



FEANTSA NEWS

Results of Readers' Poll

We have now received responses to the readers' poll on how to improve the Flash. Most respondents had been receiving and reading the Flash for five years or more, but some were relative newcomers. All respondents read the Flash every month, but did not read all sections. Most respondents read 3-4 sections. European News and Publications were the most popular sections, followed by FEANTSA News and Member News. There were some complaints about the length of the Flash but most respondents said the length was just right. The news reported was assessed as relevant and quite useful. Thank you to everyone who took part in the poll.

Homeless in Europe Magazine in English Only in 2014

The magazine will not be available in French this year.

Pilot Project on Promoting the Protection of the Right to Housing and Homelessness in the Context of Evictions

FEANTSA experts in association with the School of Law, NUI Galway and Human European Consultancy will lead a major EU-funded research project on evictions across the 28 European Union (EU) Member States. The [research](#) will investigate the national legal frameworks and extent of evictions across Europe. It will examine evictions from mortgaged, rental and other properties, with a focus on the right to housing within the context of national and EU law.

The research will also identify early intervention and preventative measures, and create a profile of evicted households, risk factors and risk groups. Patterns of evictions across all EU Member States will be analysed in the context of structural factors, the economic crisis, welfare systems, legal practices and protections, and other factors. Measures which prevent homelessness within all EU Member States remain a priority for the European Commission. This project will collate and evaluate the most cost-effective measures which can mitigate evictions across the EU.

The project was awarded following a competitive tendering process by the European Commission. Funded by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Europe 2020: Social Policies, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction, this pilot project supports the EU poverty reduction and active inclusion strategy through combating homelessness, reducing housing vulnerability and promoting access to quality and efficient social services as underpinned by the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Social Investment Package.

European Network of Homeless Health Workers Newsletter

The latest issue of the ENHW newsletter is now [online](#).

Call for Papers: European Journal of Homelessness - Vol. 8. No. 2 – 2014

The Editors of the Journal have launched a [call](#) for contributions to the Open Edition of the Journal, which analyse and interpret aspects of policy and practice in relation to homelessness and housing exclusion in Europe. Articles that explicitly address cross-national issues are particularly welcome. To be considered for inclusion in the open edition of the Journal, papers must be submitted to [Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan](#) before 21st March 2014. Furthermore, as a contribution to enhancing knowledge on aspects of homelessness and housing exclusion in Europe, the Editorial team [seeks](#) submissions that provide an overview of the nature and extent of homelessness in the Baltic States. To be considered for inclusion in the open edition of the Journal, papers must be submitted to the lead editor, [Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan](#) before 6th June 2014.

EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness - Number 3 – 2013

The third in the European Observatory on Homelessness Comparative Studies on Homelessness series, "The Costs of Homelessness in Europe: An Assessment of the Current Evidence Base", is now [online](#) and in print. To order a copy, please email [Anne-Sophie Wirtz](#).

Improving Health and Social Integration through Housing First: A Review

This [Review](#) was undertaken to assess the international evidence base on the success of Housing First services in promoting health and social and economic integration for formerly homeless people using Housing First services. To order a printed copy, please email [Anne-Sophie Wirtz](#).

Historic Breakthrough for Rights of People Living in Institutional Care

The European Union (EU) is preparing to implement the next 7 years of the Structural and Investment Funding. The framework put in place for this new programming period represents a historic opportunity to protect the rights of Europe's most excluded people - those living in institutional care. The European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-Based Care (EEG), of which FEANTSA is a member, welcomes this breakthrough, which should improve the situation of children and adults in institutional care or at risk of institutionalisation and facilitate real effective innovation in the social services sector. [Read how](#).

Starter Packs Toolkit

A regulation on a new Fund for European Aid for the most Deprived (FEAD) has recently been adopted. This fund can be used for food assistance, material assistance and social inclusion measures (not eligible under the European Social Fund). In relation to the material assistance mission of the new FEAD, FEANTSA has published a [toolkit](#), "Fresh Start: Using the full potential of the Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived to support transitions out of homelessness through starter packs" on setting up starter packs of material goods which can contribute to the resettlement of homeless people.

