have an impact on homelessness.

NATIONAL SOCIAL REPORTS

In addition to the NRPs, Member States submit additional strategic social reporting via the Social Protection Committee. In 2014 full National Social Reports (NSRs) were requested and Member States were asked to include detailed information on policies to address homelessness and housing exclusion, namely:

- Implementing strategies to prevent, confront and measure homelessness
- Improving quality and access to social, health and other targeted services for the homeless
- Improving access to adequate, affordable housing, including social housing
- Changes concerning measures and services to better prevent evictions/loss of permanent accommodation
- Reforms on housing benefits/support⁷⁶

This contrasted with 2013, when strategic social reporting took the form of a questionnaire which was not made public but which fed into the SPC annual report on developments in social protection policies⁷⁷. The latter is quite an important report as it provides a basis for part of the Joint Employment Report and is taken up in Council conclusions at the outset of the Semester. In this sense, NSRs have considerable potential to re-enforce the social reporting in the Semester and to compensate for the potential lack of detailed information on thematic priorities such as homelessness in the NRPs and the other statistical tools used to measure social developments. The inclusion of homelessness as a specific reporting requirement in the NSRs was thus an important breakthrough, which could be built upon to allow fuller analysis within the Semester in the future. This would provide a way of integrating extreme poverty into the Semester process, allowing for a fuller understanding of the social situation and the relevant policy responses in Member States.

Approximately half the Member States have used the NSR to report in some detail on their homelessness policies (e.g. **Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, UK, Austria, Netherlands, Portugal, Poland, Slovenia**⁷⁸). Some NSRs overlap with the NRPs, whilst others provide additional information.

⁷⁵ Germany, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (2014), *National Reform Programme*

⁷⁶ The Social Protection Committee, Brussels, 11 November 2013, SPC/2013.11/4, Guidance for the Strategic Social Reporting 2014

⁷⁷ Social Protection Committee (2014), *Social policy reforms for growth and cohesion: Review of recent structural reforms 2013 - Report of the Social Protection Committee*, available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7674>

⁷⁸ All NSRs are available to download from the [website](#) of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Most reporting is brief and factual, as would be expected. However, some of the Member States report on recent policy developments affecting homelessness in a partial or misleading fashion. The box below summarises some key

observations of FEANTSA members regarding the accuracy, comprehensiveness and potential impact on homelessness of relevant measures described in the NSRs.

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- In most Member States, the reporting on policies to address homelessness and housing exclusion is considered by FEANTSA members to be accurate and comprehensive. Many of the measures described are evaluated as positive by FEANTSA members. This particularly concerns Member States where comprehensive national strategies are in place or have been introduced (e.g. Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxemburg, Spain). It is important to note that some of these evolutions concern planned actions to be developed/implemented in the future. It is therefore difficult to evaluate their impact, even if they are potentially positive.
- In other cases, the reporting is more ambiguous. For example, measures described in the Hungarian NSR are not put into the context of recent reforms criminalising homelessness. The register system described has furthermore been criticized for limiting access to basic services. Furthermore, the draft budget for next year foresees a reduction of normative funding for shelters and day centres in Hungary. In Portugal, the NRP mentions homeless people as a target group of measures to safeguard the most economically vulnerable. In reality, the most vulnerable are negatively affected by the cuts, conditionality and administrative complexity of the Social Insertion Income (RSI). Furthermore, rental market reforms brought in as a result of Troika may actually contribute to increased risk of homelessness for some vulnerable tenants in the future. As regards the UK, England states that it has 'retained a strong safety net on homelessness'. In fact, the safety net has been considerably weakened through reforms of the statutory homeless system. The total number of households helped through the statutory homeless system is cited but there is no reference to the fact that the number found to be homeless within this system increased by 5% in 2012/13⁷⁹.
- In some Member States' reporting, measures are considered positive and accurately described but the degree of implementation or the resources allocated are considered insufficient. For example, in Poland FEANTSA members report that funding for the 'Programme Supporting Homeless People Inclusion' has not evolved in line with a growing number of homeless people, inflation or the development of services. The 'Programme for Social Housing Development' finances only 30-50% of housing investments, making it inaccessible for service providers working with homeless people. The Portuguese NSR refers to the National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People⁸⁰, stating that it will run until 2015. In reality the plan has not been fully operationalized because of lack of funding. There is no detail on how it will be followed up. In France, the housing led commitments described in the NRP are considered to go in the right direction. However, FEANTSA members highlight that the extent of emergency shelter places is still overall determined by the weather conditions. In addition the restructuring of regional and local governance has raised a lot of questions about responsibility for implementation. Rental regulation as proposed by the so called « ALUR » law will only be partially implemented following recent government decisions.

79 P1E data (England), available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

80 Estratégia Nacional para a Integração de Pessoas Sem-Abrigo - ENIPSA





Some countries which have submitted NSRs (e.g. **Germany, Cyprus, Lithuania, Slovakia**) have not included any detail on their homelessness policies, despite the guidance. This is a missed opportunity. **Germany** cites regional-level of competence for homelessness as the reason for not providing information. In contrast, **Austria** describes key developments at regional level. Whilst this is not comprehensive, it is more revealing of the policy realities.

A couple of Member States (**Bulgaria and Romania**) refer to homelessness as a priority in the context of anti-poverty strategies but provide no details about what policies are in place.

Several Member States' NSRs (**France, Italy, Malta, Estonia, Greece**) have yet to be published on the website of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion at the time of writing. This includes a number of countries where homelessness policies are undergoing important reforms. For example, **France**, under the auspices of DIHAL (an inter-ministerial delegation for shelter and housing) has been trying since 2012 to realign its homeless policies towards a housing-led approach⁸¹ whilst struggling to manage a growing demand for shelter⁸². **Greece** is rapidly developing policy responses to the large increase in homelessness following the crisis, including using some of the €1.5bn primary budget surplus. The Ministry of Labour has recently issued € 9.3 mn call for tenders to promote the development of housing, funding rent and utilities as well as other supportive services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

KEY OBSERVATIONS ON MEMBER STATES' REPORTING ON HOMELESSNESS IN 2014

Overall, the NSRs and the NRPs clearly demonstrate that a majority of Member States consider homelessness to be a priority both in terms of tackling the social consequences of the crisis and making progress towards the poverty target. This is welcomed by FEANTSA. The Member States' reporting shows that they are at very different stages in terms of implementing comprehensive strategies to tackle homelessness, in line with the guidance included in the Social Investment Package. Some Member States such as Spain

and the Czech Republic have introduced new homelessness strategies in 2014. Other Member States such as Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Portugal report on implementing, updating and/or reviewing existing strategies. Both housing-led approaches and prevention emerge as important in a number of Member States' policies. Overall, the following key issues emerge:

- Homelessness is understood by many Member States to include a variety of living situations and to be a dynamic and complex process.
- Local authorities play a crucial role in designing and delivering policies to address homelessness. National and regional governments can play an enabling role by providing a strategic framework to support and enable local authorities.
- Many Member States face common challenges in terms of the changing profile of people affected by homelessness – youth homelessness, homelessness amongst migrants and homelessness amongst EU citizens exercising the right to free movement are all cited by different countries.
- In line with the SIP, a growing number of countries are developing, implementing or reviewing their policies in order to move towards integrated and comprehensive strategies to tackle homelessness. The importance of housing led approaches and prevention of homelessness, as emphasised by the SIP, is clearly reflected in these strategies. However, many Member States have yet to take steps towards a strategic approach, meaning that there is much scope for progress. Furthermore, several Member States are carrying out reforms which increase (the risk of) homelessness.
- A growing number of countries recognise the importance of evidence-based strategies and are using data to underpin policy development.
- In some countries, the policy context for addressing homelessness is quite unstable and important measures have been announced since the national reports were submitted.

81 République Française, Ministère de l'écologie, du développement durable, du transport et du logement (2011) *Une stratégie du « Logement d'abord » pour les personnes sans abri ou mal logées*, DIHAL, June 2011

82 Yaouancq, F, Lebrère, A, Marpsat, M, Régnier, Legleye, V, Quaglia, M (2013), *L'hébergement des sans-domicile en 2012 - Des modes d'hébergement différents selon les structures familiales*, Insee Première N° 1455 - juillet 2013, available at: http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?ref_id=ip1455

- There is considerable diversity in the extent to which the Member States' reporting on measures to address homelessness was considered complete and accurate by FEANTSA members. The impact of the measures described is difficult to evaluate. The introduction or continuation of ambitious strategies is clearly considered a positive development.
- The situation is very diverse when it comes to the extent that Member States involve stakeholders, including NGOs working on homelessness in the preparation of NSRs or NRPs. A minority of FEANTSA members have been able to participate in the Semester in a meaningful way. For example, in Austria FEANTSA members have been involved in developing a 'registered homeless' indicator in the context of the poverty target. It is often easier for social NGOs to contribute to the National Social Reports (NSRs) than the NRPs because of existing relationships with the Ministries responsible. In many Member States, members remain largely outside the process. Nonetheless, FEANTSA analysis has overall demonstrated that homelessness is fairly well-integrated into the national inputs into the European Semester from a content perspective.
- Overall, there is clear potential to build on the dynamic which is evident in the MS' reporting in order to support better progress on homelessness in the future through the Semester process. However, FEANTSA's analysis also indicates a problem of fragmentation in social reporting and analysis. The social dimension of the Semester remains relatively weak and the reporting does not capture the full picture of policies to address poverty nor the impact of broader reforms on poverty. The weaknesses in social reporting combined with a lack of data and analytical capacity at EU level means that complex issues like homelessness risk passing under the radar in the context of Europe 2020. FEANTSA's analysis reveals relatively strong reporting on homelessness from national level. However, this is only weakly translated into the analysis of social policy reform at EU level.

Country Specific Recommendations

Country Specific Recommendations are the culmination of the European Semester. They focus on what Member States should be doing over the next 12-18 months to contribute to sustainable, inclusive growth. They follow the Commission's analysis of the national situation, based on the reporting summarized above and other sources. The Commission's in-depth analysis is summarized in a Commission Staff Working Document (CSWD) for each country. CSRs are based on the general priorities identified in the Annual Growth Survey.

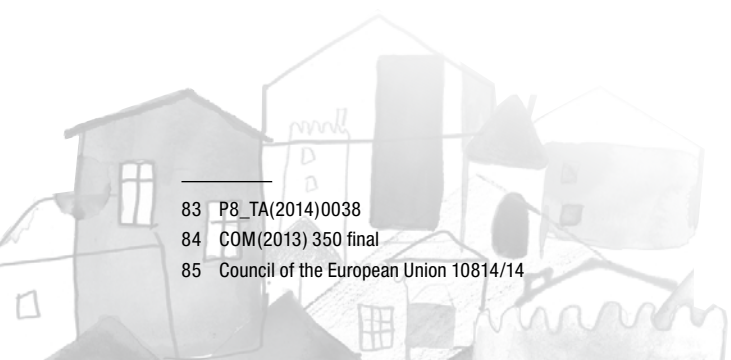
There are grounds for the European Commission to issue CSRs on homelessness when relevant. This is suggested in the SIP, which proposed CSRs as a policy coordination mechanism in the field of homelessness. The European Parliament has strongly encouraged the Commission to make recommendations on homelessness when relevant⁸³. In 2013, the Commission appeared to lay the groundwork for future CSRs on homelessness by stating in its overall communication accompanying the CSRs that 'Member States need to pay more attention to combating different forms of poverty – child poverty, **homelessness**, in-work poverty and over-indebtedness of households'⁸⁴. However, no CSRs on homelessness were given in 2014, despite the significant and increasing levels of homelessness in many Member States and the policy guidance set forth in the SIP.

Twelve Member States received CSRs on poverty and social exclusion: Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. These focus on unemployment benefits; social assistance; transitions from income support to employment; child poverty and Roma inclusion. FEANTSA has welcomed the Commission's efforts to promote social inclusion through CSRs. However, it has joined other stakeholders in stressing that the level of ambition on tackling poverty through genuine social investment, particularly when it comes to homelessness, is currently inadequate. The Social Protection Committee highlighted its concern about fewer explicit recommendations on poverty reduction in 2014 compared to 2013⁸⁵.

83 P8_TA(2014)0038

84 COM(2013) 350 final

85 Council of the European Union 10814/14





An additional four Member States received recommendations relating to their housing markets (UK, Sweden, Netherlands, and Portugal) in the framework of the macroeconomic imbalances procedure. Other fields for CSRs that could be relevant for homelessness policies are health and use of European Social and Investment Funds.

Some of the 2014 CSRs in the area of fighting poverty and social exclusion have quite strong potential to support the fight against homelessness. For example, Spain received the Recommendation that it should 'Implement the 2013-2016 National Action Plan on Social Inclusion (NAPSI) and assess its effectiveness covering the full range of its objectives'. The NAPSI includes developing an integrated national homelessness strategy, which could be monitored in the follow up of this CSR.

Recommendations to develop/implement integrated poverty and social exclusion strategies, enhance adequacy and coverage of social assistance and unemployment benefits, support those furthest from the labour market, address Roma exclusion, address child poverty, and improve social services are all potentially relevant to homelessness. Nonetheless, the CSRs' strong and at times simplistic focus on activation and employment neglects the complex nature of particular forms of poverty such as homelessness. If the Semester is to make a real impact on complex social challenges like homelessness, more targeted recommendations, based on the Social Investment Package (SIP) policy guidance are likely to be needed. This would go some way to protect against the risk of creaming in the framework of the Semester.

Recommendations on housing markets (Sweden, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Portugal) focus on macroeconomic stability and neglect the relationship between housing markets and poverty and social exclusion. This is at odds with the integrated approach of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Some of the CSRs on housing markets could have been given a clearer social dimension. For example, the Commission draws attention to the risky housing market of the UK and the problem of 'continuing structural undersupply of housing' which is driving house price increases, especially in Lon-

don and the South East⁸⁶. This could have been linked into the urgent need to tackle rising homelessness and housing exclusion in the framework of the poverty target. In 2013, the UK was encouraged to review the length of standard tenancies in order to stimulate the private rental market. This recommendation was dropped in 2014. There was arguably a missed opportunity to link it to the social consequences of the crisis by pointing out that the end of a short hold tenancy (unique in the EU) was the reason for homelessness for 22% of those accepted as such by local authorities in England in 2012/2013⁸⁷. Making this sort of link to social inclusion imperatives could arguably improve the credibility of the social dimension of the Semester process.

In order to be credible, CSRs must be balanced and consistent. However, the social CSRs focus disproportionately on cost-effectiveness and not enough on investment to generate long term human, social and economic value. Furthermore, CSRs on poverty and social exclusion are addressed to Southern and Eastern Member States, and some liberal welfare regimes in North-West Europe. Social-democratic or corporatist welfare regimes in Northern and Western Member States are not targeted, despite the fact that some face great challenges in this area, including rising levels of homelessness. Such inconsistencies undermine the Semester as a credible means to make progress on poverty.

Legitimate questions have been raised about the relevance and sustainability of the Semester process, and particularly its social dimension. The European Commission's own analysis has raised concerns about the level of implementation of CSRs. Approximately 30% of recommendations in the social area have actually been implemented to some degree⁸⁸. Re-enforcing analytical capacity in order to fully grasp social realities in the Member States could go some way to improving the situation. Better monitoring of homelessness and policies to address it would make an important contribution in this respect.

Clearly, the CSRs are a delicate exercise and require a careful balancing of priorities. There is simply not scope to give recommendations on all important social issues. Therefore, the EU Institutions and the Member States should resist the

⁸⁶ Council of the European Union 10807/14

⁸⁷ P1E data (England), available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

⁸⁸ Deroose, S and Griesse, J 'Implementing economic reforms – are EU Member States responding to European Semester recommendations?', ECFIN Economic Brief, Issue 37, October 2014, European Union, 2014

temptation to mainstream everything in the Semester. They should therefore re-enforce parallel instruments that support the fight against poverty and social exclusion through policy analysis, coordination, mutual learning, transnational exchange and capacity building, particularly on thematic priorities such as homelessness. The EPAP and the Social OMC can play an important role here. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the development of thematic work plans led by the European Commission on specific issues such as homelessness (as called for by the EU Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion)⁸⁹, or the idea of an EU homelessness strategy as called for by the European Parliament and other institutions.

Commission Staff Working Documents

The CSRs are based on detailed analysis carried out by the Commission and summarized in Commission Staff Working Documents. These documents provide insight into the rationale behind the CSRs. It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a full analysis of all the CSWDs but some striking issues relating to homelessness are worth highlighting.

In several CSWDs, the Commission takes a stance on measures relating to homelessness. For example, the Commission makes the following analysis in relation to the Czech Republic:

'In the Czech Republic, an above-average incidence of poverty or social exclusion is reported for the unemployed, single-parent families with at least one child, and households with three or more children. In January 2014, the government approved a comprehensive 2014-20 Strategy on Social Inclusion, following a strategy on preventing and tackling homelessness (up to 2020) from October 2013. These strategies represent a step in the right direction as they provide a complex approach to fighting poverty, combining access to housing, social services, access to health services and other elements. However, social housing remains deficient and steps taken in this area are not yet satisfactory'⁹⁰.

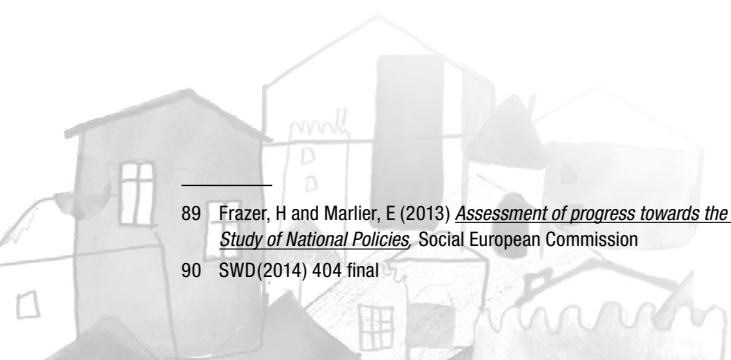
This type of analysis shows how the Semester process can be used to support Member States to tackle homelessness as a form of poverty and social exclusion, using the SIP policy guidance with its focus on integrated, comprehensive strategies as a reference. It shows critical engagement based on detailed analysis of social realities and of the Member States' own reporting on their priorities in the area of poverty.

