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HABITACT online policy bank

The HABITACT online policy bank is an exclusive service for HABITACT members. It contains information on many European cities' homeless strategies. Since 2009, the policy bank has been growing constantly and now contains more than 85 entries; the latest ones on Meran (Italy), Iași (Romania) and Arnhem (Netherlands). For more information, contact the HABITACT coordination unit at info@habitact.eu.

HABITACT steering group meeting

The next HABITACT steering group meeting will be held on Thursday 20 October – one day before the [European Conference on Quality of Social Services](#) – in Luxembourg City.

The actual steering group meeting will be held from 5-6pm. At the meeting, we will discuss relevant EU developments, cities' challenges in the fight against homelessness, as well as future HABITACT projects and events.

Before the steering group meeting, the cities have the possibility to visit homeless projects in Luxembourg City (e. g. the Luxembourg Train Company which is participating in the [Hope in Stations project](#)) guided by a social worker.

In addition to HABITACT members, the steering group meeting is also open to a limited number of delegates from other municipalities that are interested in European cooperation. For more information, please contact us at info@habitact.eu.

Housing First Europe kick-off meeting

The Housing First Europe project, set up by the [Danish National Board of Social Services](#) and the German research institute [GISS](#) with the help of [FEANTSA](#), has been accepted for funding through the European Union's [PROGRESS programme](#). It will test and evaluate socially innovative Housing First projects in five cities from a European perspective. A number of HABITACT cities are part of the HFE consortium.

The project's kick-off meeting will take place on 6-7 October in Copenhagen (Denmark). The following items will be on the agenda: the background of Housing First, the aims of the project, short presentations of the test and peer sites and an in-depth presentation of the Copenhagen project. For more information, please contact info@habitact.eu.

Ghent Peer Review

The next HABITACT Peer Review will be hosted by the [City of Ghent](#) (Belgium) on 8-9 March 2011. A presentation of Ghent's homeless policy and various site visits, during which participants can see the strategy in practice, will serve as basis for common ("peer") exchange on local homeless strategies, cities' challenges and best practices.

The main objective of Ghent's homeless policy is to reduce the number of homeless people significantly until 2013. In order to reach this goal, the municipality developed a housing-led action plan which is implemented through close cooperation of public and private service providers: the [OCMW](#) (Public Centre of Social Action), the outreach organisation [Straathoekwerk](#), the private welfare centre [CAW](#) and the [Huize Triest](#) (a project for young homeless people).

The work of the OCMW and the municipal housing department is first and foremost focused on prevention. In addition to that, Ghent is successfully working with social rental agencies, which rent dwellings from the private rental market and then sublet those to poor households (mostly former homeless individuals and families).

More about the Ghent model is available in the HABITACT online policy bank (see members' area of the HABITACT website). For practical information on the Ghent Peer Review and registrations contact info@habitact.eu.

HABITACT Partner Cities:

Amsterdam (NL), Århus (DK), Athens (GR), Bærum (NO), Copenhagen (DK), Dublin (IE), Esch-sur-Alzette (LU), Ghent (BE), Gothenburg (SE), Madrid (ES), Odense (DK), Venice (IT), Vitoria-Gasteiz (ES)

Go to the [website](#) for more info.

local news

Moscow establishes Samu Social

In recent years, the gap between wealthy and poor people in Russia has grown. As a result of that, the numbers of rough sleepers in Moscow and other Russian cities have been roaring.

In order to fight this development, homeless services are gradually established in Moscow. About five years ago, for example, a Samu Social was set up. It is modelled after its French pendant.

The international activities of the [French Samu Social](#) made this possible. The [Moscow Samu Social](#) mainly focuses on outreach work, trying to gain homeless peoples' confidence and directing them to appropriate services. So far, the Samu Social has been financed through private charity. It has not yet received any financial support from local authorities.

However, Xavier Emmanuelli, founder and honorary president of Samu Social France, signed a contract about carrying out training courses for social workers with the Municipality of Moscow this summer. Moreover, the municipality also opened public homeless shelters.

According to Emmanuelli this is a step in the right direction: "Moscow authorities are at a crossroads between 'old' repressive policies and a 'new' willingness to take responsibility and help people in need. The municipality has now understood that charity alone cannot solve the poverty problem." Read more [here](#) (in French).