EUROPEAN NEWS

European Parliament Adopts Resolution Calling for an EU Homelessness Strategy

Following a plenary [debate](#) on homelessness between MEPs and the European Commission, the European Parliament has [adopted a Resolution](#) on an EU Homelessness Strategy. The Resolution urges the Commission to act on numerous previous requests by European bodies and implement the strategy without further delay, advising that a high level expert group should be established to support the

preparation and development of the strategy. An EU homelessness strategy should focus on housing, cross-border homelessness, quality of services for the homeless, prevention and homeless young people, says the Parliament in the resolution adopted by 349 votes to 45, with 113 abstentions.

Read the [FEANTSA press release and the joint press release with Fondation Abbé Pierre](#) on the adoption of the resolution. Watch the FEANTSA video "[Europe Calls for Action](#)" and read more [here](#).

Parliamentary Questions on Homelessness

There have been quite a few recent European Parliament parliamentary questions on homelessness. They are all collected on the [FEANTSA website](#).

European Commission Publishes New Guide on Application of Habitual Residence Test for Social Security

The European Commission has published a [guide](#) on the 'Habitual Residence Test' to help Member States apply EU rules on the coordination of social security for EU citizens who have moved to another Member State. The guide defines the separate concepts of 'habitual residence' and 'temporary residence' or 'stay'. These definitions, laid down in EU law, are necessary to establish which Member State is responsible for the provision of social security benefits to EU citizens moving between Member States as under EU law there can be only one habitual place of residence and so only one Member State responsible for paying residence-based social security benefits. The guide also provides concrete examples and guidance on cases in which the determination of the place of residence can be difficult, such as seasonal workers, students and highly mobile inactive people.

Structural and Investment Funds: Commission Boosts Partners' Role in Planning and Spending

The European Commission has recently adopted [The European Code of Conduct on the Partnership Principle](#). The code is a common set of standards to improve consultation, participation and dialogue with partners during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). These funds include the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund under which some local projects on homelessness and housing are funded. This legally-binding Regulation requires Member States to strengthen cooperation between their authorities responsible for spending EU structural and investment funds and project partners such as public authorities and NGOs to facilitate the sharing of information, experience, results and good practices in the 2014-20 programming period, and to help to ensure that this money is spent effectively. The code of conduct sets out objectives and criteria to ensure that Member States implement the partnership principle. This means that Member States are required to: ensure transparency in the selection of partners, provide partners with adequate information and sufficient time as a prerequisite for a proper consultation process, ensure that partners must be effectively involved in all phases of the process, support the capacity building of the partners for improving their competences and skills and create platforms for mutual learning and exchange of good practice and innovative approaches.

European Union Adopts Revised Public Procurement Directive

In January 2014, the European Parliament [approved the revision](#) of the 2004 EU directive on public procurement, following a proposal by the European Commission in 2011. The new legislation, already agreed by the European Council in June 2013, modifies the current rules and, for the first time, sets common EU standards on concession contracts to boost fair competition and ensure best value for money by introducing new award criteria that place more emphasis on environmental considerations, social aspects and innovation.

Whereas the 2004 directive on public procurement maintained that social services, as an economic activity, fell under the scope of competition and internal market rules, this revised directive acknowledges the specificities of social services as general interest services (services to the person, with a limited cross-border dimension), provides simplified and more flexible rules and procedures and substitutes the lowest price criteria with the most advantageous economic tender.

The directives will enter into force 20 days after publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. After this date, member states will have 24 months to implement the provisions of the new rules into national law.

2013 Annual Review of Employment and Social Developments

The European Commissioner responsible for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor recently presented the review of [Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2013](#). The review paints a sombre image of the present situation, with a significant increase in the risk of poverty among the working-age population being one of the most tangible social consequences of the economic crisis in Europe. The Review states that 2013 has seen some weak signs of economic recovery from the recession, GDP grew in the second and third quarters of the year, unemployment stopped rising and employment stopped falling. However, this recovery is still very modest and rather fragile. Long-term unemployment is still on the rise in most Member States, as is the number of precarious jobs. These factors contribute to rising poverty and might result in destitution and homelessness. One of the important findings of the review is that, contrary to many commonly held views, job-seekers receiving unemployment benefits are more likely to get a job than those who don't receive benefits.

