



FEANTSA

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▶ **USA: From Foster Children to Homeless Adults in California**

▶ **FEANTSA Contributes to Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men** [30/07/2010]

FEANTSA has taken part in a consultation on women's health as part of the [European Parliament's Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men 2006-2010](#), making specific reference to Domestic and Gender-based Violence, which is the main cause for homelessness amongst women in the European Union.

▶ **FEANTSA Data Updates** [30/07/2010]

FEANTSA now produces monthly updates on data collection developments. FEANTSA members wishing to subscribe to these updates, please contact [Liz Gosme](#).

▶ **FEANTSA Sends "Europe 2020: Time for an EU Homelessness Strategy" to Commissioner Andor** [30/07/2010]

Last month, FEANTSA published a response to the Europe 2020 Strategy, which calls on the European Commission to develop an EU Homelessness Strategy. FEANTSA has now forwarded this call to the Cabinet of László Andor, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, who have said they are pleased to receive the report and will give it due attention. A link to the 2020 response is available on the [FEANTSA EU Context Page](#).

▶ **Research Conference on Homelessness in Europe - Registrations Open** [30/07/2010]

Registrations are open for the 5th Annual Research [Conference](#) on Homelessness in Europe. The conference will take place in Budapest, Hungary, on Friday 17th September 2010 and will address the key theme of "Understanding Homelessness and Housing Exclusion in the New European Context". For more information, and to register, contact [Christine Lambert](#).

▶ **The Flash Takes a Month Off** [30/07/2010]

FEANTSA will not publish a Flash newsletter for the month of August. The next issue will be in September.

▶ **9th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty** [30/07/2010]

The 9th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, organised by the Spanish Presidency of the EU, with support from the European Commission (EC) and of the European Anti-Poverty Network, took place in the European Parliament on the 25th and 26th June. Several MEPs and EC officials took part in the meeting. Amongst its conclusions were that support should be given to the following priorities: participation of people experiencing poverty in decision-making processes; guarantee of fundamental rights linked to affordable, quality and safe housing, social services, food, decent work and education and decision-maker responsibility and accountability.

▶ **Belgian Presidency to Promote Social Agenda** [30/07/2010]

The Belgian Presidency of the EU Council has said it will keep social issues high on the EU agenda in the coming six months. More information is available on the Belgian Presidency's website: <http://www.eu2010.be/>

▶ **Citizens' Agora on Poverty and Social Exclusion** [30/07/2010]

On the 18th and 19th of November, a citizens' "Agora" – a consultation process – will take place in the European Parliament. It should involve a wide consultation of civil society and other stakeholders on issues relating to poverty and social exclusion. The various parliamentary Committees will also present their work on poverty and social exclusion. More details should be available soon.

▶ **EPSCO Council Conference: Social dimension of EU2020 and the role of the OMC** [30/07/2010]

The European Council on Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) is holding a conference on the Social dimension of the EU2020 Strategy and the role of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) from the 14th – 15th September. On the agenda are: the scope for the Poverty Platform; plans to reinforce of the OMC using indicators and analytical tools and the development of "Social Impact Assessment".

► EY2010 Thematic Milestone on Homelessness [30/07/2010]

The European Commission [website](#) on the European Year 2010 for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion includes a section on the year's "thematic milestones", monthly focuses on issues relevant to the effort to end poverty and social exclusion. The [July focus](#) is on homelessness. As part of this focus, the Commission has also contacted national journalists with information on homelessness, which could provide a good link for members wishing to get in touch with the press in their countries. This should be possible through the National Implementation Bodies (NIBs).

► Latest EU regulation on population and housing censuses [30/07/2010]

In June 2010, the EU adopted another implementation [regulation](#) on population and housing censuses, namely adopting the "programme of the statistical data and of the metadata for population and housing censuses provided for by Regulation (EC) No 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council". Amongst other things, the regulation states the following "If Member States do not include the number of homeless persons in their data on the total population, they shall provide the Commission with the best available estimate for the number of all primary and the number of all secondary homeless persons in the whole Member State."

► Meeting of EU Employment and Social Affairs Ministers [30/07/2010]

EU Ministers of Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs met on the 8th and 9th July to [prepare the work of the Belgian Presidency](#). It focused on the EU 2020 strategy for employment and growth, focusing on the important steps needed to attain the objectives set out in the EU2020 Strategy. These included: a change of direction needed to ensure the social impact of Europe 2020 strategy; developing indicators for Member States to follow the implementation of the social aspects of the strategy; the importance of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) for exchanging good practice, and pensions and social inclusion, in particular the essential role of social protection systems during the economic crisis. The Treaty includes a horizontal clause (Article 9) stating that an adequate social policy must be guaranteed for each new strategic measure. On the 14th and 15th September, the Belgian Presidency will hold a Conference on the Future of the Social OMC.

► Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion [30/07/2010]

Taking place on the 18th and 19th October, this conference, organised by the Belgian Presidency, will focus on the implementation of Active Inclusion through the Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC) and in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. It will concentrate on governance and participation of people experiencing poverty and the involvement of stakeholders in the National Action Plans and National Reform Programmes. The European Commission will also submit its "key initiative", which will act as its roadmap for implementing the social aspects of the EU2020 strategy. This conference will work alongside the future "Platform against Poverty" announced by the European Commission.

