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

FEANTSA News

▶ **ETHOS goes local!** [19/12/2008]

ETHOS – European Typology on Homelessness and housing exclusion is currently available in English and French. Thanks to FEANTSA members, ETHOS will soon be available in the following languages: Austrian, Romanian, Dutch, Flemish, Czech, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Italian, Estonian, Danish, Greek, Polish.

To learn about ETHOS visit <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/pg.asp?Page=484>

▶ **FEANTSA and Reconnect exhibit at Ministerial Conference on E-Inclusion** [19/12/2008]

Earlier this month, FEANTSA, in cooperation with Reconnect, took part in an exhibition at the Ministerial Conference & Expo on e-Inclusion which took place in Vienna, 30 November – 2 December. The aim of the conference was to unite participants to discuss how Information & Communication Technology can be used to better include vulnerable groups, and prevent digital exclusion.

Reconnect is an innovative project, whose mission is to help the social workers of non-profit homeless organisations to put in place united social networks and social link tools around excluded people. Reconnect's most recent tool is a free area telephone number and a personalised voice mail for homeless people. The service is accessible from any phone for free and personalised business cards are also provided with the free number. It is very easy to use, it is free (there are no registration costs involved), and there is even the option of free callback, if the message is left from a fixed line. The number is permanent, helping homeless people keep in touch with family, social workers, health workers, and potential employers. The project has already launched in 12 centres in and around Paris, involving some 300 people.

For more information, visit www.reconnect.fr or contact Reconnect's President, Eric Chatry (eric.chatry@reconnect.fr)

▶ **Update on 2010 Campaign on Ending Homelessness** [19/12/2008]

Information on FEANTSA's preparation for its 2010 Campaign on Ending Homelessness is now available on the members-only section of the FEANTSA website. Information on key messages, materials, activities and contacts can be found on these pages which will be updated and added to on an ongoing basis. Information on the 2010 European Year on Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion has also been uploaded to the members-only section. Please note that a list of National Implementing Bodies should be available by mid-January. In the meantime, please contact your Social Protection Committee members for more information.

If you have problems accessing the members only section, please contact Ruth Owen (ruth.owen@feantsa.org)

If you have any questions on FEANTSA's Campaign on Ending Homelessness, please contact Charlotta Odling (charlotta.odling@feantsa.org)

News from the European Union

▶ **European Citizens' Consultations 2009** [19/12/2008]

The European Citizens' Consultations 2009, partly funded by the European Commission, brings together citizens from all EU Member States to discuss, with policymakers, the key challenges facing the EU.

There will be 27 European Citizens' Consultations which will be attended by 1,500 randomly selected citizens reflecting their country's demographic composition. These identical conferences, held simultaneously in nine countries over three weekends in March 2009, will enable citizens to discuss issues of common concern with each other, and key national and European policymakers and develop recommendations.

Between April and May 2009, the recommendations drawn up at the 27 national events will be voted on by all 1,500 participants. Members of the public will again be invited to debate the finalised list of recommendations online.

For more information, visit <http://www.european-citizens-consultations.eu/contenu/about-project>

▶ **European Commission work programme 2009** [19/12/2008]

The European Commission has published its work programme for 2009, outlining its priority initiatives. For each initiative, the European Commission has issued a roadmap containing EU objectives, policy options and an initial assessment of the impact of the work.

The work programme includes: a proposal for the post-Lisbon Agenda, a green paper on cross border mobility of young people, a communication on reducing health inequalities in the EU, proposals for the future Stockholm programme on Justice and Home Affairs, and a follow up of the European Migration Pact.

[European Commission work programme 2009.](#)

▶ **European Employment in Europe Report 2008** [19/12/2008]

The European Employment in Europe Report addresses topics that are high on the European Union's employment policy agenda. The report gives an overview of the employment situation in the EU, as well as an analysis of intra EU migration and employment, labour mobility within the EU after its increase in membership and the link between education and employment.

Download the [European Employment in Europe Report 2008](#).

