



## FEANTSA NEWS

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### Call for Papers: European Journal of Homelessness, Volume 9 Issue 1

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The [Call for Papers](#) for Volume 9 Issue 1 of the [European Journal of Homelessness](#), "Homelessness in Times of Crisis" is out now. Please send abstracts to [Professor Eoin O'Sullivan](#) by 2nd January 2015.

### European Journal of Homelessness, Volume 8.2, December 2014

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Volume 8, Issue 2 of the European Journal of Homelessness (Open Edition) is now available [online](#) - and will be in print soon too.

### Comparative Study on Data

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The fourth book in the European Observatory on Homelessness Comparative Studies series, "Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States. A Statistical Update", is now [available](#). Read our [press release](#) about the data.

### Save the Date: FEANTSA 2015 Policy Conference

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Following the success of the Bergamo Policy Conference this year, the next [FEANTSA Policy Conference](#) will take place on the 19th and 20th June 2015 at Paris City Hall (Hôtel de Ville), Paris, France. The programme will be available in February 2015 and registration will open in March 2015.

### "Homeless in Europe" Magazine on Housing

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"More Than Just a Roof Over Your Head: Housing Options for Homeless People in Europe" - the latest edition of Homeless in Europe magazine - is [out now](#).

### Bergamo Declaration in Greek

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The Bergamo Declaration, bringing together political messages from the FEANTSA Policy Conference, is now [available in Greek](#), courtesy of FEANTSA member Praksis.

### Five Reasons Why the European Union Must Invest in Thermal

## Renovation of Homes for Households in Fuel Poverty

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51 million Europeans cannot pay their energy bills, which means they often cannot heat their homes in winter. In total, between 50 and 125 million people are living in energy poverty in Europe because of the poor quality of their housing. Of those, at least 5 million households experience severe material deprivation and their homes stand little chance of being upgraded either by private market landlords (most are rental homes) or by local and national public authorities; investment capacity has been reduced by budgetary austerity and cautious markets. An average subsidy of 20 – 25% of the refurbishment cost per housing unit would provide the necessary and adequate boost to allow housing upgrades to be carried out, as has been proven in several EU countries under successful national initiatives. The President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, announced a budget of €300 billion for investment in Europe. Allocating €50 billion (17% of the total) to thermal upgrades would improve the 5 million housing units whose residents are most affected by energy poverty. FEANTSA, Fondation Abbé Pierre, HELIO International, Housing Europe, Réseau Action Climat, International Union of Tenants and CLER – Energy Transition Network [give](#) five reasons (in English and French) why thermal renovation of housing, targeted at those households in the most severe energy poverty, is the best possible investment. The appeal has been published as an [Op-Ed](#) in Euractiv.

## FEANTSA Speaks at Children Rough Sleepers Conference

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FEANTSA presented at the [Children Rough Sleepers](#) project final conference in the [European Parliament](#) on the 10th December.

## European Expert Group on Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care Event

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The European Expert Group on Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care, of which FEANTSA is a member, held a high-level [debate](#) to bring deinstitutionalisation into the spotlight, "Dismantling barriers to community-living", on the 10th December. Read the [press release](#).

## Report on Non-Take-Up Minimum Income Schemes by Homeless People and EMIN Conference

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A FEANTSA-commissioned [report](#) on Non-Take-Up Minimum Income Schemes by Homeless People was presented at the European Minimum Income Network (EMIN) Final EU Conference, "Building Consensus for Adequate Minimum Income Schemes" on 11th December. The [conference](#) was the last in a series of 30 national conferences throughout Europe and presented the outcomes of the work of EMIN and included contributions from other key stakeholders on how to build momentum for adequate Minimum Income Schemes.

## EUROPE NEWS

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### European Commission 2015 Budget

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The European Commission has adopted a draft EU budget for 2015. The draft must now be approved by the European Parliament and the Council. The proposed budget is particularly focused on supporting policies favouring competitiveness and economic convergence, assumed to contribute to growth and jobs. If no agreement is reached on the budget by 31st December 2014, the EU will operate under a system of the "provisional twelfth" from 1st January 2015: budget allowances for each item on the budget would receive one twelfth of its 2014 budget or the relevant amount in the 2015 draft budget,

whichever is less, monthly.