► Van Rompuy on European Union's Strategic Targets for 2020 [30/07/2010]

In his [introductory remarks](#) at a Religious Leaders' Meeting on "Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion: a Key Challenge for Europe", the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, qualified combating poverty (ending homelessness, improving access to labour markets and to health services) and "restoring human dignity" as very important strategic priorities for the European Union.

► Slovenia: European Court of Human Rights Agrees Denial of Permanent Residency Status is Unlawful [30/07/2010]

The European Court of Human Rights has recently agreed that it is unlawful for Slovenia to deny permanent residency status to long-term legal residents in the aftermath of state succession, particularly when it left these residents stateless. In 1991, all Yugoslav nationals at that time had dual citizenship, both of the Federation as well as one of its six republics - the country in which they were born. When Slovenia declared its independence from Yugoslavia, those who had been living in Slovenia for a long period of time but were not born in Slovenia (18,304 people) were deleted by the government from its official registry of residents. From that time forward, they were considered foreigners in Slovenia and were denied social services, such as health insurance and pension contributions. This situation meant that many of these people became homeless.

In 2007, the Open Society Justice Initiative submitted comments in the case highlighting the plight of these residents of Slovenia who were "erased" from the government registry. The Justice Initiative argued that the government's action violated Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects individuals' right to sustain the personal, social, and economic relations that link them to the society in which they habitually reside.

It remains to be seen what effect the European Court of Human Rights' decision will have on these people's situation.

► **France: Unaf0 is Recruiting a Policy Officer** [02/08/2010]

Unaf0, FEANTSA Member in France working on supported housing, is recruiting a Policy Officer to manage work on Integration and Economic Analysis. More information is available in the [job advert](#). Deadline for applications: 17th September 2010.

► **Italy: FioPSD Press Release on Homeless Persons Register** [02/08/2010]

The Italian government has recently approved plans to establish a national register for homeless people. The aim is to record this category of citizens in the Index of National Population. Local authorities will be responsible for collecting data and for recording homeless people's place of residence, city where they are registered or city of birth. Only the Central Directorate for Demographic Services, part of the Interior Ministry, will have access to information.

FEANTSA member FioPSD has commented on the subject in two press releases, saying that the register could be beneficial as it should guarantee a place on the electoral roll for homeless people, a prerequisite for accessing social benefits, and can monitor whether the right to housing is guaranteed. They warned that the register should not become a substitute for police records used for profiling criminals, and advise that it be welcomed with caution, but also confirmed that it would not contain stigmatizing elements, such as the label "no fixed abode" on identity cards and that it would not infringe on people's rights to privacy and dignity. They remind municipalities that "there remains the problem of how to make accommodation accessible to all persons entitled to it," and advise that directives should be issued to municipalities. Finally, they call upon the state to profit from the occasion to allow socially marginalised people to participate fully in society and instead of only being in contact with social assistance, allowing a better use of welfare services to the benefit of everyone. Read the fioPSD press releases [here](#) and [here](#).

► **Caritas Luxembourg: More Homeless Young People and Migrants** [30/07/2010]

Caritas Luxembourg director and FEANTSA President, René Kneip, has spoken about the concerns raised by the organisation's 2009 annual report. An increase in homelessness among young people and migrants has been observed. As far as homelessness among migrants is concerned, this situation affects EU- or third country migrants without legal residence status or a legal status that does not give them full access to rights (for example, if they are not working). Rejected asylum seekers also lose social protection rights. As such, these groups do not have access to accommodation for homeless people. Only one organisation, "Wanetraktion" offers unconditional access to all. Stemm vun der Stross, another homeless organisation, allows migrants to use their services to eat, wash, access medical advice and wash their clothes, but they cannot stay in the shelters. Associations are calling for a clarification of the legal situation, and discussions have focused on whether or not to open a shelter solely for migrants without full social protection rights. This argument is tempered by an unwillingness to "attract" migrants by offering access to homeless services.

► **Germany: "The Welfare State Belongs to All" Campaign** [30/07/2010]

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe (BAG W) are running a nationwide campaign called 'Der Sozialstaat gehört allen' (The Welfare State Belongs to All) in order to promote homeless peoples' rights to housing, work and health. Activities include: a campaign resolution; posters; a campaign newspaper and a cinema feature. The actions are supported by BAG W members: so far around 50 organisations are participating. BAG W expect the campaign to be followed-up by action at local level with events of all kinds in about 50-70 cities until September. The campaign will end with a central event in Berlin, Alexanderplatz on September 23rd, where there will be public debates with politicians, music and other cultural events. The campaign will be backed up by parliamentary lobbying in regard to the demands of the campaign. The [campaign resolution](#) and the [campaign circular](#) (in German) give more detailed information. Read more about the campaign on the [BAG W website](#) and on the campaign website <http://www.der-sozialstaat-gehoert-allen.de/>, where you can support the campaign demands by signing the campaign resolution.

