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Ending youth homelessness by embracing cultural diversity

Report of the study session held by
FEANTSA Youth

in co-operation with the
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
13-17 October 2025

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

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1) Background

FEANTSA Youth is a network of young people who work to prevent, reduce, and end youth homelessness. This is done through advocating for housing rights, developing prevention strategies, raising public awareness, training professionals, and building cooperation among service providers and other stakeholders. The network has emerged from the study sessions organised since 2014 in cooperation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

In several of the previous study sessions, the specific needs of young people with migrant or minority ethnic backgrounds have come up in discussions. However, the topic of migration and cultural diversity in services for youth experiencing homelessness has never been the main focus of a study session. It was also a critical time to delve into this topic, since services do now support a more culturally diverse homeless population, while there is still a big gap in terms of professionals' competencies and service design. This study session was therefore organised to help bridge this gap.

In addition, it is strategically important for the coming years to better equip homeless service providers in intercultural competencies, considering the current landscape of regressive migration policies and narratives. FEANTSA has developed a solid expertise on the intersection between migration and homelessness over the years, but there has been little work in assessing how homeless service providers are equipped to support a more culturally diverse profile of homelessness, or in developing intercultural competences within services. The expertise of the Youth Department in intercultural learning was considered a very valuable resource to develop a more inclusive, culturally sensitive homelessness sector. Therefore, it was considered relevant to organise this study session in partnership with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

2) Aim and objectives

The primary aim of the study session was to equip young professionals working in homeless service provision with the competencies needed to improve their work with young people from migrant and/or minority ethnic backgrounds, reflecting lived experiences as much as possible.

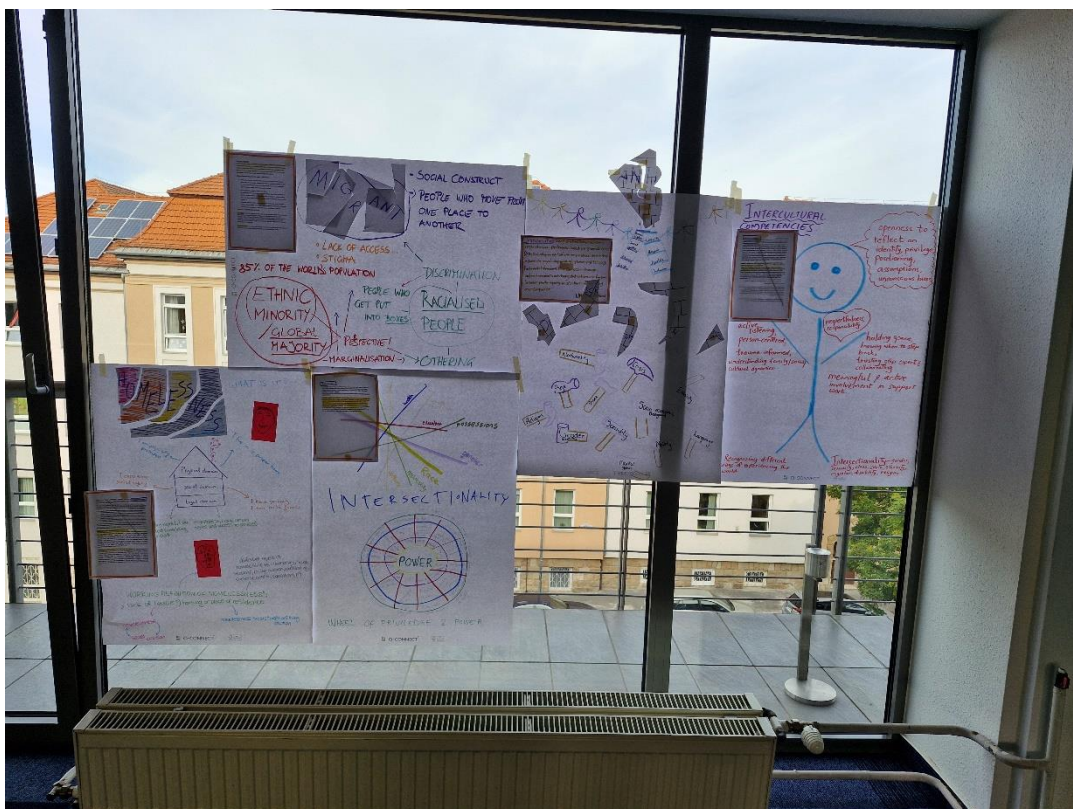
To achieve the session aim, the following objectives were set:

1. Understand the realities of young migrant, minority ethnic, or racialised people in homelessness, and identify challenges faced on the ground.
2. Recognise the distinctive characteristics of supporting these young people within homelessness services.
3. Identify the value and impact of intercultural learning and competencies in social work with this group.
4. Create spaces for sharing good practices from services implementing anti-discrimination policies and promoting intercultural dialogue.
5. Improve participants' intercultural competencies by providing guidelines to make services and communities more inclusive, and supporting advocacy for change.

During the preparatory phase, facilitators carefully considered the order and formulation of objectives. Mapping challenges and understanding participants' realities were prioritised to

ensure the programme was grounded in professional practice. Lived experience was deliberately integrated into the aim, highlighting the participatory nature of the study session. The sequence of objectives was structured to progress logically from understanding challenges to recognising effective interventions and ultimately developing intercultural competencies. Throughout preparation, facilitators debated the balance between ambition and feasibility, mindful of the breadth of topics and the limited timeframe.

