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habitact news

HABITACT peer review 2016- Call for hosting city

The 2016 peer review will exceptionally take place in autumn rather than spring. Each year a different city hosts the peer review, so if your city is interested in being a host, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@habitact.eu.

Next HABITACT steering group

The steering group will next meet in Brussels, alongside the FEANTSA policy conference taking place on 9-11 June 2016. The steering group meeting will be part of the conference's "networking hotspots". As usual this will be an open meeting, so that any representatives from local authorities at the conference are welcome to join us. Themes on the agenda will include: HABITACT peer reviews, an update on EU developments which have an impact on the work of local policy-makers, and a discussion on various emerging policy challenges. Registration for the conference and steering group will open at the end of February

Seminar on homelessness among mobile EU citizens

On the 16th February 2016 from 10.30 to 13.30 the European Parliament will host a seminar on homelessness among mobile EU citizens co-chaired by Alfred Sant (S&D, Malta) and Sylvie Goulard (ALDE, France). The seminar will explore the factors that make mobile EU citizens vulnerable to homelessness, particularly with regard to precarious working conditions. It will build on experiences lived by individuals as reported by homeless service providers, as well as on the analysis of whether EU law – directive 2004/38 and related case law – foresee minimum safety guarantees and access to services for mobile EU citizens who are economically inactive. It will feature several perspectives on the theme: not only the institutional stakeholders and the service providers but also

the cities as one of the main actors of integration of mobile EU citizens and that have to find solutions for those who have not succeeded in their migration journey. The main objectives of the seminar are not only to raise the issue with regard to destitute mobile EU citizens and to analyse the link between precarious work and homelessness but also to have an exchange about possible short and long-term solutions involving, as far as possible, all relevant stakeholders. Very important will also be to understand to which extent each stakeholder – local and national authorities, EU institutions, service providers – can contribute to the implementation of adequate solutions.

The 2015 Urban Innovative Actions call was published the 15th December 2015!

The European Commission has launched the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) Initiative in order to identify and test new solutions which address issues related to sustainable urban development and are of relevance at Union level. The main aim of the UIA Initiative is therefore to provide urban authorities across Europe with space and resources to test bold and unproven ideas addressing interconnected challenges and experiment how these respond to the complexity of real life. Projects to be supported shall be innovative, of good quality, designed and implemented with the involvement of key stakeholders, result oriented and transferable.

Deadline: The Call is open from 15th of December 2015 until 31st of March 2016.

Events: The UIA Initiative holds a one-day event in Brussels on the 13th of January in order to support applicants wishing to apply to its 1st Call for Proposals. This seminar is the first of the four events that are going to be organised for applicants across Europe. You can already register to the event until the 07th of January [here](#).



local news

Berlin leads the way on affordable housing

Of Berlin's 3.5 million residents, around a quarter of a million live in social housing projects, spread across 125,000 apartments. Following a recent ruling by the Berlin Senate, the rent paid by these tenants of public housing will be directly linked to their earnings, meaning they cannot be priced out of the rental market. The city also has 280,000 apartments owned by four state property companies that will also be subject to the new rules. 30,000 new public housing units will also be built within the next 10 years. More [here](#).

Barcelona City Council manages the transfer of 200 homes from the SAREB

On 26 October, the Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, launched an ultimatum to [The Management Company for Assets Arising from the Banking Sector Reorganisation \(Sareb\)](#) in order to cede to the City Council 562 flats available in the city and empty for over two years. "If not for the good, it will be by the law", said Colau that day. Less than two months later, the so-called "bad bank" has given the Consistory 200 homes to be allocated to social rent. "It's a very important first step, but we are not satisfied; we need many more apartments in a situation of emergency housing", said the mayor at a press conference. More [here](#) (in Spanish).

Former homeless people congregate to help other homeless people in Lille

Former homeless people unearth private housing for other homeless people: the idea comes from Gilbert Pinteau, 12 years in the street and designer with two former fellow sufferers of the *Collective of SDF* (Collective of homeless people) in Lille. The collective of homeless seek accommodation within 400 euros/month and try to convince the owners to rent them to homeless people. "We have a lot of negative responses. But at first, we were at 80-90% of refusals, now, thanks to the network and word-of-mouth is about 40%", says Mr. Pinteau. The time is about three months to relocate a homeless, it is the best on the market", he jokes. The group tries to give a guarantee to the owners: "Every month, we call them to make sure they perceived rents and if unpaid, we will see the tenant to understand what went wrong", adds the co-founder of the collective. More [here](#) (in French).