► **Hungary: Ending Homeless Exhibition Comes to Debrecen** [30/07/2010]

In cooperation with Projekt Udenfor and MODEM Centre of Modern and Contemporary Arts, a local museum well-known nationwide, an exhibition of the "Ending Homelessness" sculpture exhibition took place from 8th July to 27th July in Debrecen, Hungary. The name used for the exhibition was "[Outdoors](#)". Hungarian FEANTSA members distributed FEANTSA campaign material on ending homelessness.

► **Ireland: Focus Ireland Criticises Delayed Child Care Amendment Bill** [30/07/2010]

FEANTSA member Focus Ireland has criticized the Irish government for not implementing a proposed amendment to Child Care legislation before parliament goes into Summer recess. They warned that the lack of progress means youngsters leaving state care this Summer will be left without aftercare support and accommodation. They call for a continuum of structured care for children when they are in care and when they leave care at 18, to help them live independently.

► **Poland: PFWB Translates "Ending Homelessness" Campaign Handbook** [30/07/2010]

FEANTSA member in Poland, the Pomeranian Forum for Getting Out of Homelessness (PFWB) has translated the "Ending Homelessness" Campaign Handbook into Polish. Read it [here](#).

► **Spain: Flash Presentation on Ten Proposals for Ending Homelessness** [30/07/2010]

Spanish FEANTSA members have created a [Flash presentation](#), available in English and Spanish, to explain the ten proposals for ending homelessness as part of the Spanish wing of the FEANTSA "Ending Homelessness" [campaign](#).

► **UK: Big Issue awarded Social Enterprise Mark** [30/07/2010]

The Big Issue has been awarded the [Social Enterprise Mark](#), an award which indicates that a business fulfills criteria relating to social impact and business practices, and has begun displaying it on the magazine's front cover. The Big Issue believes that the Mark will endorse the magazine's social enterprise principles and increasing awareness of social enterprise among consumers.

► **UK: Depaul UK Shortlisted for Award** [30/07/2010]

[Broadening Horizons](#), Depaul UK's work placement scheme for homeless and disadvantaged young people is one of six schemes shortlisted for the Andy Ludlow Award, announced by London Councils. The annual awards are open to registered social landlords, local authority housing and social service departments, NHS trusts and voluntary organisations in London. A condition of the awards is that prizes are invested back into the winning scheme.

The Broadening Horizons scheme helps homeless and disadvantaged young people get the skills they need to access work by organising work experience placements for them. All young people are offered a reference from their placement and assistance with updating their CV. They are also signposted to other Depaul UK projects and external agencies to support them with their next step on the path to sustained employment.

► **UK: St Mungo's Shortlisted for Award** [30/07/2010]

St. Mungo's Brent Dual Diagnosis Project is one of six schemes shortlisted for the Andy Ludlow Award, announced by London Councils. The project helps homeless people with a combination of health and substance abuse problems in Brent. Unlike other service providers, the project takes a holistic approach to helping its clients by considering the social, medical, physical and psychological needs together. It does this by integrating psychotherapists and other professionals, into the in-house support team and offering intensive staff support. This tailors a unique approach to each individual, rather than a one-size-fits all method.

► **UK: St. Mungo's Calls for Overhaul of Basic Skills Training for Homeless People** [30/07/2010]
FEANTSA member in the UK, St. Mungo's, has called for an overhaul of skills and employment training programmes to tackle declining employment prospects for homeless people. The charity has said that in 1983, 86% of its service users had some form of work, usually casual or migrant labour. Today, much of that work has disappeared, leaving just 4% in employment, whereas 80% of the 1,500 service users surveyed say that it is their goal to get back to work and 25% wish to undertake vocational training, according to St. Mungo's. The charity is calling for the "Flexible New Deal", the UK Government's routes-into-employment programme, to include a preliminary stage with capability assessments, and a supported education system to help homeless people develop skills that currently mean they cannot find work. 40% of the people surveyed said they were not offered any training through the state employment service, Jobcentre Plus. Just less than a fifth said that the training they had been offered was not helpful. St. Mungo's also says that support must be focused on basic skills; not least because half of the homeless people they work with have literacy problems.

► **Greece: Unaccompanied Migrant Children Detained** [02/08/2010]
Greece is imprisoning unaccompanied migrant children in violation of EU laws and often in appalling conditions, human rights campaigners have protested. In a report detailing how asylum seekers and irregular migrants are being detained, Amnesty International has criticised Athens for its policy of imprisoning children for long periods. Conditions are so appalling, the report says, that children resort to hunger strikes in protest at their imprisonment, and some even attempt suicide. Amnesty International believes that there should be a prohibition on the detention of unaccompanied children provided by law. Read more [here](#).

► **Belgium: Concern over Roma families expelled from squat** [30/07/2010]
A recent expulsion of seven Roma families who had been living in a squat in Ghent, Belgium, raised the question of how to help Roma people who have housing problems. A spokesman for a Roma support organization has said that sending people back to their country of origin is not a valid solution, given the discrimination Roma people face in these countries and the fact that their children are often integrated in Belgian schools, which could mean that they would have language problems if sent back to their countries of origin.

► **Belgium: Flemish Government Links Well-Being and Living Conditions** [30/07/2010]
The Flemish government will subsidise projects run by organisations working towards better coordination of the wellbeing and living conditions of various groups who need support to live independently. The groups targeted by this initiative will be elderly people, homeless people, people with disabilities and former psychiatric patients.