## European Census Hub Data on Homelessness

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The European Commission Statistics Agency, Eurostat, has [opened](#) a platform for accessing population and housing census data from all EU countries. Data on homelessness is featured but the results are extremely unreliable according to commentators. More information about the Census methods used to count homeless people is available in the European Observatory on Homelessness [Comparative Study](#) – "Counting Homeless People in the 2011 Housing and Population Census" and in the [fourth book](#) in the same series, "Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States. A Statistical Update".

## Annual Growth Survey 2015

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The European Commission has restarted the cycle of the European Semester, the EU's yearly economic policy-making cycle, with the publication of the Annual Growth Survey (AGS) 2015, which was [presented](#) on 28th November by Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Social Affairs, Employment and Inclusion. It focuses on sustainable job creation and economic growth but has a weak focus on social issues. Structural reform, productive investment and fiscal responsibility are given as the basis for EU social and economic policy. Commentators question whether or not this is the right recipe for progress towards the EU poverty target of lifting 20 million people out of poverty by 2020. The AGS revealed that economic recovery was slower and social havoc worse than expected. The [Joint Employment Report](#), part of the AGS package which analyses employment and social trends and challenges and presents Member States' policy responses to improve employment and social performance, highlights homelessness as a concern.

## Issue 21 of HABITACT e-bulletin Online

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The HABITACT e-bulletin aims to provide regular updates on news, initiatives, projects and trends relating to homelessness at local level in Europe and in other parts of the world, where relevant.

[This issue](#) includes the following: HABITACT News; Local News; News from Europe; Local Trends.

## Seasonal Workers

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Belgian social affairs newspaper, *Alterechos*, has published a [feature](#) on seasonal workers in Europe, using input from FEANTSA on the link with homelessness and exploitation.

## Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived Approved

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The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) [supports](#) EU countries' actions to provide material assistance to the most deprived. The European Commission and Member States are currently agreeing [national programmes](#) on how to use the fund in different countries. This includes food, clothing and other essential items for personal use, e.g. shoes, soap and shampoo. Material assistance must be accompanied by social inclusion measures, such as guidance and support to help people out of poverty. National authorities may also support non-material assistance to the most deprived people.

## New 2014-2020 Intergroups in European Parliament

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The new 2014-2020 European Parliament [Intergroups](#) have been endorsed. Among them, of interest to FEANTSA, are the intergroups on "Extreme poverty and human rights", "Social Economy" and "Urban issues". Intergroups can be formed by Members from any European Parliament political group and any committee, with a view to holding informal exchanges of views on particular subjects and promoting contact between Members of European Parliament and civil society.

# UNITED NATIONS NEWS

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## UN Experts Call on the Netherlands to Give Homeless Migrants Emergency Help

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A group of United Nations human rights experts has [urged](#) the Dutch Government to provide immediate emergency assistance, such as food, clothing, and shelter to homeless irregular migrants in the country. The government still does not provide emergency assistance to this group, despite repeated criticism by international and regional human rights bodies.

## MEMBER NEWS

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### Belgium: Book Launch – A Home for More Than One Day

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FEANTSA member *Steunpunt Algemeen Welzijnswerk*, plus *Het Werk der Daklozen*, LannooCampus Publishers and Antwerp Province [launched](#) the book "A Home for More Than One Day - Myths, Facts and Personal Stories about Homelessness", written by FEANTSA AC member Danny Lescrauwaet and Bob Cools, president of *Het Werk der Daklozen*, at an event on the 11th December. The book launch was a forum for reflecting and debating on homelessness, participation, prejudices about homelessness, suggested action for combating homelessness and featured a video presentation, a photo exhibition and live speakers. The book itself aims to spread the message that homelessness can and should be ended. In a follow up to the event, a list Recommendations for creating a homelessness action plan will be handed over to the Flemish government.

