



FEANTSA FLASH
September 2008

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

FEANTSA News

▶ **Data collection working group meeting – Paris 2008** [1/10/2008]

The Data Collection Working Group of FEANTSA met in Paris on 5-6 September. Some of the key points addressed at the meeting include:

- Recent developments in France: FNARS presented the new 115 emergency line software and Statistics France (INSEE) gave an overview of different homelessness surveys carried out in France;
- European developments: The group examined different EU initiatives including the preparation of the 2011 population and housing census, the work of the European Indicators Sub-Group on common housing and homelessness indicators, the development of an EU framework on quality in social services, the results of the EU urban audit (namely city data on homelessness), and the Mphasis project;
- The Background paper on transnational statistical initiatives was updated – this paper contains detailed information on European and international statistical initiatives which are monitored by the group. This is available [online](#);
- The group revised FEANTSA's policy statement on measuring and monitoring homelessness – this is now available [online](#);
- Homelessness data in the 2011 population and housing census: The group launched a consultation of statistics' offices to collect information on the methods used by different EU countries to count homeless people on census night. A short summary with recommendations will be available in October 2008.

If you would like specific information about the meeting, please contact the group coordinator Liz Gosme (liz.gosme@feantsa.org) or consult the working group archives in the Members Only website.

▶ **FEANTSA European Conference, 13-14 November, Cardiff: Register now!** [1/10/2008]

Registration to FEANTSA's European Conference organised in cooperation with Shelter Cymru is open until the **6th of October** for participants needing a hotel room. Registration for day delegates not needing a hotel room is open until the **31st of October**.

The conference will explore different housing solutions for people who are homeless, and will gather hundreds of representatives from homeless organisations, policy makers, housing experts and researchers from all over Europe. The conference will provide an excellent opportunity to network, discuss good practices, be inspired by work going on across Europe and find out more about the work of FEANTSA.

A detailed programme, registration form and travel & accommodation information are available from the [FEANTSA web](#).

For any registration queries, please contact Christine.Lambert@feantsa.org

► **Housing rights: FEANTSA's database of decisions of the ECtHR online** [1/10/2008]

A database containing judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) relevant to housing rights is now available in the section of FEANTSA's web site devoted to the right to housing.

The database can be accessed on the following page: <http://feantsa.horus.be/code/EN/pg.asp?Page=695>

For more information on housing rights in general, please see the following link: <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/theme.asp?ID=5>

News from the European Union

► **2008-2010 "National Strategic Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion" are online** [1/10/2008]

All 27 National strategic reports on social protection and social inclusion (NSR) should now be on the [European Commission website](#). Only 6 countries respected the 15 September 2008 deadline: Austria, Finland, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and the UK (the deadline was extended to 30 September 2008 for the other countries). These are biannual reports on national progress made towards meeting the EU common objectives on Social Inclusion, Pensions, and Health and Long-Term Care. The [Social inclusion objectives](#) are relevant for FEANTSA as they include "ensuring access for all to the resources, rights and services needed for participation in society, preventing and addressing exclusion, and fighting all forms of discrimination leading to exclusion".

Homelessness is a form of social exclusion so is therefore covered in the NSRs (along with child poverty and financial exclusion, amongst others). FEANTSA closely monitors this reporting process as the NSRs are important for determining EU priorities on social inclusion.

See FEANTSA's [evaluation of the previous 2006-2008 national reporting](#) round.

► **Brussels: First European Union level summit on Roma communities** [1/10/2008]

On 16th September, the European Commission held the first EU-level summit in Brussels to focus on improving the situation of Roma communities across Europe. It was the first time that the EU institutions, national governments and social service organisations gathered to discuss how to improve the situation of Roma in the EU.

77% of Europeans believe that being Roma in Europe is a disadvantage. Says Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Commissioner, Vladimír Špidla, "In the 21st century, the situation of the Roma is a stain on Europe's conscience...but we have the tools to improve inclusion – with legislation, funding and sharing policies that work". The involvement of Roma organisations and representatives was a key feature of this event and two Roma MEP's were present.