The CSWDs reveal the potential for more joined-up thinking regarding different objectives of the Semester and Europe 2020 in several cases. One striking area where more links could be made between social and economic policies is housing. Spain is used as a case-study below to illustrate this point.

Spain's housing market is analysed in great detail in the CSWD from a perspective of macro-economic stability. The Commission examines temporary measures adopted by the Spanish Parliament under Law 1/2013 on strengthening protections for mortgage debtors, on debt restructuring and on social housing. This law extends the application of debt restructurings, provides for a partial debt discharge after foreclosure on primary residences, and establishes a temporary two-year moratorium on evictions of very vulnerable debtors. The Commission rightly points out that take-up has been limited and calls for a careful evaluation of the effectiveness of these temporary measures and strengthened consumer protection. This rejoins the analysis of FEANTSA members who point out the eligibility criteria for the moratorium are too strict to reach many vulnerable households. The link between economic and social imperatives could usefully be made more explicit here. Similarly, the Commission analyses Spain's new measures in the area of social housing - namely a reorientation towards rental and an agreement with banks to establish a social housing scheme (fondo social de vivienda), where banks transfer a proportion of their housing stock into a social rental sector. As the Com-

89 Frazer, H and Marlier, E (2013) *Assessment of progress towards the Europe 2020 social inclusion objectives: Main findings and suggestions on the way forward: A Study of National Policies*, Social European Commission

90 SWD(2014) 404 final





mission points out, take-up rates have been relatively low, probably due to restrictive eligibility criteria. Better linking this type of analysis to the EU's anti poverty agenda and the implementation of Spain's new homelessness strategy would be an excellent way to promote more ambition on generating social rental housing going forward. This could meet a dual objective of helping to balance the housing market and tackling poverty. Spain is congratulated in the CSWD for the liberalization of its rental market. In the interest of a balanced approach to Europe 2020, it would be useful to consider the impact of such measures on homelessness and housing exclusion and make recommendations regarding counterbalancing safeguards.

The European Semester seeks to promote constructive dialogue between the European Commission and Member States on the design of social and economic policies. There is therefore a very strong case for taking better account of homelessness in the CSWDs and, when warranted, in CSRs. Progression or regression in the most extreme form of social exclusion is a salient indicator of whether structural reforms are heading towards smart, sustainable, inclusive growth. Secondly, homelessness is a policy area where many Member States are making high cost mistakes and where a shift towards more integrated, personalized, social investment based interventions can have a considerable social and financial impact. In future editions of the Semester, the analytical capacity to capture these evolutions and make appropriate recommendations will be an important test of the credibility of social Europe.

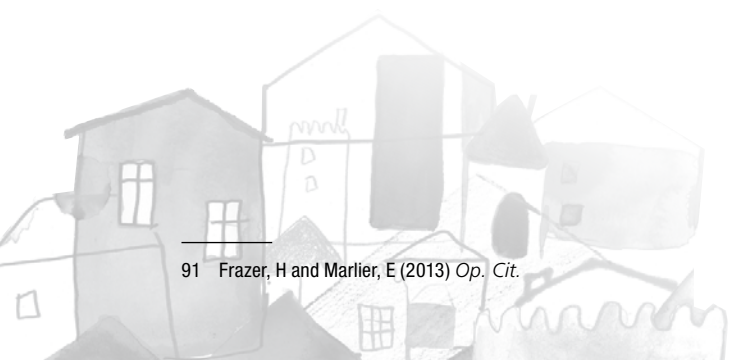
Conclusions

Key Learning Points from the 2014 European Semester

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- Overall progress towards the poverty target of the Europe 2020 Strategy is lacking and there is an urgent need to use the Semester in order to re-enforce efforts.
- Homelessness is an important social reality to capture in assessing the social situation in Member States.
- Homelessness is already integrated into the European Semester as a priority within the fight against poverty and social exclusion. It appears that the Semester process can be of added value by contributing to the multi level governance of policies in this field
- Nonetheless, FEANTSA's analysis has shown that the overall inclusion of poverty and social exclusion, and homelessness in particular, within the European Semester has some important weaknesses. The integrated nature of the Europe 2020 strategy, with its focus on smart, sustainable, inclusive growth has not been consistently translated into the Semester. Furthermore, the Social Investment Package has not been operationalized in the Semester⁹¹.
- The 2014 AGS focused on employment and the social impact of the crisis as a key priority. This is a rather restrictive approach to the fight against poverty and social exclusion, which does not reflect the full ambition of the target or the horizontal social clause of the Lisbon strategy. Nonetheless, it provided space for social issues to be taken into account within the Semester.
- Despite fragmentation, Member States' reporting (both in the NRPs and the NSRs) demonstrates that homelessness is considered a priority in the context of Europe 2020 and the poverty target. Positive developments include the fact that several Member States report on new integrated homelessness strategies, as called for by the SIP. Some have introduced specific sub targets on homelessness. Housing-led strategies and prevention emerge as clear priorities. This shows that there is potential to build on the use of the Semester to monitor and support policies to tackle homelessness.
- Social analysis and recommendations by the European Commission and the Social Protection Committee, including on homelessness, has some important gaps and weaknesses. This makes it very difficult for the Semester to deliver fully in the social area, particularly as regards complex and urgent social problems like homelessness. At European level, the emphasis placed on homelessness by Member States in their reporting is not fully taken up at the stage of analysis and recommendations by the Commission or the SPC. The potential to advance on homelessness as a key priority in the social area is thus underexploited.
- There is a clear need to re-enforce analytical capacity at EU level in order to fully grasp the social situation in Member States and arrive at useful, credible CSRs in the poverty area, including in relation to homelessness.
- CSRs are not currently being used to support better progress on homelessness within the Semester framework. This is a missed opportunity to encourage full implementation of the SIP and support progress towards the poverty target.

91 Frazer, H and Marlier, E (2013) *Op. Cit.*





Recommendations

FEANTSA makes the following 10 recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of the European Semester in supporting the fight against homelessness as part of efforts to tackle poverty and social exclusion:

1. The European Commission should ensure a stronger emphasis on addressing poverty and social exclusion in the Annual Growth Survey. The 2015 AGS does not include the social consequences of the crisis, which is a cause for concern.
2. All Member States should report on policies and developments in the area of poverty and social exclusion, including homelessness, within the National Reform Programmes and/or their National Social Reports. Member States should focus in particular on efforts to develop, implement and review integrated, comprehensive strategies to confront homelessness in line with the SIP policy guidance.
3. Member States should consider developing national sub targets and indicators on homelessness in the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, building on the experiences of countries like Denmark and Austria. The European Commission should consider setting sub targets and interim targets on poverty at EU level in order to support this. Such sub targets would be particularly relevant given the lack of progress towards the poverty target and the ongoing mid term review of Europe 2020.
4. The Commission and the Social Protection Committee should more fully exploit the Semester to monitor and support Member States' efforts to develop, implement and review integrated, comprehensive strategies to confront homelessness in line with the SIP policy guidance.
5. In order to achieve the above, the European Commission should urgently re-enforce analytical capacity at EU level on poverty and social exclusion, including in the area of homelessness. This could support full implementation of the JAF and address concerns about creaming due to the fact that existing indicators used in the SPPM and social scoreboard do not capture homelessness or extreme poverty. The thematic expertise of European NGOs should be better mobilized in this context.
6. The European Commission should prepare more extensive and coherent Country Specific Recommendations for all Member States on tackling poverty and social exclusion, including on homelessness where relevant (see FEANTSA proposals below). The Commission could use the CSRs to promote a social investment approach to social policy, including addressing homelessness, in line with the guidance laid out in the SIP.
7. The European Commission should introduce social impact assessments of all economic CSRs to ensure their consistency with poverty target and social dimension of Semester.
8. The European Commission and Member States should ensure timely and transparent involvement of key stakeholders including NGOs working with homeless people in the development, implementation and monitoring of NRPs, NSRs and CSRs. A central aspect of their contribution is expertise on social realities, especially as regards issues such as homelessness where there is a lack of EU level data.
9. The role of the European Parliament and EU advisory bodies (Committee of the Regions and European Economic and Social Committee) in the Semester should be strengthened. In particular the European Commission should respond to the European Parliament's demand for better monitoring, reporting and recommendations in the social area and particularly on homelessness⁹².
10. Instruments that complement the Semester in the social area should be maintained and re-enforced in order to safeguard the social dimension of Europe 2020. This includes the Social OMC and the EPAP. The European Commission should consider developing a concrete programme to operationalize the SIP, with work plans on key priorities such as confronting homelessness.

Proposals for 2015 CSRs

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At the outset of the 2015 Semester, this report ends by putting forward some proposals of CSRs that could support Member States to make progress on tackling homelessness as part of efforts to promote socially inclusive growth in the European Union. The proposals are not comprehensive but build on the expertise of FEANTSA membership, detailed

analysis of recent developments in the Member States, and on previous social analysis and recommendations in the Semester. The aim is to demonstrate how the Semester could support better progress on homelessness in the context of structural reforms to deliver on the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy.

Member State: BELGIUM

CSR Proposal: Continue to develop homelessness and housing exclusion policies in line with the policy guidance outlined in the Social Investment Package, taking particular account of the vulnerability of people with a migrant background to homelessness.

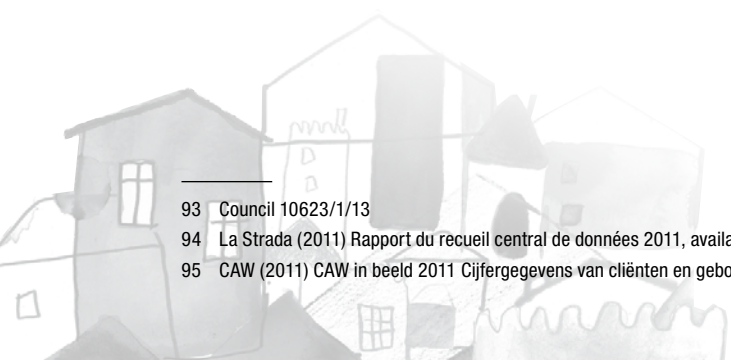
Justification: Belgium outlined a range of measures in its NRPs of 2013 and 2014 which are in line with a social investment approach to tackling homelessness. These measures, which include testing Housing First models, can make an important contribution to progress towards tackling poverty.

In 2013, Belgium received the Country Specific Recommendation that it should ‘develop comprehensive social-inclusion and labour market strategies for people with a migrant background’⁹³. In this context, it is important to note that people with a migrant background can be at particular risk of homelessness and housing exclusion. Data from homeless services indicate that people with a migrant background make up an important part of the homeless population. Data from services in the Brussels region indicates that 62% are nationals of an EU MS with 55% having Belgian nationality⁹⁴. One third have an African nationality; of these 36% are Moroccan and 25% Congolese. The client registration system for the NGO welfare sector in Flanders shows that 26.6 % of homeless service users have a migrant background⁹⁵. Lack of access to housing can compound exclusion from the labour market, limit educational attainment, re-enforce social exclusion and thus lead to social, economic and human costs. The importance of the link between housing and participation in the labour market is well established. It is therefore very important that social-inclusion and labour market strategies for people with a migrant background are integrated with measures to address homelessness and housing exclusion.

93 Council 10623/1/13

94 La Strada (2011) Rapport du recueil central de données 2011, available at: <http://www.lstb.be/index23.asp?hl=f&cat=84>

95 CAW (2011) CAW in beeld 2011 Cijfergegevens van cliënten en geboden hulverlening, available at: <http://issuu.com/annmelis/docs/caw-in-beeld-cijfers2011-web>




Member State: CZECH REPUBLIC

CSR Proposal: Implement the announced 'Concept of Solution of the Homelessness Issue in the Czech Republic 2020'. In line with the Social Investment Package, place particular emphasis on prevention and early intervention to support pathways out of homelessness and into affordable housing.

Justification: The Czech Republic's 2013 and 2014 NRP reported on the implementation of the 'Concept of Solution of the Homelessness Issue in the Czech Republic 2020'. It is a strategic government document to address homelessness, and will be based on preventive action, as well as on support related to existing services, access to housing, access to medical care and improvement of awareness and cooperation between relevant stakeholders.

The development of this concept, in conjunction with stakeholders, is an important and welcome step forward and seems to be very much in line with the social investment approach to tackling homelessness. The Social Investment Package calls on MS to 'confront homelessness through comprehensive strategies based on prevention, housing-led approaches and reviewing regulations and practices on eviction'⁹⁶. The package includes detailed policy guidance on homelessness⁹⁷. As it proceeds towards the implementation of the new strategy, the Czech Republic should ensure that it takes account of this guidance, allocates sufficient resources and makes the best use of relevant European Structural and Investment Funds.

Member State: DENMARK

CSR Proposal: Take measures to address homelessness and housing exclusion amongst young people.

Justification: Youth homelessness has increased considerably in Denmark since 2009. According to the national homelessness survey in 2009, 633 young people between the age of 18 and 24 were recorded as homeless in the count week. This figure increased to 1,002 in 2011 and 1,138 in 2013, an increase of 80 per cent in four years.⁹⁸ The reasons for these young people becoming homeless are multiple. Financial difficulties, mental illness, and addiction are the main reasons that young people are becoming homeless.

Young people face particular challenges when it comes to income, and thus in accessing affordable housing. This is illustrative of a shortfall in social safety nets and is not in line with social investment throughout the life course. In April 2013, the age group for receiving a lower level of benefit was expanded to apply to people aged 18 to 29⁹⁹. Young people on cash benefits receive the same amount as students but have no means by which to supplement this income e.g. through student work. In 2013, Denmark received a CSR on addressing youth exclusion by improving vocational training and increasing apprenticeships. In 2014, Denmark was advised to improve the employability of people at the margins of the labour market and improve educational outcomes. Given the increase in youth homelessness demonstrated above, it would be useful to specifically focus on access to housing for youth, especially given that this can be a major factor in labour market, education and training participation.

⁹⁶ COM(2013) 83 final

⁹⁷ SWD(2013) 42 final

⁹⁸ Benjaminsen, L. & Lauritzen, H. (2013), *Hjemløshed i Danmark 2013. National kortlægning*. [Homelessness in Denmark 2013. National mapping], Copenhagen, SFI.

⁹⁹ Previously the upper limit was 24

Despite a relatively large social housing stock, a review of Denmark's national homelessness strategy has highlighted that municipalities face an increasing lack of affordable housing available for allocation for people with a relatively low income.¹⁰⁰ This is especially the case in Denmark's two largest cities Copenhagen and Aarhus which both experience a general population growth exceeding 1 per cent. annually. The review has also highlighted the specific challenges municipalities face in catering for young people with complex needs.

Denmark is one of the Member States to have implemented an ambitious, integrated strategy to tackle homelessness. It has valuable experiences in implementing the Housing First strategy in its National Homelessness Strategy, which was implemented in 2009 and whose results were evaluated in June 2013. This strategy was recently the subject of a European Peer Review in the framework of the Social OMC¹⁰¹. Despite the ambition and success of this strategy overall, youth homelessness has risen dramatically and emerges as a "weak point". It is therefore highly pertinent to focus on this specific issue in a CSR.

Member State: FRANCE

CSR proposal: France should continue to make progress towards an integrated, housing-led strategy to tackle homelessness.

Justification: INSEE, the national statistics institute reports that approximately 141 500 people were homeless in metropolitan France in 2012. This represents an increase of 50% since 2001. This is a significant social challenge. Homelessness was designated a "National Priority" for the period 2008-2012. In this context, France launched a "re-foundation" of its homelessness policy. The aim was a reform of the overall system of shelter and accommodation for homeless people. The objective was to reduce homelessness significantly by creating a comprehensive public service based on the principles of Housing First. This approach is very much in line with the SIP guidance and could engender significant gains in efficiency and effectiveness. In order for this to be achieved, a full implementation of the structural reforms foreseen in the "re-foundation" is required.

Member State: HUNGARY

CSR Proposal: Hungary should stop criminalizing homelessness and develop an integrated strategy that supports pathways into affordable rental housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and housing exclusion.

Justification: In 2013 and 2014, Hungary received the following CSR: 'In order to alleviate poverty, implement streamlined and integrated policy measures to reduce poverty significantly, particularly among children and Roma'. Given recent developments in homelessness policy in Hungary, it would be helpful to use future CSRs to call for urgent measures to stop the criminalization of homeless people in Hungary and support a shift towards more appropriate policies in line with fundamental rights. The modification of the 2012 Petty Offences Act has criminalized homelessness, making rough sleeping in certain public spaces punishable by fine, community service and, in the case of 'repeat offenders', prison sentences. In November 2012, the Hungarian Constitutional Court ruled that criminalizing homelessness in this way was unconstitutional, arguing that it should be addressed as a social and not a criminal issue. However, changes were subsequently made to the constitution to enable the modification of the 2012 Petty Offences Act, which has now been adopted. Criminalizing homelessness cannot be considered to contribute to the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy. Such measures are not in line with a social investment approach and furthermore do not respect the fundamental rights of people in highly vulnerable situations. They are entirely contrary to effective, efficient social protection systems and active inclusion policies which enable and support citizens throughout their lives. The measures are particularly striking in the context of a lack of affordable, adequate rental housing options and the absence of a sustainable housing allowance system.

100 Rambøll & SFI, (2013), Hjemløsestrategien, Afsluttende rapport [The homelessness strategy. Final report]. Copenhagen, Rambøll & SFI.

101 See European Commission website for more info <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1884&furtherNews=yes>

**Member State: IRELAND**

CSR Proposal: Make progress on tackling homelessness by implementing both the national homelessness strategy and the new social housing strategy, ensuring adequate linkages between the two.