### Finland: The Work of Y-Foundation

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CEO of FEANTSA member Y-Säätiö/Y-Foundation and FEANTSA Finnish board member Juha Kaakinen explains the work of his organisation, that has contributed to a significant reduction in homelessness in Finland, in a [video interview](#). Y-Foundation is a body that seeks to end youth homelessness and aims to represent the needs of young people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness. It provides homes for 6,500 former homeless people in Finland.

### Finland: World Habitat Awards 2014-15 Finalists

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The ten [finalists for the 2014-15 World Habitat Awards](#) have been chosen from over 200 projects, from over 80 countries around the globe. From initiatives focusing on homeless or marginalised people, large-scale lighting projects or finance models as well as community self-build in indigenous communities, this year's finalists illustrate an impressive breadth of good practice in housing led by inspiring people worldwide. Y-Säätiö/Y-Foundation in Finland has been selected as a finalist for its work in building, renovating and leasing buildings to house homeless people through partnerships with municipalities and non-government organisations and playing a lead role in a policy that is on target to end long term homelessness in Finland.

### France: Emergency Accommodation Unit for Young Women

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The French Red Cross opened the only emergency accommodation unit for homeless women aged 18-25 open all year round in Paris, the [Inès Lyautey Centre](#) (in honour of the former Vice President of the Red Cross) last year. It was officially inaugurated on the 15th December.

## Ireland: Simon Communities Present Government with 10 Point Action Plan in Response to Homelessness Emergency

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The Simon Communities have presented Ministers, the Cabinet, TDs and Senators with a 10 Point Plan in response to the homelessness emergency facing the country, suggesting immediate action to prevent another tragedy and the growing numbers becoming homeless. Simon also submitted a regional analysis of the current demands on services and the actions required in all of the regions in which they operate to help ensure responses and commitments are countrywide. [More information](#).

## Ireland: Website for Students and Teachers

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Peter McVerry Trust launched a new educational website resource for students and teachers. The website, [www.homelessnessnessinireland.ie](http://www.homelessnessnessinireland.ie) aims to help students better understand the complex nature of homelessness in Ireland. The site examines issues such as poverty, mental health and human rights. The website also has a dedicated teacher resource section with additional information and lesson plans to help teacher put together classes on homelessness and related subjects.

## Ireland: Rising Rents will Push More People into Homelessness

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The Simon Communities have warned that figures from a [report](#) showing an overall increase of 11% in rent prices across the country over 12 months mean that more and more people will be pushed into homelessness and people will also be prevented from leaving homelessness. [More information](#).

## Italy: Housing First Italy Network

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The [Housing First Italy Network](#) currently has 46 members from public and private organisations working with the issue of extreme social exclusion. The training is given via Webinars with technical assistance on how to manage contracts and co-manage projects with local bodies. Many students are already learning about personalised services, housing selection and defining a methodology for intervention. The Rimini Winter School (11-13 December) brought together all those involved and reflect of future activities.

## Poland: Translation of Housing First Resources

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On the "[Housing First - Evidence based Advocacy](#)" website (run by Camilian's Mission for Social Assistance) is a [translation](#) of four chapters of Sam Tsemberis of Pathways to Housing's manual on Housing First and some chapters on Communal Housing First and Housing-led programmes by Nicolas Pleace of the University of York.

## Spain: Approaches to the Housing First Model

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As part of their Homelessness Campaign, of which this year's theme is the right to decent and adequate housing, the network of FEANTSA's Spanish members, fePsh, held a [seminar and debate](#) on Housing First on the 10th December in Madrid. Several different FEANTSA members are interested in the model. The FEANTSA secretariat presented the Housing First concept and the forthcoming Online Guide to it ([English](#), [Spanish](#)) at the [event](#). Videos will be published soon on the [DentroFuera website](#).

## Spain: Third Sector Platform Expresses Concern About "Citizen

## Safety" Law

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The Spanish Third sector Platform is very [concerned](#) about a text approved recently by the Spanish Congress. It criminalizes poverty with fines of up to €30,000 for the most vulnerable people. Read more about the law in an [opinion](#) by Human Rights Watch.

## Sweden: Ersta diakoni Housing for Young People in Stockholm

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To avoid buildings standing empty while there is a housing shortage and to provide housing to those who need it, Swedish FEANTSA member Ersta diakoni is renting out 25 apartments in what used to be a retirement home in the centre of Stockholm to young people aged 18-25.