In July, the Commission presented a working paper to improve the Roma situation which included available instruments and policies in the EU that could promote Roma social inclusion. However, whilst a framework of various tools exists, there is also a real implementation gap in the Member States.

The conclusions of this summit will lead to further discussions by EU leaders at the European Council meeting in December.

The Fundamental Rights Agency recently issued an incident report on the situation of Roma in Italy. See here for more [information](#).

▶ European Commission launches new eGovernment study [1/10/2008]

The DG Information Society of the European Commission has commissioned a new 'Mc-eGov' study to be carried out by ECOTEC Research & Consulting. Mc-eGov looks at inclusive eGovernment, assessing actions at Member States level related to inclusive eGovernment such as guideline principles and practice. The aim of the study is to reach a consensus on a multi-channel service delivery strategy that would support an efficient delivery of public services to socially disadvantaged groups.

They are using a 'scenario' approach to help understand socially disadvantaged groups, one of which is homeless people.

The study, which started in January, will run for 14 months. To learn more about the Mc-eGov study, visit <http://www.mcegov.eu/project-study.aspx>

▶ European Parliament examines the Renewed Social Agenda [1/10/2008]

On 2nd September, the European Parliament organised a first debate around the [Renewed Social Agenda](#) adopted by the European Commission at the beginning of July.

The Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Vladimír Špidla, put forward a package of 18 legislative and non-legislative initiatives concerning employment, health, migration, social protection and anti-discrimination. Members of the European Parliament were divided in their reactions. While some MEPs speaking in the plenary debate welcomed the package of measures, others said they were insufficiently specific or substantial.

There will be a vote on a resolution on the whole package at the next plenary session.

▶ Food distribution programme to expand says European Commission [1/10/2008]

On 17th September, the European Commission proposed to expand the current food distribution programme as from 2009 by increasing the budget by two-thirds to around €500 million. The range of products distributed is also to be increased, with Member States deciding on food choices. Food distribution plans will be established for three year periods.

The scheme was originally established in 1987, allowing Member States to release public stocks of surplus food for use as food aid. Now, however, stocks are at an all-time low, while there are an estimated 43 million people in the EU at risk of food poverty. This means that they cannot afford a meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day.

In May (see the FEANTSA Flash), FEANTSA sent a contribution to the online consultation on the future of the 'Most Deprived Persons Food Distribution' programme. Whilst FEANTSA believes that the free distribution of food to the most deprived can contribute to the improvement of public health in the EU, it highlights in its response that food distribution should be seen as an emergency, temporary response to a situation. FEANTSA believes that food aid should be structurally linked to a wider policy framework at EU and Member State level, and should be regarded as the first step towards deprived people's full integration into society.

For more information on the Commissions proposal, visit http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/freefood/index_en.htm

See the following links for FEANTSA's response to the 'Most Deprived Persons Food Distribution' programme: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/freefood/consult/index_en.htm,

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/freefood/consult/results_en.pdf

News from our Members

▶ Depaul Foundation: Charity strengthens links between UK and Ukraine [1/10/2008]

FEANTSA member, the **Depaul Foundation**, hosted a **5-day visit to the UK by a delegation of four officials** from Ukraine in early July. The visit's aim was to promote closer links and partnership between Depaul Kharkiv's (Ukraine) services working with street homeless children and Kharkiv's regional and district authorities, particularly those departments dealing with social services and child care.

During their visit, the group saw Depaul Trust projects in London, and met with representatives from the Office of the Third Sector, the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and key contacts in the Metropolitan Police.

They also spent a day in Belfast visiting Depaul Trust Ireland's families-based and employment/training-based projects, and meeting officials from the Northern Ireland Executive.

► **FIOpsd calls for the adoption of an Italian plan against poverty** [1/10/2008]

FEANTSA Italian member FIOpsd has issued a press release calling upon Italian Members of Parliament to adopt a comprehensive plan aimed at fighting poverty and social exclusion. In the document, FIOpsd highlights the need for a constructive debate and concrete structural answers to the situation of individuals and families faced with severe housing and social exclusion. If street homelessness is to be ended by 2015, as mentioned in the Written declaration adopted by the European Parliament earlier this year, combating poverty should become a priority for Italy's Parliament and Government. In this context, all relevant actors should be involved and join forces, including civil society organisations and local authority representatives.