Hamburg – Fence to keep away rough sleepers

After having placed huge stones under Central Hamburg's (Germany) Kersten-Miles-Bridge (point of cost: €100 000), Markus Schreiber, a social democrat and director of the local municipal office, has arranged for a €18 000-fence to be built around the bridge. The fence's aim is to prevent rough sleepers from seeking shelter under the bridge. According to Markus Schreiber, this was his reaction to growing complaints from people living in the neighbourhood. The stones were placed under the bridge to restore the historic ambiance of Central Hamburg.

However, Schreiber's policy met with scorching criticism from left politicians and social NGOs. They argue that building a fence like this to keep rough sleepers away is repressive. Moreover, according to the critics, the fence is interfering with the peoples' right to stay in public space.

Tax payers and voters, too, expressed concern about how their tax money is being spent. Money for which one could easily create a dozen shelter places. Some people placed funeral wreaths on the fence to mourn "the death of Hamburg's social conscience".

Hamburg's street paper [Hinz&Kunzt](#) calls on Hamburg's Mayor to intervene and tear down the fence. For more information, click [here](#) (in German).

Dublin Homeless Agency now Dublin Region Homeless Executive

In the framework of a reconfiguration of homeless services, which aims to ensure quality of services and progress towards the vision of ending homelessness, the Dublin Homeless Agency was transformed into the Dublin Region Homeless Executive in July 2011.

The DRHE is coordinated by [Dublin City Council](#), the lead authority, in cooperation with [South Dublin County Council](#), [Fingal County Council](#) and [Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council](#). It is responsible for supporting the Dublin Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum and the Statutory Management Group through the development of relevant strategies and actions like the rollout of the [Pathway Accommodation Support System](#) (an online emergency bed management tool).

The practical experiences of stakeholders and service providers (Dublin local authorities, the [Dublin Health Service Executive](#) and a number of NGOs), who work directly with service users, will support the work of the DRHE.

Representatives of the Dublin Local Authorities and the Health Service Executive are forming the Statutory Management Group, who figures as link between the DRHE and the Consultative Forum and makes recommendations to the Executive and other statutory bodies.

For more information, click [here](#).

Las Palmas de Cran Canaria

The [City of Las Palmas](#) (Spain) and the [Canary Islands Caritas](#) have signed a cooperation agreement. In 2011, the Municipality's Social Department will support five new Caritas homeless projects with €431 000 in 2011:

~ Barranco: A youth project offering job training in close cooperation with the municipal labour integration department.

~ The employment and vocational guidance programme: A project aiming to increase employability for adults at risk of social exclusion through special workshops and counselling.

~ The children's programme: A project aiming to fight social exclusion of children through playful and educational activities. The main goal is to teach the children social competence and help them cope with school.

~ Acerina: A social integration project for unemployed and marginalised women. The focus lies on boosting the clients' personal autonomy and social development.

~ Support and promotion with homeless people: A project helping those who have problems affording food, hygiene and health care. Support is offered by a multidisciplinary team of experts. The programme also aims to support and train social workers in all municipal districts through awareness raising campaigns. Read more [here](#) (in Spanish).

Geneva – Architecture projects to keep homeless people away from Central Station

As an answer to complaints on cleanliness and safety in the surroundings of Cornavin Railway Station, the [City of Geneva](#) (Switzerland) has adopted a rather repressive approach to homeless people. Police and public transport companies try to keep homeless people, drug users and beggars from coming to close to public transport stations. Moreover, the City of Geneva now announced its plans to invest into urban architectural projects to help change the image of the quarter. As an example, €7 million will be used for turning Square Chantepoulet and Square Pradier into pedestrian precincts.

However, many people have voiced criticism of this new policy. Sandro Cattacin, Professor of Urban Sociology at the University of Geneva, highlights that architectural transformation will not have an impact on social issues. Of course, the creation of lighter and wider spaces might lead to a decrease in petty crimes, but in order to tackle underlying social issues another approach will be needed.

Local NGOs, for example the injection centre Quai 9, underline the importance of developing more accommodation services for socially excluded and homeless people. According to social workers, for the most destitute homeless people police interventions constitute a kind of social interaction. These people are unlikely to leave the quarter because of architectural changes and repressive policies. However, tackling the issue of social exclusion should be the aim of the municipality. Read more [here](#) (in French).

Many other train stations across Europe are faced with similar problems as Cornavin Railway Station. As a result, train stations in the “Zoologischer Garten” Station in Berlin, Brussels’s Central Station, Paris’ North Station and Roma Termini Station have set up the [Hope in Stations](#) project, which aims to strengthen the integration of homeless services at and around train stations through better cooperation with different stakeholders.