The government wants to remove legal or bureaucratic obstacles which hamper the provision of support to vulnerable people given by social workers in their own home or in social housing. It is also the government's intention is to increase significantly the number of social housing units, to extend the granting of social benefits and introduce a "safety net" for people who find themselves unable to pay their rent or to pay off debts because of unforeseen circumstances.

► **Czech Republic: NGO concern over planned homeless "camp"** [30/07/2010]

Prague City Council has announced plans to create a camp for homeless people outside the city. Places being considered for the placement of the camp are a landfill site or industrial land. Czech NGOs working with homeless people have expressed their indignation in relation to this plan, considering that forcing homeless people out of the city will only increase their isolation. According to Jiri Janecek, Prague Councillor for Social Affairs, will keep homeless people on identified land, where they will not bother residents, and where officers can monitor them and prevent conflicts among residents. In addition to the camp, the council plans to establish a homeless people's register, with the aim of "avoiding abuse of homeless services". People to be added to the register must give written consent.

These measures are said to be a temporary solution until the establishment of an overall homelessness strategy. "The Action Plan does not aim to eradicate homelessness, but to help people without shelter to solve their difficult situation, including rehabilitation, and reduce the negative phenomena that accompany homelessness, and to make Prague citizens' lives easier," says Janecek. Another part of the plan would provide work for homeless people, who would earn an immediate income by cleaning public areas, and taking care of parks and gardens. The Municipality also wants to establish a Centre for homeless people, which would provide information and a contact point. Homeless people will be able to use hygiene facilities, visit a doctor, and get support for "returning to a normal life".

► **Denmark : Copenhagen Mayor Concern About Roma People** [30/07/2010]

In response to growing numbers of homeless Roma people in Copenhagen, the city's Mayor has asked the government do more to deport those who commit crimes or live illegally in Denmark. The city's response to the situation does include social considerations but concentrates on a criminal justice approach, with the police being expected to deal with Roma communities living in camps near the city.

► **France : New Cross-Ministry Delegate for the Housing of Homeless People** [30/07/2010]

A reorganisation of the French ministerial cabinet has created a delegate position to take on the coordination of governmental measures designed to fight social exclusion and guarantee access to accommodation for homeless people. The position will coordinate the efforts of different government departments, local authorities, NGOs, social landlords and construction firms. The new delegate will also take on work related to the fight against inadequate housing and accommodation unfit for human habitation. The position will bring together the work of three administrative structures (the Commission for the Coordination of Accommodation and Access to Housing, the National Centre against Inadequate Housing and the Cross-ministry Committee for the Development of Housing Offers) and will give them legal weight.

► **France : Supported Housing Community for Homeless People Opens in Strasbourg** [30/07/2010]

Social landlord Adoma and Strasbourg city authorities have launched a housing project aimed at providing stability and, as such, a route into integration into mainstream housing for homeless people with multiple needs. The project will see homeless people who have been selected by support organizations living in a community where they will receive social worker support but will enjoy a maximum of autonomy. Each house will be occupied for a maximum of three years by single people or couples, and each will have a signed contract and the inhabitants will pay a symbolic rent. This project echoes the "Skæve Huse" model pioneered in Denmark.

► **France to shut illegal Roma camps and deport migrants** [30/07/2010]

French President Nicolas Sarkozy has ordered 300 illegal camps of travellers and Roma to be dismantled. People in the camps found to be living illegally in France would be expelled, he said. The order is a response to riots in a Loire Valley town following the shooting of a youth. The government said the camps are sources of crime but critics say an ethnic minority is being singled out. Read about the EU follow-up [here](#).

► **France: Adoma to Change Focus** [30/07/2010]

Adoma, formerly Sonacotra, the organisation that provided housing to migrant workers until the 1990s and then became a social landlord that helped the most vulnerable, is to change focus. Its new target will be young people in work. Adoma gives the reduction in the number of migrant workers and the desire to offer housing solutions to people who work as the reason for this change. However, certain staff members are worried that the focus will shift away from providing housing to the most vulnerable, especially homeless people and travellers. Several redundancies are also envisaged.

► **France: Afghanis Evacuated from Paris Camp** [30/07/2010]

The police have evacuated several dozens of people from a camp in which they were living on the banks of the Canal Saint-Martin in Paris, France. Many of the people present in the camp are asylum seekers and several do not have leave to remain. Those with the right to remain in France should be offered accommodation, with asylum seekers receiving assistance as a priority, and the state has asked for additional places to be opened in shelters across the Paris region. A number of migrants have accepted state help to return to their country of origin.

► **France: Concern for Homeless People in Heat Wave** [30/07/2010]

In reaction to what is seen as an ineffective government policy of closing emergency shelters for homeless people in the summer, Paris authorities have announced that they will give an extra €200,000 to support services providing meals and hygiene services to homeless people during the summer period. They also plan to distribute a map of drinking-water fountains in Paris, and have asked for day centres to be kept open longer. The aim is to protect Parisians during this year's heat wave, and to stress that homeless people are vulnerable in the summer as well as in Winter. Fondation Abbé Pierre is following a similar awareness-raising initiative with an ice statue of a homeless person installed in front of the Louvre Museum in the heart of Paris.