Justification: Ireland currently has 90,000 households on waiting lists for social housing. Implementing an ambitious social housing strategy and ensuring that this is properly integrated with the strategy to end homelessness could make a decisive impact on homelessness and help to support a balanced and well functioning housing market in the future.

Member State: LITHUANIA

CSR Proposal: Further develop measures to promote the social inclusion of the most vulnerable, including by addressing homelessness in line with the policy guidance contained in the Social Investment Package.

Justification: In 2014, Lithuania received a CSR on ensuring adequate coverage of social assistance for those most in need. Homeless people are undoubtedly amongst the most in need, and targeted interventions are required to address the multiple barriers that they often face to active inclusion.

Member State: LUXEMBOURG

CSR Proposal: Implement the announced 'National Strategy to Counter Homelessness and Housing Exclusion'. In line with the social investment package, place particular emphasis on prevention and early intervention to support pathways out of homelessness and into affordable housing.

Justification: In its 2013 and 2014 NRP Luxembourg described its national strategy to counter homelessness and housing exclusion for the period 2013-2020. The strategy was adopted in January 2013. Implementing this strategy through appropriate social investment in housing and services could make a decisive impact on homelessness in Luxembourg and would be in line with the social investment approach.

Member State: THE NETHERLANDS

CSR Proposal: As part of efforts to address poverty and social exclusion, ensure that all people in need of emergency shelter are able to access these services

Justification: According to national estimations, the Netherlands has experienced an increase in homelessness of 17 % between 2010 and 2012 (23,300 to 27,300)¹⁰². Access to shelter is increasingly regulated by conditions such as 'local connection'. Those who cannot access shelter face destitution and this is a breach of their human rights. This has been addressed recently by the European Committee for Social Rights and indirectly by the European Court of Human Rights¹⁰³.

¹⁰² National Statistics Office, CBS (2009-2012) *Dakloos in Nederland*, [Homeless in the Netherlands]

¹⁰³ In its decision on Collective complaint 90/2013, the European Committee for Social Rights held that access to emergency accommodation shall be provided to all, regardless of residency status. Such shelters must meet health, safety and hygiene standards and have basic amenities. The Committee's decision mentions among the international law references article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which prohibits torture, inhuman or degrading treatment. Article 3 has been used by the European Court on Human Rights to prohibit the return of an Afghani family to Italy in the *Tarakhel v. Switzerland* case because once returned to Italy they would have faced inadequate accommodation in reception centres for asylum seekers. Since article 3 ECHR does not allow any exceptions or limitations, not providing emergency accommodation to any individual, regardless of the residence status, would be in breach of the ECHR

Member State: POLAND

CSR proposal: Poland should develop an integrated national strategy to combat homelessness and housing exclusion.

Justification: Poland's 2013 NRP stated that 'although Poland does not yet have a homelessness strategy, it seems to have laid the foundations for a strategy with clear standards for the functioning of local services aimed at homeless people'. Given the call for Member States to develop a strategy in the SIP, it would be appropriate for the Commission to propose a recommendation to this effect. The 2014 NRP recognizes that housing support services are required as part of efforts to tackle poverty and social exclusion. Furthermore, the priorities for Operational Programming of the structural funds could support the implementation of such a strategy (active inclusion enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, investing in health and social infrastructure which contributes promoting social inclusion and the transition from institutional to community-based service).

Member State: PORTUGAL

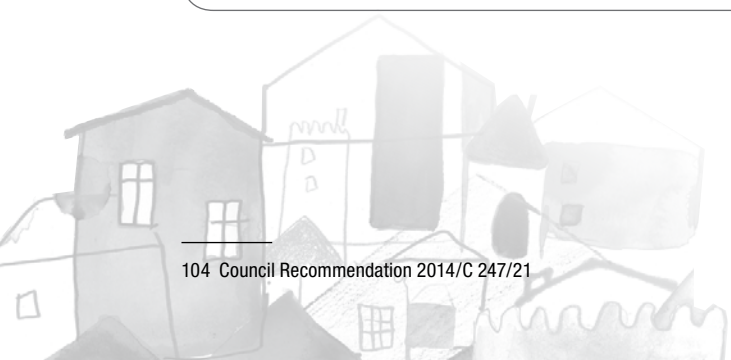
CSR Proposal: Portugal should extend and implement fully its National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People – Prevention, Intervention and Follow-Up, 2009–2015 (ENIPSA). European Structural and Investment funds could be used to support this as appropriate. The strategy should be in line with the policy guidance of the Social Investment Package, including promoting a housing-led approach. Efforts should also be made to increase the accessibility of social insertion income.

Justification: The National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People – Prevention, Intervention and Follow-Up, 2009–2015 (ENIPSA) is very much in line with the policy guidance on confronting homelessness issued in the Social Investment Package. The Portuguese government refers to the strategy in its reporting under the Semester as part of efforts to tackle poverty and social exclusion. However, its implementation has in fact been severely curtailed by a lack of resources and it is currently unclear how it will be followed up. At the same time, the risk of homelessness has increased following the crisis.

Member State: ROMANIA

CSR Proposal: In order to support the ongoing social assistance reform develop a homelessness data collection system to inform the planning and delivery of social services.

Justification: In 2013, Romania received the CSR that it should 'complete social assistance reform by adopting the relevant legislation and strengthening its link with activation measures'¹⁰⁴. In 2014, Romania received the recommendation that it should 'continue reform of social assistance, strengthening its links with activation measures'. However, it is also necessary for Romania to invest in social services to promote active inclusion, including of the most excluded citizens. In this context, a data collection system that enables a clear understanding of homelessness is required. This would be a first step towards a targeted policy underpinned by a comprehensive approach and social investment, as foreseen in the SIP. At the current time, there is no reliable evidence base that can inform reforms of homeless services to improve level and adequacy, in line with the guidance set out in the Social Investment Package.





Member State: SWEDEN

CSR Proposal: Ensure that any measures taken to improve the efficiency of the housing market are complemented by targeted measures to support pathways into affordable rental housing for people experiencing/at risk of homelessness and housing exclusion.

Justification: In 2013 and 2014, Sweden received CSRs on its housing market. These called for reform of the rent-setting system, liberalization of the rental market, simplification of the planning process and use of municipal land for housing development. In this context, it is important to underline that Sweden has experienced considerable increases in homelessness in recent years. Addressing this increase should be one of the central objectives of future housing policies. National survey data shows an increase of 29 % in homelessness¹⁰⁵ between 2005 (6,600) and 2011 (8,500). It also shows an increase of 55 % in the number of homeless people sharing with friends, relatives and others between 2005 (4,400) and 2011 (6,800)¹⁰⁶. A large so-called “secondary housing market” has developed, which consists of flats rented by local authorities (mostly from municipal housing companies) and sublet to people who are homeless at an affordable rate and subject to various conditions. The number of people in these situations is increasing because there are very limited affordable housing options available for people to move on to. The growth of the secondary housing market is an attempt by municipalities to manage homelessness in a context of a severe shortage of housing in most parts of Sweden, especially rental housing. This situation is not sustainable. Most municipal housing companies do not have any system of allocation that allows priority for people in need. With the very long waiting lists for social housing in cities such as Stockholm, targeted measures are increasingly needed to provide for people who are excluded from the housing market.

33

Member State: SPAIN

CSR Proposal: Finalize and implement the strategy to address homelessness and housing exclusion announced in the 2014 NRP. This should cover prevention, take a housing-led approach and include regulations and practices on eviction, as per the SIP. It should create a framework for social investment to address both support needs and the need for accessible, affordable rental housing.

Justification: Spain's 2014 NRP commits to ‘the design and roll out of a Comprehensive National Strategy for the Homeless, in line with European recommendations’. Key priorities include developing best practices, continuing to collect data and evidence to inform policy, and a range of service developments. In addition, the NRP gives details of a State Housing Plan 2013, which includes measures to facilitate access to rental housing for vulnerable households; and to protect vulnerable people from eviction. The planned homelessness strategy is part of the National Action Plan on Social Inclusion. Spain's 2014 CSRs included the request to ‘implement the 2013-2016 National Action Plan on Social Inclusion and assess its effectiveness covering the full range of its objectives’¹⁰⁷.

There are justifiable grounds to call for the full implementation of the national homelessness strategy at all relevant levels. Significant increases in homelessness are reported from local surveys like in Barcelona (+ 45 % between 2008 and 2013) and Madrid (+13.5 % between 2010 and 2012). A periodic national survey identified a 5% increase in the number of users of services¹⁰⁸ for homeless people between 2005 (21,901) and 2012 (22,932)¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁵ Covering in this instance rough sleepers, shelter users, hostel users, and homeless people in institutions (hospitals, prisons etc) with no home to go.

¹⁰⁶ NBH6W (2011) *Hemlöshet och utestängning från bostadsmarknaden 2011 – omfattning och karaktär* [Homelessness and Exclusion From the Housing Market 2011 – Extent and Character], National Board of Health and Welfare, Stockholm cited in Busch Geertsema, V., Benjaminsen, L., Filipović Hrast, M and Pleace, N (forthcoming) *Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States, A statistical update*, EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness No 4, Brussels

¹⁰⁷ Council Recommendation 2014/C 247/08

¹⁰⁸ NB the survey has a limited scope and is not an estimate of total homelessness in Spain

¹⁰⁹ INE (2012) *Encuesta a las personas sin hogar 2012* (metodología, diseño de registros y micro datos) [Survey to the homeless 2012 (methodology, design of records and micro data)]

A CSR on the foreseen homelessness strategy would be a logical follow up of this year's call for implementation of the NPSI. Furthermore, it would link well to the analysis the Commission has done on Spain's housing market in the 2014 CSWD. The Commission examines temporary measures adopted by the Spanish Parliament under Law 1/2013 on strengthening protections for mortgage debtors, on debt restructuring and on social housing. It rightly points out that take-up have been limited and calls for a careful evaluation of the effectiveness of these temporary measures and strengthened consumer protection. Similarly, the Commission analyses Spain's new measures in the area of social housing - namely a reorientation towards rental and an agreement with banks to establish a social housing scheme (fondo social de vivienda), where banks transfer a proportion of their housing stock into a social rental sector. As the Commission points out, take-up rates have been low, possibly due to restrictive eligibility criteria. A CSR on homelessness could be used to link social and housing/macroeconomic policy and encourage a genuine social investment approach involving measures to promote affordable rental housing in the context of rebalancing the housing market.

Member State: UNITED KINGDOM

CSR: Take urgent measures to prevent and address increases in homelessness and housing exclusion where these are occurring, especially as regards households with children.

Justification:

The CSRs have consistently highlighted the need to address concerns about the functioning of the UK housing market and about child poverty in the UK.

One of the major consequences of the imbalances in (parts of) the UK housing market combined with the impact of the crisis, welfare reforms and changes in housing policy appears to be a resurgence of homelessness in some areas. In England there has been an increase from 1,768 counted and estimated rough sleepers in 2009/10 to 2,414 in 2012/13¹¹⁰. Acceptance as homeless and in priority need under homelessness laws in England have risen from 40,020 in England in 2009/10 to 53,770 in 2012/13¹¹¹.

The Commission's Recommendation Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage has called on Member States to 'support families and children at risk of homelessness by avoiding evictions, unnecessary moves, separation from families as well as providing temporary shelter and long-term housing solutions'¹¹². It is clear that homelessness is an important dimension of child poverty and that recent developments in (parts of) the UK constitute a cause for concern. The UK government's commission on child poverty and social mobility has itself identified clear links between the UK housing market, child poverty and youth exclusion¹¹³. Local authorities throughout the UK have a statutory duty to house homeless households subject to various conditions¹¹⁴. In discharging this duty, local authorities may use temporary accommodation until housing can be offered. Data is therefore collected on the number of households with children placed in this type of accommodation. In England 2,130 homeless families with children were in bed and breakfast style accommodation as at 30 June 2014. This is an increase of 2 per cent from 2,080 a year earlier. Overall, the number of families with dependent children placed in B&B style accommodation increased from 630 at the end of March 2010 to 2,130 at the end of June 2014¹¹⁵.

110 DCLG Rough Sleeping statistics (England) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2013>

111 P1E data (England), available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

112 COM(2013) 778 final

113 Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2014) *State of the Nation 2014: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain*, OGL, London

114 NB There are important differences the legislation between the devolved administrations of the UK

115 P1e data (England), available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/families-in-bed-and-breakfast-accommodation-for-more-than-6-weeks>



Annex 1 European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion

Situation	Category		Operational category		Living situation
Homeless	Roofless	1	People living rough	1.1	Public space or external space
		2	People staying in a night shelter	2.1	Night shelter
	Houseless	3	People in accommodation for the homeless	3.1 3.2 3.3	Homeless hostel Temporary accommodation Transitional supported accommodation
		4	People in women's shelters	4.1	Women's shelter accommodation
		5	People in accommodation for immigrants	5.1 5.2	Temporary accommodation or reception centre Migrant workers' accommodation
		6	People due to be released from institutions	6.1 6.2 6.3	Penal institution Medical institution Children's institution or home
		7	People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)	7.1 7.2	Residential care for older homeless people Supported accommodation for formerly homeless persons
Housing Exclusion	Insecure	8	People living in insecure accommodation	8.1 8.2 8.3	Temporarily with family or friends No legal (sub)tenancy Illegal occupation of land
		9	People living under threat of eviction	9.1 9.2	Legal orders enforced (rented) Repossession orders (owned)
		10	People living under threat of violence	10.1	Police-recorded incidents
	Inadequate	11	People living in temporary or non-conventional structures	11.1 11.2 11.3	Mobile home Non-conventional building Temporary structure
		12	People living in unfit housing	12.1	Occupied dwelling unfit for habitation
		13	People living in extreme overcrowding	13.1	Highest national norm of overcrowding

Annex 2 Country Fiches

The following country fiches provide synthesized overviews of the homelessness and homeless policies in EU Member States¹¹⁶. They are compiled on the basis of input from FEANTSA's membership.

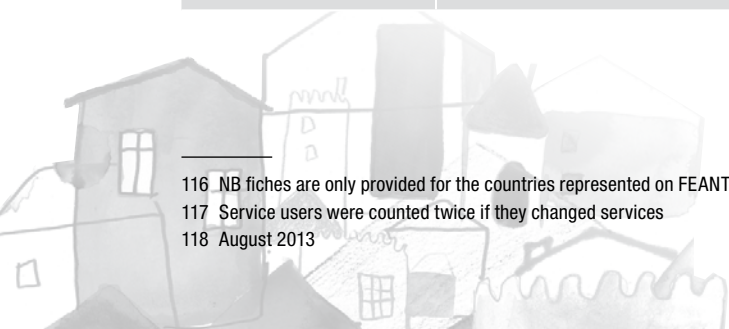
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Austria	
Key Statistics	<p>There is currently no ongoing data collection on homelessness at national level. BAWO (the national federation of homeless services) carried out a survey in 2006 and 2007. The results were delivered to the Ministry of Social Affairs. There are a variety of local and regional sources of data on homelessness:</p> <p>Vienna Social Welfare Report: The Vienna Social Welfare Report enumerates the users of the homeless service system. The 2012 report contains data from 2011. The total number of homeless service users enumerated in 2011 was 8,580. This was broken down as follows:¹¹⁷ 1) People in socially assisted living (ETHOS 7): 1,230; 2) People living in assisted flats: 2,030; 3) People living in targeted housing: 750; 4) People living in mother and child facilities: 510; 5) People living in transitional housing: 2,340; 6) People living in night shelters: 3,280</p> <p>Evictions in Vienna: About 21.000 persons were endangered losing their flat in 2013 (court procedures concerning living space). 6.500 have actually been evicted. The number has decreased slightly during the last years.</p> <p>Salzburg Annual Homelessness Survey: The service providers for homeless persons in Salzburg carry out an annual survey. This is based on a questionnaire and contributions from homeless service providers, social services within hospitals and the justice system, street workers, youth welfare institutions, psychiatric wards and bed and breakfast hostels. Data from this report covers the past 15 years. The 2012 survey estimated that there were approximately 1,000 homeless people in Salzburg and the surrounding area in the month of October</p> <p>In Tyrol, Caritas has started a similar questionnaire to the one used in Salzburg. Data goes back approximately 5 years but some homeless service providers do not participate. In Tyrol there are:¹¹⁸ 161 places/beds in emergency accommodation (23 for women) and 85 places/beds in accommodations for homeless persons (33 homeless hostels (thereof 12 for women) and 52 transitional supported accommodation (thereof 9 for women)).</p> <p>Lower Austria Homelessness Report: In the official Social Report by the provincial government there is a chapter on homelessness services and their users. For 2012, the most recent report, the numbers of users were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eviction-prevention: 5 service providers, used by 375 people asking for information, by 606 people for short-term counselling, by 249 people for mentoring. 899 cases were closed. • Shelter services: 12 providers, used by 1,331 people • Women's shelters: 6 providers, 64 places in shelters, average rate of use 61.82% (14,442 nights)
Increase/ Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>Whilst there is a lack of national-level data, local-level evidence suggests that homelessness is increasing in a number of cities:</p> <p>The Vienna Social Welfare Report shows that the number of users of homeless services increased year-on-year between 2000 and 2011. 8,580 clients used homeless services in 2011, an increase from the total of 7,526 in 2009.</p> <p>Data from Salzburg shows a steady increase in the number of homeless people over a period of 15 years. In Tyrol, services working with homeless people have reported a significant increase in homelessness over the past five years. The reasons for this relate to the current economic situation, the labour and housing markets, as well as changes in the social security system. However, this upward trend is clearly not uniform. In Lower Austria, the number of people using services for homeless people remained fairly stable between 2007 and 2010.</p>

¹¹⁶ NB fiches are only provided for the countries represented on FEANTSA's Administrative Council

