



FEANTSA Flash  
February 2008

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For upcoming events and conferences, do not forget to visit the [FEANTSA Calendar of events!](#)

## FEANTSA News

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### ► FEANTSA Response to proposals for EU "active inclusion" agenda [10/3/2008]

For the second phase of the EU consultation on active inclusion, the European Commission published a Communication on "Modernising social protection for greater social justice and economic cohesion: taking forward the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market", which proposes various ways to take forward the active inclusion agenda.

FEANTSA therefore published a response to the European Commission proposals. The response builds on FEANTSA's 8 Basic Principles for the active inclusion of homeless people developed following the first active inclusion consultation (FEANTSA, 2006) and aims to shed light on the potential transferability of the proposed ideas and measures in the recent Commission Communication into concrete policies for the active inclusion of homeless people.

You can read the FEANTSA response [here](#)

See more about "active inclusion" in the FEANTSA [Online Glossary](#).

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### ► FEANTSA Call for Papers 2008: European Journal of Homelessness [3/10/2008]

The 2008 volume of the European Journal of Homelessness has the theme "Effectiveness of policies and services for people who are homeless". The Editors welcome articles related to this topic. Draft articles should be submitted by June 16<sup>th</sup> 2008.

Articles should be submitted to Bill Edgar [w.m.edgar@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:w.m.edgar@dundee.ac.uk)

Notes to contributors and details of submission can be downloaded from the FEANTSA website [here](#).

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### ► FEANTSA European seminar: Strategies to end homelessness: Elements of conflict and cooperation at local level [3/10/2008]

FEANTSA organises a European seminar on "**Strategies to end homelessness: Elements of conflict and cooperation at local level**" on Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> of June in the Committee of the Regions in Brussels.

There are increasing efforts across Europe not only to manage or compensate for the phenomenon of homelessness, but also to significantly reduce and even end this societal phenomenon through consensus-building, targets and general public mobilisation. Ending homelessness is undoubtedly an ambitious task with potential elements of conflict and cooperation, especially at local level where solutions are to be found. Speakers at this seminar will consider some of the obstacles to /success factors for ending homelessness.

For information, programme, registration, please consult the [FEANTSA website](#).

Deadline for registrations: 16 May 2008

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## News from the European Union

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### ► Ending Street Homelessness in Europe: Growing support for European Parliament Written Declaration [3/11/2008]

Already 293 Members of the European Parliaments (MEPs) have signed the Written Declaration 111/2007 on Ending Street Homelessness in Europe (see FEANTSA Flash for [January](#)) and more signatures are expected during the Strasbourg plenary session of the European Parliament in mid-March.

"We are determined to provide political impetus for other European institutions and governments of member states to treat this problem with the utmost seriousness." European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering declared at the opening a photo exhibition on street homelessness during the February plenary session. The exhibition, "Cris silencieux" was organised on the occasion of the Written Declaration by FEANTSA in cooperation with the five first signatories.

In his opening speech, President Pöttering emphasised that homelessness is a shared problem across the EU. "Homelessness is a sad - and unacceptable - reality. No man or woman chooses to live on the street." He called on fellow MEPs to take action stating: "This is our obligation, as we - as the only European institution with a direct democratic mandate - are the voice of the people."

The Written Declaration will be adopted by the European Parliament if half of all MEPs (400 signatures) sign it before the lapse date of March 26th. FEANTSA members from across Europe are currently active in order to mobilise support for this initiative.

More information about the Written Declaration as well as pictures from the opening of the exhibition are available on the [FEANTSA website](#).

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► **New report of CLIP network: Housing and integration of migrants in Europe** [3/10/2008]

The first research module of the CLIP network (Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants) is now available in a report published jointly by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, and the Council of Europe.

The report examines segregation, access to, as well as quality and affordability of housing for migrants in the 20 cities involved in this first phase of the project. It aims to present and analyse innovative policies and their successful implementation at the local level.

Furthermore, the role which can be played by companies, social partners, religious organisations, nongovernmental organisations and voluntary organisations at local level in supporting and developing more successful migrant integration policies is also analysed in this report.

The identification and objective assessment of current practices and initiatives of the cities in the CLIP network within this report is designed to enable others to apply areas of good practice as discussed in the report and help them cope with the challenge of integration of migrants into the community.

The report is available online [here](#)

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## News from our Members

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► **Caritas Luxembourg publishes newsletter on homelessness** [3/10/2008]

The new edition of Caritas Luxembourg's quarterly newsletter on homelessness "Halt im Leben" ('Support in Life') is now available. The newsletter reports about latest initiatives of the Caritas homeless services "Caritas Accueil et Solidarité" in Luxembourg, including supporting people through flat-sharing, work opportunities in forest work and fitness training.