► **France: More Transparency on the Housing Budget** [30/07/2010]

Benoist Apparu, French Secretary of State for Housing, has said that information on the state housing budget will be readily available to homelessness organizations so that they can enjoy greater stability and better assist people in getting out of homelessness. The housing budget was at 8% at 1st January 2010, which Mr Apparu says is insufficient. He has announced an increase throughout the year. Another plan is to set up three-year agreements with NGOs on objectives and funding.

► **France: No New Emergency Shelter Places But "Housing First" Principles Instead** [30/07/2010]

The French Secretary of State for Housing, Benoist Apparu, has requested that local authorities do not increase their number of emergency shelter places. This move is seen as going together with the will to introduce housing first-based solutions to homelessness. However, homelessness organisations in France are worried that there will not be enough temporary spaces to accommodate people and doubt whether Mr Apparu's plan will come into fruition.

► **France: Paris's Only Emergency Shelter for Young Homeless Women Closes** [30/07/2010]

The only emergency centre for homeless women aged 18 to 25 in Paris, France, provided by the Parisian Departmental Directive for Social and Health Matters (Ddass) has closed because of a lack of funding. The residents have been forced to find alternative accommodation solutions which are "more than inadequate" according to the centre's director. The 25-place centre provided accommodation and support for periods of approximately one month to vulnerable women and girls. 221 women and girls used the service in 2009 and the waiting list is long. Those using the centre had often not wanted to phone the "115", France's homelessness helpline, to avoid being labeled as "homeless". The French Red Cross has called on the state to "take on its responsibilities".

► **Germany : Substandard Housing Rented to People on Benefits** [30/07/2010]

In Germany, recipients of social assistance who rent accommodation can have their rent paid by the state. Unfortunately, this has led to a situation whereby unscrupulous landlords are able to propose exorbitant prices for substandard accommodation to people receiving social assistance, as they cannot decide whether or not to pay the rent. These rents are often much higher than would be acceptable on the mainstream housing market, and the total rent is often not linked to market price or to the size of the accommodation. The only limit is that set on maximum rents by municipalities or regions, but critics say that any price below such a limit is accepted by the authorities, regardless of quality, maintaining that inspections are rare and, as such, landlords are able to get away with fraudulent housing offers.

► **Germany: Berlin Senate Wants Greater Transparency in Voluntary Sector** [30/07/2010]

Understood as a consequence of the scandal caused by the story of the luxury car and lavish salary of the head of a shelter for homeless people, the Berlin Senate in Germany wants voluntary organizations to make public their accounts and salary structures. The aim is to achieve better control over the funding received by homeless shelters, counseling centers and youth employment centres, and thus prevent the misuse of public funds.

► **Ireland: Homeless Former Prisoners Die of Drug-Related Causes** [30/07/2010]

In the context of growing concern about prison overcrowding in Ireland, research shows that almost a third of prisoners who die from drugs after being released from jail die within a week and nearly half die within a month, including eight out of 10 who are on temporary, or early, release. 20% of those who died in the study's sample were living in unstable accommodation and 10% were homeless.

► **Ireland: Many Young People in Care Experience Homelessness** [30/07/2010]

Research in Ireland has studied the life experiences of children in special care units. The report reveals that many children in care engage in criminal activity and experience homelessness from a young age and found that such situations often worsened with their placement in care institutions. In addition, 12 of the 70 children in the study had experienced homelessness after their application for a referral into care was made. The report states that: "This suggests that the needs of children who are at acute risk who have experienced homelessness are not being addressed properly." The report recommended changes in how the service is managed.

► **Italy : Mestre Homeless Services Will Not Close for the Summer** [30/07/2010]

Whereas many homeless services such as showers and cafeterias close down over the summer, the Caracol cooperative and the Casa dell'Ospitalità in Mestre will redouble their efforts. A spokesperson for the initiative maintained that, "contrary to popular belief, more people who live in the street die of the heat than of the cold".

► **Netherlands: Official Definition of "Youth Homelessness"** [30/07/2010]

In reaction to a lack of cohesion between bodies working with homeless young people in the Netherlands, the government has decided on an official definition. The definition states that "Homeless youngsters are people under 23 years of age who are sleeping rough or staying in shelter accommodation and have multiple problems". Municipalities, counties and homeless services have been informed of the decision in order to streamline work to end homelessness among young people.

► **Netherlands: Free Helpline for Homeless People** [30/07/2010]

Homeless people in Groningen, the Netherlands, can now get information about accommodation and services from a free phoneline. The information is accessible day and night for anyone who needs information about places to stay or to eat. The aim of the helpline, (z)Onderdak ((No)Place to Stay), is to make sure that no one is forced to sleep on the street in Groningen. It was created by the Stichting van de Straat (Street Foundation) which recently celebrated its tenth anniversary.