Madrid City Council avoids 84 evictions for non-payment mortgage

Mortgage Brokerage Office of the City of Madrid has intervened in the strike of 229 eviction processes, of which 84 have already resulted in an agreement between the lender and the owners who had failed to pay the bills of their loans. After the first six months of this municipal service, Manuela Carmena's team made a "positive" assessment

of their results. However, once the initial contract concluded in January, the possibility of introducing changes to make it more efficient arose. Since last July, the Mortgage Office has opened a total of 703 cases, of which 229 have passed the stage of intermediation. "We believe we can still do more, especially in streamlining these processes we have in the pipeline [116 right now]," as explained by the delegate of Equity, Employment and Social Rights, Marta Higuera. More [here](#) (in Spanish).



International news

Bill De Blasio announces a nearly \$3 billion plan to help homeless people

New York City Mayor, Bill de Blasio, is preparing to introduce his most comprehensive homeless-services plan to date: nearly \$3 billion in funding for about 15,000 "supportive housing" units, apartments to help domestic abuse victims, veterans, drug addicts and those living on the street. The plan will consist of 7,500 newly constructed units and 7,500 scatter-site units. The city will pay roughly \$1 billion of the total \$2.6 billion in capital costs; all but \$380 million of which the city said was already budgeted in de Blasio's Housing New York plan, released in May 2014. The rest of the capital costs, which total about \$1.6 billion, will be paid for with a combination of low-income housing tax credits and private funding sources. More [here](#).

Introducing 'A Way Home'

A Way Home, the new national coalition dedicated to supporting communities and governments to prevent, reduce and end youth homelessness in Canada was officially launched at the end of October in Ottawa. A Way Home is dedicated to inspiring and facilitating change through promoting effective strategies that shift the focus from an emergency response, to promoting prevention (stopping young people from becoming homeless in the first place) and helping those who do become homeless move into housing with supports as rapidly as possible, in a safe and planned way. A key strength of A Way Home is that it is not just another autonomous national organization competing for resources and public attention. Rather, it is an outcome of active collaboration between a range of national partners, all of whom bring expertise, resources, national profile and members to support the work of A Way Home. More [here](#).



news from europe

SAVE THE DATE: FEANTSA Policy Conference 2016

The 2016 FEANTSA Policy Conference: **Leveraging the European Consensus to Win the Fight Against Homelessness** will take place in Brussels, Belgium on **9-11 June**. Full programme and registration coming soon.

Roma are being driven to homelessness across Europe

Roma across Europe are increasingly being subject to forced evictions and demolitions of their houses, leaving them homeless. These systematic forced evictions take place without early warning and normally without providing any alternative housing solutions. In the first half of 2015, nearly 4,000 Roma were forcibly evicted in France and similar cases are being copied throughout Europe. A selection of European NGOs have raised this issue and are now calling for concerted political will to act on this obvious discrimination. More [here](#).

European seminar "Preventing housing evictions in the European Union – data and best practices"

On the 16th October Brussels hosted the European seminar *Preventing housing evictions in the European Union – data and best practices*. It serves to present and review the findings of the first EU-wide study on evictions - the pilot project on *Promoting the protection of the right to housing – Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions*. The research was undertaken by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to support EU poverty reduction and social inclusion strategy through combatting homelessness, reducing housing vulnerability and promoting access to quality and efficient social services as underpinned by the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Social Investment Package. Among the various learnings of the study were the efficiency of the prevention strategy when it is implemented at an early stage, insisting on the fact that people in difficulties are not necessarily the one that perceive themselves as such, and, on the other hand, that effective strategy should include a global approach of the person's situation so as to address the different problems met.