After the study session, facilitators reflected on the outcomes and the alignment of the activities with the objectives. It was agreed that while all objectives were addressed to varying degrees, the number and scope of objectives had been overly ambitious for the available timeframe. Some objectives, particularly those related to improving intercultural competencies and applying good practices in participants' home contexts, could have been explored more deeply if fewer goals had been set. Facilitators noted that future study sessions would benefit from focusing on a more modest set of objectives, allowing for greater depth of engagement and more meaningful reflection. Despite this, participants gained valuable understanding of the challenges faced by young people from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds, exchanged good practices, and engaged with intercultural and rights-based frameworks that can inform their work moving forward.



3) Programme and methodology

This study session addressed the specific challenges faced by young people experiencing homelessness with migrant or minority ethnic backgrounds. Through intercultural learning and peer exchange, participants explored how discrimination, restrictive policies, and insufficiently adapted social services impact access to rights, with a focus on housing. The study session aimed at bridging gaps in service design, fostering culturally sensitive practices, and framing youth and migrant/ethnic minority homelessness as a human rights issue.

The programme was designed to provide participants with theoretical concepts as well as practical tools for advocating for the rights of migrants, ethnic and racialised communities. The sessions were structured following a logical chain: building a group dynamic and trust among participants, allowing them time to understand each other's contexts while reflecting about their own work and then working towards new skills for advocacy, interculturality, human rights and the intersection with migration/minorities and homelessness and community building.

Practical tools were also introduced throughout the sessions, by sharing good practices between the participants and facilitating the space and guidance that would allow them to translate the knowledge exchanged during the study session in locally adapted organisational action plans. The main goal of this action was to develop a plan adapted to the participant's organisation and local context, with concrete steps for advocating for the rights of migrants, while raising awareness on the connection between intercultural competences and homelessness service providers.

The work of the Council of Europe was integrated throughout the study session. On the second day, a session on human rights frameworks presented instruments such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Social Charter, and several Council Recommendations, particularly those related to young people, migration, and ethnic minorities. Participants engaged in an activity to identify relevant legal instruments and discuss case studies of human rights violations. On the fourth day, the session on intercultural competences drew on the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, while on the final day, the work of the Council of Europe Youth Department and the European Youth Foundation was presented. In addition to these specific sessions, various Council Recommendations and educational materials on human rights education were used throughout the week and informed the overall programme.

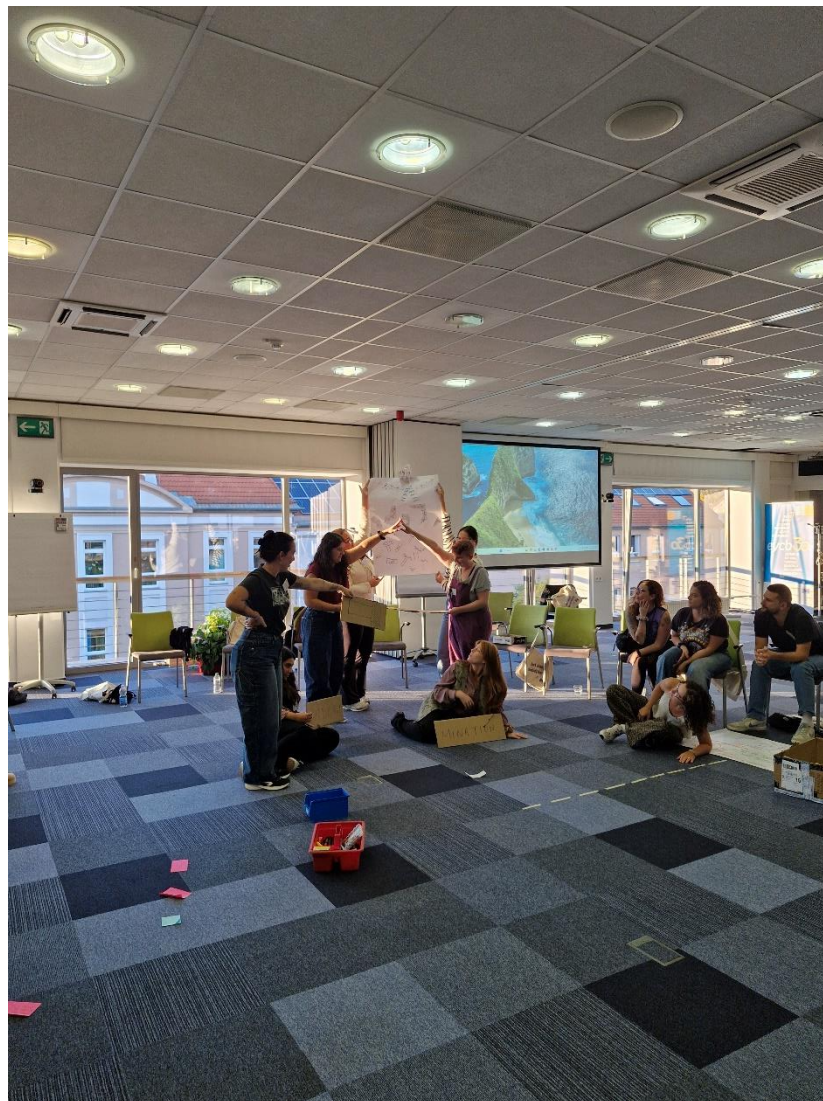
The study session adopted a **non-formal educational approach**, designed to engage participants actively and encourage reflection, dialogue, and peer learning. There was a deliberate mix of formats including pair conversations, small-group work, plenary discussions, and activities integrating physical, creative, and intellectual engagement to accommodate different learning styles. The programme also aimed to provide participants with a first-hand intercultural learning experience, fostering understanding and collaborative problem-solving across cultural contexts.