¹¹⁷ Service users were counted twice if they changed services

¹¹⁸ August 2013



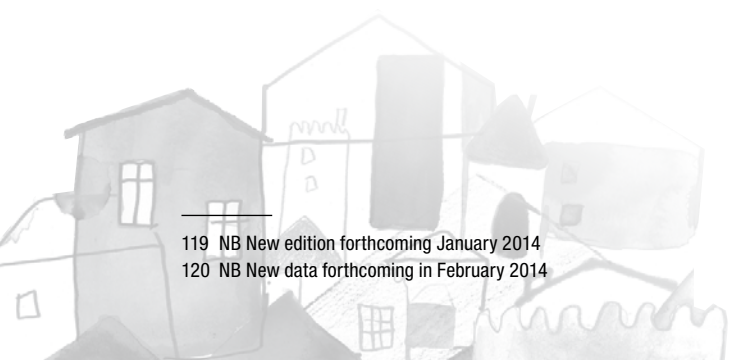


Austria		
Change in Profile of Homeless People	There is no data on this at national level. There are some indications of an increasing proportion of homeless young people and women in some local contexts. In Salzburg, there is evidence from the annual survey of increasing homelessness amongst women and migrants, especially from South-Eastern EU countries. According to BAWO members there is an increasing presence of persons without access to health insurance, social assistance (needs based minimum benefits) and homelessness services in Austria. These are especially asylum seekers whose claims have been rejected, third country nationals without access to the labour market or with a temporary residence permit, and mobile EU citizens under various circumstances. This applies to a greater or lesser extent to Vienna, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol and Carinthia.	
National Strategy	There is no national homelessness strategy. Vienna and Upper Austria have adopted an integrated programme on homelessness, covering prevention, accommodation and reintegration. The programme in Vienna is known as the Vienna Integration Programme for Homeless People (Vienna Multi-Stage Scheme). Housing First approaches are being implemented.	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	According to the division of competences there is no national budget in homelessness. Budgets are allocated by the Länder, most of the budgets are increasing. For example: According to the Vienna Social Report, expenditure for homeless services in Vienna was € 37.3 million in 2011 (2009: 34.4).	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive Since 1 st September 2010, most persons are included in the health insurance scheme under the new needs-oriented minimum security aid law.	Negative Third Country Migrants without a long term residence permit and without connection to the labour market and some EU citizens especially in the first three months are still excluded from the health insurance scheme of the new needs-oriented minimum security Aggressive begging and begging with children in Vienna and many other cities is punishable by law. There is a strong trend in Vienna towards closing the provincial borders for funding to avoid people using homeless services in other provinces

Belgium	
Key Statistics	<p>In Belgium, statistics are available at regional rather than national level.</p> <p>Brussels In the Brussels region, La Strada (the support centre for the homeless sector) has developed two data collection mechanisms: 1) Centralisation of service data to monitor one-night stays of the homeless people in services on an annual basis. 2) A periodical survey of homeless people on a given night over the whole territory of Brussels. The survey was carried in 2008 and in 2010¹¹⁹.</p> <p><i>2010 One-Night Survey:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people sleeping rough (ETHOS 1.1): 329 • Number of people living in night shelters (ETHOS 2.1): 282 • Number of people living in homeless accommodation for men : 312 • Number of people living in homeless accommodation for women: 34 • Number of people living in homeless accommodation for women and children: 298 • Number of people living in mixed-gendered homeless accommodation: 125 • Number of people living in private (non-certified) accommodation services: 189 • Number of people living in squats with local authority permission: 275 • Number of people living in very poor condition squats: 100 <p>Total: 1,944</p> <p><i>2010 Centralised Service-Data Collection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people (adults & children) using homeless accommodation services: 2,051 • Number of children using homeless accommodation services: 964 • Number of people using homeless accommodation services on a regular basis: 170 <p>Total: 3,185</p> <p>Flanders In Flanders, the NGO Centres for General Welfare (CAWs) use a uniform register system. However, the local authority services for social welfare (OCMW) do not, meaning that there is not comparable data for the region as a whole¹²⁰. The Minister of Welfare has laid out plans for a regional monitoring system, which could provide more comprehensive data in the coming years. In 2010, the CAW data recorded 5,802 people staying in hostels and shelters and 2,830 people using forms of supported housing for homeless people.</p> <p>Wallonia There is very little regional-level data available for Wallonia. A 2004 estimate suggested there were around 5,000 homeless people.</p>
Increase/ Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>No clear overall trend at national level. In Brussels, comparison of results from the one night survey carried out by La Strada in 2008 and 2010 showed an overall increase of 13% in the number of homeless people, from 1,724 in 2008 to 1,944 in 2010. Improvement and enlargement of the survey explains at least part of this increase. On the basis of the information available in Flanders, the number of clients using homeless services has remained stable in recent years.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>No clear trends at national level. There is some evidence of an increase in the proportion of women and immigrants amongst homeless services users. More than one in three homeless persons in Flanders is a woman and the proportion continues to increase. Most of them become homeless as a consequence of domestic violence.</p>

119 NB New edition forthcoming January 2014

120 NB New data forthcoming in February 2014





Belgium		
National Strategy	<p>National Strategy</p> <p>There is no integrated national strategy. There has been some progress towards regional strategies:</p> <p>In the Flanders region, a multi-stakeholder steering group has been established to prepare a homelessness strategy. The steering group has produced a proposal based on five strategic goals to end homelessness. The steering group is now working on developing funding possibilities to implement the strategy.</p> <p>In Brussels, protocols have been signed between the Government of the Brussels Capital Region and the three Community Institutions concerning the fight against poverty.</p> <p>At Federal level, homelessness was included in the National Action Plans against poverty and social exclusion, and has been integrated into the National Reform Programmes in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy. There is an Inter-ministerial committee on social inclusion and the social economy (CIM) which brings together different ministries of the Federal Government, the Communities and the Regions. One of its five working groups is dedicated to homelessness. Homelessness was also a major priority for the Belgian Presidency of the EU Council in 2010. A national experimentation has been set up to test Housing First in 5 cities in Belgium¹²¹.</p> <p>Governance</p> <p>As stated above, competence for homelessness is mostly at the level of the regions. In the Brussels region, it is divided between the regional government, the three Community Institutions, and the <i>communes</i> (districts) which are responsible for the public social services centres. La Strada became operational in 2007. As a support centre for the homeless sector, its role is to support stakeholder dialogue/participation and data collection on homelessness. Meetings between service providers, public authorities and other stakeholders take place every two months with a larger meeting once a year. The aim is coordination, information sharing, practice development, mutual learning and overall exchange to enhance service delivery in line with needs.</p>	
	Remarks on Budget Evolution	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	No clear overall trend	
	<p>Positive</p> <p>Progress towards a homelessness strategy in Flanders.</p>	<p>Negative</p> <p>Increase in coercive approaches reported in Brussels. This includes the use of administrative sanctions and a focus on squats and Roma people. An ordinance approved on December 13th 2007 criminalised begging and called for a fine of 84 Euros (N.b. "vagrancy" and begging were decriminalised in Belgium in 1993).</p>

¹²¹ See here: <http://www.housingfirstbelgium.be/>

Croatia	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no established strategy for collecting national/regional data on homelessness in Croatia. The term “homeless” was legally defined in 2011 for the first time in the Social Welfare Act. The definition is in line with the ETHOS typology and includes “rough sleepers” homeless category.</p> <p>There are 22 homelessness services in the Republic of Croatia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 homeless shelters (Zagreb-2, Rijeka, Pula, Karlovac) (ETHOS 3.1.) • 7 night shelters in Zagreb, Varaždin, Osijek, Zadar, Rijeka, Split and Kaštela (ETHOS 2.1.) • 2 transitional supported accommodation (Zagreb, Split) ETHOS 3.3. • 8 NGOs that support homeless without accommodation - Vinkovci, Zagreb (6), Split <p>Unofficial estimated data (calculated by NGO MoSt and the Croatian Network for the Homeless):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 300 people sleeping rough (ETHOS 1.1.) • 124 people living in overnight shelters (ETHOS 2.1.) • 217 people living in temporary accommodation (ETHOS 3.1) • 10 people living in transitional supported accommodation (ETHOS 3.3.) • Approx. 40 people living in medical institutions (ETHOS 6.2.) • Approx 350 people living in temporary, non-standard structures (ETHOS 11.1., 11.2., 11.3.) • 35 people living in unfit housing in Dubrovnik (ETHOS 12.1.) • 250 people living in accommodation for migrants (ETHOS 5.1.)
Increase/ Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>Homelessness in Croatia has been increasing in recent years.</p> <p>The rising unemployment rate has led to an increase in the number of homeless people (single men, women and whole families) who are experiencing poverty for the first time.</p> <p>The high unemployment rate (16.9%) and especially the high rate of youth unemployment (51.8%) are also key problems.</p> <p>Croatia is experiencing an increase in the number of asylum seekers (148 in 2009, 867 in 2013). Most of them are from Syria, Somalia, Algeria, Pakistan and Morocco.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth carried out an analysis of the profile of 384 shelter beneficiaries in 2012. Most beneficiaries are men aged between 45 and 60 years, usually single, divorced or never married and without children. The majority of them have finished high school and have approximately ten years of work experience.</p> <p>The analysis showed that 9.9% were aged 0-29 years and 13.3% were aged 30-39 years.</p> <p>In Zagreb shelters, there are some young people who left institutions (prison or social care) at the age of 18.</p>





Croatia		
National Strategy	<p>There is no strategy to combat homelessness.</p> <p>The Government is developing a Strategy for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Members of NGO MoSt are involved in the process.</p> <p>The Social Welfare Act stipulates that large cities and county towns are obliged to fund meal services in public canteens, as well as homeless accommodation. The Act also determines that large cities and county towns are obliged, depending on their financial capacity, to encourage and guarantee the provision of other forms of material assistance and support, such as: meals in public canteens; temporary accommodation for homeless persons; accommodation for persons who receive sustenance support in social housing and subsidies for particular social and other services. They should also encourage civil society organisations' work and voluntary work in social welfare, as well as develop other forms of social welfare. If large cities and county towns are not able to ensure funds for meals in public canteens, temporary accommodation of homeless persons in shelters or accommodation of persons who receive sustenance support in social housing, regions will also contribute to the funding of such support and services, depending on their financial capacity.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>There is no continuous financing of projects and activities in the area of homelessness at local, regional or national level.</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth did not offer a single grant application procedure in the category of homelessness and poverty in the year 2013.</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy against poverty and social exclusion is being developed. • Opportunities to use EU funds to address homelessness. • Ministry of Social Policy and Youth decision to fund homelessness projects and programmes in 2014. 	Negative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clear and set rules and regulations about how homeless shelters should function. • ETHOS still not implemented in definitions of homelessness. • New Act transferred all financing and managing responsibilities from national to local level. That caused new problems since the local authorities lack the sufficient funds to support NGOs that work with homeless people.

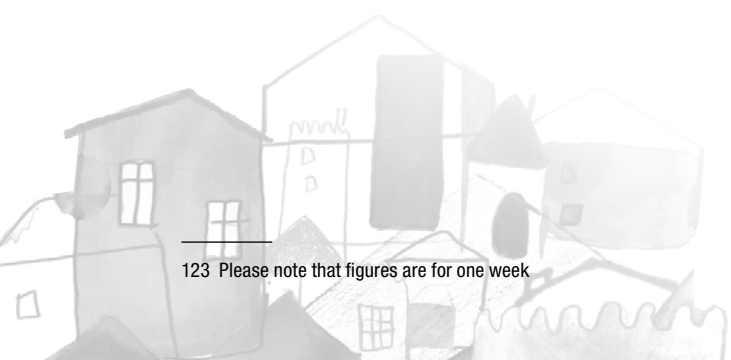
Czech Republic	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no national/regional homeless data-collection strategy. Several cities and regions carry out surveys. There is no uniform methodology and data is not comparable. Key sources of data include the following:</p> <p>The national register of social services, which provides information on the number of places in services. For 2013, the register included 215 long-term shelters with 6,661 beds. There were also 67 night shelters with 431 beds.</p> <p>The 2011 population census included the first official national data on the number of people using homeless services. According to the 2011 census, there are 11,496 homeless people in the Czech Republic. This covers people using accommodation facilities for homeless people (i.e. asylum shelters (ETHOS 3.1), night shelters (ETHOS 2.1) on census night. It is important to note that experts consider that the real number is much greater.</p> <p>As part of the preparatory work for the new 'Concept of Preventing and Tackling Homelessness Issues' (see below) an Expert Group gathered all available homeless statistics and made a qualified estimation on the number and distribution of homeless people in the Czech Republic. Their definition included the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visible homeless: ETHOS 1.1, 2.1, 8.2 and partially 8.1 • hidden homeless: ETHOS 3.1, 4.1, 7.1 <p>The Expert Group considered the number of homeless people to be at least three times higher than the census figures (approx. 30,000 people – obvious homeless: ETHOS 1.1, 2.1, 8.2 and partially (8.1) or hidden homeless: ETHOS 3.1, 4.1, 7.1). The estimated number of people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness was 100,000.</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	Homelessness has increased in recent years and there has been an increase in demand for services. The number of users of day centres, asylum shelters, night shelters and half a way houses for homeless people increased by 10% between 2012 and 2013 (source Statistical Yearbook of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs).
Change in Profile of Homeless People	There has been some evidence of increasing homelessness amongst families in recent years. Homelessness amongst women has also increased.
National Strategy	<p>National Strategy</p> <p>The 'Concept of Preventing and Tackling Homelessness Issues in the Czech Republic until 2020' was adopted by the government in August 2013. In order to develop the Concept, an Expert Group was created, attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) Commission for Social Inclusion. NGOs working on homelessness, experts from relevant ministries and academics are represented in the group. Since the Concept's adoption, the Expert Group supervises and monitors the implementation of particular measures.</p> <p>The whole system of proposed solutions in the Concept is based on the definition of four trajectories describing routes into homelessness. These trajectories are defined as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long-term (people who are born into and/or grow up in homelessness); 2. Short-term (people who find themselves temporarily in difficult situations such as debt, unemployment, etc.); 3. Health (people who face specific challenges due to health factors); 4. Own choice (people who become homeless through their own choice). <p>The strategy is also based on economic analysis of the costs of homelessness and of various solutions.</p> <p>A Consensus Conference on Homelessness was held in November 2014. Conclusions from the Conference should be published by the end of 2014¹²². The conference was one of Concept's priorities for 2014.</p> <p>The City of Prague has also adopted its own local homelessness strategy.</p>



Czech Republic		
Remarks on Budget Evolution	There is a lack of sustainable funding for homeless services. The current system of annual calls for proposals co-managed by regional and national authorities means that homeless services are reliant on unstable funding sources. Drops in funding levels since 2012 have meant that some services have closed. The role of the EU Structural Funds is limited because of the strong administrative burden on service providers, which makes them unmanageable and for some NGOs. A change of funding system is expected since 2015. Regional offices are expected to play the main role in financing services and new funding criteria are developing.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of the Concept • Preparatory work on the Social Housing Strategy and Social Housing Act • Increasing number of relevant stakeholders (researchers, experts) • Visibility of the homelessness issue in the media. • Consensus Conference on homelessness 	Negative <p>A range of measures exist that regulate behaviour in public space with the imposition of fines at local level. The regulations concern “undesirable behavior” such as begging, alcohol consumption and damage to property or equipment. These measures are generally enforced by city police or in some cases by private security companies regulating semi-public spaces such as shopping centres. They affect homeless people disproportionately compared with the general population.</p>

Denmark	
Key Statistics	<p>National homelessness counts have been carried out biennially over a given week (week 6 of the year) since 2007. A national client-registration system for homeless hostels, run by local authorities under §110 in the Social Service Act, has existed since 1999. The homelessness count gives a stock figure during the count week, whereas the client registration system on homeless hostels gives both stock and flow figures published in annual statistics.</p> <p>Results of the 2013 National Homelessness Count</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People sleeping rough (ETHOS 1.1): 595¹²³ • People staying in emergency night shelters (ETHOS 2.1): 349 • People staying in homeless shelters/hostels (ETHOS 3.1): 2,015 • People staying in hotels due to homelessness: 70 • People staying with family and friends: 1,653 • People staying in short-term transitional housing: (ETHOS 8.1): 211 • People homeless following institutional release from prisons (ETHOS 6.1): 64 • People homeless following institutional release from hospitals/treatment facilities (ETHOS 6.2): 119 • Other: 744 <p>Total: 5,820</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>There was a 16 percent total increase in recorded homelessness between 2009 and 2013 (a rise from 4,998 to 5,820). However, the trend varied by municipality. In the 8 municipalities with a full Strategy programme (see below), homelessness increased by 4 percent on average. In the 9 municipalities with a floating support programme homelessness increased by 11 percent on average, whereas in the remaining 81 municipalities, which had not participated in the programme, homelessness increased by a staggering 43 percent on average.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>There has been an 80% increase in youth homelessness in Denmark between 2009 and 2013 (from 633 persons to 1,138 persons). This reflects the fact that young people with complex needs are particularly vulnerable in tight housing markets, partly because they can access lower levels of social benefits. There is greater awareness of youth homelessness since the strategy was put into place.</p> <p>The national homelessness count shows that homelessness in Denmark is concentrated amongst individuals with complex support needs. About four out of five homeless people in Denmark has either mental illness, substance abuse or both. About half have a mental illness, about two thirds have a substance abuse problem and one out in three are substance abusers with mental health problems. Only about one out of five have neither of these problems.</p>

123 Please note that figures are for one week





Denmark		
National Strategy	A Strategy to Reduce Homelessness in Denmark, 2009–2012	
	<p>Scope Seventeen municipalities (out of a total of 98) were involved in the Strategy. The main focus was on eight municipalities which contained about half of the total homeless population in Denmark. This included the 3 largest cities – Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense. The majority of the strategy budget was allocated to these municipalities. In a second phase, additional municipalities were invited to apply for funding. Nine additional municipalities, mainly medium-sized towns, were thus selected.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No citizens should live a life on the street; 2. Young people should not stay in care homes, rather they must be offered alternative solutions; 3. Periods of accommodation in care homes or shelters should last no longer than three to four months for citizens who are prepared to move into their own homes with the necessary support; 4. Release from prison or discharge from courses of treatment or hospitals must presuppose that an accommodation solution is in place. <p>DKK 500 million (€67m) state funding allocated to the strategy over four years. This is additional to municipal funding for statutory homeless services such as drop-in centres and homeless accommodation.</p> <p>Housing First Housing First was the overriding principle of the Strategy. The strategy thus supported 3 methods of delivering floating support: Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), Individual Case Management (ICM), or Critical Time Intervention (CTI). Other parts of the programme included strengthening street outreach work and implementing a methodology for needs assessment in homeless shelters. Resources were also given to other local services and initiatives. Furthermore, part of the funding was allocated to provide more housing for homeless people including the construction of new housing units. The municipalities applied for specific projects and after a process of negotiating between central and local government, it was decided which projects should be carried out. It was possible for the municipalities to focus on all, or just some, of the four overall goals depending on the local situation.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	The national strategy was financed by DKK 500 million over four years (ending August 2013). Shelters are financed under the relevant legislation with about DKK 1.4 billion a year. Since 2009, some budget cuts have been observed on the municipal level (in relation to standard programmes for the homeless, including drop-in centres and types of accommodation). A further DKK 20 million a year for 2014 to 2017 has been allocated for initiatives to fight homelessness amongst young people.	
Remarks on Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	Ongoing shift towards offering permanent housing solutions as quickly as possible.	General impression that the use of urban space is increasingly controlled, especially through the replacement of comfortable benches with unattractive sitting options. Rise in youth homelessness.

