

FEANTSA STATEMENT

11 May 2021

EU leaders commit to address homelessness FEANTSA's reaction to the Porto Social Summit

ABOUT FEANTSA

[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. We have over 120 member organisations from 28 countries. Our members are predominantly NGOs working with homeless people, but also include other stakeholders involved in the fight against homelessness such as public authorities, social housing providers, foundations, and research entities.

FEANTSA's reaction to the Porto Social Commitment

At the Porto Social Summit on the 8th of May, EU leaders adopted a set of commitments. The [document](#) agreed by Heads of State and Governments is in fact an endorsement of the current European Commission's social agenda, the Action Plan on the Pillar of Social Rights. Moreover, it is a unique political declaration of the European Council, interpreting and prioritising social policy agendas against the backdrop of the recovery.

FEANTSA welcomes leaders' commitment to "reducing inequalities, defending fair wages, fighting social exclusion and tackling poverty, taking on the objective of fighting child poverty and **addressing the risks of exclusion for particularly vulnerable social groups** such as the long-term unemployed, the elderly, persons with disabilities and the **homeless**".

The explicit dedication to address homelessness is of strategic importance. Especially, as there is a risk of a substantial increase in homelessness, which had already been rising in the majority of EU Member States preceding the pandemic.

With the Porto Declaration, the three main EU institutions have all expressed their intention to increase EU action for the fight against homelessness in recent months. The European Parliament has reiterated the urgency of the matter in a number of resolutions.¹ From the European

¹ European Parliament resolution on tackling homelessness rates in the EU (2020/2802(RSP)); European Parliament resolution on a strong social Europe for Just Transitions (2020/2084(INI)); European Parliament resolution on access to decent and affordable housing for all (2019/2187(INI)).

Commission's perspective, the link to the European Pillar of Social Rights is clear, as Principle 19 addresses the right to housing and providing assistance to the homeless. Furthermore, the Action Plan on the Pillar presented in March this year makes an explicit commitment to launch in Q2 2021 **the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness**.

In fact, the Porto Declaration is the strongest political soil for the European Platform to grow out of.

FEANTSA supports such strengthened EU-level cooperation and sees the potential of the European Platform in triggering progress on tackling homelessness in the EU Member States.

Civil society and social service providers will have an important role in Europe's social recovery. FEANTSA and its members are ready to play their part to support implementation, particularly in the framework of the upcoming European Platform on Combating Homelessness and in close cooperation with the EU institutions and other key stakeholders.

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