► **Netherlands: More Homeless People in Schiphol Airport** [30/07/2010]

The number of homeless people in Amsterdam's Schiphol airport has risen by 30% since last year, from 124 to 165, says the Dutch Salvation Army's annual report. The majority were Polish migrants and Dutch people who have been deported from abroad. The Salvation Army has no homeless shelter at the airport but offers a service where people can go for advice, coffee and to use the telephone or computers. Of the new 124 homeless people last year, the majority were helped to access accommodation services. At the end of the year, only 21 still had no housing solution. Of the service users from Eastern Europe, whose number rose from 1919 to 1941 last year, all were young Polish men who had come looking for employment, but the economic crisis meant they could not work and therefore could not find accommodation.

► **Northern Ireland: "Social housing does not comply with human rights standards"** [30/07/2010]

Human rights experts at Queen's School of Law in Belfast, Northern Ireland, have analysed the Northern Ireland government's spending on social housing, and have found that it does not comply with international legal obligations to use the maximum available resources to ensure progressive realisation of the [right to adequate housing](#). They state that there has recently been a significant increase in the waiting list for social housing and a rise in the number of households "presenting as homeless", and state that insufficient funding for new social housing represents a violation of international human rights law. The report also makes recommendations, including: increasing funding for new social housing; ensuring that the price paid for land does not unduly benefit advantaged groups and that the private rented sector should not be seen as a long term solution to the housing crisis.

► **Romania: No Evictions from Buildings Intended for Housing in Winter** [30/07/2010]

Romanians will not be evicted from buildings intended for housing in wintertime anymore, if the draft law approved during an extraordinary sitting of the Romanian Government in mid-July is passed by Parliament. Prime Minister Emil Boc said that according to the draft law passed by the Government, the prohibition to evict people from buildings intended for housing between 1st December 2010 and 1st March 2011 was in place.

► **Scotland: Government Invests in Affordable Homes** [30/07/2010]

The Scottish Housing and Communities Minister has announced that £45 million funding will accelerate building of at least 800 new low cost homes across Scotland. The resources will be focused on stimulating the country's house building industry and tackling homelessness. The Minister has also said that he will travel across Scotland to meet home owners, tenants, elected officials and housing association staff to hear about their experiences of the housing system, in a bid to "adopt fresh thinking and new ideas" to support an increase in the supply of housing.

► **Scotland: Homeless Man Kept in Prison as Court has Nowhere to Send his Paperwork** [30/07/2010]

A homeless man in Scotland who is has denied a charge of assault has been kept in prison because the court has nowhere to send his paperwork. As there are no bail hostels in Aberdeen, there is nowhere to send his bail papers. A hostel for former offenders is the closest thing to a bail hostel, but it is not accepting any new arrivals because it under threat of closure.

► **Spain: More and more people registering with homeless services** [30/07/2010]

Various regional-level Spanish press agencies have recently reported large increases in the number of people accessing homeless services, and the number of short period homeless people is growing. A national level study, conducted by the Institute for National Statistics (INE), is pending publication. The last such study, published in 2008, recorded an increase in the number of people seeking help from homeless services compared with the previous year. In the same year, Caritas Spain predicted a strong increase in homelessness in Spain in 2009 and 2010, a prediction that appears accurate.

The main explanation for this increase is given as the effects of the economic crisis, including unemployment, sometimes long-term, and the failure of family and social networks to deal with this situation. Moreover, according to Caritas Spain, many people who have already accessed homeless services and were on the road to social inclusion now find themselves in need of help and resources again as a result of the crisis.

The crisis is affecting migrants as well, say Caritas Spain: they have difficulty renewing their residence and/or work card as they cannot prove economic resources as a consequence of unemployment or the end of social benefits, which in turn makes it impossible for them to have access to the employment market and thus has led to an increase in migrant homelessness.

► **UK: EU Migrants Increase Number of Homeless People in London** [30/07/2010]

Almost a quarter of London's rough sleepers are from new EU states, a trend exacerbated by rising unemployment that is reversing a decline in homelessness in the UK capital, a report says. The Combined Homeless and Information Network (Chain) database has published figures showing that London has almost 4,000 homeless people, a figure up from 2,500 three years ago. While the number of homeless British nationals in the capital has stabilised at about 2,500, citizens of Central and Eastern European states account for hundreds more. Most of those sleeping on the streets come for a better life but find limited opportunities, and, in some cases, become destitute. Unless they have worked full-time for a year, migrants from countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 have no right to state funds and only limited access to services. The outcome is often isolation and homelessness. British charities say that while the tide of large-scale migration from Eastern Europe has largely reversed, many people are staying in the UK because of limited social protection in their own country.

► **UK: Fears benefit cuts will increase homelessness** [30/07/2010]

The new UK government's decision to cut housing benefit, which will mean that many of the poorest people in Britain will lose up to 17% of their disposable income, could put 200,000 people at risk of homelessness, according to a campaign group. The National Housing Federation (NHF) claims a 10% reduction in payments for those who claim unemployment allowance for more than 12 months will lead to more evictions. The NHF said many of those evicted would not qualify for emergency accommodation because they would be deemed to have become intentionally homeless and therefore "at fault" for their situation.

► **UK: Plans to Deport Eastern Europeans Sleeping Rough Could Land UK in European Courts** [30/07/2010]

A pilot scheme to deport eastern Europeans sleeping on the streets in parts of the UK has been criticized by lawyers and human rights groups. The scheme enables the government to deport people if they have been in the UK for longer than three months, but are not, and "have no prospect" of, working or studying.