Team building, trust and agreement within the group was built through intercultural icebreakers such as the 'Dominoes' exercise, the Bridge challenge or the Swamp. For the sessions dedicated to exploring the realities and needs of the participants and the target group, the tools used were informal exercises and experiential games, where participants were able to have individual time for reflection. After this, they had the chance to get into conversations

with each other and share about their different contexts, or the needs and challenges they identified from their work at the local level.

For the sessions that introduced theoretical concepts, such as information on interculturality, or the intersection between human rights with migration, racialised minorities and homelessness, a combination of short informative presentations and group work was used. Participants were asked to use the information received on relevant cases that were prepared for them in advance, with the purpose to allow them to experience how the theoretical concepts and the legislative frameworks they learnt about could be applied in practice.

The methodological approach was centred on the needs of participants and remained open to their suggestions. Flexibility was very important to ensure that the feedback could be taken on board, which led to some sessions being allocated more time (such as the one on good practices, for example).



4) Profile of participants

The group of participants was made of 33 people, out of whom 7 identified as male, 25 as female and 1 as non-binary, which overall reflects the gender distribution of professionals working in the social or homelessness sectors. There was a big diversity in terms of age (being all over 18 years old) and countries of residence (14 countries), as well as professional and personal backgrounds, which was a key factor in the success of the educational experience.

Most of the participants were social workers directly supporting young people experiencing homelessness, in emergency shelters, transitional accommodation, in housing advice, etc. There were also a few participants with lived experience of homelessness and/or migration, which contributed greatly to the discussions. For most of them this was their first experience with non-formal education and in an international exchange. They were mostly very committed and engaged in the different programme activities.

Participants were overall very satisfied with the study session. In an online and anonymous evaluation form, 57.6% of them said their experience of the study session was very positive, while all the rest said it was positive. Participants appreciated the opportunity to learn from each other and with the activities proposed. Some discussed the approach to their work will definitely change, and that they are very willing to implement changes in their contexts. They left with lots of food for thought and interesting reflections about their attitudes and skills when supporting young people in homelessness, in particular those who have a migrant and/or ethnic minority background.

5) Information of the partner organisations and the team

The facilitation team was selected according to their expertise with the topics covered in the study session and was essential to the success of the study session:

- Sergio Pérez Barranco, 28, male, FEANTSA Youth, Belgium. Policy Officer in charge of youth homelessness within FEANTSA and coordinator of the FEANTSA Youth network.
- Simona Barbu, 39, female, FEANTSA, Belgium. Policy Officer in charge of migration within FEANTSA, has worked extensively on the intersection between migration and homelessness and the lack of access of ethnic minorities to housing rights.

FEANTSA is the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless. It is the only European NGO focusing exclusively on the fight against homelessness, with the ultimate goal to end homelessness in Europe. Established in 1989, FEANTSA brings together non-profit services that support homeless people in Europe. There are now nearly 140 member organisations from 26 countries, including 23 Member States of the European Union.

- Klaudia Veizaj, 35, female, ternYpe International Roma Youth Network, Albania. Has worked to promote Roma rights, especially among young people, and has coordinated the last editions of *Dikh He Na Bister* with the Council of Europe.

International Roma Youth Network is a dynamic coalition of youth and youth associations dedicated to empowering young Roma through self-organization, participation, and active citizenship. The network creates spaces for Roma and non-Roma youth to engage in intercultural dialogue, fostering mutual respect and cooperation. A key aspect of ternYpe's work is its commitment to building inclusive societies, free from prejudice, racism, and discrimination. By empowering youth to take leadership roles in their communities, ternYpe helps strengthen their identities and enables them to shape their futures.

One of ternYpe's main initiatives is "Dikh He Na Bister - Look and don't forget" - the Roma Genocide Remembrance Initiative, launched in 2010. Every year, around August 2nd, the initiative brings together thousands of Roma and non-Roma youth from across Europe to commemorate the victims of the Roma Holocaust. This event, which promotes solidarity and historical awareness, provides a platform for young people to engage with history as a tool for fostering social change. The initiative also builds partnerships with historians, educators, and political stakeholders to advocate for the recognition of the Roma Genocide and to ensure that the lessons of the past inform contemporary struggles against discrimination. Through these efforts, ternYpe emphasises the vital role youth play in constructing inclusive societies based on understanding, dialogue, and shared responsibility. Another significant event ternYpe is focusing on is the commemoration of May 16, Roma Resistance Day, which honors the courageous uprising of Roma prisoners against the Nazis in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. This day is a powerful reminder of the resilience and strength of the Roma community in the face of oppression.

- Razan Damlakhi, 43, female, the Netherlands. In her role as a trainer/facilitator, Razan is committed to advance awareness and action on human rights while strengthening the empowerment and participation of (refugee) youth. She is affiliated with VYRE (Voices of Young Refugees in Europe), a grassroots network established in 2013 by and for refugees, bringing together members from across Europe. Through Capacity-Building and Advocacy, VYRE strives to uphold the rights and agency of (young) refugees in Europe.
- Adam Mohamed Ariche, 38, male, CONVIVE Fundación cepaim, Spain. Has experience as intercultural mediator and now works at the advocacy department of CONVIVE Fundación cepaim, which is a FEANTSA member organisation.

CONVIVE Fundación Cepaim is a Spanish non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting social cohesion, equality, and the inclusion of migrants, refugees and other vulnerable groups. With centres across Spain, Cepaim provides support through housing programmes, reception services, legal counselling, community-based initiatives, and socio-educational projects. The organisation works to combat discrimination and strengthen intercultural dialogue by fostering inclusive communities and promoting equal access to rights. Cepaim is strongly involved in advocacy at local, national, and European levels, contributing with expertise on migration, asylum, homelessness, and anti-racism. Its work focuses on empowering young people, defending human rights, and promoting public policies that ensure dignity and social justice for all. As a FEANTSA member, CONVIVE Fundación Cepaim brings valuable field experience to European cooperation efforts on ending youth homelessness.