Purmerend – Rooms and Chances

The Dutch [Municipality of Purmerend](#) has developed the “[Rooms and Chances](#)” youth homeless project, together with the [Wooncompagnie](#) Foundation, the [Algemeen Opvangcentrum Foundation](#) (AOP) and [Clup Welzijnswerk](#).

“Rooms and Changes” (“Kamers met kansen”) is based on the French concept “Foyers de Jeunes Travailleurs”, where young people can live and receive support on their way to independence.

This enables them to focus their energy and build up a future. The Dutch programme targets 18 to 25 years old people, who can live in a residence and receive theoretical and practical training. Projects like this exist in [many Dutch municipalities](#).

The Casa24 project in Purmerend will start on 1 October 2011. There will be 24 places in shared flats and single apartments as well as flats for singles with children. The young people will receive support through “living coaches” from the municipal social services, who have their offices in the building.

Thijs Duyens, who is working with school drop-outs in the municipality, says: “We might not have as many young rough sleepers as in bigger cities, but there are many hidden homeless in Purmerend, moving from place to place. These are the ones we are trying to help with our project.” Read more [here](#) (in Dutch).

Gdansk wins quality award

The Municipal Centre for Social Assistance in [Gdansk](#) is the only one in Poland having implemented a quality management system for social services.

The main aims are: increasing the effectiveness of social services; placing the customer in the centre of services; and identifying bottlenecks in order to develop new innovative services.

For this, the Municipality of Gdansk has based its system on international standards and is working closely with Polish and international NGOs. In future, the municipality aims to focus more on the prevention of social exclusion.

For its work, the municipality recently won the title Municipal Centre for Social Assistance of the Year 2011 and the Gold Emblem for Quality 2011.

One of the main projects of the municipality is a family housing project called “Housing is urgent”. They build seven houses with gardens adapted for temporary accommodation. Three to four families, mostly homeless mothers with children or people with disabilities, can stay in one house at the same time. During their stay, they are followed by social workers from various NGOs and receive financial guidance and employment support. The municipality works according to the principle of triangular contracting, between the municipality, the client and the NGOs. Persons who have completed the first stage will get a permanent job at a Gdansk Social Cooperative (e. g. in the production of wood or textiles). Read more [here](#) (in Polish).

news from europe

European Journal on Homelessness

Volume 5 of the European Journal on Homelessness has been published this September. The special edition contains five papers, originally presented at [FEANTSA’s 2010 Research Conference](#) in Budapest, which are seeking to shed light on the changed European context of homeless-

ness and housing exclusion.

One article, by Magdalena Mostowska, explores access to services for Polish homeless migrants sleeping rough in Brussels and Oslo, comparing the situation, policy and services of the two cities. The journal can be downloaded [here](#). For ordering a printed copy, please contact [Odette Peinado](#).

Two new FEANTSA toolkits

In September 2011 [FEANTSA](#) published two toolkits aimed at homeless service providers:

- The *Employability Starter Kit* aims to raise awareness about the positive role that employment-related activities can play for the inclusion of people experiencing homelessness. The toolkit provides a checklist of issues that have to be considered before and during the development of an employability project and contains local best practices.

- The *Housing Practitioners' Toolkit* is aimed at housing practitioners who provide housing to formerly homeless people and to social service providers working on housing projects. It contains many practical examples and advice on how to manage housing services for homeless people.

Both toolkits can be downloaded in English and French on the [FEANTSA webpage](#).

For more information, please contact info@habitact.eu.

European Parliament Resolution on EU Homeless Strategy

Coordinated by the [Belgian Presidency of the EU Council](#), the [European Commission](#) and [FEANTSA](#), the [European Consensus Conference on Homelessness](#) took place in Brussels in December 2010.

In their recommendations, the Jury highlights the need for robust homeless data and clear EU guidelines and urges the European Commission to develop a European Homeless Strategy.

The [European Parliament](#) has made it its priority to follow-up the Consensus Conference recommendations and the [EP Written Declaration on an EU Homelessness Strategy](#) adopted in 2010.

On 13 September 2011, the European Parliament held a press conference in advance of an [oral question for debate](#) (O-000153/2011) to the Commission on an EU homelessness strategy.