Legal groups claim the scheme could result in the UK being taken to the European Court of Justice for contravening EU law. They believe that the scheme could raise questions about the way Central and Eastern Europeans are prevented from accessing benefits. The benefits system surrounding people from Eastern European countries which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 is subject to exceptions that do not apply to other EU members.

Government demands require people to produce often hard-to-access documents. For example, to prove that they have been working, some must pay £90 for a work permit. For those already struggling, unregulated work becomes the easiest option, so many are without proof that they have worked for the minimum three-month period. Some have left the UK before being targeted. Others have failed to turn up for interview, where ID is being confiscated. This flight from services that could help people in need is potentially very problematic.

A government spokesman says the scheme was "one element of an overall plan to tackle rough sleeping and destitution. Reconnections services available have provided voluntary returns home for hundreds of people in the last 18 months, supporting them into accommodation, and reconnecting them with friends and family. [The government] will only take removal action in cases where the individual consistently refuses this support, and is left destitute and a problem for their community." He explained that ID was confiscated "so people cannot prevent removal by destroying the document".

► **UK: Travellers prepare to fight government housing policy** [30/07/2010]

The newly elected UK government has reversed policies giving incentives to councils to develop land for Gypsy and Traveller communities. As a result, all bids to fund new sites and refurbish existing ones across England and Wales have been cancelled and the government wants to revive the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act that turns trespassing into a criminal offence. This will mean that Travellers who refuse to move from land could be arrested by police or forcibly evicted.

► **Wales: Government Can Stop Social Housing Sales** [30/07/2010]

The Welsh Assembly Government has introduced legislation which will enable the suspension of the right to buy a social housing in areas hit by a shortage of homes. The right to buy means that tenants of social housing can buy the property, but this means that the property is no longer social housing. The law, known as a Measure, will enable local authorities to apply to Welsh ministers for approval to suspend the right to buy in areas of housing pressure. It will also give ministers powers to strengthen controls on registered social landlords.

► **Wales: Homeless People to get Free Sun Cream** [30/07/2010]

Homeless people in Cardiff will be provided with free sun cream and after-sun products thanks to a joint venture between the Co-operative Pharmacy and Sunwise, a Cardiff Council initiative. The Council founded Sunwise to tackle skin cancer, which affects a significant number of homeless people. Cardiff is one of 13 cities involved in the scheme, which started in 2008.

► **Wales: Improving the Health of Homeless and Vulnerable People** [30/07/2010]

Wales's Public Health department and Shelter Cymru, the representative body for providers of housing-related support, homelessness and supported living in Wales, have drawn up a document supporting the implementation of the Welsh Assembly Government's [Improving the health and well-being of homeless and specific vulnerable groups - Standards 2009-2014](#). The document seeks to counter the situation in which homeless people have poorer physical and mental health than the general population and often have problems obtaining suitable healthcare. In this agreement, [Public Health Wales](#) will lead on the development of evidence-based planning, in cooperation with homelessness services, healthcare providers and government Health Boards.

▶ **UN Asks Belgium to Ban Begging by Children** [30/07/2010]

The United Nations (UN) Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended that Belgium explicitly ban the use of children for street begging, in accordance with its final observations on the Belgian report on the implementation of the rights set down in the convention on the rights of the child.

▶ **Denmark: Roskilde Festival will Focus on Poverty and Homelessness** [30/07/2010]

Each year, Denmark's Roskilde Festival, the largest Northern European culture and music festival, donates its profits to humanitarian and cultural projects. Until now, the proceeds have gone to environmental organisations with an international focus. From 2011, however, the festival will focus on poverty, homelessness and inequality, with specific reference to the situation in Denmark. The reason for this is the expected increase in poverty in the future, a situation on which awareness reportedly needs to be raised in Denmark.

▶ **EU Participatory Forum: Building Together a Europe For All, Circus Against Social Exclusion** [30/07/2010]

As part of the EY2010 October Focus Week, marking the last quarter of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and the end of DG Employment (European Commission)'s Circus Campaign "Do you know what Social Europe can do for you?", a participatory forum will take place in Brussels on the 18th – 20th October 2010. As part of the forum, specific open space sessions will be devoted to participatory sessions presenting an initiative/project developed in a European context (benefiting from financial support, approach developed through mutual learning or within a European organisation).

▶ **European Commission Consultation on Rights and Protection of Victims of Crime and Violence** [30/07/2010]

A new [consultation](#) has been launched on victims of crime and violence. All citizens and organisations are welcome to contribute, and contributions are sought from organisations, associations, bodies, institutions and experts who deal with victims of crime and violence at local, regional, national, European or international levels. It might therefore be useful for FEANTSA members to take part in the consultation to raise the issue of violence against homeless people (including gender-based violence).

▶ **UK: The Poverty Site** [30/07/2010]

This site monitors what is happening with regards to poverty and social exclusion in the UK. The material is organised around 100 statistical indicators covering all aspects of the subject, including homelessness. All data is from official sources and is the latest available.