The [press release](#) is available in Italian.

► **Simon Communities: Irish charity launch inaugural 'Simon Week'** [1/10/2008]

This month, the Simon Communities of Ireland launched their inaugural 'Simon Week', a public awareness raising initiative to urge all sectors of society to address homelessness and support the concept that ending homelessness is everyone's responsibility. Simon Week will span from 29th September to 5th October and will host events and activities targeting different groups, from politicians and businesses to the media. All activities will be aimed at highlighting how everyone can play their part in tackling homelessness.

Patrick Burke, Chief Executive of Simon, says, "In recent years, real strides have been made in tackling homelessness. However, given the current economic climate, the challenge is to ensure that the momentum to deal effectively with homelessness is not lost".

Among the activities and initiatives that will take place during Simon Week are:

- A national radio and billboard campaign;
- A briefing day for politicians to inform them about issues which contribute to homelessness;
- A volunteer promotion initiative;
- Exhibitions, marathons, auctions, discussion and forums.

For more information visit <http://www.simoncommunity.com/>

Homelessness in the Headlines

► **Belgium: Women more at risk of poverty than men** [1/10/2008]

According to statistics published by the Walloon Institute of Assessment, Forecasting and Statistics (IWEPS) and the Council for Equal Opportunities (CWEHF), women are at a higher risk of poverty than men. The figures reveal that almost one Walloon in five is at 'risk of poverty', particularly single-person households where the income is often under 860€ a month and 1,805 € for four-person households.

The figures also show that the female employment rate (48,6%) is lower than the male employment rate (63,6%), even though women are often better qualified than men.

► **Denmark: Homeless eastern Europeans stranded in Copenhagen** [1/10/2008]

Copenhagen's mayor, Mikkel Warming has asked the Danish Welfare Minister, Karen Jespersen for help to aid the estimated 250 Eastern Europeans who are currently homeless in Copenhagen.

Coming mostly from Romania and Poland, they have no right to social benefits in Denmark, nor do they have the right to be housed in shelters. Says Warming, "we're seeing people suffer in the Danish society – we have to help them." His proposal is that money be made available to fund shelters for foreign nationals, or to create extra spaces in existing shelters.

► **France: Deputy-Mayor's report on homelessness and social housing demands State to increase its effort** [1/10/2008]

On 5th September, the Deputy-Mayor of Versailles Etienne Pinte, submitted his report on housing and access to housing for the homeless to Prime Minister François Fillon. Pinte already submitted a report in January containing measures concerning immediate housing for the homeless. This current report focuses on viable and permanent access to housing, and has had a great deal of input from French organizations working with homeless people.

The report reveals that there are approximately 100,000 people in France sleeping rough, 600,000 living in insecure housing conditions, and 900,000 who are homeless (living temporarily in institutions or shelters). An estimated 3.5 million people live in inadequate housing conditions altogether. The report recommends that 500,000 homes need to be built each year, including 120,000 social housing projects, in order to improve the situation.

The report warns of the danger of not ensuring that allocated funds go towards the most deprived areas. Of the 798 million euros that were voted as part of the appropriation bill for 2008, only 643 million were effectively distributed with 155 million euros frozen or not touched at all.

French organizations working with the homeless are dismayed that the results of the report were not taken into consideration when the Minister for Housing, Christine Boutin, announced her ideas for housing reform. Citing problems with the parliamentary calendar, Boutin announced her reforms back in July, a full two months before the report, and its recommendations were ready. Says Christophe Robert of the Fondation Abbé-Pierre, 'this report amounts to nothing, given Christine Boutin's behaviour.' However, Boutin has responded by saying that the proposals in Pinte's report can be taken up in amendments.

Furthermore, there is consternation that Boutin plans to 'relax' the application of Article 55, which requires '*communes*' to devote at least 20% of their housing capacity to building social housing.

To read the outline of Etienne Pinte's report in French, click [here](#).