▶ **MPHASIS: France** [19/12/2008]

The Mphasis France meeting took place on the 21st of November in Paris. This meeting was coordinated by FNARS (French umbrella of homeless service providers) and attended by representatives from a wide range of stakeholders in France including representatives from the national statistics office, homeless services providers (FNARS, Emmaüs, Samu Social), and local authorities, national public authorities and researchers. Participants in the meeting took this opportunity to discuss the current situation in France.

Currently there are many different homelessness data collection initiatives in France organised by homeless service providers, the Ministry for Social Affairs, the national statistics institutes, local and regional authorities. The challenge will be to better link and coordinate these different initiatives in the future and to collect and extract homelessness data which can be used at different levels (service delivery, official statistics, surveys, research, etc). The national position paper and documents of the meeting will be available on the [MPHASIS](#) website.

▶ **MPHASIS: Sweden** [19/12/2008]

The Mphasis Sweden meeting took place on the 28th of November in Stockholm, coordinated by the National Board of Health and Welfare. There were 30 people at the meeting from different organisations, NGO's, ministries, authorities as well as researchers. Different systems of data collection were presented by the municipalities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmo. The Swedish official statistics system was presented by a statistician from the National Board of Health and Welfare. Three of the most important NGO's presented their view concerning homelessness data collection – traditionally, NGO's have not been very positive to such data collection, due to concern for the integrity of the homeless people. But, now NGO's realise the need for and the advantage of better ways of measuring homelessness.

In Sweden, the National Board of Health and Welfare is together with other important authorities in the middle of carrying out a national homelessness strategy (2007-2009), commissioned by the Swedish Government. One of the missions in the strategy concerns how to improve data collection on homelessness, and to find ways to get the important stakeholders to follow the same path in this. In this work, most of the Mphasis recommendations – like the core variables, for instance – are being considered. All the meeting participants seemed to be very satisfied, and as a result of the meeting, several initiatives are now being discussed.

► **PROMETHEUS – European project promoting quality of social services 2009-2010** [19/12/2008]

The PROMETHEUS project was submitted under the Open Call for Proposals VP/2008/004 on “Promoting quality of Social Services of General Interest”, and the application for funding was successful. The aim of the project is to develop, validate and pilot the cross-sectoral and trans-national application of the European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) system. The objectives of the PROMETHEUS project include the following:

- To review and validate the Quality Principles and criteria of EQUASS with a wide range of European and national sectoral stakeholders in the field of social services (via a CEN workshop agreement).
- To pilot and modify the EQUASS system taking into account the specificities of different major social services sectors: Services to people with disabilities, Services to homeless people, Long-term care to elderly and dependent people, and Child care services

The project will be implemented by a consortium of partners led by the European Platform for Rehabilitation. FEANTSA and Casa Ioana (Romanian homeless service provider and member of FEANTSA) are both part of the consortium and will be involved in examining quality standards in homeless services.

See the [Open call for proposals](#).

Visit the [EQUASS webpage](#).

► **Study finds that 40% of immigrants in the EU are citizens of the EU** [19/12/2008]

Figures from a recent report issued by Eurostat reveal that 40% of the 3 million foreign immigrants who settled in a country of the EU27 in 2006 were citizens of the European Union. The largest foreign immigrant groups in the EU27 were citizens of Poland (290,000 people), Romania (230,000 people), Morocco (140,000 people) and the UK (100,000 people).

The highest absolute number of foreign immigrants was recorded in Spain (803,000 people), Germany (558,500 people) and the UK (451,700) who together received 60% of all foreign immigrants in the EU27. However, the highest relative number of foreign immigrants was recorded in Luxembourg (28.8 foreign immigrants per 1000 inhabitants), Ireland (19.6) and Cyprus (18.7). The EU average is 6.2 foreign immigrants per 1000 inhabitants. For both Luxembourg and Ireland, the overwhelming majority of foreign immigrants were EU citizens.