6) Summary of the programme

As detailed in Annex A, over the course of five days the programme combined theoretical inputs, experiential learning, and intercultural exchange to build participants' competences in addressing youth homelessness through a human rights and intercultural approach.

Monday, 13 October - The agenda for this day was designed to set the foundation for the week. Additionally, it aimed to highlight the role of the Council of Europe in this study session. Participants were introduced to the study session's objectives, programme, and expectations, while team-building activities fostered connections among participants. The day continued with an exploration of key concepts and terminology, followed by the establishment of reflection groups and a storytelling evening that encouraged personal sharing and connection.

Tuesday, 14 October - The second day deepened understanding of the topic by analysing the realities and challenges of youth homelessness and migration. Participants exchanged experiences from their local contexts and identified the specific needs of young migrants and ethnic minorities facing homelessness. The day also introduced a human rights framework to assess these situations and concluded with a session on intercultural approaches, exploring how interculturality can enhance work with affected communities.

Wednesday, 15 October - Midweek, participants took part in a study visit to the BMSZKI Accommodation Centre for Ukrainian refugees in Budapest, gaining first-hand insights into practical responses to homelessness and displacement. This visit allowed them to connect theoretical discussions with field realities.

Thursday, 16 October - The fourth day was designed to consolidate learning through experiential and interactive methods. Participants engaged in a simulation exercise and then they were introduced to tools for developing intercultural competencies. In the second part of the day, they participated in the guest lecture by Mr. Cafer Saatçı from Amnesty International Bulgaria on "Community building: from intercultural dialogue to advocating for human dignity", and shared good practices on interculturality and anti-discrimination in homeless service provision.

Friday, 17 October - The focus of the last day was to translate learning into action. Participants learned about advocacy strategies to strengthen their future initiatives and drafted action plans to implement changes in their local contexts. The study session concluded with the programme evaluation and closure.

7) Detailed implementation of the programme

Monday morning: introductions and group agreement

To officially open the study session, the facilitation team introduced itself and greetings were delivered by the course director. He introduced FEANTSA's work and engagement in the field of youth homelessness, underlining the importance of cooperation and shared learning among youth organisations and professionals across Europe. He also stressed the link between homelessness and human rights, in particular regarding young people.

A formal welcome was then offered by Mr. Marcos Andrade, Deputy Director of the European Youth Centre Budapest, on behalf of the Council of Europe. He greeted participants and highlighted the relevance of the study session's topic within the Organisation's work on human rights, participation, and inclusion, encouraging participants to use the week as an opportunity for dialogue, reflection, and cooperation.

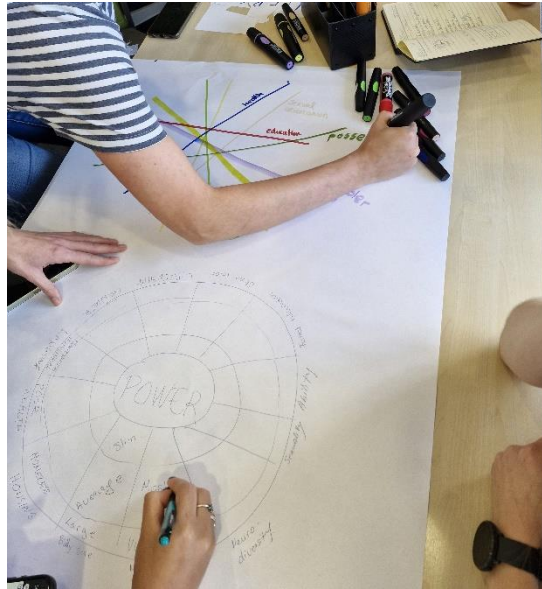
The session continued with a detailed presentation of the week programme and the aim and the objectives of the study session, emphasizing the importance of addressing youth homelessness through intercultural dialogue and inclusion. Following this, the participants were invited to reflect on their expectations, fears and contributions regarding the study session, and to discuss them in plenary.

Finally, participants had a first collaborative activity where they needed to build a bridge with different materials. This was useful to start a discussion about how groups should work together with shared goals, which then continued with a more formal group agreement with a set of rules for the rest of the week, agreed by consensus.

Monday afternoon: team-building and key concepts

The third session aimed to strengthen team cohesion and promote dialogue among participants. Building on the introductions and group agreement established earlier, participants engaged in an interactive team-building activity designed to develop trust, communication, decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving. The main task required participants to cross from one side of the "magic swamp" to the opposite side within a set time, encouraging planning, leadership, and support among peers. The debrief following the activity allowed participants to reflect on key aspects of group dynamics, including responsibility, roles, and cooperation, while also highlighting the value of diverse approaches and intercultural perspectives.

Finally, the last session of the day focused on the key terms that would underpin the work of the study session. Participants were divided into small groups through an interactive puzzle activity, which assigned each group one of the core concepts: homelessness; migrants, ethnic minorities and racialised people; (anti)discrimination; intercultural competencies; and intersectionality. Each group worked collaboratively to create a poster illustrating their own working definition of the term, alongside drawings, keywords and explanations reflecting both their professional experience and their cultural perspectives.



Afterwards, all posters were displayed in a gallery-style exhibition, allowing participants to circulate, read each other's work, and leave comments or questions using sticky notes. Groups then prepared a short creative presentation of their concept—using formats such as a jingle, news report, theatre sketch or short video—to further explore the diversity of interpretations and communication styles within the group.

