

Report on UNECE Workshop on Homelessness Oslo 18th and 19th of May 2009

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Programme

Surveys of homelessness

Report on the homelessness situation in Europe

National and local challenges and policies

National strategies to combat homelessness

Recommendation to UNECE



Participants

20 countries from all parts of Europe

47 participants included representation of
Feantsa and UNECE secretariat



Report on homelessness in the UNECE

- A questionnaire sent to all member countries
 - ▣ Problems in finding the correct authorities
- 15 countries answered
 - ▣ 3 outside the EU
 - ▣ Some "new" members from Eastern Europe
 - ▣ Some Western European countries



Definition

Some countries do not have a definition of Homelessness

Some countries use rooflessness and living on the street or in other public spaces

Some countries use homelessness about living institutionnally or informally without having a rental agreement or property of their own

Some countries have official definition which includes rooflessness, temporary housing also temporary housing with relatives and friends.



Ethos typology

Recommended by the european Homelessness network – Feantsa.

In addition to homelessness it includes unadequate housing.



Homelessness data

Some countries have undertake a survey process every few years.

Countries in Eastern Europe seem to be weaker on statistical information around homelessness



Causes of homelessness

Structural causes

- high costs of living
- lack of employment opportunities
- lack of suitable and affordable housing

Individual reasons

- relationship issues
- health difficulties
- addiction
- financial problems
- criminal record



Homelessness strategies

FRAMEWORK:

- Homelessness prevention
- Reduction in length of time experiencing homelessness
- Avoid repeated homelessness



Role of UNECE

Expectations in the context of furthering the exchange of experience and good practice

Assistance with conferences

Assistance in training of experts

New conferences

Most countries shy away from putting themselves forward to organise.

But they want follow-up conferences.



Conclusions

Homeless is an issue of **growing concern** for UNECE member states

Homelessness affects an increasing **variety of people**

Lack of knowledge on the scope and nature of the problem is a recurrent problem

Structural causes seem to become increasingly important

Public authorities feel increasingly **responsible**

No country managed to **solve** homelessness

Most comprehensive homeless policies are **recent**

→ European/transnational cooperation can play an important role in design and implementation of homelessness policies

Recommandation from the delegates

UNECE should continue working in cooperation with other European organisations.

UN Habitat

Feantsa

Cecodas



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