The highest share of immigrants from non-EU countries were registered in Slovenia (90%), Romania (86%), Portugal (84%) and the Czech Republic (83%). The Member States with the highest concentration of immigrants from one single country were Romania, where 56% of the foreign immigrants were citizens of Moldova, the Czech Republic (46% citizens of Ukraine), and Slovenia (43% citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

See [full statistics](#) (available in English, French and German).

► **Study on poverty and social exclusion in rural areas** [19/12/2008]

A study has recently been published which describes and assesses the phenomenon of social exclusion and poverty in the EU's rural areas. It also examines the impact of policy measures addressing these issues, particularly the rural development programs launched with the support of the EU structural funds.

Download [full study on poverty and social exclusion in rural areas](#).

News from our Members

► **Focus Ireland: Launches annual awareness campaign** [19/12/2008]

On 26th November Focus Ireland launched its annual public awareness campaign aimed at breaking down stereotypes about people who are homeless and building more public and political support to help tackle and prevent homelessness.

The campaign, 'Without Your Home Your Life Develops Differently', is running for two weeks and consists of three TV and three radio advertisements which feature a range of personal stories revealing how people can become homeless. These can vary from family breakdown, mental health problems, and drug or alcohol addiction. The advertisements also show how the provision of targeted services can support people to secure and sustain a home preventing homelessness from happening in the first place.

The charity aims to provide homes for 2010 households by 2010 under its five-year strategy. This target will be achieved by securing 800 homes directly through a combination of direct acquisition, partnership and building programmes. Focus Ireland will deliver the additional homes by supporting more families and individuals to secure and sustain a home through its tenancy support and settlement services.

Focus Ireland worked with more than 6,000 people this year – an increase of 13% percent on last year. There are fears that this will worsen, as the recession bites and more homes are repossessed. Currently 59,000 households are awaiting social housing (up from 27,000 in 1996) and many more are expected to join the line.

► **OSW: awarded funds for new projects and response to welfare reform agenda** [19/12/2008]

The UK organisation, Off the Streets and into Work (OSW), has been awarded funding to deliver a project to influence the government's Welfare Reform agenda, and to capture the 'voice' of small and specialist homelessness organisations within London. Key aims of the two year project include gathering views and experiences of service users and ex-service users to give a vital 'reality' check on government policy and to create a fully searchable online resource library of the significant UK and international resources that OSW has gathered or identified.

The organisation has also been allocated funding for the 'In Work, Staying Better Off' project from The Oak Foundation to help people who are homeless achieve job sustainability. The 18 month pilot project will develop a model that equips homeless and resettled individuals with the skills, support and linkages they need to gain and sustain work, and to progress within work to achieve greater earnings.

Homelessness in the Headlines

► **Afghanistan wins Homeless World Cup** [19/12/2008]

On 7th December Afghanistan defeated Russia in the men's final of the sixth Homeless World Cup (5-4) in Melbourne, Australia. In the first women's Homeless World Cup final, Zambia won over Liberia (7-1).

Mel Young, the tournament's founder, presented the cup to the Afghan players, saying: "You have shown that working together we can create real, lasting change. Together we can end homelessness. It is everyone's game. And are you watching world? This is the way that sport and football can be played. This is the spirit of fair play".

According to research conducted during the tournament, 77% of players experienced a 'life change'; no longer using drugs or alcohol, moving into homes and jobs and gaining an education. 94% claim to have a renewed motivation for life.

► **Austria: '4 walls & more' - Building Society awards prize for Housing in Dignity** [19/12/2008]

Austrian building society (*s Bausparkasse*) has awarded, for the first time, several prizes to homeless projects for their efforts in ensuring housing in dignity for people experiencing homelessness in Austria. An innovative feature of the '4 walls & more' prize (*4 Wände & mehr*) was the jury, which included former homeless people as well as social workers and architects.