To conclude, facilitators presented the reference definitions from the Council of Europe and the United Nations, encouraging participants to compare these frameworks with their own co-constructed definitions. This helped establish a shared glossary for the remainder of the study session and reinforced the importance of clarity and common understanding when addressing interculturality, discrimination, and youth homelessness.

Tuesday

Session 1 - Understanding realities and challenges

Following an initial day focused on team-building and establishing shared terminology, the second day began with a session designed to explore the diverse local contexts of participants. The aim was to better understand their working environments, the challenges they face, and the communities they support.

Participants first worked individually to create posters describing their realities, responding to guiding questions about their work, context, challenges, and sources of motivation. They then engaged in an exchange round, presenting their posters to one another and discussing their local contexts in short conversations. Afterwards, participants identified common themes and issues through a brief individual reflection exercise, which fed into a final plenary discussion. The session concluded by highlighting shared challenges, notable differences, and key insights that were relevant to shape the rest of the study session according to participants' needs.

Session 2 - Exploring the needs of young migrants and ethnic minorities experiencing homelessness

The goal of this session was to identify what are the specific situations faced by these groups, both within services and society at large. To do so, participants played a game which then served as a basis for a reflection on intersectionality, power relations, majority-minority groups, or access to resources and rights. The evaluation stressed the importance of considering the social structures in which migrants and ethnic minorities live, and how a human rights approach can overcome barriers to rights.

Session 3 - Human rights and the intersection with migration and homelessness

This session focused on exploring how human rights intersect with youth, migration, discrimination, and homelessness, and on introducing key human rights principles, instruments, and legislation relevant to youth homelessness and migration. The aim was to support participants in critically reflecting on their own practices and to strengthen their ability to apply rights-based approaches within their work.

Using a participatory methodology, the session opened with a short icebreaker before introducing the human rights framework and its core components, including fundamental principles, international instruments, and relevant Council of Europe recommendations, through an interactive presentation. Participants then worked in small groups on practical case studies, applying the framework to analyse real-life situations.

The session concluded with a plenary debrief and discussion, allowing the group to consolidate insights, share reflections, and draw practical conclusions on how to integrate rights-based approaches into their daily work.

Session 4 - Intercultural approach

With this session, participants could apply in practice how an intercultural approach is necessary to ensure the human rights of migrants or ethnic minorities in homelessness. Otherwise, universal or 'one-size-fits-all' solutions can risk not fulfilling them.

Firstly, facilitators gave theoretical inputs on assimilationism, multiculturalism and interculturalism. After this, participants were given several culture-related 'dilemmas' based on real scenarios of migrants and/or ethnic minorities in homelessness. They were asked to discuss in groups potential solutions to these dilemmas using an intercultural approach. At the end, they shared these solutions in plenary and received feedback from peers.



Wednesday: study visit

Participants had the chance to see in person how intercultural competencies were applied in a local service provider for people in homelessness. In particular, they visited an accommodation centre for Ukrainian refugees, almost all of them having Romani background. This service is run by BMSZKI, *Budapesti Módszertani Szociális Központ és Intézményei* (Budapest Methodological Centre of Social Policy and Its Institutions), the largest service provider in Budapest for people in homelessness and FEANTSA member organisation.

The activity included first a visit to the accommodation spaces and then a long conversation with the current and previous managers of the centre. They explained extensively the challenge to set up such a service in a very short time (only two days after Russia started the war in Ukraine), the successes and obstacles of social work and integration in Hungarian society of the people accommodated, the need for staff to develop their intercultural competencies, the usefulness of having Roma people among staff, or the many problems the service is having at the moment. These are caused by a lack of funding and overall political support from both the national government and city authorities. It was discussed whether the Council of Europe could play a bigger role in ensuring human rights on the ground, for example by providing stable financing to services working with marginalised groups, such as the one of the study visit.

Thursday

Session 1 - Intercultural Learning and Competences

The day started with a debriefing of the study visit held in the previous day. This provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on the challenges observed during the visit. Participants shared their thoughts and frustrations, with insights on Roma culture and family dynamics contributed by Klaudia as a young Roma facilitator, enriching the discussion with lived experience. Based on this reflection, a small group of participants expressed interest in drafting guidelines for future visits to homelessness service providers, [which can be accessed here](#).

The session continued with the experiential simulation game 'Barnga', designed to highlight hidden dynamics of intercultural misunderstanding and communication barriers. By placing participants in a scenario where rules vary and communication is restricted, the activity simulated the types of unspoken assumptions, cultural clashes, and frustrations that can arise in real-life intercultural interactions, particularly within service settings for marginalized and culturally diverse populations. The activity aimed to develop awareness of intercultural misunderstandings and to build competences for navigating cultural differences constructively, preparing participants for subsequent workshops on intercultural competencies, community building, and anti-discrimination practices.

Session 2 - Intercultural competencies – concepts & toolbox

This session built on the conceptual input from the morning by offering participants a practical toolbox to analyse and respond to intercultural challenges in their daily work. Through small-group discussions, participants worked on real intercultural incidents involving young migrants and racialised groups, identifying what had gone wrong in terms of attitudes, knowledge and skills. They examined how misunderstandings can arise from cultural differences, unequal

power relations or communication styles, and explored constructive strategies for social workers to respond more effectively.

After the group work, participants shared their insights in plenary, and facilitators introduced the “Intercultural Toolbox” framework, drawing on the Council of Europe’s Competence Framework for Democratic Culture and the models presented earlier. The discussion focused on how to diagnose intercultural issues and propose concrete improvements, helping participants translate theoretical concepts into practical tools to strengthen intercultural communication and promote more inclusive support services.