► **France: Minister for Housing announces new plans for families** [1/10/2008]

On 4th September, Christine Boutin the French Minister for Housing announced new government plans to assist housing families. Several measures were announced following a poll on the standard of living of families in cities. These include increasing accessibility to housing and accommodation for low-income families by making it available from the cost of 15 euros per day, as well as giving permission to increasingly large families to expand their living area, by building another floor, for example.

Boutin also announced plans to free up space in social housing areas, making more adaptable living areas for large families with children.

These proposals are to be brought before the Senate for discussion on 14th October.

► **Ireland: Big increase in homelessness** [1/10/2008]

Irish organisations working in the homeless sector report that the number of homeless people in Ireland has soared as the recession starts to bite.

Crosscare has recently announced that demand for homeless accommodation and hot meals has increased by more than 40 per cent in three years. Last year the social care agency provided 45,000 beds and 90,000 hot meals in Dublin.

Similarly, Simon Community reported a high increase in demand for its services. CEO Sam McGuinness announced that the number of sleeping bags handed out by the charity trebled in the first six months of 2008 compared with the same time last year. He also stated that referrals by the 'rough sleeper' team, which encourages homeless people to access accommodation, health and social welfare services, made to the Homeless Persons Unit increased by 74 per cent in the first six months of 2007, from 243 in 2007 to 424 in 2008.

Organisations are stressing the need for the Government to maintain levels of funding for the homeless sector. Says McGuinness, 'in the current economic climate, we would plead to the Government that the upcoming Budget cannot be a time to further punish those on the margins of society.'

► **Norway: Foreign beggars in Oslo suffer discrimination** [1/10/2008]

An Oslo magazine, called '=Oslo', has been accused of barring foreigners from selling the publication on the streets. Norwegian street sellers are allowed to sell the magazine on the streets and keep half the proceeds, acting as a way for homeless people in Oslo to gain income instead of begging. However, foreigners who also want the chance to sell the magazine are being refused. '=Oslo' insists that its vendors must be Norwegian citizens and speak fluent Norwegian.

Following street protests, local authorities are now investigating whether '=Oslo' is breaking anti-discrimination laws. If the magazine is found to be violating the law, they will have to find a way to include non-Norwegian citizens into their network.

In addition, an Oslo organisation that gives out free food to poor people, 'Fattighuset', has also refused to give food to foreign homeless people. The organisation claims that foreigners sell the food on the street, giving the organisation a bad reputation and defeating the purpose of food aid.

► **Poland: homeless people die following bird flu vaccine trial** [1/10/2008]

Three Polish doctors and six nurses are facing criminal prosecution after a number of homeless people died following medical trials for a vaccine to the H5N1 bird-flu virus.

It is alleged that the medical staff carried out medical trials of an untried vaccine against the bird flu on as many as 350 homeless and poor people last year. Authorities claim that the alleged victims received 3-4 Euro to be tested with what they thought was a conventional flu vaccine but, according to investigators, was actually an anti bird-flu drug.

Mr Waclawski, the director of a homeless centre in the northern town of Grudziadz, reported that 21 people from his centre died last year, a figure which is well above the average of about eight.

Authorities have yet to prove a direct link between the deaths and the actions of the medical staff. Investigators are also looking into the possibility that the doctors and nurses deceived the pharmaceutical companies that commissioned the trial.

The suspects claim that all those involved knew that the trial involved an anti-H5N1 drug and took part willingly.

► **Rome: Vatican refers to the Written Declaration and ETHOS** [1/10/2008]

FIDES, the press agency of the missionary work of The Vatican produced a background document in August 2008 entitled Homeless – Una Humanidad para Salvar (Saving Humanity), in which both FEANTSA's typology of homelessness and housing exclusion (ETHOS) and information on the Written Declaration on ending street homelessness were cited.

Page 3 of the document refers to the work of the European Observatory on Homelessness, outlining the different definitions given for homelessness, while page 8 is devoted to the Written Declaration on ending homelessness which was adopted in the European Parliament in April this year through the efforts of the five MEP's who initiated the written declaration and FEANTSA's members.

