



### FEANTSA Calls on EU to Fund Home Starter Packs for Homeless People in Framework of FEAD

FEANTSA congratulates the European Commission on its proposal for a Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and welcomes the inclusion of homeless people as priority target group. It considers that the fund could have a real impact and create a much-needed new dynamic around homelessness in several member states, if the proposed “EU policy guidance” is supported by concrete planning, including an EU homelessness strategy, which has been called for by numerous EU institutions. Policy guidance is necessary to avoid ineffective “charity handouts” to homeless people. The FEAD could and should be used to help homeless people move from shelters into independent or supported housing. This would correspond with the emerging interest in many Member States for housing-led policies which want to move people quickly into stable housing with support and minimise the use of shelter and other temporary living solutions. The emerging interest should be solidified in an EU strategy which could include policy guidance on how to best use the FEAD.

The proposal, announced on Wednesday by European Commissioner for Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor would, “establish a Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived to complement the existing instruments of the EU (social cohesion policy)”, helping “Member States to provide non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons addressing food deprivation, the consequences of homelessness and the material deprivation of children.” The Commission has proposed to allocate a budget of 2.5 billion euros for a successor instrument to the food support programme aimed at fighting the worst forms of poverty and social exclusion in synergy with the European Social Fund.

Commissioner Andor said that Member States can be helped to achieve the goals if they receive “policy guidance” from the European Commission. FEANTSA agrees that this can help, and urges the Commission to give part of this policy guidance in the form of an EU homelessness strategy, which has also been called for by the European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions, EPSCO Council and various MEP groups.

According to the proposal, Member States could distribute food or goods or a combination, and partner organisations would be involved. FEANTSA contributed to the consultation on the Fund with the idea of Starter Packs of household items and furniture to help homeless people accessing housing get off to a good start in their new home and avoid burdensome costs that might push them back into homelessness. If the EU focuses on long-term homeless and realistically considers the potential of moving people out of the shelter system and into housing, the Starter Packs (costing 200€ each and representing a budget of around €40 million per year, the share that should go to homeless people on the basis of the numbers presented by the EC) could help us reach and support a large part of the chronic homeless population that could be moved to independent housing.

Such a scheme would also be environmentally-friendly as it reuses material and prevents companies throwing away durable goods, and socially viable, as it helps homeless people access housing and can be linked with social enterprise (recycling and repairing durable goods), as well as helping homeless people overcome the first costs of independent living and survive the first few difficult months. This kind of planning could be part of the EU homelessness strategy FEANTSA calls for, which would greatly increase the EU’s ability to tackle homelessness, and help reach the proposed Fund’s objective of helping “the most-deprived, the homeless and materially-deprived children to break out of the vicious circle of poverty and deprivation and so make a concrete contribution to the Europe 2020 target of reducing the number of people in poverty or at risk of poverty by at least 20 million.”

FEANTSA agrees that the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived can have an impact, but maintains that it must be part of an EU homelessness strategy to be effective in addressing the consequences of homelessness, as mentioned by Commissioner Andor.

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#### Notes for editors:

1. [FEANTSA](#) is the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless. It 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 focusing exclusively on homelessness at European level.
2. The European Parliament has called for an EU Homelessness strategy <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2010-0499&language=EN>, as has the Committee of the Regions <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:015:0041:0045:EN:PDF>, the European Economic and Social Committee <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.soc-opinions.14931>, the S&D Group of MEPs <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=B7-2012-350&language=EN> and a group of MEPs following the deaths of homeless people during the cold snap last year <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20120210IPR37797/html/Parliament-reiterates-call-for-an-EU-strategy-for-the-homeless>. The EPSCO Council has called for an adequate scheme for tackling homelessness at EU level [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/131109.pdf%2B5%20](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/131109.pdf%2B5%20)
3. The full proposal can be downloaded <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8951&langId=en>; a press release explains the Fund [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-1141\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1141_en.htm)

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