Session 3 - Guest lecture

We had the opportunity to count with the expertise of Mr Cafer Saatçi, Expert Human Rights Trainer at Amnesty International Bulgaria. He contributed with the guest lecture “Community building: from intercultural dialogue to advocating for human dignity”. Participants were provided with the basic tools and concepts of community-building, such as giving a prominent role to people from the communities or to ‘dissect’ problems into smaller parts.

The outcomes of the session were very useful for participants to identify what they could transfer from community-building to their local contexts, either in their work settings or in their communities more generally. They were also useful in promoting an understanding of social work that puts in the centre the voices of people who are supported.



Session 4 - Sharing good practices

This session was dedicated to identifying and analysing concrete good practices related to the themes of the study session, while offering participants the opportunity to share successful experiences from their own contexts. The goal was to foster cross-learning, strengthen collaboration, and encourage participants to consider how these practices could be adapted and integrated into their own realities.

The session began with a short introduction in which the concept of a “good practice” was clarified, including key characteristics and examples. Following this, participants were divided into small groups and given time to discuss and select a good practice from their own experience. Using guiding questions, they mapped out the practice’s purpose, target groups, methods, and potential avenues for support. Participants then engaged in two rounds of peer exchange, presenting their identified good practices to other groups and learning from the approaches shared by their peers.

At the end of the day, participants expressed that they felt they needed more time for exchanging between themselves and learning about good practices, which was addressed in the following day.

Friday

Session 1 - Advocacy theory, including CoE recommendations and other frameworks

This session introduced participants to the foundations of advocacy and its relevance for supporting young migrants, refugees, and racialised groups experiencing homelessness. Through an interactive discussion, participants explored what advocacy means in practice, the different levels at which it operates (local, national, and international), and the various forms it can take, such as lobbying, campaigning, strategic communication, or litigation. The facilitators linked these concepts to concrete human rights frameworks, including the Council of Europe Recommendations on young people’s access to rights and on equality for migrants and refugees, as well as the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and the UN Global Compact on Migration. These instruments were presented as practical tools that participants can use to strengthen their policy messages and engagement with authorities.

The session continued with a simulation exercise adapted from the Council of Europe’s *Compass* manual, in which participants acted as different societal actors and negotiated demands related to youth homelessness and migration. This activity highlighted the interdependence between stakeholders and the importance of building alliances to achieve systemic change. The final debrief connected the exercise back to real-life advocacy, emphasising how clear objectives, knowledge of relevant legal and policy frameworks, and strategic communication can enhance the impact of youth and social organisations working to defend housing rights.

Session 2 - Good practices (continued) and link to action plan

The activity began with a reflective walk around the room, allowing participants to review posters and flipcharts from the week, including the good practices discussed the previous day. This was followed by individual work on developing an organisational action plan, and then collaborative work in country groups to refine and discuss these plans.

The focus was on supporting participants to reflect on how to apply the knowledge acquired throughout the week to their own local contexts and services. They were encouraged to identify ways to make their organisations more inclusive of migrants and ethnic minorities, and to develop practical tools to advocate for change upon returning home.



Session 3 - Presentation of action plans

In the afternoon the session continued with participants presenting their action plans and receiving feedback from peers. In a first section, they merged into same-country groups to discuss how they can make their action plans more adjusted to the local/national context. In a second step, they were encouraged to exchange with peers they had not previously worked with, providing feedback and sharing ideas.

To support participants, guiding questions were provided and they were also able to rely on the information received in the morning session on Advocacy theory, incl. CoE recommendations, which has set the ground for achieving an understanding on the power of advocacy, the theoretical knowledge and the tools needed to conduct advocacy for realising migrants' and minority groups' rights.

Session 4 - Evaluation

In the last session of the week, participants evaluated their educational journey throughout the week by several means. First, they reflected on the hopes, expectations and fears they expressed in the first session of the week. Then, they were invited to position themselves in the space according to several prompts regarding contents, methods, results or logistics. This was then used to start a discussion with the big group about these topics. Finally, an online evaluation form was filled in. The main conclusions of this evaluation are summarised in section 9) of this report.

8) Follow-up activities

Several follow-up activities emerged organically from the study session as participants reflected on how to apply the tools and insights gained during the week. Through the development of individual action plans, participants identified concrete steps they intend to implement within their own organisations, such as introducing internal discussions or trainings on intercultural competences, reviewing service rules to improve cultural sensitivity, strengthening cooperation with local migrant or minority-led groups, or incorporating human-rights considerations more systematically into daily practice. These initiatives will be pursued independently by the participants according to their local contexts and capacities.

In addition, a group of participants expressed interest in collaboratively drafting a short set of guidelines for future study visits to homelessness service providers, motivated by reflections from the visit held during the programme. They planned to continue this work online after the study session, which concluded [in this set of recommendations](#).

Participants also showed willingness to stay connected informally to exchange ideas, follow each other's progress and maintain cooperation on themes such as interculturality, youth homelessness and anti-discrimination. These connections, initiated during the week, are expected to evolve according to participants' own initiatives and interests.

9) Reflections of the participants and conclusions

Main findings and conclusions

The study session confirmed that the need to strengthen advocacy in relation to the right to housing for migrants is a stringent one at local level, highlighting that young people with migrant or ethnic minority backgrounds experience homelessness differently from their peers. Consequently, tailored, intercultural approaches need to be developed in the services that support migrants and people belonging to ethnic minorities/racialised groups to access their rights.