During the plenary session held afterwards, the Commission responded to the Parliament on what progress has been made to develop an EU homelessness strategy.

As a result, on 14 September 2011, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution on an EU homelessness strategy](#) (B7-0475/2011), sending out a strong political message and urging the EU institutions to develop a framework to support the national, regional and local authorities' fight against this urgent problem.

The motion for the resolution was presented by Pervenche Berès (S&D, France) and Karima Delli (Greens/EFA, France) on behalf of the EP Employment and Social Affairs Committee.

Please read the Resolution [here](#).

Annual Convention of the European Platform Against Poverty

On 17 and 18 October the First Annual Convention of the [European Platform Against Poverty](#) will be held in Krakow (Poland). It is organised by the [European Commission](#) together with the [Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#).

The Convention, to which about 350 participants are expected, aims to give visibility to the European Platform Against Poverty and to build a support and cooperation network between stakeholders from different levels.

The Convention will review the progress made towards the EU2020 headline target of reducing poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million people until 2020 and the implementation of the EPAP. After a debate of the National Reform Programmes and the European Commission's work on poverty and social exclusion, Convention participants will be able to work out suggestions for future actions in five parallel thematic sessions. For more information, click [here](#).

European Research Conference on Migration and Homelessness

On 16 September 2011 FEANTSA's 6th Annual European Research Conference on "Homelessness, Migration and Demographic Change in Europe" was held in Pisa (Italy). The conference has been co-organised by [FEANTSA's European Observatory on Homelessness](#); the [ENHR Working Group on Welfare Policy, Homelessness and Social Exclusion](#); [fio.PSD](#); and the [Faculty of Political Science of the University of Pisa](#).

The one-day event, chaired by Volker Busch-Geertsema from the European Observatory on Homelessness, was divided into a plenary session and six parallel afternoon workshops, during which researchers presented their contributions on a variety of different issues, e. g. new challenges connected with the issue of migration, risks and vulnerabilities of homeless migrants, new perspectives on homelessness in Europe, the old and new Mediterranean Model, social and legal perspectives, and gender dimensions.

Many local examples were presented in the workshops: Jenny Edwards (UK) presented a study on Street Homelessness among Central and Eastern Europeans in London, Jeanett Schmidt (DK) presented a study on Undocumented West African Migrants living as Homeless in Copenhagen, and Vita Casavola and Emanuela Iacono (IT) presented the [DIOGENE project](#) which is an integrated approach to homelessness and mental illness in Milan.

All the conference presentations can now be downloaded at the [FEANTSA webpage](#).

Homeless Link – Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping Toolkit

In September 2011, Homeless Link published a toolkit on “Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping”. It is mainly designed to support English local authorities to implement the Government guidance “Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping: a new approach” which has been published in September 2010.

However, the toolkit can be of good use for any other European local authority aiming to estimate or count the numbers of rough sleepers on their territory.

It includes advice on how local authorities can estimate the numbers of rough sleepers through consulting and gathering information from local partners.

Furthermore, it explains ways to conduct a thorough rough sleeper’s count.

The toolkit contains a health and safety checklist, a model rough sleeping count form and a model rough sleeping statistics form.

For more information click [here](#).

local trends

Homeless 2011 in Sweden

On 22 September 2011, the Swedish City Mission published the yearly report on homelessness in Sweden called “Hemlös 2011”.

The report analyses the success of the Swedish National Strategy which ended in December 2009 and on which the work on national level has now been discontinued.

Chapter 5 of the report looks at the work and challenges of Swedish municipalities. Important findings include: 81 out of 166 Swedish municipalities have a “roof-over-the-head”-guarantee; 67 Swedish municipalities do regular homeless counts and surveys; 17% of the municipalities express concerns over an increase of young homeless people (e. g. Norrköping and Karlskrona); and 19% of the municipalities report rising numbers of homeless families with children (e. g. Uppsala and Eskilstuna).

Chapter 6 of the report focuses on the rise of young homeless people in Stockholm and on challenges connected to that issue: In 2010, 122 children were evicted in Stockholm Region which constitutes a rise of 13% compared to 2009; homeless families with children often have to stay in temporary accommodation for a long time (49% had to wait for more than ten months before a temporary solution could be found); the Swedish social law makes it impossible for young people between 18 and 20 to finish secondary school since young people over 18 only receive social aid, if they are available for the job market. Read the report [here](#) (in Swedish).