EU Launches New Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)

In January 2014 the new [EU Employment and Social Innovation](#) funding programme, EaSI, has come in to replace the three EU financing programmes managed separately between 2007 and 2013. This European-level financing instrument is set to promote quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions. Managed directly by the European Commission, EaSI brings the [PROGRESS](#), [EURES](#) and [Progress Microfinance](#) programmes together to support the modernisation of employment and social policies, job mobility and access to micro-finance and social entrepreneurship. EaSI will support Member States' efforts in the design and implementation of employment and social reforms at European, national as well as regional and local levels by means of policy coordination and the identification, analysis and sharing of best practices.

EU Approves Mortgage Directive Changes

The European Union has [adopted](#) a directive on mortgage credit, which will create a single market for mortgage credit applicable to all loans made to consumers for the purpose of buying a home and to all loans to consumers that are guaranteed by a mortgage or another comparable security across the EU. The directive's aim is to ensure that mortgage markets operate responsibly and, as such, increasing consumer protection and contributing to financial stability. European Union Member States must incorporate the directive into their national legislation within two years.

HABITACT Website in Polish

The HABITACT website now has a [Polish version](#).

Annual Convention Speeches and Proceedings

All speeches and presentations from the Third Annual Convention of the European Platform Against Poverty and Social Exclusion are available [online](#). The [proceedings](#) have also been published. Homelessness received a lot of attention, including a workshop on homelessness, which concluded that: "Both panellists and interventions from the audience called for the European dimension of homelessness and affordable housing policies to be strengthened. The Social Investment Package can be brought forward and different European Union funds better exploited to reduce homelessness and housing exclusion."

MEMBER NEWS

Austria: Assessment of Homeless Sector

BAWO have published a short [paper](#) assessing the homeless sector in Austria. It concludes that the sector helps people have a place to stay but does not help them find their own home, not least because of a shortage of affordable housing. Without this, the homelessness sector

cannot effectively fight or prevent homelessness, the paper states.

Denmark: Kompasset Statistical Report 2013

Kirkens Korshær Kompasset has recently released its new statistical report covering 2013. Kompasset opened in January 2013 and the report shows the development in users and inquiries made to Kompasset throughout the first year. The statistics show that there has been a significant increase in the number of inquiries since the opening.

The main subject of inquiry concerns the use of facilities (job board, printing, use of computers etc.), advice on job opportunities and legal rights, general counseling about Denmark as well as support and assistance with registration in Denmark for EU/EEA citizens. 64% of the inquiries are from EU/EEA citizens, 30% from Third-country nationals (TCNs) with a residence permit in another EU country and five percent from TCNs without a residence permit in another EU country.

For more information please read the full statistical report [here](#) or contact Project Officer, [Benedicte Ohrt Fehler](#).

France: Extend Universal Rent Guarantee to Most Vulnerable

As part of its draft bill on access to housing, the French government will make a decision on the conditions for implementing the Universal Rent Guarantee (GUL). Given the severe housing crisis in the country, FNARS [welcomes](#) the government's willingness to intervene to reassure landlords and help households access and stay in housing. FNARS considers that opening the GUL to NGOs who will ensure mediation between landlords and tenants is also an interesting development. However, they maintain that the government draft bill has moved away from its original ambition to put in place universal housing benefit. It will probably thus have little impact on households' ability to access housing as vulnerability is growing. The mechanism proposed in the draft bill has a number of failings, they say.

Portugal: Barroso Donates to CAIS

European Commission Head José Manuel Durão Barroso has donated his half of the Carlos V Prize he received from the [Fundación Academia Europea de Yuste](#) to CAIS. He will personally present CAIS with the prize money. The other half will go to the secondary school where Barroso was a student.

UK: Faith in Affordable Housing

Faith in Affordable Housing is a project, led by Housing Justice, inviting churches and other property-owning Christian organisations in the UK to offer their land/unused buildings for conversion to affordable housing. In partnership with a range of partners, Housing Justice have produced a [guide](#) providing advice on the practicalities of implementing such a project, along with case studies that demonstrate how feasible such an exercise is.