20,000 euros were allocated to a number of projects under two categories: housing projects and innovative projects. The award winning projects include supported housing, housing for women with children, integrated housing and employment projects. A special "service user" prize was awarded to the 'Mentlvilla', a low threshold emergency accommodation for homeless people with drug addiction in the city of Innsbruck.

► **Canada: Vancouver's new mayor creates 'homeless emergency action team'** [19/12/2008]

One day after being sworn in, Vancouver's new mayor, Gregor Robertson, announced the establishment of the 'Homeless Emergency Action Team' to help get people off the streets and into safe accommodation.

Mayor Robertson stated that ending homelessness is the most important priority of his team, and maintained this goal can be achieved in three steps. The first step will focus on getting more shelter beds and providing more outreach services. The second step will see the city using its bylaws to protect existing affordable rental housing and ensure treatment is available for people with addictions and mental health issues. The third step will be the construction of new affordable housing, which Mr Robertson calls the only long-term solution.

► **Czech Republic: Lay-offs at Skoda see rise in homelessness** [19/12/2008]

The municipal authorities in Mlada Boleslav, Central Bohemia have become increasingly alarmed at the growing number of homeless people in the town, following dismissals at the Skoda Auto plant. "The number of homeless people is growing and the connection with the lay-offs of foreign employees at Skoda is clear," said police chief Tomas Kypta. The number of homeless people in the town Mlada Boleslav has grown by one-third compared to last year. There is currently only one shelter in the town, run by FEANTSA member Nadeje, and it's 12 beds are no longer enough. According to trade unions, Skoda has so far reduced its agency personnel by about 1500 - 2000 people, due to the economic crisis. In addition, there is speculation that almost all agency employees will leave the company which would mean the departure of another about 2000 people. The Mayor of Mlada Boleslav, Raduan Nwelati, said the town would seek to help those homeless people who are interested in resolving their situation.

► **France: Implementation of DALO reaches next step** [19/12/2008]

The French DALO Act (the enforceable right to housing) adopted in March 2007 requires the French State to give "decent and independent housing" to anyone who is need of it, through a staged approach. The law has since the 1st of January 2008 given specific target groups recourse to a mediation committee to solve their housing needs.

As from the 1st of December 2008, people who are homeless or inadequately housed, whose cases have been considered 'priority', can now take the State directly to court if the mediation committee's decisions have not been implemented. As from 2012, people who have been waiting for social housing for an 'unusually long period of time' will also be given the opportunity to go to court if not provided with an adequate housing solution.

According to Housing Minister, Christine Boutin, 50,600 demands for housing have been submitted under the DALO law this year, of which 32,000 are from the Ile-de-France. However, the follow-up Committee on the DALO law (Comité de suivi de la mise en oeuvre du droit au logement opposable) have stated that only 3,374 have actually been offered shelter or re-housing.

► **France: Increase in number of homeless women** [19/12/2008]

According to figures released by the research observatory of 'SAMU social' (French emergency ambulance response unit) the number of women who are homeless has increased to 20% of the homeless population. In 1999, women represented 14%.

In 2007, approximately 1,500 women were found in shelters in Paris through the SAMU social units; the average age of the women was found to be 39 years old. Statistics also reveal that the amount of nights women spend in shelters has increased. In 1999, it was between 15 and 20; that had increased to 40 in 2005; 52 in 2006, and 61 in 2007. Whilst in 2000 the percentage of women seeking shelter accommodation for the first time was 80%, in 2007 it was 54%, meaning that the remaining percentage were women who had stayed several times in shelter accommodation.

► **France: Plans to force homeless indoors are dropped** [19/12/2008]

The French government has dropped plans that would force people who are homeless to take shelter during cold weather this winter, after it drew fierce criticism from various homelessness organisations.

Prime Minister François Fillon stated: "We are not going to force the homeless to go to emergency shelters", adding that there would be efforts to improve shelters and persuade people who are homeless to go, but not against their will. This followed Housing Minister, Christine Boutin's statement saying that she would look at ways to make it "compulsory" for people who are homeless to go to shelters when the temperature dropped below a certain level. She added: "No-one can reasonably defend a freedom that will lead to death".