Homeless – [Una Humanidad para Salvar](#) (in Spanish).

► **Spain: Busiest six months for Valencia charity since 2000** [1/10/2008]

Casa Caridad Valencia, a private charity based in Valencia, has had a record busy period for the first six months of 2008 with a 7% increase on the first six months of 2007 and an 18.5% increase from the same period in 2006. The charity provides shelter, food and clothes to homeless people and runs a primary school. It also works closely with social services in providing assistance with employment and health.

From January to June, the canteen served 28,118 lunchtime meals, the shelter took in 11,298 people, and overall it assisted 3,000 more people than in the first six months of 2007. Antonio Casanova, President of Casa Caridad, says, "There has been an increase in the last year in the need for social assistance. The number of young people and people in Valencia who are unemployed has grown". He added that, "In spite of creating new structures which provide social assistance, each day we see more and more immigrants in Casa Caridad".

► **The Netherlands: Housing corporations take government to court** [1/10/2008]

Dutch housing corporations have made moves to abandon their status as institutions forming part of a government-controlled structure which regulates housing in the Netherlands, and go fully commercial. The move was prompted by government attempts to skim off the assets of the housing corporations.

The corporations argue that they are at a disadvantage compared to commercial real estate companies which are entitled to a wider range of tax rebates. However, Housing Minister Ella Vogelaar has rejected the request of two housing corporations which asked for permission to leave the structure and acquire full commercial status. The two corporations in question have taken the case to the courts, arguing that they voluntarily joined the structure and should be allowed to leave it whenever they decide to do so.

Economist and former senior civil servant, Sweder van Wijnbergen, says Minister Vogelaar is about to blow up the whole structure of social housing in the Netherlands.

"If the judge rules in favour of the housing corporations, an exodus will follow. Even if corporations agree to keep operating under government guidelines, the cabinet will have lost its power to centrally control social housing".

► **UK: Churches sell property to help housing shortage problem in Scotland** [1/10/2008]

A church in Edinburgh hopes to get full planning permission to demolish its current place of worship and replace it with fifteen affordable homes and a new church with lower maintenance costs, more appropriate for its smaller congregation.

In 2005, the United Reform Church (URC) in Leith sold its land to the Port of Leith Housing Association (POLHA) for £455,000, with the right to buy back a smaller and purpose-built church on the site for £330,000. The new smaller church with community facilities opened last year. Eighteen affordable one and two-bedroom flats have been built above the church, and four three-bedroom houses behind it.

Scottish Churches Housing Action (SCH) regards the redevelopment as an example of how church property – empty and underused buildings and land – could help address Scotland's affordable housing shortage. Their target is to create sixty affordable homes a year from church property, housing 130 people a year for the next ten years. To date, it has received 41 inquires, an additional 21 are at feasibility stage, and seven are nearing completion.

► **UK: Government measures aim to boost housing market** [1/10/2008]

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced a package of measures aimed at first-time buyers and families facing repossession. Other housing initiatives announced include, "free" five year loans of up to 30% of a property's value for first time buyers of new homes in England, and bringing forward spending from future years to encourage more social housing to be built.

For first-time buyers, the new scheme means they will not have to pay stamp duty on properties costing £175,000 or less for the next 12 months. The current threshold stands at £125,000, so someone buying a home for £175,000 will save £1,750 under the scheme. On top of this, up to 10,000 first-time buyers who cannot afford their own homes will be offered help through a new £300m shared equity scheme.

Communities Secretary, Hazel Blears, announced on 2nd September a £200m scheme in which thousands of families struggling with mortgage repayments can pass ownership of their homes to housing associations in return for their debt being written off. Under the scheme, homeowners would become tenants paying rent to housing associations, which would buy off their debt. Ruth Davison of the National Housing Federation said the scheme "will mean that many people at risk of being thrown out of their own homes will now be able to turn to a housing association for help". She added that the system will be, "fair, transparent and just".