UK: Difficult Family Relationships and Housing Situation Leads to Youth Homelessness

Nearly half of young people who become homeless have been forced out of their home by their parents, a survey of 169 councils and homelessness charities by Homeless Link has shown. The [research](#) indicates that of those young people approaching councils with homelessness applications, 44% said their parents were no longer willing to house them, with 14% saying that a friend or relative would not accommodate them. The research also found a lack of accommodation for young people, with 68% of respondents reporting not enough youth-specific housing in their area. 43% of local authorities had been forced to place young people in bed and breakfast accommodation. But the report also suggested improvements have been made to local authority homelessness services.

HEADLINES

Belgium: Emergency Winter Shelters Full Every Night

Every night, between 700 and 750 people stay in the Brussels emergency [winter shelter system](#) put in place by Samusocial. Each of the three shelters has reached capacity (110 places in the permanent structure, 300 each in the two temporary shelters).

France: Fondation Abbé Pierre State of Housing Exclusion Report

In its 19th annual [report](#) on housing conditions in France, Fondation Abbé Pierre estimates the number of people experiencing housing exclusion or homelessness at 3.5 million. It counts in particular 2.7 million people experiencing "very difficult" housing conditions, in inadequate or overcrowded dwellings, and 141,500 homeless people across the country. The shelter system is not sufficient to provide a solution for every vulnerable household, says the Foundation. Access to housing is becoming complicated for low-income households "but also for numerous households with a good social and economic situation", states the report.

The report also decries "an unregulated increase in housing costs", with rents having increased 55% in 13 years while the socio-economic situation continues to worsen.

France: Housing Women Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

A workshop hosted by the French cross-ministry delegation on accommodation and access to housing (Dihal) explored the theme "Rethinking Support into Housing for Women Survivors of Gender-Based Violence", discussing the publication of a memorandum on improving integrated reception and orientation services (SIAO) provision for women fleeing violence. A partnership-working project that allows for rapid and coordinated rehousing and transport if necessary for the women affected was presented to the workshop participants. Other mobile community teams presented their experience of reaching out to women in rural areas to help them escape their isolation and support them in their decision to leave their violent partner if they wish. Access to independent housing occurs very quickly. Another project, which instead involves the justice system to remove the violent partner who is also given accommodation and supported to prevent reoffending, was also presented.

Hungary: Budapest City Hall Votes to Add More Areas to List of Forbidden Zones

The Budapest City Council added a few more areas to its list of zones where rough sleeping ("occupying public space for living purposes") is illegal. The City added an underpass, where the end station of Metro 4, to be opened in April 2014, is going to be. The City reasons that the underpass is "going to be so busy ... that public order, public safety and public health require outlawing the occupation of public space for living purposes". The City also integrated the wishes of districts 4 and 13 – the first one adding some areas, while the second one taking some off the restricted zone. The City argues that according to the Law on Petty Crime, it is obliged to include any zone districts ask. The City concludes that the public has been notified about the suggested changes through the City's official website "in order that those immediately affected by this" should be made aware. The two-page feasibility study suggests that this modification shall have no effect on the City budget, nor its administrative burdens. However, it will affect "health and the environment": it will improve the view of the streets, decrease the amount of garbage left on the premises, and enable public spaces to be used for the purpose of traffic, the study claims. [See more.](#)

Ireland: Homelessness Oversight Group Publishes First Report

When the Irish Government's Homelessness Policy Statement was published in February 2013, the Housing Minister established a high-level oversight group to review the approach being advocated in the Statement, identifying obstacles and proposing solutions. The Oversight Group's first [report](#) contains initial observations and recommendations for meeting the target of ending long-term homelessness by the end of 2016.

Italy: National Guidelines on Homelessness

The Italian Parliament has [promised](#) two things for 2014: an updated picture of homelessness in the country and National Guidelines from the Government and Parliament which will advise every Region and Local authority on action to take in order to help end homelessness.