▶ **World Habitat Awards 2010** [30/07/2010]

The competition for the [World Habitat Awards](#), organised by the Building and Social Housing Foundation and UNHABITAT is now open. Projects and approaches are sought that demonstrate practical, innovative and sustainable solutions to current housing issues faced by countries; can be transferred or adapted for use as appropriate; view the term 'habitat' from a broad perspective and bring other benefits, such as energy or water saving, income generation, social inclusion, community and individual empowerment, capacity building or education. The competition has a two-stage entry process. All Stage I submissions must be received by 1st November 2010.

▶ **A Social Inclusion Roadmap for Europe 2020** [30/07/2010]

In the context of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010, the Belgian Presidency of the EU Council and the Europe 2020 strategy, the [EU Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion](#) has produced a book of recommendations for fighting poverty and promoting social inclusion, including a chapter on homelessness and housing exclusion. The book is available to order [here](#).

▶ **Belgium : A Critical Approach to Social Mix in Housing Policy** [30/07/2010]

The Belgian Centre for Equal Opportunities and the Fight Against Racism has produced a study on social mix policies with regards to housing. The study ([Dutch](#) / [French](#)), entitled "Diversity and Discrimination: Towards a Critical Approach to Social Mix Policies" looks at the debate on definitions, the effect of reducing physical distance on social ones, examples in Belgium and the risk of discrimination.

▶ **Belgium: Walloon Relais sociaux Produce Report on Barriers to the Reception and Accommodation of Homeless People** [30/07/2010]

The Relais sociaux, the Belgian network of services for homeless and socially excluded people, have released a [report](#) on the situation with regards to homeless people in contact with the social services in Belgium, identifying what barriers remain to their accessing homeless services and housing solutions and making policy recommendations in order to improve the situation.

▶ **Conference Report on the Right to Housing** [30/07/2010]

Jurislogment, a network of legal professionals working for the enforcement of the right to housing, held a conference about the French law on the defensible right to housing. The [proceedings](#) are now available online.

▶ **European Commission Research: Links Between Housing Policy and Homelessness** [30/07/2010]

Government housing policy can play a crucial role in weakening the links between poverty and poor housing, according to [research](#) funded by the European Commission as part of its Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity. The study highlights the links between housing, welfare provision, employment and homelessness. Six European countries took part in the research and found that housing affordability, standards and neighbourhood quality depend on national housing conditions, reflecting general living standards and government housing policy.

The study discovered that a lack of available, affordable housing can lead to high levels of homelessness, and can make it difficult to meet people's housing needs, even in countries with high levels of welfare protection.

Housing allowances – state income to help people with their housing costs - were found to help lower income people, but the report also found that the "working poor" have only marginally better housing prospects than unemployed people because people in low paid work receive less housing allowance.

In relation to unemployment and homelessness, short-term labour market change rarely leads to homelessness in countries with strong welfare systems. However, long-term unemployment is often a cause of homelessness.

▶ **France: Social Workers Concerned About Housing for Young People and Older People** [30/07/2010]

The Centre de recherche pour l'Etude et l'observation des conditions de vie (Research Centre for the Study and Observation of Living Conditions, or Crédoc) in France has produced a [report](#) highlighting increasing difficulties with regards to housing experienced by young people and older people. This situation appears relatively new for these groups, who have previously been able to rely on social networks to avoid housing problems, which is a cause for concern for social workers. The report points to job market instability as partly to blame for the increase.

▶ **Helping or Hindering - Meeting Young People's Needs in Bedford, UK** [30/07/2010]

This [report](#) looks at the needs of young people in Bedford, UK, particularly focusing on how those who are not in education, employment or training seek assistance and access services. The report includes a section on homelessness and rough sleeping among young people.

▶ **Housing Models Study: 'Staircases, Elevators and Cycles of Change'** [30/07/2010]

This [report](#) summarises the findings of a study by the Centre for Housing Policy (University of York) and Crisis, reviewing the evidence base regarding the effectiveness of both 'orthodox' and 'innovative' models of supported housing (Housing First and other housing models) for homeless people with complex support needs. The study assessed existing evidence regarding what 'works' for homeless people with complex support needs and drew together 'lessons learned' in other developed countries.

► **Survey: Impact of the Crisis and Responses of URBACT Cities** [30/07/2010]

URBACT, European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development, has launched a study on the impact of the economic crisis and the responses developed by the URBACT II partner cities to address the recession. The survey forms part of a broader package of work on cities and the crisis being undertaken by the URBACT programme. URBACT has a dedicated webspace 'Economic Crisis: Cities' Responses and Resources' to bring to light and display resources and tools to support local practitioners. Find out more at <http://www.urbact.eu/>

► **USA: From Foster Children to Homeless Adults in California** [30/07/2010]

California is creating homeless adults by failing to ensure that youth in foster care are given the support to live independently as adults and by ending state support abruptly, Human Rights Watch has said in a report. Human Rights Watch said that the state should provide financial support, connections with adults, shelter, and other safety nets for young people as they make the transition toward independence. The report, "[My So-Called Emancipation: From Foster Care to Homelessness for California Youth](#)," documents the struggles of foster care youth who become homeless after turning 18, or "aging out" of the state's care, without sufficient preparation or support for adulthood. California's foster care system serves 65,000 children and youth, far more than any other single state. Of the 4,000 who age out of the system each year, research suggests, 20 percent or more become homeless.