The newsletter is available on <http://www.caritas.lu/>

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► **The Social Reality of People who are homeless in Greece, A contribution to the Flash by Nikoleta Kyrana, Klimaka** [3/10/2008]

In 2005, we conducted a survey addressing the profile of homeless people in Greece. It was the first survey of its kind and the only one to date. It took place in three major cities: Athens, Salonica and Larisa.

According to the survey the average age of homeless people in Greece is 47 years. In their majority they are single (50, 3%) or divorced (13, 7%), half of which have been homeless for more than 3 years (46, 5%). The key reasons for their loss of housing were identified as financial problems, unemployment and lack of support from their families. 82, 4 per cent of the survey participants spend the night on the streets or in abandoned buildings. 84, 4 per cent are fed by NGO's and charitable organizations. It was also apparent that a significant percentage have never been in touch with an aid program for the homeless.

The survey reveals what our experience of many years confirms: the overwhelming majority of homeless people are individuals with psychiatric problems.

See full article [here](#).

## Homelessness in the Headlines

### ► **Denmark: The Homeless: Minister of Social Affairs Denies Help to Homeless East Europeans in Denmark - Translation of article published in the Danish newspaper, Politiken, 23 February 2008 [3/11/2008]**

Undocumented immigrants from Eastern European countries who use public services should be reported to the municipal office, according to a proposal by the Minister of Welfare. Unacceptable, says Kirkens Korshær, a Christian help organization. Their services are not to have a checkpoint at the door.

East Europeans in Denmark who are experiencing homelessness should not expect to be welcomed with open arms by Minister of Welfare Karen Jespersen (of Venstre, one of the two government parties). Nor should they expect a warm welcome at hostels or night cafés, if the Ministry is to have its way. A notice sent to *Politiken* maintains that homeless East Europeans may not seek food and a mattress for the night at hostels and night cafés, if these are covered by the service law.

It is the law on social services which provides for economic support to places such as the night café in Hillerød street in Copenhagen. Uninvited guests are to be reported to the municipal office within two days, after which they are to be sent back to their home countries – otherwise, economic support will be reduced, according to the law.

Organizations like Kirkens Korshær, however, refuse to follow these tactics – regardless of whether they receive support according to the service law or not.

See full article [here](#)

### ► **Czech Republic: More Czech towns to follow ban on drinking in public places? [3/10/2008]**

The decree banning drinking alcohol at some public places in Usti and Labem, Czech Republic has been approved by the Interior Ministry, and several other Czech towns want to follow suit, according to City Mayor Jan Kubata.

The decree has been in force since July 14th 2007 and carries a fine of up to 1000 Czech crowns in the 22 localities where it applies.

Kubata has said that the central aim of the decree is to protect the inhabitants against alcohol-related negative phenomena, which have been visibly eliminated in certain parts of the city. The outcome of the application and the successful impact of the implantation have made the prospect appealing to other towns in the country.

The Czech capital of Prague is also thinking of approving a similar decree, citing its motivation for a restrictive tool to get people with alcohol related problems as well as people who are homeless away from streets. The City Councillor for Social Affairs has suggested that a ban on alcohol, particularly at main railway stations and the airport may be a workable solution.

### ► **France: Homelessness organisations organise Solidarity Night in Paris [3/10/2008]**

Homelessness organisations in France recently organised a "Solidarity Night" (Nuit solidaire) for people experiencing homeless on Place de la République in Paris. The event, which took place on the evening of Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February and brought together organisations including Emmaüs France, the Abbé Pierre Foundation, Secours Catholique, l'Armée du Salut and les Enfants de Don Quichotte, called for the French government to provide the necessary means to fight homelessness effectively and to enforce the right to housing in France. According to the organisers, the event attracted between 5,000 and 7,000 people.

Following the Solidarity Night, French Housing Minister Christine Boutin announced that an additional budget of 250 million euros would be made available to fund concrete projects for people who are homeless as well as people living in substandard accommodation.

Earlier this year, in a joint letter to French Prime Minister Fillon, the numerous organisations working with homelessness had asked for 1.5 billion euros in order to alleviate the housing crisis in France.

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► **Greece: Shopping without cash or card: New cooperation between supermarket and the city of Athens** [3/10/2008]

A new joint corporate social responsibility venture between Europe's largest retailer, Carrefour, and the municipality of Athens is enabling hundreds of citizens to shop do their weekly grocery shopping for free.

The Sofokleos St supermarket in Athens looks just like any other grocery store. However, closer inspection reveals that there are no cash registers or debit card machines because all money transactions are prohibited.