Athens – rise in homelessness

According to various articles, homelessness in Greek municipalities is roaring since the aggravation of the economic crisis. Alone in Athens homelessness has risen by 25% last year. According to [Klimaka](#), a Greek homeless NGO, the number of homeless people in Athens was an estimated 20 000 at the end of 2010.

At the same time, the profile of homeless people is slowly changing. The “new” homeless usually lost their house because of the debt crisis and not because of other issues like domestic violence, substance abuse problems or mental health problems. Read more [here](#).

Link between mental health problems and rough sleeping

The report “Understanding Complex Lives”, based on a survey of 1286 homeless people and 452 follow-up interviews, shows the extent of the overlap between homelessness, mental health problems, drug and alcohol dependency, street activities like begging, sex work, shop-lifting and the experience of institutions such as prisons.

The report was carried out by researchers from the [Economic and Social Research Council](#), the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), [Homeless Link](#) and the [Tenants Services Authority](#).

Key findings of the study include: there is a strong overlap between rough sleeping and other support needs; “visible” forms of homelessness commonly happen after contact with non-housing agencies such as drug agencies; many street homeless have a past of traumatic childhood experiences; workers of homelessness and housing support agencies often feel isolated trying to deal with those complex problems; people with complex needs (referred to as multiple exclusion homeless people) often fall through the cracks in service provision.

The author of “Understanding Complex Lives”, Theresa McDonagh, says that the main aim of the study was to highlight the need for health, housing and social service workers to cooperate in order to successfully help their clients.

At the end of the report, one can find useful suggestions for local practitioners for successful prevention or reinsertion work:

1. In order to successfully prevent people from becoming homeless, it is important to recognise underlying childhood experiences and to understand the critical intervention points.
2. In order to successfully help an already homeless person, it is important to recognise and address acute mental distress and the reasons for it, to ensure better access to coordinated support, to provide learning opportunities for homeless workers and to reinforce the client’s social network. Read more [here](#).

Granada success thanks to HOME04

The European [HOME04 project](#) ran from February 2010 until June 2011 and was financed through the [People-programme](#) of the [European Regional Development Fund](#). It aimed to promote the social inclusion of homeless people through the use of information technology and modern communication tools. The lead partner was the Region of Andalusia; the other project partners were the Cities of Granada and Sevilla, the City of Venice and the Stockholm Employment Agency.

According to an article recently published in a Granada newspaper, the project was a success for Granada. With the budget of €20 518, the Andalusian municipality managed to optimise its resources.

It created a local expert group on homelessness, developed a unified database and trained homeless people in the use of new technologies. This way, 24 former rough sleepers were able to leave the streets for good. Now 16 of them live in flats and four even have found work.

Read more about Granada and HOME04 [here](#) (in Spanish).

focus: sport and social inclusion

An attachment of the [Amsterdam Treaty](#) (1997), the declaration 29, highlights “the social significance of sport, in particular its role in forging identity and bringing people together”. Ten years later, the [European Commission](#) published a [White Paper on Sport](#), in [chapter 2.5](#) of which it also underlines the importance of sport as a tool for social inclusion of “the underprivileged or groups at risk of or facing discrimination”.

In recent years; many local, regional and national authorities as well as NGOs have developed sport projects to facilitate the integration of marginalised groups, including homeless people.

Inspired by the Homeless World Cup 2011, which was held in Paris, we decided to dedicate this focus to sport projects for homeless people. The projects presented below illustrate well the beneficial impact exercise can have for homeless people on various levels (health, empowerment and social inclusion).

International initiatives

Just about one month ago, Scotland won the Football World Cup – the *Homeless Football World Cup*. This initiative was launched in 2003, when the tournament was hosted by the City of Graz (Austria). Since, the Homeless World Cup has travelled from Gothenburg to Rio de Janeiro. It has shown how sports can be used as a tool to empower homeless people. In August 2011 the event was held in Paris, organised by the French homeless sports NGO [Remis en jeu](#). >> [Details](#)

Another international competition for marginalised people are the Social Inclusion Games. They are held every two years; the last Games have been organised in 2010 in the Netherlands by [Federatie Opvang](#); [Humanitas Onder Dak](#); the [Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport](#); the [Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment](#); [Domijn](#); the [Municipality of Enschede](#); the [Municipality of Hengelo](#); the [Province of Overijssel](#); the [Humanitas Foundation](#) and the [University of Twente](#). The Social Inclusion Games cover a variety of different (often team) sports, from darts to athletics. >> [Details](#)

International events like The Homeless Football World Cup attract the attention of the media and thus contribute to raising awareness for the issue of homelessness. Both initiatives are also supported by FEANTSA.

