



**UNECE**

# **No one should sleep on a newspaper**

## **RIGHT TO HOUSING HOMELESS NO MORE**

**PANEL EVENT**

**3 OCTOBER 2018 | 2 PM  
PALAIS DES NATIONS  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

# WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

Homelessness is the condition of people without a permanent dwelling as they are unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure and adequate housing. There is no universal definition of homelessness. Hence, the term may include people whose primary night-time residence is in a homeless shelter, a domestic violence shelter, long-term residence in a motel, a vehicle, squatting, cardboard boxes, a tent city, tarpaulins, shack/structures made of discarded building materials or other ad hoc housing situations.

Homelessness is an epidemic that affects developing and developed states. The last global survey on homelessness was conducted by the United Nations in 2005 in which over 100 million people were said to be homeless. Homelessness disproportionately affects vulnerable populations including women and children.



**Over 100 million people  
around the globe may be  
homeless\***



**Approximately 2 % of the  
global population is  
homeless**



**1.6B i.e. 20% of the  
world's population lack  
adequate housing**

In 2017, the issue of homelessness reached a crisis point in all EU countries (except Finland). In the United States, the number of homeless people has increased for the first time since 2010 – approximately 554,000 people are homeless. At least 235, 000 Canadians experience homelessness every year. The level of homelessness in Russia and several CIS countries remains uncertain. it is estimated that in Moscow alone there are 8000-15,000 homeless.

# UNECE'S ROLE

The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management is committed to ensuring that decent, adequate, affordable and sustainable housing is available to all.

The Committee also supports the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Strategy for sustainable housing and urban development 2014-2020, and the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development.

The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing supports member States as they work to ensure the access to decent, affordable and healthy housing in the ECE region. The Charter specifically mentions the need to reduce homelessness by improving access to good quality, healthy and barrier-free housing for all. The Charter also places importance to gather data on homelessness using common international standards to ensure data comparability between member States; make these data and national statistics publicly available in order to support policy-making, research and economic development; and make use of global and regional data repositories to support the policy-making process.



The Committee also contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achievement of the housing, urban and land-related Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."

Due to the cross-cutting nature of housing, land administration and management, and urban development, the Committee also contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15. Under Goal 1, "End poverty in all its forms everywhere", the Committee addresses the social dimension of sustainable housing and supports development of policies on housing affordability, energy poverty, social housing and low cost housing. Through the work of the Working party on Land Administration, the Committee promotes access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources in accordance with national laws.



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## PANEL EVENT

3 October 2018

Palais des Nations

The 79th session of the Committee, which will take place in Geneva on 4 and 5 October 2018, will discuss concrete steps on how the Committee should align its activities with the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. Innovative experiences and best practices on housing, urban development, and land administration and management will be presented and discussed.

### III. Lunch Reception

### IV. "Housing the Homeless" Panel event:

Homelessness is relevant to three Sustainable Development Goals, the achievement of which is simply not possible without decisive action to end homelessness: SDG1 – Eradicating poverty in all its form, SDG3 – Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages and SDG11 – Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The panel event involving eminent speakers from diverse backgrounds: architects, NGOs, government and private sector, to explain the different dimensions of homelessness and pose innovative solutions to alleviate it.

#### Speakers:

- Mr. Andreas A. Tjeldflaat - Architect, Founder of Framlab
- Mr. Freek Spinnewijn, Director, FEANTSA
- Mr. Juha Kaakinen - CEO Y Foundation
- (TBC)

#### Date & Time:

1 PM - 3 PM

3 October 2018



**Organisers:**

- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe: Committee on Housing and Land Management

**Co-organisers:**

- United Nations Office at Geneva
- UN Library (TBC)

**Prospective Partners:**

- FEANTSA
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (TBC)
- UN Habitat (TBC)
- UN Women (TBC)

**For more information, please contact:**

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