Netherlands: Updated 'Opvangatlas' Attracts New Visitors

Since the launch of the new [Opvangatlas](#), or Shelter Atlas site, with a new logo and a new design in October, the site has had more new visitors. The renovated website gives the visitor more background information. There is a page for every NGO (47) with a profile and information on their services and working methods. Many organisations have used the option of putting photos and videos on the site.

Spain: Housing First Experimentation

The Spanish government has submitted a proposal, under the latest EU social experimentation call, to test Housing First approaches in three cities (Seville, Madrid and Barcelona). The project is called "Social innovation for policy design on homelessness in Spain: Results on people and cost-efficiency of the Housing First model." News about the proposal funding should be available before the summer.

UK: Need for Northern Irish Housing

More housing is 'desperately needed' in Northern Ireland, the Chartered Institute of Housing has said. 700 more homes are needed in the private sector and fewer homes are being bought than in 2012. The figures also showed 4,832 households presented as homeless, up 209 from the previous quarter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Homeless Link Conferences

"Learning for everyone: making it work for homeless people", 12 February 2014 - 10:00 - 16:30, London, UK

There is an urgent need to support access to learning for adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This conference aims to share recent policy, research and practice about what works (and what doesn't) for adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in accessing and sustaining learning.

"Preparing for work: supporting clients to find and sustain employment", 20 March 2014 - 10:00 - 16:00, London, UK

People who are homeless face significant barriers to employment and require specialist support from homelessness services to become work ready. This conference will look at what you can do to support someone who is homeless into work and help them to keep it.

[More information and bookings](#)

Solidarity with Hungarian Homeless People

From the 13th to the 15th February, movements from across Europe will demonstrate in front of the Hungarian Embassies in their countries in order to raise awareness about the criminalisation of homelessness in Hungary and send a message to the Hungarian government to try and persuade it to change its policy.

European Network for Housing Research Conference 2014

The European Network for Housing Research is holding its 2014 [conference](#) in Edinburgh, UK from the 1st- 4th July 2014. There will also be a [New Researchers' Colloquium](#) from the 30th June to the 1st July. The deadline for [abstracts](#) is the 28th February 2014 and the deadline for Papers the 30th May 2014. ENHR offers more than 20 specialist [workshops](#) where papers will be discussed by experts in the field. For the first time the conference [plenaries](#) are genuinely interdisciplinary in approach and are organised around the themes of people, place, money, and home.

First Comes Housing, Then Comes Ethics - BAWO Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe Conference

14th-16th
Hotel Novapark, Fischeraustraße 22, Graz, Steiermark, Austria

May

2014

Access to Housing, the Right to Housing (in the European context too), Different Aspects of Social Work and Networking are the main focal points for this [conference](#). The motto will define the content of the conference: housing must be secured first, and then everything else can come after - a very clear order of priorities. Using the problem of making the housing market accessible to everyone in Austria as a starting point, the conference demands that housing be a fundamental right and not a matter of charity. BAWO welcomes registrations from interested participants outside Austria. The conference will be in German, with two presentations in English on the Friday. Early bird rates until 14th March. To book your place, please send an email to fachtagung@bawo.at

PUBLICATIONS

Children Rough Sleepers, The Italian Mosaic

The [CRS \(Children Rough Sleepers\)](#) project, along with partners, has written a report on the situation of homeless children in Italy called [The Italian Mosaic](#).

Health and Housing Among Vulnerable Groups

This [research](#), in Catalan and English, by Caritas Barcelona analysed the living conditions and health status of individuals and families in 320 households receiving help from Càritas Diocesana de Barcelona and living in substandard housing and/or struggling to pay housing-related costs.

Roma Rights - Country Profiles

The European Roma Rights Centre has published ten country profiles outlining the situation as regards Roma people's rights in each country. The [reports](#) on the Czech Republic, Italy, Macedonia, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine are available in English and the reports on [France](#) and [Romania](#) are available in French.

Housing First Europe – Glasgow Site Final Report

The full Glasgow pilot evaluation for Housing First Europe is now complete and the final report [available](#).



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

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

To that effect, PROGRESS purports at:

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

For more information see:

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

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