## UK: Homeless Veterans Campaign

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Several UK media bodies are putting resources behind a campaign to raise awareness about and funds in aid of former service personnel who have become homeless, called '[Homeless Veterans](#)'. The campaign features the activities of FEANTSA member [Veterans Aid](#) and ABF The Soldiers Charity.

## HEADLINES

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### Belgium: Les Morts de la Rue Wins Award

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The Collectif 'Morts de la rue' ('Street Deaths' Collective) has won an award for its work to reduce the social inequalities surrounding death and burial. The collective was [given](#) the Orfinger-Karlin Award for its will to give homeless people a decent and dignified burial by the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (Human Rights Association).

### France: Emergency Number Unable to Deal with Volume of Calls Nationally

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FNARS has [issued](#) a warning that the emergency number that aims to connect people sleeping rough with accommodation services is unable to deal with the volume of demand and calls for an end to the practice of only opening temporary solutions such as gymnasia when temperatures become dangerously low and for permanent solutions to homelessness.

### Greece: Apartment Block to House Families

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The City of Athens has [opened](#) a second apartment block that will house eight families at risk of homelessness. The building, or House of Hope as it is known, has eight apartments that have been fully furnished thanks to a donation from Procter & Gamble. The families that will move in will be allowed to stay there for six months plus another six if they are unable to move on at that point. The building is the second social housing project run by the City. The first currently houses 50 people. The municipality would like to expand the project in order to reduce homelessness. Some Athenians have also offered their homes for this purpose if the municipality helps cover the costs.

## Ireland: Government Action Plan to Tackle Homelessness

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The Irish Government has [announced](#) its 20-point action plan to tackle emergency and short term homelessness. The plan commits to €20 million "plus" in expenditure. It includes the immediate provision of 260 additional emergency beds for people sleeping rough in Dublin, and a night café to provide a contact point for homeless people who do not want to be placed in emergency accommodation. It also includes the provision of transport with support services to bring people sleeping rough to emergency accommodation where they will be cared for.

## Italy: Alleged Organised Crime Involvement in Social Services Management

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Investigations are currently underway into the [involvement](#) of organised crime, far-right militants in the [management](#) of social [services](#) such as asylum-seeker reception centres, Roma camps and services for [homeless people](#) in Rome, with the cooperation of local politicians, both left and right wing. These activities are [alleged](#) to be very [lucrative](#) for organised criminals. The Winter emergency plan for homeless services has [not yet started](#) in Rome because of the investigations. A rough sleeper died a few days ago.

## Italy: 1 Child in 4 Lives in Inadequate Housing

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The fifth Save the Children [report](#) into living conditions for children in Italy has [revealed](#) that many children live in dark, damp and overcrowded housing.

## UK: Government Pilots Benefit Sanctions Prevention Scheme for Homeless People

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The UK government is piloting a scheme aimed at preventing vulnerable homeless people being hit by sanctions to their benefits. The pilot scheme, working with local housing providers places 'vulnerability markers' on the case files of homeless people. These markers trigger support to help homeless claimants avoid penalties for failing to find work. The move follows concern about the number of homeless people receiving benefit sanctions. Research by Homeless Link revealed that a third of homeless people claiming jobseeker's allowance were sanctioned (their allowance was cut or stopped) between May and July 2013. The pilot scheme aims to help job centre staff support homeless jobseekers according to personal need. It is an attempt to address concerns that job centre advisors are sometimes unable to recognise when claimants are homeless and need to be given extra flexibility. Benefit sanctions, which reduce a claimant's allowance are issued if claimants commit an 'offence' such as failing to attend an appointment at the job centre, even though it is notoriously difficult to keep appointments, find work or provide evidence of looking for work when a person is homeless.