Blears also declared that £400m of committed future spending will be brought forward by 18 months to help fund new affordable homes. As Leslie Morphy, Chief Executive of Crisis, warns, "house building has stalled across the country, and it is down to the government to avert a future homelessness crisis with real action- not just token gestures. Building 5,500 more social homes in the next 18 months is a welcome step, but Government must remain committed to its 2020 target of 3 million new homes".

▶ UK: measures announced to help rough sleepers into employment [1/10/2008]

Housing minister Caroline Flint has announced a £200,000 initiative to encourage homeless charities to employ people who used to sleep rough. The government hopes to encourage about 800 people to find work in the sector within the next two years. The plan will focus on the 46 largest homeless organisations, before moving on to smaller charities across England.

The money will be used to help the charities set up training courses in areas such as IT, finance and client counselling. Flint stated, "I want to see homelessness organisations across the country taking up the challenge and unlocking the skills and talents of people to the benefit of all".

Announcements

▶ Web documentary on homeless in Romania [1/10/2008]

A web documentary on the homeless and street children of Bucharest entitled, 'Below Bucharest' has been made by the Danish photojournalist group, 'The Bombay Flying Club'. The group was established in 2005 by photojournalist, Poul Madsen, and journalist, Frederik Hoelge.

The web documentary can be viewed from the following link in English:

http://www.bombayfc.com/bucharest_uk/

Publications

▶ France – Europe for the Homeless [1/10/2008]

There are an estimated 3 million homeless people in Europe today. But what does 'homeless' really mean? What do we understand by 'homelessness'? The homeless are not only people who are without a house, but also people without any accommodation, people staying temporarily in shelters, and people in deplorable housing conditions.

This is a written copy of the conference and debate with FEANTSA director Freek Spinnewijn which took place in Paris in April 2008, organised by FEANTSA member 'l'Association Emmaüs'.

For a copy of the conference and debate, visit <http://www.presses.ens.fr>

▶ Hungary - National Update on Homelessness [1/10/2008]

Peter Gyori, from FEANTSA member, Shelter Foundation Hungary has just produced a national update on homelessness in Hungary.

To access it, please go to the following link: <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/theme.asp?ID=4>

▶ Ireland - Tackling Health Inequalities: An all-Ireland approach to Social Determinants [1/10/2008]

A study jointly published by the Institute of Public Health and the Combat Poverty Agency has revealed that almost 40% of people at risk of poverty suffer from a chronic illness compared to less than a quarter of the general population. In the North of Ireland, almost 50% of unskilled workers suffer from a long-standing illness whilst throughout the country, those at risk of poverty are one and a half times more likely to suffer from chronic illnesses than the general population.

The homeless remain particularly vulnerable to illness and premature death - Simon Communities services reported 55 deaths last year. The report also highlights the country's poor record on child poverty, revealing that Ireland has the third highest rate of child poverty in the EU.

Click [here](#) to see the full published report.

▶ UK - Broadway: Keeping Homes [1/10/2008]

The London homelessness charity, Broadway, has published a study carried out by their research team measuring the longer term outcomes for clients after resettlement (after they had moved into their own homes).

Click [here](#) to see the full published report.

▶ UK – Discharged to no fixed abode [1/10/2008]

Grant Shapps MP, the Shadow Housing Minister, published a report on 11th September that looks into the number of hospital patients being released onto UK streets. The report contains numerous findings; the number of patients who have no fixed abode on discharge from hospital has risen by 36% over the last five years.

To read the full published report, click [here](#).

► **USA - American Behavioral Scientist: Homelessness, Children and Youth** [1/10/2008]

Issue 6, Vol. 51 of the American Behavioral Scientist makes available some of the most recent research on the growing social, economic, and human development impacts of homelessness on families - specifically, on the lives of children and youth. Seven studies from the United States and Canada provide important evidence-based insights to inform efforts aimed at combating homelessness among children and youth. Some of the articles include:

'Understanding the Impact of Homelessness on Children: Challenges and Future Research Directions' and 'Adaptation in Homeless Children: An Empirical Examination using Cluster Analysis.'

Visit <http://abs.sagepub.com/content/vol51/issue6/> for all articles.



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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/employment_social/progress/index_en.html

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