

FEANTSA FORUM

18-19 MAY 2026

WARSAW

EVENT REPORT



Photo Credit: Gerhard Schuetzinger

HIGHLIGHTS



500+ Participants

30+ Countries

30 Sessions

12 Site Visits

EVENT SUMMARY

The FEANTSA Forum took place on the 18 and 19th of May, on the back of the launch of the EU's new Anti-Poverty Strategy which identified homelessness as one of the most extreme forms of poverty. Building on this, the Forum offered a timely opportunity to reflect on where the fight against homelessness fits within the broader European agenda and how to use these tools to advocate for real change on homelessness.

The Forum took place in Warsaw, organised in partnership with the Municipality of Warsaw and the National Federation for Solving the Problem of Homelessness, with over 500 participants attending the event. The programme provided opportunities to understand homelessness in Poland, to get to grips with the latest EU-level developments, and to share learning from across Europe. Participants reaffirmed their shared commitment to ending homelessness, despite challenging political and economic contexts.

EU Agenda: Is it Making a Difference in Homelessness

The Forum opened with an assessment of where Europe stands on homelessness, and how EU-level actions impact on the ground. Jakub Wilczek, from the Polish Federation for Solving the Problem of Homelessness, gave a poignant keynote outlining that, whilst EU policy coordination and funding has contributed to new ways of understanding and addressing homelessness in Poland, much work lies ahead to deliver lasting change at scale.



"So let us return to the question posed at the beginning: 'Does the European Union's agenda make a difference?' The answer is yes. It has changed the language, the goals, the way of thinking and the scope of knowledge about homelessness. But the greatest challenge today remains implementation - making sure that this difference is felt not only within systems and institutions, not only by all of us working in this field. But also by [people experiencing homelessness]."

-Jakub Wilczek, President of the National Federation for Solving the Problem of Homelessness, Poland.



The keynote address was complimented by a round of panellists including representatives of the European Commission, the Director for Social Rights and Inclusion, Katarina Ivankovic-Knezevic, and head of the Housing Task Force Stefan Moser to present the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Affordable Housing Plan. Although there was common agreement that homelessness is a key priority in these frameworks, Sarah Coupechoux from Fondation pour le Logement and Jan Milota from the Platform for Social Housing noted that the ambition on paper has yet to be translated into real progress, with approximately 1.3 million people experiencing homelessness across the EU every night and levels climbing in many EU countries.

Regardless of these challenges, the message was not one of despair but of urgency. As Jakub said, Europe today has the knowledge, experience and tools needed to effectively reduce homelessness. The question is no longer: “Do we know how?” The question today is: “Are we ready to do it at the scale required?”

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The FEANTSA Forum: A Day of Exchange and Practice

The FEANTSA Forum opened with participants choosing from a combination of site visits and collaborative working sessions. The twelve site visits were hosted by local organisations working across Warsaw, offering direct insight into how nonprofits respond to homelessness at the city level. Services represented spanned employment support, street outreach, mental health provision, community and day centres, emergency and family accommodation, a hostel dedicated to LGBTIQ+ people, and a project repurposing vacant buildings into housing. These visits offered participants a grounded, firsthand perspective on the realities and innovations shaping practice on the ground.

Across the two days, participants selected from twenty-nine thematic sessions reflecting the full complexity of homelessness in Europe today. Sessions clustered around several interconnected themes. Questions of health, housing, wellbeing and discrimination ran through many discussions, with dedicated sessions on mental health, neurodiversity, ageing, and the specific experiences of women and LGBTIQ+ people facing homelessness.



Sessions on eviction prevention, deinstitutionalisation, prison release, and unregulated service provision provided insights on different fronts of action. Migration, climate change and energy poverty, were featured as cross-cutting challenges reshaping how we address homelessness. The rights and needs of children and young people received focused attention, as did the use of data to better understand and respond to homelessness at scale. Housing First remained a touchstone across several sessions, reflecting its continued centrality to European homelessness policy.

Building Resilience in the Homeless Sector

"In France every time we talk about the homeless sector, they talk about crime, stigmatising discourse. We need to define arguments that affect society as a whole and can be a solution for everyone. We need to reach to other sectors - healthcare, employers, legal organisations... that share our observations and needs. We shouldn't do this alone, we should do it collectively with our sector."

- Marthe Yonh, Cite Caritas, France



The 2026 Forum concluded with a strong panel of speakers, including Vera Kovacs (From Streets to Home Association, Hungary), Marthe Yonh (Cite Caritas, France) and Jörn M. Scheuermann (Managing Director of the Working Group for Emergency Housing Assistance Munich and Upper Bavaria, Germany). The discussion revolved on the resilience in the face of pressures such as rising of right-wing populism, austerity and stigmatising discourse. The consistent response of the speakers was not retreat, but a stronger call for strategic and collective resistance, protection of frontline workers, defence of evidence-based policymaking and holding the line on progress achieved.

This was a sentiment many who attended the Forum left with. Across the sessions, the homeless sector showed itself to be increasingly guided by evidence, shaped by experience and driven by collective determination. That combination is powerful in making the ending of homelessness not just necessary, but genuinely possible. The work ahead is to ensure that this conviction shapes national and European policy decisions that will determine outcomes.

Thank You

We extend our sincere gratitude to the National Federation for Solving the Problem of Homelessness and the Municipality of Warsaw for their partnership in hosting the event, and to all the participants, speakers and volunteers who contributed to the success of the FEANTSA Forum 2026.



The FEANTSA Team

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