Launch of first-ever report "An Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe" by Fondation Abbé Pierre and FEANTSA

The report, launched in Brussels on 19 November 2015 by [FEANTSA](#) and [Fondation Abbé Pierre](#), reveals that rising housing costs are disproportionately affecting the poor: with a growing number of people experiencing housing deprivation, arrears on rent, overcrowding, fuel poverty and homelessness. If you are interested to see where your country stands in the overall European ranking on housing exclusion, and to gain a more detailed insight into the situation in your country, [please visit FEANTSA website](#), to find the section providing national country profiles, as well as access to the report itself. We encourage you to circulate the report and your country's fiches to your members and media. [Click here to read an article about the report in the European press](#).

Housing First Guide Europe: an update

The last Advisory Meeting of the Housing First Guide Europe took place on the 20th November 2015. The final Guide text will be finalised by January 2016. Feantsa has already started the promotion of the Guide at Feantsa events mainly and would like to link the future promotion to other Housing First related events at national or local level. Feantsa has recently presented the Guide at a Roundtable on Housing First in England, organised by Feantsa

Member Homeless Link where policy makers and organisations were present. Please, [click here](#) to find the presentation. The launch event of the Housing First Guide will be on the 9th June in Brussels co-organised with Housing First Belgium and SPP- Integration Social, the Social Affairs Ministry in Belgium.

11th European Research Conference on "Homelessness and Social Work in Europe"

The research conference will take place the 23rd September 2016 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Registration & call for papers coming soon!

Update on the European Structural and Investment Funds

The FEAD Stakeholder meeting at EU level took place on Monday 16th November 2015 in Brussels. The FEAD Annual Implementation Reports 2014 were presented and discussed. 6,1 million people benefited from FEAD in 2014, thereof 70 000 homeless persons (1%). The Commission presented the new FEAD Platform for exchange of good practice. The main objective of the platform will be the provision of technical assistance to DG EMPL in order to encourage the promotion and sharing of good practices and support networking and capacity building on the most effective ways to provide non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons in the EU.

Open Urban Day

The [Open Urban Day](#), jointly organised by the [Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy](#) of the [European Commission](#), the [Brussels Capital-Region](#) and the [Committee of the Regions](#), took place in Brussels on 14th October during the ['13th European Week of Regions and Cities'](#). The annual event acts as a platform for practitioners, officials and experts from all over Europe interested in the **urban dimension of EU policies**.

EPSCO endorses call for homelessness to be addressed in the 2016 Annual Growth Survey

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) has endorsed the call for homelessness to be addressed within the European Commission's 2016 Annual Growth Survey (AGS). The EPSCO Council groups together national ministers responsible for social affairs and they have recommended that the AGS includes a call for housing policies which **"promote the reduction of homelessness and housing exclusion programmes."** They also stipulate that **"addressing homelessness needs sustainable solutions which move away from emergency crisis management."** The AGS sets out the broad EU economic priorities for the year to come and FEANTSA warmly welcomes the inclusion of homelessness as a key issue to address. [Click here to read more](#).

Call for papers: European Journal of Homelessness

The Editorial Team now invites contributions to [Volume 10.1 of the European Journal of Homelessness](#). They particularly welcome contributions that address family homelessness, the theme of FEANTSA [annual research conference in Dublin](#) on September 25, but also welcome contributions that address other dimensions of homelessness in Europe. To be considered for inclusion in this edition of the Journal, papers must be submitted to Professor Eoin O'Sullivan (tosullvn@tcd.ie) before 15 January 2016. More [here](#).

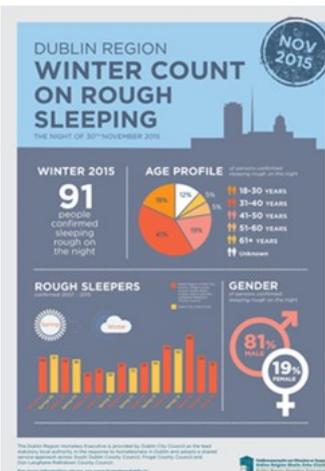


local trends

The number of homeless people in Barcelona reaches 2.800

The Network of Care for Homeless people (XAPSLL) has found in a [diagnostic study](#) that the number of homeless people has remained stable in recent years but with a slight upward trend (in 2014 were 2.700). There is not a profile of homeless people and nor either fall into this group only those living on the street. Also people living in settlements with poor housing conditions (land plot, industrial plants, etc.) or who are living in shelters are within the group of homeless people. Experts have warned, however, that the statistics exclude other situations directly linked to the housing emergency or bad housing conditions. The report also includes 434 people living in settlements (equipment or inadequate structures) and 1.672 homeless relocated in the care resources of XAPSLL. More [here](#) (in Spanish).