Campaigners for the rights of people who are homeless had criticised the plan, saying it would amount to turning shelters for the homeless into detention centres. Augustin Legrand of 'Les Enfants de Don Quichotte', said: "So you force homeless people to sleep in gyms or municipal halls during the winter...and then what? You let them out in a month or two? Homeless people die in the summer as well as the winter".

The French Union of Psychiatry (USP) added: "We refuse to allow another case of indignity, as with centres for undocumented migrants, where the solution is simply to lock people up. People who are homeless refuse to go to emergency shelters because they don't feel like they're treated with dignity".

Campaigners claim the government has failed to tackle a broader housing crisis and an increase in extreme poverty, and it should be looking for permanent solutions, not quick fixes.

► **France: Sarkozy announces 26 billion euro economic recovery plan** [19/12/2008]

On 4th December, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, announced a 26 billion euro economic recovery package, made up mainly of tax refunds for the private sector and a public works programme. The plan will cost 1.3% of France's GDP as economic growth is expected to increase by 0.8% next year. However, the country's deficit spending will be raised to 4% of GDP.

France's economic recovery plan has been drawn up in co-ordination with the European Commission's overall 200 billion euro injection into the EU economy. The President placed emphasis on the housing and automobile sectors.

The plan includes the development of social rental housing, 700,000 dwellings will be built over the next two years, of which half will be 'social' and half 'intermediate' housing. Zero-interest property loans for new housing will be doubled in order to support social access to homeownership. 200 million euro is to be spent on improving unsafe housing. 160 million euro has been specifically allocated for the improvement and upgrade of shelters.

► **France: Uproar over fines imposed on French organisations** [19/12/2008]

French homelessness organisations, Emmaüs France, Association Emmaüs and Fondation Abbé Pierre issued a joint statement on 25th November revealing their anger at authorities actions against the organisations 'Droit au logement' (DAL – 'Right to Housing') and 'Les Enfants de Don Quichotte' (The Children of Don Quixote).

A court fined the two organisations 12,000 euros for pitching tents near the Paris Stock Exchange to raise awareness on the issue of homelessness. Their tents were also confiscated.

The ruling caused uproar and Martin Hirsch, a former head of Emmaüs and France's High Commissioner for Active Solidarity against Poverty, said the state should not collect the fine.

Read the [press statement](#) (in French).

► **Ireland: Housing waiting lists have increased by 30% in 3 years as homelessness is also on the rise** [19/12/2008]

Between 2005 and March 2008 there has been a 30% increase in the number of families on local authority housing waiting lists. More than half of those on the waiting list are unable to afford to buy homes. The number of EU nationals on housing lists in Ireland has increased by 141% over the last three years. According to the Minister of State for Housing, Michael Finneran, just over 56,000 households were in need of social housing at the end of March this year, in comparison with 2005 that had 43,000 households.

Mr Finneran said the number of homeless households represented those who had applied for social housing support and could clearly not represent the total number of homeless households in the country as a whole, adding that there had been a decrease in the number of homeless households on the waiting lists.

The minister said, however, that the government had been responding to the increased social housing need by expanding its social housing investment programme. There had been a "record" level of over 9,000 homes built at local authority level in 2007, he said, adding that total investment in the voluntary housing sector would total 370 million euro this year.

The number of homeless people has increased by 4% over the past three years, despite record funding aimed at eliminating long-term homelessness by 2010. A review of homeless services commissioned by the Homeless Agency Partnership raised concern that too much money is being put into temporary accommodation instead of long-term solutions. More than half (55%) of those in emergency accommodation have been in a situation of homelessness for more than five years. However, the review also revealed a 40% decrease in the numbers of rough sleepers from March 2005 to March 2008.

► **Spain: Poverty on the rise in Andalusia** [19/12/2008]

Recent figures from Spain show that 440,000 people in Andalusia, in the South of Spain are living below the poverty line and that 5.5% of the population are living in situations of extreme vulnerability and social exclusion. This is way above the national average, and only Extremadura, Ceuta and Melilla have worse statistics.

