

Tackling the Housing Crisis in Europe: Towards an Integrated Policy on Homelessness

Integrating the European Knowledge



Wednesday 10th April 2013

The Silken Berlaymont Hotel
Brussels



Tackling the Housing Crisis in Europe: Towards an Integrated Policy on Homelessness

Overview

Homelessness has been rising steadily over the last five years and latest figures estimate that 4.1 million people are now homeless in Europe. Publishing its EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review in June 2012, the European Commission pointed to the impact of the recession on job losses, and with many people experiencing a decline in income, this has contributed to the growth in homelessness across the EU, with young people and foreign nationals being disproportionately affected. Consequently, with homelessness continuing to remain a significant problem, housing deprivation is an issue that urgently needs to be addressed alongside policies targeting social exclusion.

Acknowledging the homelessness problem, in September 2011 the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling for an EU homelessness strategy. With this resolution the European Parliament highlighted the importance of the key issues and the need for co-ordination and support of Member States' policies. Building on previous work at EU level, there is a need for an integrated approach to tackle homelessness and in July 2012, the European Council called on the Member States and the Commission to work on adequate schemes in order to address the problem.

With 2013 being the European Year of Citizens, it is appropriate that a focus is placed on the homeless, who are among the most marginalised in local communities. As such, the roundtable meeting in March between EU Ministers on homelessness agreed 6 principles that will inform such policy across Europe:

1. Develop and share knowledge and best practice
2. Core elements for response
3. Funding
4. Common Reference Framework
5. Research, innovation and data collection
6. Implementation and monitoring

Following the recent publication of European Commission's Social Investment Package and its strong focus on homelessness, this timely International Symposium will facilitate policy discussion to combat homelessness in Europe. Common understanding of the nature and causes of homelessness, and shared understanding of the potential solutions will contribute towards successful policy intervention. Co-operation between Member States can impact positively to the development of homelessness policies and delegates will have the opportunity to address the underlying issues around poverty, equality and social justice.

Public Policy Exchange welcomes the participation of all key partners, responsible authorities and stakeholders. The Symposium will support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in thought-provoking topical debate.

“ In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources.”

- Article 34, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Venue and Accommodation

**The Silken Berlaymont Hotel,
11-19, Boulevard Charlemagne
1000 Brussels - Belgium**

Through our partnership with the Silken Berlaymont Hotel we are pleased to be able to offer our delegates specially negotiated accommodation rates. These discounted room rates are subject to availability and are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.



Why Attend?

- ✓ **Discuss the next steps in tackling homelessness and creating an EU-wide homelessness strategy**
- ✓ **Analyse the role of social innovation as a solution to tackle housing deprivation**
- ✓ **Explore the ways of combining available funding sources to face current and future challenges**
- ✓ **Discuss the importance of local, national and international cooperation and the impact of strategies at all levels**

Who Should Attend?

- Housing Officials
- EU Officials
- Ministries of Employment and Social Affairs
- Social Services
- Employment Agencies
- Research Institutes
- Social Innovation Centres
- National Departments for Social and Family Affairs
- Lifelong Learning Institutes
- Social Advisers
- Voluntary Organisations
- Employment and Social Inclusion Institutes
- Labour Economy Research Centres
- Labour Market Institutes
- Academics
- European Social Organisational Science
- Consultancies
- European Employment Associations
- Social Partners
- Associations of Social Enterprises
- Physical and Social Rehabilitation Centres
- Employment Unions
- Vocational Training Centres
- Innovation and Personal Development Centres
- Special Employment Unions
- Children's and Youth Services
- Local, Regional and National Authorities
- Media Organisations
- Migration Organisations
- Equality and Human Rights Practitioners
- NGOs

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Programme

- 09:15** Registration and Morning Refreshments
- 10:00** Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks
Dr. Padraic Kenna, Lecturer, School of Law, National University of Ireland Galway, Housing Rights Watch (confirmed)
- 10:15** **Making the Case for a Pan-European Approach to Homelessness**
- Taking Stock of the Current Situation and Extent of the Problem
 - Addressing the Human, Social and Economic Costs of Housing Deprivation
 - Assessing the Advantages of an EU Framework
 - Future Actions and Policy Recommendations
- 10:55** **First Round of Discussions**
- 11:25** Morning Coffee Break
- 11:45** **Developing Local-Level Experience and Potential**
- Facilitating an EU Dialogue Between Local Authorities and Agencies
 - Combining a Range of Funding Sources to Promote a Shared and Effective Response
 - Increasing Cooperation on the Local, National and Transnational Levels
 - Future Perspectives and Recommendations
- 12:05** **Second Round of Discussions**
- 12:35** Networking Lunch
- 13:35** **Protecting and Recognising the Rights of Citizens**
- Towards an Adequate European Definition of Homelessness
 - Addressing the Issue of Stereotyping and Raising Awareness
 - Identifying and Targeting High Risk Groups – The Need for Further Data
 - Tackling the Criminalisation of Poverty
- 13:55** **Third Round of Discussions**
- 14:25** Afternoon Coffee Break
- 14:45** **Social Innovation to Combat Homelessness**
- Targeting a Housing-Led Approach
 - Providing Immediate Access to Supported Housing
 - Employment Integration and Social Support Models
 - Recommendations
- 15:25** **Fourth Round of Discussions**
- 15:55** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
- 16:10** Networking Reception
- 16:40** Close

Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice

Event Details

- Date:** Wednesday 10th April 2013
Time: 10:00am – 4:40pm
Venue: The Silken Berlaymont Hotel, Brussels



Speakers Include

- ✓ **Freek Spinnewijn**, Director, European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless, FEANTSA (confirmed)
- ✓ **Andrea Meszaros**, Policy Officer, Homelessness, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction, DG EMPL, European Commission (confirmed)
- ✓ **Liz Gosme**, Policy Officer, HABITACT (confirmed)
- ✓ **Pascal De Decker**, Professor, Faculty of Applied Engineering Sciences, Hogeschool Gent (invited)
- ✓ **Representative**, DG EMPL, European Commission (invited)



The current crisis has led to an unprecedented level of homelessness in the EU. This extreme and complex form of social exclusion can only be addressed through integrated policies combining for instance housing interventions with employment or education-related actions. The recently adopted Social Investment Package provides Member States with guidance on such integrated policies and calls for the best use to be made of the structural funds, notably the European Social Fund."

- Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Belgium, March 2013

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