Participants concluded that intersectionality and analysis of power relations are essential for effective support, and that intercultural competences are very useful practical tools for professionals. The session also highlighted the urgent need for increased investment in housing and support services, particularly in a context of widespread social-policy budget cuts across Europe.

Recommendations or statements

Participants stressed that European youth policy should prioritise inclusive, rights-based homelessness strategies grounded in interculturality, intersectionality and human rights. Policies should explicitly recognise the compounded exclusion faced by migrant and ethnic minority youth.

The Council of Europe, and especially the Youth Department, could further promote intercultural competences among youth workers, strengthen advocacy on housing rights, and continue producing resources on human rights and interculturality for practitioners. Supporting transnational peer-learning spaces was identified as particularly valuable.

Furthermore, following the visit to the homelessness service provider in Budapest, the participants made two suggestions. One suggestion was that for the organisation of such visits under the EYCB study session a set of safeguards must be formulated and communicated with the service prior to the visit, to ensure that this is done in a respectful manner, considerate to the conditions and the people residing in the location. Secondly, participants recommended that the CoE could play a stronger role in raising awareness and supporting the local services, who are confronted with restrictive policies and consequently, financial cuts, by strengthening its work on ending homelessness.

Learning points for participants

Participants reported a significantly deepened understanding of human rights, interculturality and cultural diversity, along with practical tools for applying these concepts in their daily work. They highlighted gaining new strategies, perspectives and concrete ideas to strengthen intercultural approaches within their organisations and communities. They gained new knowledge on Council of Europe tools and recommendations, and were introduced to community organising. The study visit deepened their understanding of homelessness conditions and reception systems in Hungary.

A strong sense of empowerment was also mentioned, as a result of engaging with a supportive European network of like-minded professionals facing similar challenges. Many emphasised increased motivation to implement change and recognised the importance of seeing homelessness through an international, systemic lens.

The study session also fostered confidence, inspiration and renewed commitment to advocacy, community-building and inclusive youth work. Overall, participants valued the exchange of best practices, shared experiences and the sense of not being alone in their struggles.

“I learned a lot about intercultural competence and how to implement this into my service back home for the benefit of our young people.”

“My experience of this Study Session was enriching and inspiring, as it deepened my understanding of how embracing cultural diversity can effectively address youth homelessness.”

“The study session allowed me to learn in a way most beneficial to me. The experience of sharing with each other was worth so much more than conventional styles of learning.”

“This was the first time I had the opportunity to understand the role of the Council of Europe and the relevance of its work in promoting human rights, inclusion, and equality for all young people.”

Overall evaluation

Participants valued the space to meet peers across Europe, reflect on the different practices and experiences, analyse power relations and work on real cases. The sense of community and the opportunity for critical reflection, which is normally rare in urgent frontline work, were considered major strengths.

Contribution of the session to the programme/mission of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe

The session directly contributed to the Youth Department's priorities by strengthening human rights education, advancing intercultural dialogue, and equipping participants with tools to combat discrimination and social exclusion. It also reinforced the Department's role in supporting vulnerable young people and promoting rights-based youth work across Europe.

10) Reflections of the facilitation team

The team assessed that all learning objectives were met to a lesser or larger extent, the programme being adequate to reach these goals. It was also underlined that overall, the learning experience for participants was very positive and contributed to their holistic development, including knowledge, skills and attitudes. Additionally, participants had an impactful intercultural learning process not only from covering this content in the programme, but also by reflecting on their own biases, stereotypes, tolerance of ambiguity or openness for change. From an organisational perspective, participants critically assessed whether rules and procedures in their workplaces are culturally sensitive, or the tools needed by professionals to better support young people in homelessness who have diverse cultural backgrounds.

It was also concluded that this study session was relevant for the work of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, in particular by contributing to its priority on young people's access to rights. The aim was precisely about how to better support young people with migrant or ethnic minority backgrounds so they can effectively access rights and services. It is fair to say that by the end of the study session, participants had better knowledge about the challenges faced by this group of young people and how intercultural competences can help in overcoming them.

In regard to the suggestions for improvement, the facilitation team underlined two points. Firstly, as underlined already in section 2) on the aims and objectives, by the end of the study session the team concluded the number of objectives was perhaps too ambitious. Given the complexity of the topics addressed and the available time, the programme was considered to be too packed. Participants expressed they could have benefitted from more time to go deeper into some sessions and to discuss more extensively with each other. This feedback from participants was appreciated by the facilitation team, who agreed with it overall.

Secondly, more time should have been allocated for the first two objectives: for participants to know better about each other's work contexts and the specific challenges of supporting young migrants or ethnic minorities. Both participants and facilitators agreed these objectives were adequately met, but more time would have allowed for richer discussions in the following parts of the programme, grounded on a more solid understanding of participants' experiences.

To conclude, this study session has proven valuable for the long-term objective of FEANTSA Youth -to end youth homelessness in Europe-, by providing tools that will help young people in homelessness with a faster and more sustainable transition into independent housing. In the short-term, the topics discussed are very relevant to help services that support an increasingly diverse homeless population in terms of migration or ethnic backgrounds.