Furthermore, it is estimated that 4,000-5,000 people are homeless in the region. In Seville, organisations working with homeless people have noticed a change in their profile - they are increasingly female, young and foreign, with no mental health or addiction problems. Shelters are having to adapt, and it is estimated that things will get worse in 2009, when the effects of the economic crisis will truly be felt.

► **Spain: Shelters over-stretched in Madrid** [19/12/2008]

Madrid's shelters are currently overwhelmed with the number of homeless people needing a place to sleep for the night. "I don't know if it's because it's minus five or whether it's the crisis, but the amount of people that are coming this year is incredible," said a worker at a Madrid shelter.

An unofficial survey in 2007 estimated there are between 4,000 and 6,000 homeless in Madrid. City Mayor, Alberto Ruiz-Gallardon has recently announced that up to 11% of the city's homeless are suffering from some sort of mental health problem.

The city council has promised another 357 beds by the end of March 2009.

► **The Netherlands: WWW wins this year's prize for best homelessness project** [19/12/2008]

Dutch project WWW – 'Wonen, Werken, Welzijn' (Live, Work, Health) in Leeuwarden has been awarded this year's 'Zilveren Woonladder' prize for best homelessness project. The project has helped 35 homeless people with accommodation, psychological problems and debt.

Project leader, Fred Voet, received the prize in Amsterdam saying "this project, which started in 2006, has been a success. We now have 13 participants in subsidised employment, and one in regular employment... the 10,000 euro we have won will be put to very good use".

► **UK: Competition encourages innovative solutions to reduce homelessness** [19/12/2008]

A UK competition which encourages new and innovative business ideas to prevent and tackle homelessness has opened for applications. Called SPARK, and backed by Communities and Local Government, the scheme invites social enterprises and individuals who are at risk of homelessness or have been homeless to bid for a share of a GBP 1.6 million prize as well as business mentoring from companies such as British Telecom and PWC.

Profits from these enterprises are used to help the homeless find training and employment. This builds on the success of last year's 15 winners which included an organic farm that provides employment and rehabilitation services to homeless people and a corporate bike servicing programme.

Applications can be sent until the 9th of February 2009.

Further information on the SPARK competition can be found at: www.sparkchallenge.org

News Releases: www.communities.gov.uk/newsroom

► **UK: First home saved by a housing association** [19/12/2008]

A 53-year old postman with learning difficulties is believed to be the first person in Britain to have been saved from repossession by a housing association.

Arthur Stone's home has been bought back by Trent and Dove Housing Association after he fell into debt and was taken to court by his lender. While he originally had a £17,000 mortgage, plus a £10,000 renovation loan, his debts spiralled out of control and by April 2007 he owed his lender, GE Money, £75,000 and £25,000 in unsecured debts and arrears. Trent and Dove have paid £76,000 for the property out of its own funds. Chief Executive, Ron Dougan, states that the association can only afford 10 families in total though: "We have to prioritise those who are need...If it's a single person who has taken on a mortgage to buy a house, a loan to buy a car, and the money is not there to pay, they would not make it to the top of the list".

This follows Communities Secretary, Hazel Blear's announcement in early September of a £200m scheme that would help thousands of families struggling with mortgage repayments. Under the scheme, homeowners pass ownership of their homes to housing associations in return for their debt being written off.

► **UK: Government sets target to end child poverty by 2020** [19/12/2008]

The government's promise to end child poverty by 2020 was made legally binding under plans in the Queen's speech on 3rd December. The previous Prime Minister, Tony Blair, set the target in 1999 when around 3.4 million children were estimated to be living in poverty in the UK. He also set a goal to halve child poverty by 2010; however, in March the House of Commons Work and Pensions committee said this target was likely to be missed by about a million.