Finland	
Key Statistics	<p>The Housing Finance and Development Centre (ARA) conducts an annual, national survey on homelessness. The data collected on the 15th of November 2013 show a decrease both in the number of single homeless people (7,500) as well as homeless families (417) compared to the previous year. Homelessness is concentrated in Helsinki (4,100 single homeless) where the number remained unchanged compared to the year 2012. The ARA survey covers a variety of living situations as demonstrated below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People sleeping rough or in emergency accommodation (ETHOS 1.1 and 2.1): 332 • People living in homeless hostels (ETHOS 3.1): 547 • People living in institutions (ETHOS 6.2): 819 • People leaving prison without housing (ETHOS 6.1): 177 • People living with relatives or friends (ETHOS 8.1): 5,626
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>At the end of the 1980s, there were almost 20,000 homeless people in Finland. By 2008, this had fallen to about 8,000 people. There was a slight rise in homelessness in 2009, with figures climbing to around 8,200. This was caused by a shortfall in social housing provision. Homelessness decreased to around 8,000 in 2010-2011. In 2012 the numbers were rising again. This was mainly due to increasing homelessness in Helsinki; in other cities the numbers were decreasing. In 2013 there was a considerable decrease especially in the number of single homeless people. There have been particular decreases in the number of long-term homeless people as a result of the national strategy.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>There has been an increase in the number of homeless immigrants over recent years. In 2013 over 28% of single homeless people and almost 61% of homeless families were immigrants. The number of single homeless with migrant background has risen from 306 in 2007 to 1,986 in 2013. Real figures are probably higher as all cities do not collect separate data on migration. Youth homelessness has been rising during the past few years but the 2013 survey showed a decline of 9% in the number of homeless people under 25 years old. Also family homelessness decreased slightly as did the number of homeless women.</p>
National Strategy	<p><i>Programme to Reduce Long Term Homelessness 2008-2011 and End Long Term Homelessness 2012-2015</i></p> <p>Scope: The previous programme period (2008-2011) focused on the 10 biggest urban growth centres with Helsinki as the main priority. During the present period 11 cities are taking part in the execution. Focuses on long-term homeless. This follows 20 years of homeless strategies targeting other parts of the homeless population.</p> <p>Housing First is the main principal underpinning the strategy. There is a commitment to the conversion of all shelters and dormitory-type hostels into supported housing. In Helsinki the last big shelter was closed in 2012 and it has been converted into a supported housing unit.</p> <p>New provision involves both scattered-site housing with floating support and communal Housing First projects, where formerly homeless people have independent flats with support services onsite. Supported housing distributed throughout the social housing stock and accompanied by flexible, mobile support work are re-enforced. Cities are encouraged to establish multidisciplinary teams for housing advisory services and home care, and to develop joint models for support work.</p>





Finland		
	<p>Objectives: The 2008–2011 programme aimed at halving long-term homelessness and developing more effective measures to prevent homelessness. The quantitative target of providing 1,250 new dwellings, supported housing units or places in care facilities for homeless people was exceeded: by the end of 2011 altogether 1,519 dwellings were allocated for the homeless. The 2012–2015 phase aims to eliminate long-term homelessness by providing a further 1,250 flats and flexible support services. Focus is in scattered housing, floating support and prevention.</p> <p>Resources: Approximately €200 million were allocated for the overall funding of the programme between 2008 and 2011. State funding accounted for €170 million, the municipalities for €10.3 million and the Finnish Slot Machine Association RAY for €20.5 million. ARA reserved €80 million in investment grants for groups with special needs. €10.3 million from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health funded 205 support staff in services for homeless people. RAY funded the acquisition of supported housing and development projects.</p> <p>The minimum overall funding for the programme period 2012-2015 is €100 million. Investment grants by ARA are €60 million, RAY funding for acquisition of housing is €40 million and €6.7 million comes from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health for hiring support personnel. The funds by signatory cities are €30 million mainly for wages of support workers.</p> <p>Governance: The Ministry of Environment manages and coordinates the programme, in close cooperation with The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Justice, the state Housing Finance and Development Centre (ARA) and the Finland Slot Machine Association (RAY). Implementation is achieved through the signing of letters of intent with the municipalities. Both the previous and the present programme include a clear plan on how the responsibilities are shared and how the progress is monitored.</p>	
Targeted Prevention	Prevention of homelessness is a central pillar of both the previous and the current national program. In Finland, young people who have been taken into custody are the only group of people who have a subjective right to housing. People living in institutions and prisons belong to the target group in the programme. The number of housing advisory services has increased, as has the amount of tenancy sustainment support. New service concepts and work methods have been developed.	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	The national strategy is well-resourced (see above) and adequate funding has been provided for the second phase.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>Overall policy shift from the staircase model towards housing-led solutions, which has provided a framework within which homeless people can benefit better from the general service system.</p> <p>Planning of the next program period (2016-) has started with the working title Preventive strategies.</p>	<p>Lack of affordable rental housing especially in the metropolitan region.</p> <p>Increase in homelessness amongst immigrants.</p>

Germany	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no legally-required, nationwide data collection on homelessness in Germany. Relatively extensive data exists but does not cover all regions of the country. BAG W (the umbrella organisation of non-profit homeless service providers) presents annual nationwide estimations based on its own monitoring systems, taking account of developments in the housing market, labour market, migration, social security and drawing on regional statistics and BAG W flash surveys. BAG W also lobbies in an ongoing fashion for the improvement of data collection with a legal basis at national level.</p> <p>According to BAG W's estimations for 2012, the (annual prevalence) number of cases of 'housing exclusion' ("<i>Wohnungsnotfälle</i>") in Germany is 414,000. This breaks down into the two following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless people: 284,000 over the course of a year • People at risk of becoming homeless: 130,000 over the course of a year <p>There are comprehensive, regular statistics on homelessness available in the state North-Rhine Westphalia. A data collection strategy has been developed in the framework of a regional homelessness action plan. In 2012, a one-day count on the 30th June recorded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People provided with night shelters and temporary accommodation by the local authorities (part of ETHOS 1.2 and 3.2): 10,920 • People who had received some support from the voluntary sector for the homeless in the month leading up to the count (parts of ETHOS 1,2,3,7, 8.1 and 11): 7,271
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>According to BAG W estimates, the number of homeless people rose by 15% from 2010 (248,000) to 2012 (284,000). This included a rise in the number of rough sleepers from approximately 22,000 to 24,000 – an increase of about 10%. The number of people at risk of homelessness is estimated to have risen by 22.6% from 106,000 in 2010 to 130,000 in 2012.</p> <p>It is, however, clear that the picture is not uniform across Germany. In some regions, the increase in numbers is smaller than on others, but in all regions, including in North-Rhine Westphalia, there has been an increase. Overall, the number of homeless people in North-Rhine Westphalia fell strongly from 18,533 in 2004 to 11,788 in 2009. The decrease in North-Rhine Westphalia can be explained by a well-developed prevention system as well as a broad network of advice agencies for homeless people. However, in 2012 – although due to a new statistical system numbers are not strictly comparable to former years – an overall number of 18,191 homeless persons were counted: even a qualified prevention system cannot mitigate the effects of the growing housing market crisis in Germany.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>According to BAG W estimates, homelessness amongst single-person households rose faster than family homelessness between 2010 and 2012. Homelessness amongst single-person households is estimated to have increased by 17% from 152,000 to 178,000. Family homelessness is estimated to have risen by 13% from 2010 to 2012. This reflects in part a shortage of small flats available to house single homeless people.</p> <p>According to BAG W, of about 284,000 homeless people in Germany in 2012, 25% were women (63,000). The share of children and adolescents is estimated at 11% (32,000). Men represent 75% of the homeless population (189,000).</p> <p>BAG W identifies a high proportion of young people and a growing proportion of migrants among the single homeless population. Approximately 31.8% of the single homeless population was under 30 in 2012. This compares to 32.2% in 2010. In the younger age group, the proportion of women is relatively high. In total, the proportion of women among the homeless reached 25% in 2012.</p>





Germany		
National Strategy	<p>There is no national strategy in the sense of a federal programme defined in a strategic document. Nonetheless, service provision for homeless people is relatively extensive and provided for by a legislative framework. National legislation sets out the obligations of municipalities in terms of social service provision. Since the mid-1990s, the Social Code has stipulated that all persons who are at risk of losing their homes are entitled to assistance - either in the form of loans or allowances for rent arrears. Police laws in the <i>Bundesländer</i> (regional states) strictly oblige municipalities to provide shelter for roofless people.</p> <p>In 2013, BAG W laid down principles for a National Strategy in a <i>Call for a National Strategy against Homelessness and Poverty</i>, published in September 2013. It will follow up this call in the coming years. The Call focuses on specific local, regional and national level programmes.</p> <p>North-Rhine Westphalia, the most populous region, has a regional funding programme on homelessness. The budget for the Programme is 1.12 million Euros a year. Its aim is to develop innovative approaches and support municipalities to tackle homelessness. The main focus is the prevention of homelessness and access to housing. Specific target groups include migrants and older homeless people.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>Funding for social services for homeless people is legally guaranteed in Germany. There have been major decreases in national funding in the field of employment services (30% and more in the context of the crisis).</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>The level of the subsistence benefit has been revised slightly upwards (although it is still not enough) after the intervention of the national court in 2010.</p> <p>A rent control regime for new rents was introduced in 2013 and is to be further developed strengthened from 2015. Under this regime it is possible that price rises are controlled for a maximum rise of 10 percent in areas with a shortage of houses. The regime is limited to the existing housing stock, so it is still possible to raise rents in newly constructed houses to far over the market level.</p> <p>In the states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg the introduction of homelessness statistics is under pilot testing, mainly following the model of North-Rhine-Westphalia.</p>	<p>Ceilings of the housing benefit regime are too low in a context of rising rents.</p> <p>There is no major investment in social housing.</p> <p>The growing regulation of public space has led to stricter control of public places, also affecting homeless people.</p> <p>The trend in homelessness levels – ongoing rise which looks set to continue in the next years.</p>

Greece	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no official data-collection strategy on homelessness in Greece. A study on homelessness was conducted in 2009 by the Ministry of Health. It reported that the total number of homeless people was 7,720. This excluded immigrants and travelers. Within the total were an estimated 1,800 rough sleepers and 970 people in hostels and shelters. These figures are challenged both by the Ministry itself and other social partners due to methodological constraints.</p> <p>The United Nations Human Rights Council reports that ‘there are 21,216 cases of people who live, in various forms, outside the home’ in Greece.</p> <p>A recent study mapped homelessness in Athens¹²⁴. It estimated an annual period prevalence of 1200-2360 roofless persons for 2013. It reported a point-in time prevalence of 630 roofless persons on census day in April 2011. It also found those living in a ‘houseless’ situation to exceed 140.000 persons.</p> <p>Research on evictions that is expected to be published soon, will provide more information on the invisible forms of homelessness in Greece for the past years.</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>Service providers estimate that the homeless population in Greece has risen in recent years, especially the population that lives in inadequate housing conditions or with the threat of eviction. This rapid increase is a result of the financial, economic and social crisis. Growing unemployment and falling income levels have increased vulnerability to homelessness as more people are unable to meet housing costs. Austerity measures and cuts have had a major impact on service capacity at a time of growing demand.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>No statistical evidence has been gathered but it is clear that homelessness amongst immigrants is a major issue in Greece. Policy responses and infrastructure are inadequate to cope with levels of migration. The crisis has worsened the situation and there are increasing reports of coercive action by police towards homeless immigrants as well as violence perpetrated by citizens.</p> <p>In 2012, a new law on evictions was issued (L.4055/12, 2012) 2012, revising the eviction process to be more favorable to owners. The Federation of House Owners states that over 50% of the tenants renting apartments in the center of Athens cannot pay their rent, and recommends that owners carry out an eviction when two consecutive months are unpaid. While approximately 5,000 evictions were registered in the whole of 2011, 4,000 people were evicted in just the first 40 days of 2012. The empirical data suggest that this figure has increased significantly. New data on evictions are expected to be published soon.</p> <p>Households are finding it increasing difficult to pay for utilities. According to the only electricity provider in Greece, the number of households experiencing electricity cuts reached 330,000 in 2013. 35,000 of these had their electricity connection reinstalled irregularly and 140,000 households attempted to regulate the payment of their debts via instalments.</p>

124 Arapoglou V., Gounis K. (2014) «Caring for the Homeless and the Poor in Greece: Implications for the Future of Social Protection and Social Inclusion». Final research report to the Hellenic Observatory- London School of Economics, Rethymno: University of Crete



Greece		
National Strategy	<p>Homelessness is framed within the wider context of social policies and addressed in an indirect and incoherent way. The economic crisis and dramatic rises in homelessness have brought the issue onto the policy agenda. The 2012 National Reform Programme refers to the “establishment of an inter-ministerial working group to address the rapidly deteriorating homelessness problem”. A Committee on Homelessness was established in January 2012 with the aim of drafting a legislative proposal and an action plan. The committee is composed of several stakeholders including ministries, academics and NGOs. The Committee has developed the first legal recognition of homelessness and a definition. It also drafted the Integrated National Plan to Combat Homelessness.</p> <p>Despite the fact that the National Plan has never been put in force in any legal or other binding form, there have been small but spasmodic steps concerning the coverage of homeless needs in 2014. Specifically, a new bill was introduced at the end of March 2014 (Support Measures in the light of the implementation of 4046/2012 bill) referring to the need for homeless services for the first time ever in the Greek legislation. State budget has been allocated from the primary surplus observed at the end of 2013 in the Greek economy after 6 consequent years of recession. 20 million euros out of 525 million euros allocated for the most vulnerable population in Greece. The first call for tenders for housing programmes was published in September 2014 and the whole procedure is expected finalized within December 2014. However on 9,3 million euros were allocated for the specific programme while the rest are provided for food supply in different forms (groceries, soup kitchens and so on). The FEAD programme is announced to start soon.</p> <p>In the operational plan for the use of MMF 2014-2020 there is a clear but limited reference to homeless people, opening perhaps more opportunities to programmes that may support longer term solutions to homelessness in Greece.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>Minimum (Guaranteed) Income that was planned to start the pilot phase implementation on 15th November 2014 in 13 municipalities in Greece has delayed.</p> <p>Additionally, measures to support homeless and households at risk of homelessness are going to be funded using the surplus budget.</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>The legal recognition of homelessness (a. 29 L.4052/12).</p> <p>The clear reference to actions for housing, food and care for homeless in the bill introduced March 2014 (Measures to support the implementation of 4046/2012)</p> <p>The Common Ministerial Act on Social Minimum Income (MIS) was published.</p> <p>An increased interest in establishing long-term services (Housing led approach, Social Housing) in order to respond to the current crisis.</p>	<p>The current crisis and austerity measures mean that more people are at risk of homelessness and services are less well-equipped to respond.</p> <p>Homeless people are excluded from receiving unemployment benefits and free healthcare because of bureaucratic restrictions (demand for the provision of a document/certificate from the Tax Office, public utilities bill or a land-line telephone bill or a copy of an official housing tenancy agreement).</p> <p>A number of coercive measures/restrictions have been introduced which have a legal basis and can act as tools for criminalising the homeless: the banning and criminalisation of begging (Penal Code article 407); sanitary/public health administrative provisions; occupancy of private spaces (civil law, and penal provisions/Penal Code article 382).</p> <p>Budgetary commitment is on an ad hoc basis (surplus).</p>