National, regional and local projects

In recent years, various homeless sport projects have been set up across Europe. In the following paragraph, we will present national homeless sport projects and local pilots.

~ The Netherlands, Rotterdam: In 2010, the Dutch NGO [Federatie Opvang](#), one of the coordinators of the Social Inclusion Games 2010, set up the national homeless sport project [MeeDoen](#). [MeeDoen](#) is a three-year-project and receives financial support from the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports. The project aims to facilitate the social inclusion of homeless people and victims of domestic violence. MeeDoen has helped set up various local pilot projects. As an example, in 2010, the City of Rotterdam launched the programme “Sport en Bewegen”. Four organisations, the [Salvation Army](#), the [Arosa Foundation](#), the Social Service Centre and the [Ontmoeting Foundation](#) jointly coordinate the project. Together with the [City of Rotterdam](#) they organise several sports events a year, where homeless people can try out various sports instructed by professional trainers. Especially self-defence classes have been a success in the work with victims of domestic violence. >> [More here](#) (in Dutch).

~ France, Lille: Like Federatie Opvang in the Netherlands, the [French Salvation Army](#) is carrying out a country-wide project called *Bougeons ensemble*. Since 2010, the NGO has been organising regional and local sports days, where socially excluded people can participate in various sports. Contrary to MeeDoen, Bougeons ensemble is also able to the general public, a fact which, according to the Salvation Army, contributed to decreasing the general public's fear of contact with homeless people. Like MeeDoen, Bougeons ensemble, launched local pilots and is working closely with French municipalities. The local shelter in Lille, for example, carries out a sport programme, including activities from ping pong to football, in order to support homeless people to find their way back into a normal life. The importance of sports as a tool for social inclusion is also highlighted in the social strategy of the [Municipality of Lille](#), which provides the necessary facilities to the Salvation Army. In an interview with HABITACT, the director of the Salvation Army shelter, Bruno Guibout, highlighted the positive impact sports can have on homeless peoples' lives: exercise boosts physical and mental health, enables social contact and last but not least helps formerly homeless people to better integrate in their district. >> [Details](#) (in French)

~ United Kingdom, Cambridge: Since about two years, the English NGO [Homeless Link](#) supports local sport projects through their programme [Aiming High – Sport for All](#). For example, [Cambridge City Council](#) has set up a project called “Hopebridge and Invigorate”, in the framework of which they offer a variety of activities from swimming to tai chi, some of which for a small participation fee. The sessions are facilitated by professional trainers. >> For more information, click [here](#).

Research on sports and social exclusion

As the projects above show, sports have been discovered as a tool for social inclusion quite recently. Therefore the subject slowly also begins to interest researchers.

~ On 28 and 29 June 2011, the German [University of Augsburg](#) hosted a research conference on the subject of sport and social inclusion. The event highlighted the importance of sport as a tool for social inclusion of marginalised groups. Many practical examples have been presented at the conference. Key questions of the conference included the benefits of physical exercise, but also the challenges social workers and municipalities meet when setting up projects of this kind. Speakers underlined that, in order to successfully carry out sport projects, social workers have to be trained accordingly. >> For downloading the presentations of the conference, please click [here](#) (in German).

~ In the framework of the national three-year-programme [Aiming High](#), [Homeless Link](#) organises free regional sport events and seminars, at which social workers have the possibility to exchange on best practices. >> [Details](#)

Homeless Link carries out research on sports and homelessness, in cooperation with the UK charity [Groundswell](#). Groundswell is collecting feedback from project participants and carries out individual case studies, in order to illustrate the impact sports can have on homeless pathways. One finding is that, while sports is beneficial for all homeless people, the attitudes of female and male project participants differ: While men see sport as central to their lives, women initially do not display much faith that sport can contribute positively to their situation. >> Some of the research can already be downloaded [here](#).

The examples above show that sports and exercise can be used as an effective tool for social inclusion. The Homeless Link/Groundswell study shows how varied the benefits of exercise can be: it can lead to improved relationships, it helps to acquire team-building skills, it positively impacts health and nutrition and constitutes a diversion from anti-social activities.



For any reactions/comments/contributions to the e-bulletin, please contact us at info@habitact.eu