## UK: Record Eviction Levels Following Benefit Cuts

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The number of renters evicted from their homes in England and Wales [hit](#) record levels in the third quarter of this year, with cuts to social security among the trigger factors. [Figures](#) from the UK Ministry of Justice show that 11,100 rented properties were repossessed between July and September, the highest quarterly figure since records began in 2000. In contrast, just 2,805 mortgage borrowers lost their homes. The homelessness charity Shelter estimates that over 1,300 people a day (560 households) in England are put at risk from eviction or repossession. The reason for this sharp increase is complex, with a number of factors from rising property prices to welfare reform at play, but [a large proportion of possession claims have been made by social landlords such as local councils and housing associations](#), who have warned it is caused by the introduction of the '[bedroom tax](#)'. [More information](#).

## UK: Local Authorities Face Supreme Court Challenge for Treatment of

## Homeless People

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England's local authorities will [face](#) a challenge by the Supreme Court over the way they decide which homeless people are judged 'vulnerable' enough for rehousing. As the law is currently interpreted by English councils, when a person presents themselves as homeless they must prove that they are more vulnerable than an 'ordinary homeless person' to qualify as a 'priority' for rehousing. 'Ordinary' is not defined, however, and has the potential to mean that serious issues that affect high numbers of homeless people will not be taken into account as they will be considered 'usual' issues. According to homelessness charities, this interpretation results in people in desperate situations being turned away to sleep on the streets including women fleeing domestic violence, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems and young people forced out of the family home. [More information.](#)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### Next FEANTSA Policy Conference

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The next FEANTSA Policy Conference will take place on the 19th and 20th June 2015 in Paris. Put the date in your diaries!

### Conference on Ending Family and Youth Homelessness, USA

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The National Alliance to End Homelessness in the USA is holding a national [conference](#) on Ending Family and Youth Homelessness on the 19th and 20th February 2015.

### Making Connections - Improving Lives: Building Partnerships for Better Outcomes

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The European Social Network 23rd annual [conference](#) will take place from the 6th-8th July next year in Lisbon. It will be an opportunity to present innovative practice on a wide range of issues within the overall theme of building partnerships.

### First Meeting of European Migration Forum

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The first meeting of the next European Migration Forum will take place on 26-27 January 2015. It will provide an opportunity for civil society organisations to discuss the current situation in the Mediterranean area with the EU institutions. The selection of participants will be based on an application procedure; [apply now](#).

### Registration of Intent – Third World Conference of Women's Shelters

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Applicants interested in participating in the [3rd World Conference of Women's Shelters](#), hosted from the 3 - 6 November 2015 in the Hague, The Netherlands, are invited to [register their intent](#) to attend the conference and to submit ideas for contribution to the content of the conference. Please also indicate whether or not you will require assistance in finding funding for your participation. Those who wish can already pre-pay the conference fee and/or donate in order to support other participants.

## PUBLICATIONS

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## Outreach Work

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Hogeschool Gent has published a [book](#) (in Dutch) on outreach work with homeless people entitled 'Reach Out!'.

## Counting Homeless People

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Julien Damon has published a short [article](#) (in French) on statistics on homeless people.

## Emergency Social Assistance as a Sign of the Times: Historical Events and Social Justice in Homeless Services in France from the 1980s

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Based on a field survey of emergency assistance for homeless people in France since the 1980s, this [thesis](#) sketches a political picture of society at the time around the concept of a political commentary grounded in current events. The paper concludes that contemporary attitudes are instrumental in the definition and regulation of homelessness.

## University Students Offer Healthcare Support to Homeless People

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Medical students at the University of Leicester, UK, have designed and developed a [response system](#) to help support homeless people in the city. The project involved medical students working jointly with academic staff and has resulted in the establishment of a charity called Project LIGHT (Leicester Initiative Good Health Team), which has been commended for encouraging partnership between students and academics. One-in-three rough sleepers have an untreated health condition which they often ignore until their condition deteriorates and forces them to seek emergency medical care. The students found that many homeless people avoid going to current services provided, but 90 per cent would welcome clinical services from students, according to new research published in the *Journal of Interprofessional Care*. The students conducted a three week study of structured interviews with members of Leicester's homeless community to assess the need for such a service. They found that the majority of individuals surveyed had serious health problems and welcomed student support, with 61 per cent requesting a fixed location.



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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-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>

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