Annexes

Annex A - Programme

Sunday, 12 October 2025

Arrival of participants

19:00 Dinner

21:00 Welcome evening

Monday, 13 October 2025

08:30 Registration desk with EYCB staff

09:30 Opening with introduction to study session – *to present the objectives, expectations and programme*

Formal welcome by Mr Marcos ANDRADE, deputy director of the EYCB

11:00 Break

11:30 “Who’s in the room” and group agreement – *to get to know each other and agree on rules for group work*

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Team building – *to start building trust among participants*

16:00 Break

16:30 Key concepts and terminology – *to develop a common understanding of relevant concepts which will be discussed during the week*

18:00 Reflection group

19:00 Dinner

21:00 Intercultural evening

Tuesday, 14 October 2025

09:30 Understanding realities and challenges – *to exchange about the local contexts of youth homelessness and migration between participants*

11:00 Break

11:30 Exploring the needs of young migrants and ethnic minorities experiencing homelessness – *to identify the specific needs of young migrants or ethnic minorities when they experience homelessness*

13:00 Lunch break

14:30 Human rights and the intersection with migration and homelessness – *to assess the situation of young migrants or ethnic minorities in homelessness with a human rights framework*

16:00 Break

16:30 Intercultural approach – *to learn about interculturality and how it can be useful in the work with young migrants or ethnic minorities experiencing homelessness*

18:00 Reflection group

19:00 Dinner

Wednesday, 15 October 2025

09:30 Study visit – Accommodation centre for Ukrainian refugees run by BMSZKI, *Budapesti Módszertani Szociális Központ és Intézményei* (Budapest Methodological Centre of Social Policy and Its Institutions)

13:00 Lunch break

Free afternoon

Dinner out in the city

Thursday, 16 October 2025

09:30 Experiential learning/simulation – *to internalise all the knowledge and skills acquired the last days*

11:00 Break

11:30 Intercultural competencies: concepts/toolbox – *to provide participants with a toolbox on incorporating intercultural competencies*

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Guest lecture from Mr Cafer SAATÇI, Expert Human Rights Trainer at Amnesty International Bulgaria – “Community building: from intercultural dialogue to advocating for human dignity”

16:00 Break

16:30 Sharing good practices - *to exchange among participants on interculturality and anti-discrimination practices in homeless service providers*

18:00 Reflection group

19:00 Dinner

Friday, 17 October 2025

09:30 Advocacy theory – *to learn the essentials of advocacy and how to use it*

11:00 Break

11:30 Good practices (continued) and link to action plan – *to prepare the next steps after leaving the study session and an individual action plan*

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Presentation of action plans - *to finalise the plan and have it peer-reviewed*

16:00 Break

16:30 Evaluation – *to take stock of the learnings during the week and evaluate the study session experience overall*

19:00 Dinner

21:00 Farewell party

Saturday, 18 October 2025

Departure of participants

Annex B - List of participants

Name and country of residence	Organisation
Albania / Albanie	
Bleona Lushi	Streheza Edlira Haxhiymeri
Pashako Xhafa	Streha Center
Kristiana Mano	SOS Villages Albania
Austria / Autriche	
Katharina Pirchmoser	lilawohnt
Rene Darwish	Neunerhaus
Katharina Watzl	Caritas Vienna
Christoph Maurer	Neunerhaus
Belgium / Belgique	
Lena Ghilain	CAW De Kempen
Lucie Baranès	SINGA Brussels
Antoine Leloup	Samusocial
Finland / Finlande	
Verna Nykänen	No Fixed Abode NGO
Katherine Cao	Blue Ribbon Foundation
Greece / Grece	
Anastasia Apostolakopoulou	Edra
Anna Maria Melissari	NKUA
Ireland / Irlande	
Chenyse Hanrahan	Focus
Cora Saxenberger	DePaul
Jack Archer	DePaul
Italy / Italie	
Ainoa Pérez	Alice Cooperativa Sociale
Netherlands / Pays-Bas	
Jet Huugen	Municipality of The Hague

Aleksandra Meyer	De Regenboog Groep
Julia Murray	Jimmy's / Housing First NL
Norway / Norvege	
Hannah Raanes-Holm	The Church City Mission Oslo
Poland / Pologne	
Lili Boglárka Somogyi	Podróżnych Ugościć
Portugal / Portugal	
Daniela Melo	CASA - Porto Delegation
Marisa Carocinho	CASA
Teresa Castro	Youth RISE / Kosmicare
Romania / Roumanie	
Andreea Goidea	University of Bucharest
Spain / Espagne	
Andrea Sánchez	San Juan de Dios Valencia
United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni	
Clive Shembe	Buckinghamshire Council
Robert Nimmon	Niacro
Joseph Coats	The Rock Trust
Kajal Reji	New Horizon Youth Centre
Kirsty McAleer	The Rock Trust
<i>Preparatory team</i>	
Razan Damlakhi	Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE)
Adam Mohamed Ariche	CONVIVE - Fundación cepaim
Simona Barbu	FEANTSA
Klaudia Veizaj	ternYpe International Roma Youth Network
<i>Lecturers</i>	
Cafer Saatçı	Amnesty International Bulgaria
<i>Course director</i>	
Sergio Pérez Barranco	FEANTSA

Educational advisor

Chiara Gullotta

Council of Europe

Ida Kreutzman

EYCB Educational Advisor

Zoe Zahorák

Project assistant

Annex C - List of references

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- United Nations. [“Migrants - Protect NOT Marginalize”](#) (last accessed 3 December 2025)
- United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing. [“Homelessness and human rights”](#) (last accessed 3 December 2025)

Annex D - Visibility

Firstly, the study session was announced in FEANTSA social media together with the call for applications. A website was made with all relevant information to apply, which was shared through several FEANTSA newsletters and with other organisations involved in migration work at EU level.

During the study session, updates of the programme were shared through FEANTSA social media in different posts. [A landing page on the FEANTSA website](#), with the main highlights and takeaways of the study session, was also made. A short summary featured in the November edition of FEANTSA monthly newsletter.

On another note, an interested participant took the initiative to make an episode of her podcast about this study session, and to draft an article to be published in national blogs and media. Other participants shared insights of the study session in their own social media channels, such as on LinkedIn.