The European Platform on Combatting Homelessness

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Homelessness in the EU

- Lack of common legal/statistical definition
- Different monitoring and counting methodologies
- Difficult to assess the extent of the phenomenon in comparative terms
- Available data (FEANTSA, OECD) roughly 1 million homeless
- Rising tendencies among MS with exceptions
European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR)

- The EU compass for social fairness and inclusion
- Adopted in 2017 and EPSR Action Plan adopted in 2021
- **Principle 19** of EPSR calls for:
  - Access to **social housing** or **housing assistance** of good quality
  - right to appropriate assistance and protection **against forced eviction**.
  - Adequate **shelter and services** for social inclusion of homeless
The European Platform on Combatting Homelessness

• Launched by the Lisbon Declaration, signed in June 2021
• National governments, European institutions, civil society, social partners and cities (multilevel, multi-stakeholder community)
• A deliverable of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan
• A reference initiative and focal point for the battle against homelessness in the EU
The goals of the Lisbon Declaration

- no one sleeps rough (open spaces)
- no one lives in emergency or transitional accommodation longer than is required
- no one is discharged from any institution (e.g. prison, hospital, care facility) without an offer of appropriate housing
- evictions should be prevented
- no one is discriminated due to their homelessness status
A “housing first” policy approach

- The Platform promotes an **integrated “housing first” policy approach**, combining:
  - **Prevention**
  - **Stable housing solutions combined with socio-economic support services**
- Help homeless people maintain their tenancy, achieve stable living conditions, and avoid falling back into exclusion.
The work programme

- Work programme adopted in 2022 (2022-2024)
- Describes governance, activities and deliverables.
- Activities in 3 work strands:
  - Strengthen evidence on homelessness
  - Mutual learning activities
  - Access to finance
WS1: Monitoring and data collection

- **Overall objective**: strengthen analytical work and data collection to promote evidence-based policies
- Pilot project European Homelessness Count in 35 cities from 20 MS
- Policy Toolkit on homelessness and Monitoring framework drafted by OECD
- ESTAT EU-SILC ad-hoc module on housing difficulties
European Homelessness Count

- Two-year pilot project funded by the EC, lead by University of Leuven
- Aims:
  1. Identifying a common operational definition and collection methodology
  2. Testing it at city level in different Member States.
- Organisation and coordination of one common simultaneous European homelessness point-in-time count
- 35 cities from 20 MS (15 cities 1st year+ 20 cities 2nd year)
European Homelessness Count (2)

- The count will collect data on the numbers and characteristics of homeless people
- ETHOS Light categories 1-3 (optionally also 4-6)
- Street counts and administrative/service data
- Engagement and ownership by local authorities
- Learning Network of cities
- Currently, in the stage of shaping the common methodology – counts end of October
OECD Policy toolkit and Monitoring Framework

- **A Policy Toolkit** to provide evidence-based guidance to improve the measurement of and policy responses to homelessness.
- **A Monitoring Framework** which presents common approaches to collect data on homelessness, and identifies their key characteristics, strengths, limitations, and common implementation challenges.
- **Country Notes on homelessness data** which provide information on statistical definitions of homelessness, available data, collection methods and national strategies.
EU SILC ad-hoc module

- Ad-hoc module on well-being, material deprivation and housing difficulties
- The ad-hoc module’s section on housing difficulties looks at the experience of persons having housing difficulties during their lifetime.
- Experience of housing difficulties (duration, reason, exit)
- Run in 2023, results to be published in second half of 2024
WS2: Mutual learning

- **Overall objective**: support mutual learning of good practices for combatting homelessness and explore further the implementation of successful existing models
- 6 Mutual Learning Events organised the EC.
- Knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices
- Key elements of integrated, person-centered and housing-led homelessness strategies
- Mutual learning activities further evolved by the EPOCH Practice project, lead by FEANTSA and funded by EC action grant
- Social Innovation Call (EUR 15 MIL) to fund pilot projects.
WS 3: Access to finance

- **Overall objective:** Promote the use of EU funding (ESF+, ERDF) for measures aiming at eradicating homelessness.
- Working group on access to finance, co chaired with CEB
- Representatives from central governments, local authorities and NGO’s

**Components:**
- Discuss a strategic approach to optimise the use of finance (both repayable and nonrepayable forms of financing)
- Mapping of public and private funding resources for homelessness
- Work on a potential pipeline of projects promoting housing-led/Housing First approaches that could be financed by EU and/or public and private financing institutions
Thank you!