



**Enforcing the Right to Housing is possible
...if the political will is there!**

On World Habitat Day 2007, FEANTSA calls on governments in Europe to make the right to housing justiciable and to ensure that everyone in the European Union can seek legal redress when deprived of access to adequate and secure housing.

The number of people suffering from housing exclusion is growing rapidly in many EU member states. House prices and housing related costs are increasing in most parts of Europe and in particular in areas where new jobs are being created.

Homelessness in Europe has many different faces. Men and women, children as well as young and older people, migrants and ethnic minorities, workers and people who are unemployed are suffering from homelessness and housing exclusion in Europe.

The right to housing does not only concern people living in the streets. There are **many people experiencing hidden forms of homelessness**, such as overcrowded, substandard and insecure housing. Access to decent housing is a precondition for the exercise of other fundamental rights and for full participation in society.

Several countries in Europe have demonstrated that with sufficient political will, the enforcement of **the right to housing is not only feasible but also an effective mean to combat homelessness and housing exclusion in a sustainable way.**

“Although no country has fully implemented the justiciable right to housing yet, enforcing housing rights is an effective tool to push homelessness policies forward. It binds governments to think strategically and develop an integrated and long-term approach”, highlights Freek Spinnewijn, Director of FEANTSA.

In **Scotland**, public authorities have set themselves the target of providing adequate accommodation for all people who are homeless as from 2012.

The recently adopted law on the justiciable right to housing in **France** aims to give people the right to seek legal redress in front of the administrative tribunal. It can require the State to offer the claimant adequate housing.

Several Autonomous Regions in **Spain** are currently discussing ways to enforce housing rights for vulnerable groups.

Other countries can learn from these experiences! !

Making the right to housing justiciable is not an empty ideal but an effective and intelligent way to work towards ending homelessness in the European Union.

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