Despite around 600,000 youngsters being lifted out of poverty so far, campaigners say that the government is not doing enough to meet its pledges. The Child Poverty Bill is supposed to give "new impetus" to the government's goals, but it is not expected to make any reference to the 2010 target.

As part of its work on social inclusion, FEANTSA examined child homelessness in Europe (2007) to contribute to debates on child poverty.

Download FEANTSA's report, '[Child Homelessness in Europe - an Overview of Emerging Trends](#)' (2007).

Announcements

► **CECODHAS: European Social Housing Observatory publishes briefing on right to housing** [19/12/2008]

The briefing on 'The Right to Housing in the European Union' is now available for CECODHAS members. It provides an overview of Member States commitment to housing at national, regional and international level. In addition, current developments on housing rights are illustrated through examples from five EU countries.

The briefing is available for download from the 'Members Only' page at www.cecodhas.org

► **Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) announces its 2008 Housing Rights Awards** [19/12/2008]

On 9th December, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) announced the winners of its annual Housing Rights Awards for 2008. The Constitutional Assembly of Ecuador was presented with 2008's Housing Rights Protector Award for its role in making Ecuador the first country in the world to explicitly recognise in its Constitution a range of key housing and habitat-related rights.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Governments of Israel and Italy received the Housing Rights Violator Awards for their demonstrated failure to protect and implement housing rights.

COHRE's Executive Director, Salih Booker, said: "These awards demonstrate that in 2008 many governments and other responsible bodies have yet to take seriously their housing rights obligations under international law. Israel's very serious and persistent violations of housing rights deserve the clearest possible condemnation from the international community. Similarly, the Italian government must be condemned for its ongoing abuses of the housing rights of Roma and Sinte people living within its borders – abuses that worryingly escalated since the election of the current government in May 2008".

Mr Booker added though, that in contrast, "The example of Ecuador's Constitutional Assembly shows that it is possible for governments and public institutions to take real and very practical steps towards fulfilling their international human rights obligations. Ecuador can be proud of the fact that it is now a world leader in terms of recognition of international housing rights standards in its domestic law".

For more information, download [COHRE's press release](#).

Publications

► **Belgium – Renting social housing in Brussels and Wallonia** [19/12/2008]

This new book, written by Nicolas Bernard and Laurent Lemaire, takes a legal approach to examining social housing in Brussels and Wallonia. The authors take a critical and comparative perspective at the differences between Flanders and Wallonia and the federal law on social housing.

Visit <http://editions.larcier.com/livre/?GCOI=28044100108730&fa=description> for more information (in French).

► **France – Europe: pas sans toit! Le logement en question** [19/12/2008]

This publication, by AITEC (International Association of Technicians, Experts and Researchers), brings together numerous articles on housing in Europe. This publication includes an article jointly written by FEANTSA Director Freek Spinnewijn and Marc Uhry (Chair of FEANTSA's Right to Housing working group).

Download the publication '[Europe: pas sans toit! Le logement en question](#)' (in French).

► **UK – Estimating the costs of child poverty** [19/12/2008]

A UK organisation focusing on poverty, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, has published this paper on child poverty that includes the findings from three specially-commissioned reports and estimates some of the tangible costs resulting from child poverty.

Download the paper '[Estimating the costs of child poverty](#)'.

► **UK – Housing, care, support: a guide to integrating housing-related support at a regional level** [19/12/2008]

This report outlines the findings of a research project commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Housing Corporation and the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP) to explore investment in housing-related support for vulnerable groups within the context of the new regional framework.

Download '[Housing, care, support: a guide to integrating housing-related support at a regional level](#)'.

► **UK – YMCA: Youth Homelessness Report** [19/12/2008]

The YMCA Youth Homelessness Report calls for better support for families to prevent young people becoming homeless.

The report found that 80% of the young people interviewed left home at the age of 16 or 17. Parents cited mental health issues as a cause in 80% of cases, 10% cited violence, and 12% said it was because of the relationship with their children.

Download the [YMCA Youth Homelessness Report](#).



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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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