



FEANTSA

Frequently Asked Questions

12/04/10

European Homelessness at a Glance

■ European Federation of National Associations Working with the Homeless AISBL

Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales Travaillant avec les Sans-Abris AISBL

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is homelessness?

There is no universally accepted definition of homelessness, nor is there a common European definition.

Homelessness can be defined narrowly to include only people without a roof over their heads or it can be defined more broadly. FEANTSA argues for a broad definition of homelessness, which includes, as well as people who are roofless, people who are houseless and people who live in insecure and inadequate housing.

Find out more:

- [ETHOS](#) (European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion) is a tool FEANTSA has developed to improve understanding and measurement of homelessness in Europe. It is a one page document that classifies homeless people according to their living situation, now available in many European languages.

2. How many people are homeless in the EU?

There are no homelessness statistics at European level. Such data *is* collected at national level but differences in definition and methodology mean it is rarely comparable. Steps are being taken to improve statistics at the EU and international level.

Find out more:

- See our [data sources on homelessness in the EU](#) webpage for an up-to-date snapshot of homelessness statistics from the Member States.
- FEANTSA facilitates a data collection working group; a pool of experts who exchange information on data collection methodologies, monitor relevant EU developments, and steer FEANTSA's strategy on data collection. See our [data collection](#) page for policy statements, background documents, news and useful links on measuring homelessness.
- See our [Flash](#) newsletter for regular news on national and local counts, surveys and reports
- See the [European statistics](#) page on the FEANTSA research website.
- See the [Measuring Homelessness](#) section of the FEANTSA research website.

3. Who experiences homelessness in Europe?

The lack of reliable, comparable statistics makes it difficult to accurately profile who is experiencing homelessness in Europe. People experiencing homelessness are diverse and the profile is changing, rather than fixed.

Find out more:

- See the European Observatory's [thematic research page](#).
- See the [Flash](#) newsletter for news on studies profiling homeless people around Europe



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4. Why do people become homeless?

There are multiple pathways into homelessness. Often, individual experiences such as relationship breakdown, illness, addiction, eviction or experience of violence combine with external factors to cause homelessness. External factors can be structural; poor access to decent affordable housing, unemployment, precarious employment and discrimination and stigmatisation. They can also be institutional; release from institutions such as prisons, medical or children's institutions, poorly structured and administered benefits systems and lack of service co-ordination.

Find out more:

- The [reports](#) page of the FEANTSA website contains up-to-date reports on a wide variety of issues relating to homelessness.
- Our [housing](#), [employment](#) and [health and social protection](#) pages provide policy statements, background documents, news and useful links that give a more in-depth insight into the specific roles of these factors on homelessness.

5. What good practices exist to fight against homelessness?

A wide variety of approaches to combat homelessness exist in different institutional, political and socio-economic contexts. Policies will not be applicable in all situations, but "best practices" can give guidelines on effective ways of combating homelessness.

FEANTSA believes that the most effective homelessness policies should include 10 approaches that are listed in our Toolkit for Developing an Integrated Homeless Strategy. However, a balance should always be sought with the context in which the policy will be implemented and operated. Guidelines for ending homelessness

Find out more:

- See the FEANTSA publication [Ending Homelessness: A Handbook for Policy-Makers](#)
- See the FEANTSA [Toolkit](#) for developing an integrated homeless strategy.
- FEANTSA's [Strategies to combat homelessness](#) page contains examples of strategies that have been put in place across Europe with the aim of reducing, and even ending, homelessness.
- See the [Flash](#) newsletter for regular updates on services and policies tackling homelessness.



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FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless is an umbrella of not-for-profit organisations which participate in or contribute to the fight against homelessness in Europe. It is the only major European network that focuses exclusively on homelessness at the European level. FEANTSA's objective is to prevent and alleviate the poverty and social exclusion of people threatened by or living in homelessness, by encouraging and facilitating the co-operation of all relevant actors fighting homelessness in Europe.



FEANTSA is supported by
the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013).

This programme was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields. The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries. To that effect, PROGRESS purports at:

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

For more information see:

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

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