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Press release

DESTITUTION AMONG MOBILE EU CITIZENS IN STOCKHOLM: REPORT ON LIFE CONDITIONS, ACCESS TO RIGHTS, AND BARRIERS THAT CREATE VULNERABILITIES

On Thursday December 16, FEANTSA and Crossroads Stockholms Stadsmission published together the report “Vulnerabilities of Stockholm’s destitute EU citizens” based on a survey conducted between December 2020 and March 2021 involving 51 individuals.¹ The respondents were mobile EU citizens living in destitution in Stockholm and utilising the services of Crossroads Stockholms Stadsmission.

The aim of the survey was to gather information about relevant issues that impact negatively the inclusion of EU citizens, such as challenges with housing conditions in Stockholm, the link between residence status and employment, individuals’ access to the labour market and welfare benefits, their knowledge of EU citizenship rights, and health status and access to healthcare. Finally, the analysis zooms in on the characteristics of Romanian (49%) and Polish (20%) citizens, as they were the most represented among the respondents.

Almost two thirds of those included in the survey were relatively young, between 18 and 49 years old. While 75% moved to Sweden to look for a job, only 8% had a legal employment at the time of the interview, which points to the challenges that jobseekers face when moving to Sweden. Indeed, the survey results show that issues with indirect discrimination as well as an inadequate implementation of the EU legislation denies destitute mobile EU citizens to obtain (and secure) residence in Sweden. Interestingly, **almost 60% of the interviewees have been residing for a long time in Sweden**: 29.5% of them for more than 5 years, and 29.5% between 1 and 5 years. Nevertheless, because of the reasons mentioned above, even if having lived for a long time in the country, 79% of the respondents could not obtain a social security number, which makes it almost impossible to access many public and private services. At the same time, most of the respondents could not access welfare benefits in Sweden, with 86% of them never having applied for this type of support.

Only 6% of the people surveyed had a legal rental contract at the time of the interview, while **69% of the respondents were roofless or had inadequate housing**. The remaining 31% (incl. the ones with a legal rental contract) were living in destitution and needed the support of services such as the ones from Stockholms Stadsmission (e.g.: services to meet basic needs, general assistance, or legal advice to help individuals secure their status and access their rights in Sweden).

The report concludes that there is an urgency in adopting and promoting more effective local, national and European policies to include vulnerable European citizens in the labour market. **To this end, it is recommended that Sweden takes the necessary steps to fully implement European law**. Moreover, especially in compliance with the principle of equal treatment and in order to promote the European

¹ The report can be retrieved [here](#) and has been produced in the framework of the [PRODEC](#) project (Protecting the Rights of Destitute Mobile EU citizens). This project is supported financially by [EPIM](#), the European Programme for Integration and Migration.

integration process, Sweden should remove the obstacles that prevent EU citizens from obtaining the Swedish social security number.

While this report is not representative for the entire population of destitute mobile EU citizens in Sweden, it does portray the living conditions often experienced by those attended at Crossroads in Stockholm, aiming to shed light on what are the main reasons why people are made vulnerable and homeless. Mobile EU citizens have become over-represented among the homeless populations in European cities², hence it is crucial to collect and disseminate more information about their living conditions in order to understand the reasons why they end up in these situations and to advocate for tailor-made policies for lifting them from homelessness.

Everyone should have the right to adequate housing, regardless of their country of origin or immigration status. The pandemic has proved that with adequate financing and political will, ensuring accommodation for all is possible. FEANTSA and Stockholms Stadsmission would like to contribute with this report to protecting the rights of destitute mobile EU citizens and to the fight for ending homelessness in Europe.

FEANTSA is the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless. We are the only European NGO focusing exclusively on the fight against homelessness. Our goal is an end to homelessness in Europe. FEANTSA works with over 120 members across 28 countries including 24 EU Member States.

Stockholms Stadsmission is a not-for-profit organization that works in various ways to contribute to a more just society, by advancing social inclusion and improved life quality of individuals. Stockholms Stadsmission aims to alleviate poverty and vulnerability. The mission is of a more humane society for all, where everyone has the power to shape their own lives, everyone has access to housing, education and employment.

Contacts

FEANTSA

Simona Barbu

Chaussée de Louvain 194, 1210 Bruxelles

simona.barbu@feantsa.org

+32 0478 43 90 39

<https://www.feantsa.org/>

Stockholms Stadsmission

Maurizio Dogliotti

Tullvaktsvägen 2, 115 56 Stockholm

maurizio.dogliotti@stadsmissionen.se

+46 08 – 684 232 51

<https://www.stadsmissionen.se/>

² FEANTSA (2018) [Effectively Tackling Homelessness Amongst Mobile EU Citizens: The Role of Homelessness Services, Cities, Member States and the EU](#)