Hungary	
Key Statistics	<p>A survey of homelessness in Hungary is conducted every year on the 3rd of February. This has been run for 14 years and involves a range of researchers, municipalities and NGO service providers on a voluntary basis. Initially, it covered only Budapest but has now expanded to a growing number of municipalities, now 53. The Third of February Homeless Survey is not a census of all homeless people, nor is it a tool to estimate the number of homeless people. The survey only covers those people who are in touch with shelters or outreach teams at the time of the survey.</p> <p>At national level, there are registers of certain types of homeless services provided under the Social Care Act but there are a number of limitations regarding the quality of the data.</p> <p>On the 3rd of February 2012, 9,793 homeless people took part in the survey.¹²⁵ This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living in public space/outdoors (ETHOS 1.1): 3,087 • People staying in hostels (ETHOS 2.1 and 3.1): 6,706
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>The number of homeless people captured by the 3rd February survey increased from 8,641 in 2012 to 9,793 in 2013. This is not an indication of the total number of homeless people.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>According to the 3rd February Survey, there has been an increase in the number of people becoming homeless due to financial reasons or insecure housing. The percentage of homeless people with a permanent health condition or disability has reached 53% among those living in Budapest and 47% among those in the countryside. 61% of those sleeping in hostels in Budapest had a permanent health condition or disability. 23% of homeless people have been called Roma at one point in their life.</p>
National Strategy	<p>There is currently no national strategy in Hungary. A proposal for a strategy was developed in 2008. It was the first document that attempted to address homelessness in a comprehensive way in Hungary. The proposal was drafted by two well-known experts in the field and was commissioned by Miklós Vecsei, the Ministerial Commissioner for Homeless Affairs under the previous Government. Until now, it has not received any high-level backing and has disappeared from the agenda at present. Nonetheless, there is regular consultation with social service providers through a consultative committee and there might be the possibility to revive the initiative in the future. At the moment, there seems to be little perspective for a comprehensive national strategy on homelessness.</p>
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>The Hungarian state channels approximately 30 million EUR per year into tackling homelessness through a combination of normative and grant-funding. In terms of normative funding, the nominal amount per capita has either declined or stayed unchanged for the last 5 years for most types of services. Homeless service providers must settle for fewer and fewer resources to fund their services. Local government also funds services but this contribution varies across the country. In the case of Budapest, the additional funding to NGOs operating in the city has been withdrawn. Moreover, the normative funding of day centres has been halved, significantly affecting the financial resources of many homeless service providers. An estimated 10% cut in funding for transitional accommodation has been observed due to recent changes to the regulation that defines the amount of funding. In 2012, the funding for street outreach services shifted from being part of the normative scheme to falling under the category of tendered services. Funding for homeless services has also been negatively affected by a decree made by the Government in 2011 declaring the abolition of the "Public Solidarity Foundation". Finally, the take up of EU funds is greatly hampered by administrative burdens.</p>

125 See <http://www.bmszki.hu/sites/default/files/field/uploads/f-3-2013-english-final.pdf#overlay-context=februar-harmadika-munkacsoport>



Hungary		
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
		<p>A process of criminalisation of homelessness has taken place in Hungary over recent years. This started with the Building Act, which was modified in November 2010 to regulate the use of public space. On the 18th May 2011, Budapest City Council issued a decree that made sleeping on the street an offence and subjected people sleeping rough to fines of €200 and detention. On the 10th November 2011, the Hungarian Parliament voted a law which allows for the imprisonment of or €600 fine for those found «guilty» of sleeping rough twice in a six month period.</p> <p>There have also been reductions in social benefits and eligibility criteria have been made more restrictive. The period of unemployment benefit is now reduced to 3 months. The total budget for benefits has been reduced.</p> <p>The Government is planning to further reduce the normative funding multiplier for day centres. Formerly it used to be a 3 fold multiplier of the authorized capacity of a day centre. It is a drop-in service that is why this multiplier was in place. There were not always 3 times as many service users as the government paid for. But this compensated the lack of funding for other types of services plus inflation, etc. Therefore, the government developed a registering system. Now the current 1,5 multiplier is planned to be reduced to 1,2, which means that only 120% of the authorized number of capacities for day centres will be paid.</p>

Ireland

Key Statistics

At national level, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) carries out a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) every three years. This national summary of social housing assessments provides an important insight into the level of need for social housing support across Ireland. The Housing Needs Assessment was collated by the Housing Agency in 2013. 89,872 households were assessed as qualifying for social housing supports (as of 7th May 2013). This included: Homeless households: 2,808 (3.1%); Households living in unfit accommodation: 647 (0.7%); Households living in overcrowded accommodation: 2,896 (3.2%); People who are dependent on Rent Supplement: 46,584 (51.8%)

Census 2011, for the first time, attempted to enumerate the number of people who were homeless in Ireland on Census night. These figures were released in September 2012 and reported 3,808 people sleeping rough or in homeless accommodation on Census night. This is a point-in-time count and does not include everyone who comes under the ETHOS definition. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has confirmed that they will prepare a Special Census Report on Homelessness again as part of Census 2016.

Since April 2014, the DECLG has been collating national data on homelessness from PASS (the Pathway Accommodation and Support System) and posting it monthly on its web-site. In the week 17-23rd November 2014, a total of 2,720 individuals accessed at least one night's accommodation in emergency beds funded by the Department. Of these 1,766 were men and 958 were women. 1,709 (63%) of the 2,720 homeless individuals were accommodated in Dublin. The DECLG data records that in November 2014 there were 344 families in emergency homeless accommodation nationally, with a total of 887 children.

Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People

The HNA shows a consistent increase in the number of households registered with Local Authorities as in need of social housing – rising from 1,394 in 2008, to 2,348 in 2011 and 2,808 in 2013.

The Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) reports a rise in rough sleeping in Dublin. 168 people were observed sleeping rough in the November 2014 count, compared to 139 persons in November 2013. This represents an increase of 29 persons or 20%. There was a 60% increase between the winter 2012 and winter 2013 figures.

The number of people recorded using emergency beds in the reference week in November 2014 (2,720) reflected an increase of 243 (9.8%) since April 2014.

Change in Profile of Homeless People

Homeless services in Dublin have reported an increase in the number of women accessing services. According to the 2008 'Counted In' survey, the proportion of women users of homeless services aged 18-34 was higher than the proportion of men.

Youth homelessness is a growing concern in Ireland. A total of 245 children aged 12-17 years were accommodated in emergency residential accommodation in 2011 (primarily as a result of family relationship breakdown or a placement breakdown, either from foster care or residential placement breakdowns).

Since 2012 there has been a significant increase in the number of families presenting as homeless, particularly in Dublin, rising from an average of 8 a month in 2012 to over 40 per month in the 2014 (Jan-Nov).

National Strategy

The Way Home: A Strategy to Address Adult Homelessness in Ireland, 2008-2013**Scope**

An overall national policy framework accompanied by an implementation plan. Guides development of local homeless strategies. The objectives are:

1. To reduce the number of households who become homeless through the further development and enhancement of preventative measures;
2. To eliminate the need for people to sleep rough;
3. To eliminate long-term homelessness (specifically people spending more than 6 months in temporary accommodation);
4. To meet long-term housing needs;
5. To ensure that all services for people who are homeless are effective in addressing needs;
6. To re-orientate spending on homeless services away from emergency responses to the provision of long-term housing and support services.





Ireland		
	<p>The strategy was followed up by a 'Homelessness Policy Statement' in February 2013, which seeks to ensure that homelessness is tackled in a more planned and strategic way, providing housing and resettlement solutions and supports rather than managing people in emergency facilities. The policy statement commits to a Housing-Led Approach to tackling homelessness in Ireland, and the goal of ending long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough by 2016.</p> <p>In May 2014 an 80 point "Implementation Plan on the State's Response to homelessness" was published focusing on eliminating long-term homelessness by 2016.</p> <p>In December 2014, following the death of a homeless man in the street in front of the Irish Parliament, the Government published a further 20 point 'Action Plan to Address Homelessness' with the objective of ending the need to sleep rough by Christmas 2014.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>In order to ensure continued progress towards the achievement of the 2016 target of ending long-term homelessness, funding for homeless services through the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government was maintained at €45 million in 2014.</p> <p>The capital funding programme for social housing has been seriously reduced in recent years, and the impact of cuts on the special needs capital budget has resulted in projects being halted and delayed. The Government's 'Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform', which was launched in November 2014, commits to the provision of over 35,000 social housing units by 2020 at a cost of €3.8billion. The Strategy contains an Action Plan with detailed objectives and timelines.</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>A range of targeted services to improve access to health care for the homeless have been introduced. A national mental health policy, which aims at the maximisation of recovery and meaningful integration of patients, is also an important development.</p> <p>Renewed commitment to end long-term homelessness by 2016 and work of the Homeless Oversight Group (HOG) to monitor progress.</p> <p>Review conducted on the implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy.</p> <p>Amendment of the Child Care Act, 1991 to provide for a statutory right to the preparation of an aftercare plan for young people leaving care as required before they have to leave at 18.</p> <p>In December 2014, the Government launched a '20-Point Action Plan' to tackle emergency and short-term homelessness. The Plan commits to €20 million 'plus' in expenditure and includes the immediate provision of 260 additional emergency beds for people sleeping rough in Dublin, a Night Café to provide a contact point for homeless people who do not want to be placed in emergency accommodation, and the provision of transport with support services to bring people sleeping rough to emergency accommodation. The four Dublin housing authorities must also allocate 50% of all housing allocations to homeless households and other vulnerable groups up to June 2015 - this will provide homes for approximately 500 people.</p>	<p>Poor implementation of the strategy so far. The target to eliminate long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough by 2010 was not achieved. The monitoring of and the reporting against the Key Performance Indicators identified in this Strategy has been poor for a number of reasons, including the delayed roll-out of an agreed, national data-collection system (PASS).</p> <p>No clarity on where the accommodation/housing will come from.</p> <p>No clear road map to get to the 2016 target.</p> <p>The Criminal Justice Public Order introduces specific provisions on begging. Non-compliance with a police officer's instructions leads to a fine of up to €500.</p> <p>It will take up to 18 months for the new Social Housing Strategy to deliver the first homes for people in need of housing.</p> <p>Recommendation in the PRTB research on the Private Rented Sector that rent regulation/control would not deal with the problem of rising rents, and could trigger various negative impacts (such as black market transactions, lower quality housing, reduced mobility, and impact negatively on new and existing supply).</p>

Lithuania	
Key Statistics	<p>The department of statistics (Statistics Lithuania) collects data on homelessness every 10 years within the framework of the general population census. In 2011, the census instructions defined homeless people as those who have no permanent place of residence and no money to rent or buy at least a basic lodging, and for this reason live on the streets (ETHOS 1), in places not intended for human habitation, in institutions for temporary living (night shelters (ETHOS 2.1 and 3.1), crisis centres or shelters for mothers and children (ETHOS 4.1).</p> <p>Statistics Lithuania recorded about 4,957 homeless people on a given night in Lithuania in 2012. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 601 persons were living in shelters for homeless people (ETHOS 2.1 and 3.1); • 2,179 persons were living in crisis centres and shelters for mothers and children (ETHOS 4.1). <p>In a database of Vilnius city, in which people who are recognised as homeless and/or begging and using social support services are registered, 1,642 homeless persons were registered at the end of the 3rd quarter of 2014.</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>Homelessness has been steadily increasing over the past years. As an indication, the number of residents in shelters for homeless people increased by 6.3 % from 2012 to 2013, and by one third since 2005. The number of people residing in night shelters went from 2,447 in 2012 (annual prevalence) to 2,601 in 2013. The number of people residing in crisis centres and shelters for mothers and children decreased from 2,510 in 2012 to 2179 in 2013.</p> <p>In 2012 more than 31 thousand households, which represents about 70,000 persons were waiting for a social housing, which is 4% more than in 2011. Only about 3% got the social housing in 2012. Each year waiting lists for social housing increase with 1680 applicants, which is by 3.4 times more than in 2004.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>There are no obvious evidence based changes in the profile of homeless people.</p>
National Strategy	<p>There is no specific integrated strategy for tackling homelessness in Lithuania. There is a housing strategy with goals that are indirectly linked to homelessness such as the expansion of housing options to all social groups. Vilnius has adopted a program on homelessness for the period of 2013-2018, covering accommodation and reintegration.</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Security and Labor has the main responsibility for issues relating to homelessness, also for coordinating governmental policies regarding State assistance for housing acquisition or rental. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring the provision of social services. Under the Constitution, the municipalities are autonomous in respect to the development of local policy. Hence, there are regional disparities in the quality of social services, the infrastructure of services etc.</p>





Lithuania		
Remarks on Budget Evolution	There is no specific budget for homelessness interventions. But there is a plan in the budget of 2015 to foresee about 5.2 millions of euros for compensation of part of the rent or lease. Funds allocated to the housing programmes and the housing policy implementation agencies are managed by the Ministry of Finance. Social services are financed by municipal funds, specific grants allocated to municipalities, and personal contributions paid for social services.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>In Vilnius, in the context of the program to fight homelessness, a second day center together with the first hygienic (showers) center was opened.</p> <p>The new law concerning support for housing acquisition or rental will come into force from the beginning of 2015 in order to deliver changes in the system of social housing.</p>	<p>There is a lack of systematic and concerted actions to combat and prevent homelessness as a specific social issue.</p> <p>There is a lack of various services for homeless people.</p> <p>The prevention of homelessness is very weak.</p>


Luxembourg	
Key Statistics	<p>There is currently no national-level data-collection system on homelessness in Luxembourg. The only official scientific study on homelessness and housing exclusion in Luxembourg was published by CEPS in 2007, on behalf of the Ministry of the Family and Integration. It enumerated adult users of day centres, shelters, hostels and supported housing during the week beginning 6th February 2006. 715 homeless people were identified, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 people who had slept rough the previous night (ETHOS 1.1); • 136 people who had stayed in a night shelter (ETHOS 2.1); • 141 people who had stayed in a homeless hostel (ETHOS 3.1); • 240 people who had stayed in supported housing; • 40 people who had stayed in hospital or prison (ETHOS 6.1 and 6.2); • 38 people who were housed by family or friends (ETHOS 8.1). <p>The Ministry of the Family and Integration also collates reporting of social service providers and publishes the results in an annual report. The latest report, from 2013 found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 372 people used classical structures (day and night shelters for urgent situations). This is less than in 2012 because people are staying longer and so they are blocking beds, meaning that newcomers have to wait. • 1,056 people stayed in dwellings rented by social services for homeless people (supported housing); • 105 young people used specialised supported housing services for youngsters. <p>Total: 1,533 people in about 10 organisations¹²⁶</p> <p>There are two other sources of data that help to get an idea of the homelessness problem in Luxembourg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The domiciliation commission, which tries to get an address for people who have lost it because they moved into a dwelling which is not authorised as such by the municipalities and where people are not allowed to live. 610 requests were addressed to this commission by 368 different people in 2013. This represents an increase of 13% compared to 2012. • The Ministry's special "winter action plan" in collaboration with Caritas, Inter Actions and the Red Cross (see below).
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>Evaluation of the Winter Action Plan showed that 297 different homeless individuals were identified during winter 2008/2009, a figure that rose to 383 people in winter 2009/2010, 422 people in winter 2010/2011 and reached 519 in winter 2011/2012. During winter 2012/2013, this number rose to 684 different persons. We have to conclude that one of the objectives must be to have a clearer picture of changes in the general extent of homelessness over time at national level, but there is evidence that the problem is not decreasing.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>According to the 2013 report by the Ministry of Family and Integration, users of night shelters in Luxembourg are decreasing in number (from 658 in 2010 to 372 in 2013). However, there has been an increase in the average number of nights spent in the shelters (38.6 days on average in 2010 and 76 in 2013).</p> <p>The <i>Ulysse</i> shelter run by Caritas in Luxembourg City has reported an ongoing high level in the number of young people it receives. People under 30 accounted for 25% of its users in 2009, 29% 2010, 30.2% in 2011 and 31.5% in 2012. <i>Ulysse</i> shelter data also indicates a increasing proportion of people using its services over long periods. This suggests that specific interventions are required for long-term homelessness.</p>

126 See here: http://www.mfi.public.lu/publications/01_rapports-activite/rapp_act_2013.pdf



Luxembourg		
National Strategy	<p>In March 2013, the Luxembourg Family and Integration Minister announced and explained the national homelessness strategy. The strategy was adopted on the 18th January 2013 by the Government. It provides a framework for all the governmental activities to fight homelessness an exclusion from housing. It requires the collaboration of all governmental bodies and the NGOs working in this field. The strategy is based on the Housing First approach. It has four main objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide homeless people with decent and stable dwellings; 2. React rapidly and adequately to urgent situations; 3. Prevent homelessness; 4. Boost the existing measures and consolidate governance <p>The strategy will be implemented through 14 concrete actions from 2013 to 2020.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>The Ministry has gradually increased the budget targeting care for homeless people. Recent investments have been made in the area of youth homelessness and, according to the homelessness strategy there are plans to invest in a more housing-led approach in the future. The service LEA (logements encadrés et accompagnés) of Caritas is a housing-led approach since 2004, but has not been developed over time.</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>Creation of a social rental agency in 2009, which today provides access to 124 dwellings for 385 people (including 175 children) with a housing problem defined by ETHOS.</p> <p>Launch of the national strategy with a housing-led approach.</p>	<p>The financial crisis has also reached Luxembourg and to restore the balance of the state budget there will be serious cuts in the social budgets. In the context of the debate on the de-centralisation of services for homeless people, municipalities have rarely been willing to accept any establishment of transitional or emergency structures, even permanent housing for homeless persons within their territories. Currently, budgets are restricted and there is a lack of additional funding for the strategy.</p>