Fewer rough sleepers in Dublin, but more need emergency beds



The number of people sleeping rough in Dublin has fallen by 46 per cent since last winter, the latest figures show. However, the number of adults in emergency beds has increased by over 50 per cent in the same period, and by far higher numbers. A total of 91 people were found sleeping rough on the night of the annual winter rough-sleeper count, on November 30th. This compares with 168 sleeping rough in the 2014 winter count. However the number of

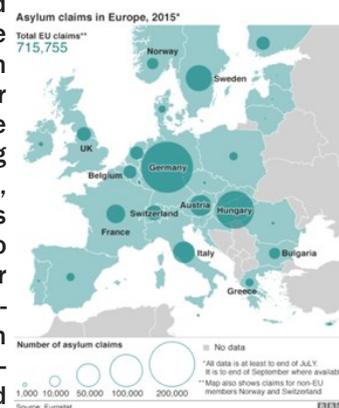
adults in emergency accommodation in Dublin has increased in the same period by 804, from 1,526 in November 2014 to 2,330 in September – an increase of 52 per cent. This does not include the 1,425 children also in emergency accommodation in Dublin, in October, an increase of 110 per cent on the 680 homeless children in October last year. More [here](#).

Child homelessness in Brighton and Hove four times higher than 2010

The number of children living in temporary accommodation in Brighton and Hove has increased by almost 300% since 2010. The dramatic rise, significantly above the national average, is mainly down to a change in the council's allocation policy, which sees homeless families placed in flats and homes for up to ten years rather than being given priority for social housing. But cuts in benefits such as the bedroom tax, coupled with a decrease in the availability of longer-term “temporary accommodation” leases means the service is coming under renewed pressure. More [here](#).

Refugee Crisis 2015: Who is coming to Europe, where they're headed and why

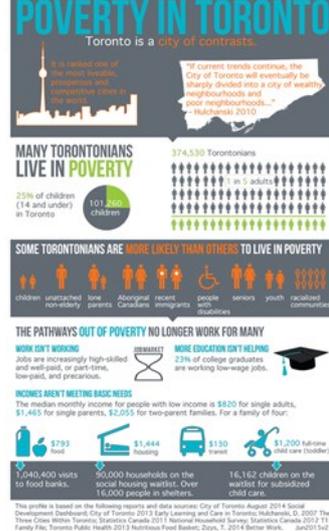
According to the [International Organisation for Migration](#) (IOM) more than 650,000 migrants are estimated to have arrived by sea so far this year. Although Germany has had the most asylum applications in 2015, with almost 222,000 by the end of August, the surge of people arriving in Hungary meant it had the highest in proportion to its population, as more migrants have tried to make the journey overland through Greece and the Western Balkans. It had 96,350 applications by the end of July. The conflict in Syria continues to be by far the biggest driver of the migration. But the ongoing violence in Afghanistan, abuses in Eritrea, as well as poverty in Kosovo are also leading people to look for new lives elsewhere. Tensions in the EU have been rising because of the disproportionate burden faced by some countries and [European leaders have met](#) to try to agree a plan for managing large numbers of [refugees](#). More [here](#).



International trends

Why does Toronto need a Poverty Reduction Strategy?

The [City of Toronto](#), has published an infographic that takes a look at the need for a poverty reduction strategy in Canada's largest city.



The infographic states that 25% of children in Toronto, and 1 in 5 Torontonians, live in poverty. Gender, race and social status are all factors that play a critical role in the determining who is poor. Aboriginal Canadians, recent immigrants, people with disabilities, seniors, youth and racialized communities are all more likely to live in poverty than others. The infographic also attests that the traditional pathways out of poverty, including employment and education, no longer work for many Torontonians. More [here](#).