Products on sale at the supermarket are surplus stock items which have been provided free of charge to Carrefour by its suppliers.

200 beneficiaries, made up of low income families, senior citizens and unemployed persons are entitled to between 100 and 300 euros worth of products each month, depending on their financial situation as assessed by the Social Welfare Office.

Carrefour is currently examining the possibility of opening more such supermarkets in other municipalities across the country.

The municipality of Athens is planning to extend services for people who are homeless in the city. A "Home for Homeless" - a multi-purpose facility comprising bedrooms and a recreational facility, as well as a dining area, washrooms with showers and clothes washers will soon open its doors.

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► **Slovenia: Number of people who are homeless on the increase in Ljubljana** [3/10/2008]

A new book and survey on the issue of Homelessness in Ljubljana has highlighted the growing number of people who are homeless in the Slovenian society.

Author Bojan Dekleva wrote the book and included the survey in order to raise awareness of those experiencing homelessness, and to ensure that the public do not turn a blind eye to the issue.

The book deals with the various aspects of homelessness in Ljubljana, including facts, figures and statistics and proposes an initiative in the area of homelessness.

The book deals principally with visible homelessness in the strictest sense; those without shelter on a day to day basis. But this is only the tip of the iceberg, and the need remains for society to address the issue of concealed homelessness, given that this is an area which is still somewhat unknown and unaccepted by politics.

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► **UK: New Plans to Tackle Housing Crisis in Northern Ireland** [3/10/2008]

Homelessness has been declared a key priority by the Stormont Social Development Minister Margaret Ritchie, in the unveiling of a new vision for the housing crisis in Northern Ireland.

The Minister has previously spoken of her plans to tackle homelessness and also to make housing affordable for more people. In her recent address, she briefed Assembly members on her plans to build more social homes and help more people get on the property ladder through co-ownership schemes.

Ms Ritchie's proposals follow a recommendation from former Civil Servant John Semple that developers should hand over a fifth of land for the development of social and affordable housing.

Such a move would help those in need, those on the waiting list or who are homeless and those unable to get on the property ladder, addressing the current housing crisis in Northern Ireland.

An additional £200 million in Stormont Finance Minister's budget has been obtained for social and affordable housing.

## News from the United Nations

### ► UN Report on Adequate Housing in Spain [3/10/2008]

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Miloon Kothari, visited Spain in November 2006. Following this visit, he prepared a report on the housing situation in Spain which was published at the end February.

The report highlights that more efforts are needed in order to tackle the housing crisis in Spain. This includes more interventions in the housing market. While the Right to Housing is included as a fundamental right in the Spanish Constitution, there is a lack of policies ensuring that this right is implemented correctly.

The Rapporteur points out that the dominance of the private property sector in Spain has excluded important parts of the society and generated numerous problems, including corruption.

In addition to the UN report, a report on the Right to housing and housing policies in Spain, prepared by the Observatori DESC was issued together with the UN report.

The UN report is available [here](#).

## Publications

### ► Poland: New publication – Aspects of Homelessness [3/10/2008]

Within the framework of the project "Agenda of Homelessness – Standards for Active Return to Employment" the book "Aspects of Homelessness" was issued February 2008. It comprises theoretical as well as empirical reflections on the diverse issue of homelessness and is divided into three parts.

The first is a presentation of theoretical considerations of scientists and experts dealing professionally with the issue of homelessness. The second is a look at homelessness through the lens of scientific research. Both qualitative and quantitative research is evidence of the book's variety. The third part includes a list of discussion panels held at the conference in May 2006. The book's reviewer Andrzej Przyemeński (Academy of Economics, Poznań) suggests that "Aspects of Homelessness" is an interdisciplinary project and among its assets are the participation of practitioners who deal with homelessness in their everyday work and stenographic records of the panel discussions on several aspects of homelessness, also with an active part of practitioners.

Authors of the articles undertook such issues as the general diagnosis of the problem of homelessness in Poland from the point of view of the state social policy, social perception of the homeless, help system for the homeless in European countries, access of homeless persons to the public sphere, homelessness and social capital, the condition of help system for the homeless in Poland, the stereotype of homelessness, the presence of the homeless in documentaries, and the presentation of tasks undertaken by the University of Gdańsk within the project "Agenda of Homelessness – Standards for Active Return to Employment".

In the empirical part of the book, several issues are addressed concerning measuring homelessness in Pomeranian Voivodship, the process of identity search of the homeless, their social activity and everyday tasks.

A key motivation and benefit of the research into homelessness is to show the psychological differences between the groups of active homeless and those staying in shelters in Gdańsk as well as to present the level of religiosity of the homeless.



**The FEANTSA Flash is supported by  
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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.

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For more information see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html)