Poland	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no national data-collection strategy for homelessness in Poland. Homelessness was addressed by the 2001 and 2011 Housing and Population Censuses but there were considerable limitations to the methodologies and definitions used.</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy collects annual Social Welfare Statistics from all social welfare centres in Poland, including on homeless assistance. The Ministry also holds a register of homeless service providers. Furthermore, since 2011, the Ministry has produced a biennial national study on homelessness. However, NGOs in the homelessness sector have many objections to the research methodology used and therefore consider the figures to be inaccurate.</p> <p>NGO service providers collect homeless data in some regions e.g. the Pomeranian Forum in aid of Getting Out of Homelessness (PFWB) carries out very comprehensive biennial surveys of homelessness in the Pomeranian region. A data-collection standard on users of services for the homeless and a methodology for aggregating data on unique users of various services has also been developed in Warsaw by the “Shipyard” Foundation for Social Innovation and Research.</p> <p>Census Data 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people sleeping rough: approx. 9,600 on a given night (ETHOS 1.1, Census 2011 - 15/16.04.2011) • Number of people living in group accommodation facilities for longer than 3 months: 14,500 on a given night (ETHOS 2 and 3, Census 2011 - 15/16.04.2011) <p>Total: 24,100</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy data on homelessness gathered in a point-in-time headcount of February 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people rough sleeping: 8,554 (ETHOS 1) • Number of people living in overnight shelters and homeless hostels: 22,158 (ETHOS 2.1 and 3.1) <p>Total: 30,712</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy welfare services yearly statistics of 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people who were provided with a shelter: 16,735 (mostly ETHOS 2.1 and 3.1) • Number of persons who received financial support because of homelessness in 2010: 43,206
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>According to social welfare statistics, there has been steady growth in the number of homeless people in Poland from 33,785 in 2005 to 43,206 in 2012. This trend was slightly disturbed by the Polish accession to the EU in 2004, which resulted in a wave of emigration and related changes to the domestic labour market. There is some anecdotal evidence from service providers in Poland of the possible intensification of an already existent increase in homelessness as a result of the crisis and specifically the return of emigrants whose prospects for employment in other Member States have worsened.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>There is a lack of national-level data on the gender, age or nationality of social welfare clients. Local data and service-provider experience indicates an ageing of the homeless population and a continuing over-representation of men. The 2011 Census results reported a significant number of homeless children and a growing problem of family homelessness, although comparison with earlier data is not possible. A new observation is a slight growth in the number of youth homeless reported by some of the service (2014).</p>
National Strategy	<p>There is no national integrated homelessness strategy. Between 2008 and 2010, work on such a strategy was undertaken by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, upon the request of the Parliamentary Commission for Social Policy and the Family.</p> <p>At the current time, five of six Polish FEANTSA members¹²⁷ are working on proposals for a homelessness strategy entitled “National Programme for Combating Homelessness and Housing Exclusion 2014-2020”. In August 2014 a wider strategy called “National Programme for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion” was adopted by the Government. One of its priorities refers directly to housing insecurity and homelessness.</p>



¹²⁷ CMSA are not participating



Poland		
Remarks on Budget Evolution	There is no consolidated budget dedicated to combating homelessness in Poland. Overall, there has been a steady increase in available municipal funding for shelter services in recent years (from €5,042,835 in 2006 to €9,714,104 in 2012).	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>In 2011, the Ombudsman for Citizens' Rights proposed to undertake work to simplify procedures, including the creation of a legal basis for funding of the medical care for those not covered by the health insurance, as well as shortening the waiting time for uninsured and homeless people needing to stay in curative care institutions and nursing homes by adjusting the admission procedures to the situation of these people.</p> <p>The subsistence benefit entitlement is dependent on the so-called income criterion specified by the Social Welfare Act. The criterion was raised in 2012 from €114.66 to €130.29 per single person and from €84.37 to €109.61 per person for families</p> <p>Work on strategic documents concerning homelessness and poverty have been taken up again after a standstill of several years. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy has presented the National Programme for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2014-2020, while the partnership of NGOs working on the ESF-funded quality framework project prepared the National Programme for Combating Homelessness and Housing Exclusion 2014-2020.</p> <p>The quality standards framework prepared by five of six Polish FEANTSA Members called "Municipal Standard of Leaving Homelessness" was accepted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Currently (2014), efforts are undertaken on lobbying the legislative amendments proposed alongside the framework and on mainstreaming the framework itself.</p>	<p>While temporary health insurance coverage exists, some homeless people still encounter difficulties in accessing health services due to bureaucratic requirements and also due to the reluctance of healthcare institutions to apply the relevant legislation.</p> <p>A persisting lack of initiatives to improve the knowledge of the real costs of public homelessness policy (e.g. costs of employment-led policy, costs of dwelling in public space) and a lack of efficiency requirements for existing mainstream services i.e. shelters and programmes for exiting homelessness (also those provided by NGO service providers).</p>

Portugal	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no concrete data, so far, from official entities about the number of homeless people at national level in Portugal. However “Planning and Intervention for Homeless People Nuclei” (NPISA (see below)) and homeless services provide important information at national level. There is an attempt to consolidate and standardise the procedures for collecting information and data.</p> <p>Recent Statistics</p> <p>In 2009, a survey by the Social Security Institute identified 2,133 homeless people on one night in Portugal. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 922 were sleeping rough (ETHOS 1.1); • 1,088 were living in homeless shelters (ETHOS 2.1); • 43 were institutionalised (in mental health centres and prisons) (ETHOS 6.1 and 6.2); • 80 were uncategorised. <p>63% of the people surveyed were located in Oporto and Lisbon.</p> <p>In Lisbon in 2011, a network of social institutions (including street work teams, housing centres, social support and inclusion services) participated in a statistical study, realised in one night and identified 2,399 individuals (ETHOS1.1 and ETHOS 2.1).</p> <p>NPISA Oporto provided data for 2013, reporting 1,300 homeless people in accommodation and around 300 homeless sleeping in the street per night.</p> <p>The Social Security Institute states that its official data from 2013 is still being compiled and handled. However, initial unapproved data shows that 4,420 people were recorded in “active homeless situations” over the year on the social security information system. This means that they had an open case, i.e. were receiving support from social workers.</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>The lack of up-to-date national data makes it difficult to describe overall trends. However, data collected about service use gives an indication of some trends. Between 2008 and 2013, the number of homeless people that AMI supported increased by 16% (2008: 1,445 homeless people; 2013: 1,679 homeless people). The number was practically the same in 2012.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>AMI has collected profile data on new clients in 2008 and 2013, and reports the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26% were women in 2008, and 26% were women in 2013 • 79% were born in Portugal in 2013, compared with 66% in 2008 • 10% were born in PALOP (Portuguese-speaking African countries) in 2013, compared with 13% in 2007 • 29% were under 30 in 2013, compared with 16% in 2008 • 14% were beneficiaries of the Social Inclusion Income (RSI) in 2013, compared to 20% in 2008
National Strategy	<p><i>National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People – Prevention, Intervention and Follow-Up, 2009-15</i></p> <p>In 2009, the Portuguese ‘National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People – Prevention, Intervention and Follow-Up, 2009-15’ was launched. However, the progress that was made on implementation in the early phase has been largely halted in the context of the economic crisis.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>The overall aims of the strategy are to enhance the evidence base on homelessness through the adoption of an agreed definition and a shared information and monitoring system and to promote quality in homelessness services and responses. The strategy contains the following specific targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 80% of homeless people should have a ‘case manager’; 2. No-one should have to stay overnight on the street for more than 24 hours owing to the lack of an alternative; 3. No-one should leave an institution without having all necessary help to secure a place to live. <p>The strategy has not been adopted by the Council of Ministers and has not featured in European reporting processes such as the National Reform Programme. A lack of formal political backing has had a very negative impact on implementation. At the time of its public presentation, a budget of €75 million was announced. However, this budget has not been allocated. Given the crisis, it seems unlikely that this will happen in the near future.</p>





Portugal		
Remarks on Budget Evolution	At the time of its public presentation, a budget of €75 million was announced for the Portuguese homelessness strategy. However, this budget has not been allocated.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>The introduction of the strategy has been an important step towards ending homelessness, even though progress on implementation is not currently being made.</p> <p>However in certain local areas such as Oporto, Coimbra, and Lisbon, civil society organisations remain mobilised around the strategy to find better ways to tackle homelessness.</p>	<p>The social policy has been relegated to the background, with the measures imposed by the troika. Cuts and decreases in the social support, like the RSI level or unemployment benefit.</p> <p>Other social help has been reduced in the several subsystems of the social security, including support for mothers.</p> <p>An increase in the poverty rate to 18.7% in 2013, and unemployment to 17.8%.</p> <p>There are now higher taxes on working people and access to public hospital services is also taxed at an increased rate.</p> <p>The housing policies did not see improvements with the introduction of the rental law, which reduces eviction processes to three months.</p>

Romania	
Key Statistics	<p>There is no national homelessness data collection strategy and very little data is available. Only general social inclusion indicators are available at national level.</p> <p>A study conducted in 2004 by the Research Institute for Quality of Life and the National Institute of Statistics, estimated the number of roofless people in Romania at 14,000-15,000 persons maximum.</p> <p>Between 1 January and 31 December 2011, 113,495 'marginalised persons' were registered with the authorities of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41,085 did not own or rent a place to live • 61,806 lived in inadequate conditions • 10,604 were older people without legal guardians or care givers <p>According to Eurostat, in 2011, 17.1% of the EU-28 population lived in overcrowded dwellings with the highest overcrowding rates registered in Romania (54.2%).</p> <p>There are some future prospects for improved data collection.</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>The comments paper produced for the 2013 Peer Review in Denmark indicates a significant rise in homelessness in Romania. Although not all of the stated 41,085 'marginalised persons' who did not own or rent a place to live' would have been experiencing 'rooflessness', the remainder are likely to be suffering 'houselessness'. Compared to the 2004 study – an estimated 14,000-15,000 roofless persons – the 2011 figure of 113,495 marginalised persons experiencing rooflessness or houselessness means that the earlier study was extraordinarily inaccurate or there has been a steady and dramatic rise in homelessness in Romania.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>There is anecdotal evidence indicating family homelessness is increasing, partly because of economic hardship but also because of domestic violence. Although slightly down on 2012, Casa Ioana received 98 applications from homeless families for a place in one or other of its family shelters in 2013.</p>
National Strategy	<p>There is no national integration strategy in Romania. Homelessness has always been referred to as a general priority in anti-poverty policies because homeless people are considered a vulnerable group. Following a Government decision (197/2006), a National Interest Programme (NIP) was launched with the aim of combating the social exclusion of homeless people by creating emergency social centres. The programme sets out a range of aims, objectives and indicators for a six-year period. Six national interest programmes have been developed concerning different vulnerable groups. Their aim is to promote the social inclusion of vulnerable groups as part of broader anti-poverty policy (as described in the National Reform Programme).</p> <p>In addition, the Romanian Government has provided a definition of homelessness through Law 292/2011 on the national system of social assistance, which amended Law 47/2006. The definition of a homeless person is 'someone represented in a social category formed by single people or families who, because of singular or cumulated reasons (social, medical, financial, economic or legal) or because of <i>force majeure</i>, lives on the streets or with friends or acquaintances and is unable to sustain a rented house or is threatened with eviction, or lives in institutions or prisons and is due to be released within two months and lacks a domicile or residence.'</p> <p>In 2005, the Government committed to implementing a three-year national programme for the counties and municipality of Bucharest that would establish 50 shelters for homeless people. The programme was to be funded by the state and implemented through the National Interest Programme. By the end of November 2011, 55 centres had been established. However, adult services for people who had lost their homes are only being provided in 19 of the 41 counties and in only 26 cities. Not all of these services provide shelter with many simply offering information and advice - it is unclear how many of these services still operate in 2014. NGO service providers consider that the supply is insufficient to meet the demand.</p>





Romania		
	<p>The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection (MLFSP) is responsible for developing and implementing social policies and programmes as well as monitoring and assessing policy implementation. Other ministries involved in social policy are the Romanian Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing, the National Disability Authority, the National Employment Agency and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. The Romanian Ministry of European Affairs monitors the implementation of the National Reform Programme (NRP) at the national level and coordinates the elaboration of the annual Action Plan for implementing it. The implementation of measures for poverty mitigation will be monitored by the MLFSP, based on information received from the implementing institutions.</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>Introduction of a minimum income guarantee scheme (Law No. 416/2001).</p>	<p>Homeless people face considerable barriers to healthcare. According to Law No.95/2006, uninsured persons can receive a maximum of 72 hours medical care and the unemployed and those not receiving state benefits must pay RON 39 (€8) per month for health insurance cover. The same applies for mental health care.</p>

Spain

Key Statistics

National systems for data collection on homelessness are in place in Spain but there are some significant gaps. The estimated homeless population according to NGO service providers is between 23,000 and 30,000/35,000 people.¹²⁸

National Statistics

Since 2004, the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE) has carried out two surveys on homelessness:

- Survey of homeless people (EPSH-Personas Survey)
- Survey of homeless services (EPSH-Centros Survey)

Coverage is limited to municipalities with over 20,000 inhabitants. The definition of homelessness used by the national statistics institute covers:

- People sleeping rough (ETHOS 1.1)
- People living in emergency accommodation provided by the local authority or an NGO (ETHOS 2.1)
- People staying in long-stay group accommodation provided by the local authority or an NGO (non-emergency centres, shelters for victims of domestic violence, centres for asylum seekers or irregular migrants) (ETHOS 3.1 – 5.2)
- People living in buildings that would commonly be considered unsuitable for human habitation (ETHOS 12)
- People living in temporary accommodation such as pensions or guest houses
- People living in squats (ETHOS 8.2 and 8.3)

Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People

There has been a rapid increase in the number of people in inadequate and insecure housing in the context of the economic and financial crisis. Growing unemployment and income falls have increased vulnerability to homelessness as more people are unable to meet housing costs. Austerity measures and cuts are having an impact on service capacity.

The latest national Survey on Homeless Persons by the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE) counted 22,938 people using homeless accommodation and catering facilities in Spain in 2012. This compared to 21,900 in 2005, representing an increase of 4.8%. Whilst methodological changes contributed to this dramatic increase, it does reflect a widely acknowledged trend. Caritas and other NGO service providers consider that the real number of homeless people is much greater than the results of the INE survey indicate. Caritas reports that an estimated 6,000 to 10,000 people slept on the streets in Spain in 2011.¹²⁹ Caritas' figures also show an increase in the number of homeless people using their services from 24,463 in 2007 to 30,415 in 2011.

Change in the Profile of Homeless People

Homelessness Amongst Immigrants: There are indications that the proportion of migrants may have decreased slightly in 2013, as on the one side undocumented migrants are actually excluded from some legal social provisions and, on the other side, more than 1,000,000 migrants returned to their origin countries of origin in the last two years.

"New Entrants" to Homelessness as a Result of the Crisis: There is evidence of a broadening of the socio-economic profile of the homeless population. An increasing number of homeowners are confronted with homelessness. There has been an unprecedented increase in the number of mortgage foreclosures since the beginning of the financial and economic crisis. According to the Spanish Bank, 19,565 families lost their principal home during the 6 first months of 2014. Evictions rose 7% in Spain during the last semester. In the region of Murcia 21% more evictions than during the last semester of 2013. Most alarming increases in La Rioja (73,2%); Extremadura (40,5 %); Murcia (38,8 %); Andalucía (14,7%); Comunidad Valenciana (13,2 %) y Canarias (10,3 %).

Homelessness Amongst Women: Whilst most homeless people are men (80.3% according to the 2012 Survey by the National Statistics Agency), cities such as Segovia and Soria report an increase in the proportion of women in the homeless population.

Age of the Homeless Population: According to National Statistics Agency, the average age of a homeless person was 42.7 in 2012 (compared 37.9 in the 2005 Survey). There is, however consensus that youth homelessness may be hidden as young people do not wish to be considered homeless and are reluctant to access traditional homeless services.

¹²⁸ This is based on adding 6,000 to 10,000 rough sleepers that Caritas estimates to the 22,938 people INE surveyed in homeless services in 2012

¹²⁹ Caritas (2011) *Cáritas ante la crisis. VI Informe sobre las demandas atendidas a través de la red confederal de Acogida y Atención primaria*. Cáritas Española. Madrid



Spain		
National Strategy	In April 2014, the Parliament approved the first Spanish National Homelessness Strategy and the Ministry is beginning to work with different NGOs to define and develop this Strategy. There have also been strategic developments at the level of different autonomous regions. Catalonia has produced a document known as the "Model for Attention to Homeless People 2010". It sets out the legal framework for tackling homelessness within the region. This is seen by stakeholders as a prerequisite to a strategy with clear targets, responsible stakeholders, set budgets, etc.	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	In the context of the crisis, funding cuts at the level of local and regional authorities are having a huge impact on social services.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	Adoption of the first national strategy to tackle homelessness in April 2014.	<p>Cuts to both welfare and homeless services are a major challenge in the current context, especially when combined with rising homelessness. In several Autonomous Communities, subsistence benefits to people in vulnerable situations or experiencing social exclusion have decreased and/or become more difficult to access due to tougher eligibility requirements.</p> <p>The Spanish Congress is poised to approve a bill on public security designed to control and punish behavior on the street, including sanctions targeting the homeless. Individuals who damage public property or lead to its vaguely-defined "degradation" ("deslucimiento") could be fined up to €600. Nongovernmental organizations in Spain are worried this could lead to homeless people being fined for sleeping on a park bench or sitting on a street corner.</p> <p>The national Government is refusing several local, regional and national measures proposed by other public authority levels and political parties to avoid evictions and its consequences.</p>

Sweden

Key Statistics

National data collection is carried out by the National Board of Health and Welfare every five years over one week in May. The survey covers people in 4 broad categories:

1. "Acute" homelessness;
2. Institutional and longer term care;
3. Long-term housing on the secondary housing market;
4. Insecure housing.

In several large cities, data collection takes place more frequently.

Latest Statistics (2011)

The 2011 count by the National Board of Health and Welfare identified 34,000 homeless people in total. This covers most of the ETHOS typology, and can be broken down into the following living situations:

1. Public space / outdoor: 280
2. Tent: 50
3. Caravan / camping site: 250
4. Shelters: 1,100
5. Hotel / hostel: 1,100
6. Temporary accommodation: 1,400
7. Women's emergency centres: 430
8. Supported housing: 3,300
9. Transitional supported housing, e.g. training flats: 2,200
10. Social lease/municipal lease: 11,700
11. Institutions - discharge within 3 months: 1,700
12. Correctional institution / custody - discharge within 3 months: 710
13. Involuntary staying with family / relatives: 2,600
14. Involuntary staying with friends / acquaintances: 2,300
15. Private sublet, shorter than 3 months: 560
16. Temporarily renting a room, less than 3 months, from a private individual: 1,400
17. Other: 1,600

Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People

In 2011, according to the National Board of Health and Welfare survey, overall homelessness had increased by almost by 50% since the last count in 2005. This reported increase is partly the result of a change in the definition that meant better account was taken of people in long-term secondary housing in the second survey. Nonetheless, the data shows increases in all 4 of the homeless situations measured. Although "acute homelessness" has increased overall, the number of rough sleepers has decreased. This probably reflects the implementation of the 2007-09 strategy which introduced a guarantee that everyone should have a roof over their head.

Change in Profile of Homeless People

Migrants and women represent an increasing proportion of the homeless population.

National Strategy

There is no up-to-date national strategy. The previous strategy was *Homelessness, Multiple Faces, Multiple Responsibilities – A Strategy to Combat Homelessness and Exclusion from the Housing Market, 2007-09*. Its main priorities were:

1. Everyone shall be guaranteed a roof over his/her head and be offered further coordinated action based on individual needs;
2. There shall be a reduction in the number of women and men who are in prison or at a treatment unit, or have supported accommodation and who do not have any housing arranged before being discharged or released;
3. Entry into the ordinary housing market shall be facilitated for women and men who are in temporary and transitional supported accommodation provided by the social services and others;
4. The number of evictions shall decrease and no children shall be evicted.

In 2007-09, this strategy was evaluated by researchers and the National Board of Health and Welfare.

There are currently regional strategies against homelessness in Stockholm and Gothenburg.

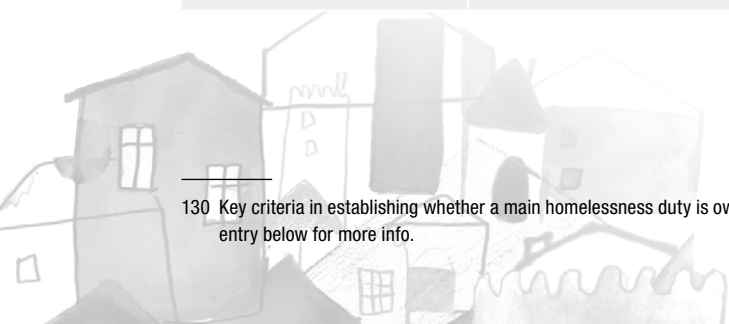




Sweden		
Remarks on Budget Evolution	There is no special funding earmarked at national level. Every municipality is responsible for deciding on the budget channelled to homelessness interventions. Hence, budget evolution cannot be estimated.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>Appointment of a Homelessness Coordinator 2012.</p> <p>Growing interest in the Housing First model.</p>	<p>There is no overall follow up for the national strategies.</p> <p>Six years between the national mappings is too long an interval.</p>

United Kingdom	
England	
Key Statistics	<p>Local authorities throughout the UK have a duty to collect data on information on local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation, which varies between England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In England, data is collected on applications for assistance and the number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty (referred to as 'acceptances') according to the legislation.¹³⁰ Local authorities must also report on the number of homeless households to whom they owe a main homelessness duty and to whom they have provided temporary accommodation. The Department for Communities and Local Government publishes this data on a quarterly basis for England. See here for further information.</p> <p>Local authorities in England now also report on the number of homelessness cases that take place outside of the statutory homelessness framework. These are referred to as "homeless prevention and relief statistics" which report on how local authorities have assisted people to avoid homelessness or obtain alternative accommodation who have not had a main homelessness duty owed. See here for further information.</p> <p>Local authorities in England also submit counts and estimates of rough sleeping. This is published on an annual basis by The Department for Communities and Local Government. See here for further information.</p> <p>In London, the CHAIN database offers extensive data on the rough sleeping population. See here for further information.</p>
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>Statistics from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) show that the Autumn 2013 total of rough sleeping counts and estimates in England was 2,414. This is up by 105 (5%) from the Autumn 2012 total of 2,309.</p> <p>There had been a sustained reduction in "statutory homelessness" levels from the early 2000s until 2009. This trend has now been reversed. DCLG statistics show that the financial year 2010/11 saw an increase in homelessness acceptances by local authorities of 10%, representing the first increase since the year 2003/04. During the 2012/13 financial year, there were 53,540 acceptances. This is a further increase of 6% from 50,290 in 2011/12.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>The gender profile of the statutory homelessness population remains fairly stable. The priority need categories affect the gender profile of acceptances strongly.</p> <p>More recently there has been growing interest in the levels of youth homelessness. Whilst the number of acceptances of homeless households that were headed by young people fell by 10% between 2011/12 and 2012/13, many fall out of the statutory definition of homelessness and there is evidence that the number of young people rough sleeping has risen.</p> <p>There has also been growing concern about rising homelessness amongst immigrants. This has particularly focused on rough sleeping amongst EU citizens from Central and Eastern Europe in major cities.</p>
National Strategy	<p>Throughout the UK, homeless policies are underpinned by a strong legislative basis. In England, the main legal provisions are contained in the 1996 Housing Act, the Homelessness Act 2002, and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002. This legislation lays out the statutory duties of local authorities, which include an obligation to provide housing in cases of homelessness where eligibility, priority need and non-intentionality are established. Priority need covers various groups including households with dependent children; households with a pregnant woman; and people who are vulnerable in some way (for example through mental illness or physical disability). In addition, the Homelessness Act (2002) places a duty on housing authorities to carry out local reviews of homelessness and formulate, publish and regularly review local homelessness strategies in consultation with stakeholders. The initial date by which authorities had to comply with the duty to produce a homelessness strategy was 31 July 2003. Strategies have to be reviewed and renewed within five years. The English homelessness legislation was amended under the 2011 Localism Act and accompanying supplementary guidance was issued - (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. These changes allow councils to discharge their duty to homeless households into the private rented sector.</p>

¹³⁰ Key criteria in establishing whether a main homelessness duty is owed include non-intentionality and various forms of "priority need". See the 'National Strategy' entry below for more info.





United Kingdom		
England		
Remarks on Budget Evolution	The government has maintained the homelessness grant (£100 million a year for each of the four years between 2011 and 2015). However, most prevention and support services are funded out of Local Authority housing-related support budgets (previously known as Supporting People budgets). Most cuts are taking place at local level in a context where ring-fencing for these budgets has been removed by central government. This has resulted in staff redundancies, reduced support and some projects closing altogether. Homeless Link's 2014 Annual Review of Support for Single Homeless People found that 58% of homeless accommodation projects said Housing-Related Support was their primary source of funding, which had decreased from 76% in the previous year. 38% of accommodation projects reported a fall in funding compared to the previous year, with an average reduction of 20%.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	The Government have encouraged the introduction of the 'No Second Night Out' approach, which encourages Local Authorities to offer a rapid response to new rough sleepers so they are provided an offer of accommodation that means they do not have to sleep out for a second night. A cross-Government Ministerial Working Group on Preventing and Tackling Homelessness was established in 2011. There have been recent commitments by the Government to increase the supply of affordable housing.	Welfare reform changes including changes to housing benefit in 2012-2013 mean that a growing number of people are potentially at risk of homelessness. There is evidence which suggests that homeless people are more at risk of having their social security benefits sanctioned under a new increased conditionality and sanctions regime introduced in 2012. Regulations which came into force on 1 April 2014 have removed access to Housing Benefit for European Economic Area (EEA) jobseekers. There is a chronic shortage of affordable accommodation which has been caused by the failure of successive Governments to build enough housing to meet long term need. The Localism Act 2011 has allowed councils to discharge their duty to homeless households to the private rented sector.

Northern Ireland	
Key Statistics	In Northern Ireland, the Department for Social Development publishes a quarterly housing bulletin, including statistics on statutory homelessness applications and acceptances. See here for more information.
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	Following an upward trend since 1999, the number of households presenting as homeless to the NI Housing Executive (the authority with statutory responsibility for homelessness) peaked in 2006/07 at 21,013 households, and then levelled off between 2006/07 to 2009/10. There was however a sharp increase from 18,664 in 2009/2010 to 20,158 in 2010/2011. In the following two years, the numbers of presenters decreased by 4% (2011-12, n=19737; 2012-13, n=19354).
Change in Profile of Homeless People	The Homelessness Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012-17 refers to the "changing nature of the homeless population which includes ex-offenders, young people, older people, those leaving care and migrant workers. Increasing numbers of homeless people are reported to "have mental health and addiction problems and other complex needs and require intensive support."

National Strategy	<p>Homeless policy in Northern Ireland is contained in the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 as amended (April 1989). The order places a statutory duty on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to provide temporary and/or permanent accommodation for certain groups of homeless persons, depending upon the assessment of their case. Those who satisfy the tests of eligibility, homelessness, priority need and unintentional homelessness are considered to have Full Duty Application Status (FDA). For those not entitled to FDA status there is a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance.</p> <p>The Housing (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 placed a duty on the Housing Executive to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy. The Act states that an extensive range of agencies are also obliged to take into account the homelessness strategy in the exercise of their functions. The Department for Social Development (DSD) has overall responsibility to ensure that the stipulations of the Housing Act are enacted. "The Promoting Social Inclusion Homelessness Partnership" - an inter-departmental, cross-sectoral working group that was established by The Department for Social Development - will implement and monitor the new strategy. This interagency body will support the four objectives of the homelessness strategy. A list of performance indicators will be used to monitor progress in implementing the strategy. These will be detailed in an implementation plan to be developed following publication of the strategy.</p> <p>With regards to recent / ongoing housing policy trends, a number of strategy changes are likely to impact on homelessness and housing.</p> <p>As outlined in 'Facing the Future: Northern Ireland Housing Strategy 2012-17', the Department of Social Development (DSD), which has strategic responsibility for housing, stated its intention to put a clearer policy focus on preventing homelessness and work better in partnership with other bodies to support individuals and families with particular needs to live independently. As part of this Strategy, the DSD stated that it would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use public funding in innovative ways to increase the supply of social and affordable housing; • undertake a fundamental review of social housing allocations policy; • make better use of existing social housing stock to meet a range of needs; and • place a stronger policy emphasis on preventing homelessness and work with partners in both the public and voluntary sectors to promote a prevention agenda. 	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	<p>Given the diverse funding streams for homeless policy and service provision, it is difficult to assess whether overall funding has increased or decreased. Secondly, funding information is not easily sourced or accessed. As a result, limited data were available at the time of creating this report.</p> <p>According Housing Related Support Strategy 2012-2015 (Supporting People), homeless households receive 21.4% of the Supporting People budget (total budget £71m).</p> <p>For the period 2013/14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-up vouchers in relation to private sector temporary accommodation – circa £2,600,600 • Voluntary sector funding to organisations concerned with homelessness that assist the Housing Executive in (1) meeting its statutory duties and (2) the delivery of its homelessness strategy – circa £2,900,000 (this includes funding in relation to homelessness advice services) • Funding for Specialist Private Temporary Accommodation – £955,000 	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive <p>Homelessness is mentioned in the Housing Strategy for NI, Anti-Poverty Strategy, and in Transforming Your Care.</p> <p>We do have inter-departmental commitment to take cognizance of homelessness in the relevant discharge of duties across Government.</p>	Negative <p>The move to discharge homelessness duty into a fundamentally unregulated and insecure private rented sector.</p> <p>Reduction in opportunities for individuals to obtain full duty applicant status on grounds of extended anti-social behaviour sanctions.</p> <p>There are fundamental changes proposed to the allocation of social housing with less attention paid to individual need factors, to a quota system, and a possible reduction in security of tenure through introduction of Short Secure Tenancies.</p>





Scotland		
Key Statistics	Homelessness data are collected by all local authorities and published by the Scottish Government on quarterly and annual bases. See here for more information.	
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	Homelessness is decreasing in Scotland. The data for the quarter July-September 2013 shows a 13% reduction in statutory homelessness presentations and a 12% reduction in those assessed as homeless compared to the equivalent period in the previous year.	
Change in Profile of Homeless People	The profile of homeless people has been steady over the last nine years, with the exception of an increase in the proportion of women under 25. The number of homeless women is reducing slightly more slowly than the number of men, possibly due to the fact that more services target mainly the latter.	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	The Scottish Government in 2007 gave greater autonomy to local authorities over their spending and removed the 'ring fence' from certain funding streams. There has been an overall reduction in real terms (rather than cash terms) in the funding available to Scottish local authorities for the entire range of their spending. There has also been the introduction in a number of local authorities of competitive tendering for a number of social support and homelessness services with a view to getting 'more for less.' In addition, there is evidence that NGOs are using their own resources to fill any gaps in funding resulting from reductions.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>Since December 2012 local authorities in Scotland have had a legal duty to provide every 'unintentionally' homeless household with settled accommodation</p> <p>All charges for prescribed medicines have been abolished in Scotland. All health authorities (Health Boards) must implement a health and homelessness action plan to deal with the health needs of homeless people in their area of operation.</p> <p>The Scottish Parliament will be given new powers over some elements of taxation, housing benefits and some welfare benefits, including the power to create new welfare benefits in legislation due to be debated in 2015. It is unclear how this will affect homeless people.</p> <p>Health and Social Care services are in the process of being integrated, which may have either positive or negative outcomes.</p> <p>Self-Directed Support and personalisation is slowly being extended, which gives greater control and influence to service users over the services they receive and how the budget allocated to them is spent.</p> <p>Since June 2013, there has been a legal duty for local authorities to provide a housing-support assessment to homeless applicants where they have reason to believe they require housing support, and a further legal duty to ensure that the support they need is provided. (Housing Scotland Act 2010.)</p>	<p>Welfare Reform taking place including benefits sanctions to people who do not actively pursue work or deny work offers; an upper 'cap' on welfare benefits; deductions in housing benefit where a household has more bedrooms than they 'require'.</p> <p>Because of the difficulties presented by the 'bedroom tax' some local authorities are considering developing small scale hostels, primarily because there are insufficient one bedroom apartments to provide accommodation for single people.</p>

Wales	
Key Statistics	Information on local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation is collected through the quarterly homelessness statistical return and published by the government. Data includes the number of households accepted as homeless, reasons for homelessness and the number of households in temporary accommodation. See here for more information.
Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People	<p>The number of households accepted as homeless fell during 2012-13 and this decrease has continued into 2013/14 despite an increase in the number of applications. From October to December 2013/14, a total of 1,215 households were accepted as homeless which is 11% less than the same quarter of 2012/13. Over the same period, a total of 3,840 households made homeless applications, which is 5% more than the same quarter of 2012/13.</p> <p>In general, numbers of acceptances have been falling since 2004-05, when 44 % of applications resulted in the household being found eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and therefore owed the main housing duty. By 2013/14, the proportion of applicants owed the main housing duty had fallen to 32%. This is thought to be due in part to increased prevention work and also to stricter adherence to the 28-day definition of threatened homelessness, in response to higher demands on services due to welfare reform.</p> <p>The numbers of households in temporary accommodation decreased at the end of 2012/13 following increases in the previous two years and as with acceptances this decrease has continued into the first three quarters of 2013/14. At the end of December 2013 there were 2,310 households in temporary accommodation which is a decrease of 4% compared with the end of December 2012.</p> <p>The number of households in Bed & Breakfast (B&B) accommodation at the end of the quarter has been increasing in recent years. At the end of December 2013, there were 260 households in B&B accommodation which is an increase of 23% compared with the end of December 2012.</p>
Change in Profile of Homeless People	<p>On 8th March 2012, the Welfare Reform Act 2012 changed the age threshold for the shared accommodation rate of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) from 25 to 35. Whilst the number of single person households accepted as homeless has generally fallen since 2004/05, the percentage of all acceptances that were single person households has been increasing. In recent years, around 50% of all acceptances were single person households. However, during 2012/13 and 2013/14 this has been increasing, with 58% of all acceptances in October to December 2013/14 being single person households.</p> <p>The impact of Welfare Reform, tighter public sector budgets and job losses, the rising costs of living and the economic outlook means that rising homelessness is likely to continue in coming years.</p>





Wales		
National Strategy	<p>Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, which came into force in January 1997, places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or help in getting accommodation. The local authority owes a main homelessness duty where it is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group. The priority need groups include households with dependent children; households with a pregnant woman; and people who are vulnerable in some way (for example through mental illness or physical disability). The Welsh Government introduced secondary legislation (starting from 1st March 2001) extending the priority need categories to specifically include: applicants aged 16 or 17; applicants aged 18 to 20 who were previously in care; applicants vulnerable because of domestic violence or the threat of violence; or applicants vulnerable as a result of leaving the armed forces, or leaving prison. Where a main homelessness duty is owed, then the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, then the authority must make an assessment of their housing need.</p> <p>On 18 November 2013 the Welsh Government introduced the Housing Bill to the Assembly. This is the first piece of housing-related primary legislation created by the Assembly since law-making powers were extended in 2011. Part 2 of the Bill makes several significant changes to current homelessness legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A universal homelessness prevention duty, available to all households presenting as threatened with homelessness, to take 'reasonable steps' to 'help to secure that accommodation does not cease to be available' • Extending the statutory definition of threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days • Giving authorities the power to discharge the main homelessness duty into the private rented sector without the consent of the applicant • Removing priority need status for prison leavers who do not fall under the definition of vulnerability • Ending family homelessness by 2019, by phasing out intentionality for households with children • Requiring authorities to 'opt in' to applying intentionality, publishing reasons for doing so • Giving Ministers powers to revoke the priority need test without further primary legislation. <p>The Bill is due to receive Royal Assent in July 2014.</p>	
	<p>In order to meet the additional costs of the new statutory framework, Welsh Government funding for homelessness is set to increase from £6.4 million in 2014/15 to £11.3 million in 2015/16.</p> <p>The Supporting People budget, which funds housing-related support for vulnerable people, was protected in 2014/15. However, the Welsh Government has announced a £4 million cut in 2015/16, bringing the budget to £130.2 million.</p>	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	High level of ambition and long-term vision for a universal rights-based service, including the long-term eradication of priority need.	<p>UK government changes to housing benefit and changes for working age/work-related benefits are having an impact on homeless people and putting more people at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Scarcity of public funds limits the extent to which the Government is able to achieve long-term aims.</p>



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

This publication is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013). This programme is implemented by the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment, social affairs and equal opportunities area, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy goals in these fields.

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FEANTSA works with the European Commission, the contracting authority for the four-year partnership agreement under which this publication has received funding.

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