European Consensus Conference on Homelessness:

Policy Recommendations of the Jury

European Consensus
Conference on Homelessness

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Chantier
national
prioritaire
2008-2012
pour les personnes
sans-abri ou mal logées

MEMBERS OF THE JURY

Frank Vandenbroucke is the Chair of jury. An economist and politician, he is a Member of the Belgian Senate and has served as Minister for Social Affairs and Pensions, and Minister for Employment and Pensions in the Belgian Federal Government. From 2004 to 2009 he served as Minister for Work, Education and Training in the Flemish regional government. He has been very involved in social policy development at EU-level and played a key role in the development of the Social Open Method of Co-ordination. He also teaches at the University of Leuven and Antwerp.

Álvaro Gil-Robles is Vice-chair of the jury. He has extensive experience as a lawyer and Human Rights activist, both internationally and in Spain. He was the first Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe from 1999 to 2009.

Ruth Becker is an economist and planner. Until her retirement, she was Head Professor of Women's Studies and Housing in the Urban Planning Department of the Technische Universität Dortmund. Her main fields of research are gender aspects of spatial development, new forms of housing and social change.

Mary Daly is Professor at the School of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work, Queen's University Belfast. She is a member of the EU Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion and works extensively on social issues at EU-level. She was the Chair of the Council of Europe's High-Level Task Force on Social Cohesion.

Máté Szabó is the Hungarian Parliamentary Commissioner for Civil Rights/Ombudsman. He is also Professor at the Doctorate School of Political Science at the Faculty of Law of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest

Matti Mikkola is Professor of Labour Law at the University of Helsinki and Visiting Professor of Social Policy at the University of Tartu, Estonia. He has been a longstanding member of the European Committee of Social Rights (1994-2006).

Barbara Wolf-Wicha is a freelance journalist and is involved in managing cultural activities. She was formerly Professor at the Institute for Social Sciences, University of Salzburg where she was Head of the Department of History and Political Science from 2004 to 2006. She retired in 2008. Her main fields of research and teaching include Austrian and comparative politics, European Union Studies and Gender Studies.

Contents

Consensus conferencing is a specific tool for facilitating progress on complex issues where a lack of shared understandings blocks policy progress. The policy recommendations contained in this report are the outcome of the 2010 European Consensus Conference on Homelessness[1]. They are the conclusions reached by an independent jury on a set of six key questions. These policy recommendations seek to provide a strong basis from which to make continued and enhanced progress on the issue of homelessness within the European Union, particularly within the framework of the new Europe 2020 Strategy[2], and the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion[3].

In response to **key question 1 'What does homelessness mean?**' the jury confronts "common sense" definitions of homelessness as rough sleeping and concludes that homelessness is a complex, dynamic and differentiated process with different routes and exits, or "pathways", for different individuals and groups. The jury recommends the adoption of the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS)[4], which was launched by FEANTSA in 2005 as a common framework definition of homelessness. ETHOS uses physical, social and legal domains of a "home" to create a broad typology that classifies homeless people according to four main living situations of rooflessness; houselessness; living in insecure housing; and living in inadequate housing.

The jury's response to **key question 2 'Ending homelessness': a realistic objective?'** addresses the level of ambition that should underpin an overarching EU homelessness strategy. The jury concludes that homelessness is a grave injustice and violation of fundamental human rights that can and should be ended. Whilst there will always be a potential flow of people into situations of homelessness, the jury concludes that ongoing prevention and intervention measures, in the context of national/regional integrated homelessness strategies, can both prevent people from entering homelessness and ensure that long-term solutions are secured quickly for those who face situations of homelessness. The jury thus considers that homelessness can be gradually reduced and ultimately ended. The jury puts forward some specific targets that need to be addressed in order to make progress towards ending homelessness.

Under **key question 3 'Are 'housing-led' policy approaches the most effective methods of preventing and tackling homelessness?'** the jury calls for a shift from using shelters and transitional accommodation as the predominant solution to homelessness towards 'housing led' approaches. This means increasing access to permanent housing and increasing the capacity for both prevention and the provision of adequate floating support to people in their homes according to their needs.

In answer to **key question 4 'How can meaningful participation of homeless people in the development of homelessness policies be assured?'** the jury calls for a move away from approaches that see homeless people as passive recipients of help towards approaches that emphasise their rights and autonomy. The jury calls for homeless people to be empowered to participate in decision-making that affects their lives. The jury also highlights some important barriers to facilitating the full participation of homeless people in policy-making processes and makes suggestions as to how these barriers should be managed.

Key question 5 'To what extent should people be able to access homeless services irrespective of their legal status and citizenship?' addresses the accessibility of homeless services, specifically for migrants and non-national EU citizens who may face barriers due to legal or administrative status. The jury highlights that this is an issue of growing importance and debate in the context of a growing problem of homelessness amongst migrants and non-national EU citizens in a number of Member States. The jury states that no person should be left destitute in the European Union and emphasises the need to respect fundamental human rights, regardless of legal or administrative status. The jury calls for an integrated approach to the situation of migrants and EU citizens facing homelessness as a result of access barriers relating to legal or administrative status. The jury highlights the particular responsibility of migration policy in preventing this situation. Homeless services must not be systematically used to compensate for inconsistent migration policies that lead people to situations of destitution and homelessness. Neither should access to homeless services be used as a means to regulate migration.

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Homeless service providers should not be penalised for providing services to people presenting in need. In order to strengthen understanding of this issue, the jury concludes that there is a need for an EU study into the relationships between homelessness and migration as well as EU free movement contexts. Such a study should pay due attention to the gendered nature of migration experiences and the special situation of some female migrants.

Key question 6 asks **'What should be the elements of an EU homelessness strategy?'** The overriding conclusion of the jury is that, in the context of the new Europe 2020 strategy and particularly the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, there is a need for an ambitious ***EU homelessness strategy*** to frame the development of national/regional strategies in Member States and enhance progress in the fight against homelessness. Both the overarching EU framework and the national/regional strategies must adopt an integrated approach, bringing together all relevant fields such as housing, social affairs, health, and employment. They must consist of

proper governance allowing the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. They must be evidence-based, which requires robust data collection and research, and they must focus on clear targets. Within the proposed EU strategic framework, the jury calls on Member States to fix dates by which they will end rough sleeping and long term homelessness. In addition, the prevention of homelessness, the promotion of quality services for homeless people and access to affordable housing with support to maintain this as necessary must be central priorities. Integrated homelessness strategies must take account of the changing profiles of the homeless population. At EU level, the strategic framework must support, monitor and co-ordinate the development of integrated national/regional strategies in the Member States through an appropriate monitoring framework, a strong research agenda with a social innovation stream, a mutual learning and transnational exchange programme, the promotion of quality services, sustainable links to EU funding opportunities and mainstreaming of homelessness across relevant policy areas.

Background

This report contains the findings of the independent jury appointed to deliver their conclusions following the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness[5]. The conference was an official event of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, co-organised with the European Commission and FEANTSA (the European Federation of Organisations Working with the Homeless) and was held on December 9th and 10th 2010 in Brussels. The French government also supported the event.

Consensus conferencing represents an innovative, action-orientated and participatory tool, which incorporates diverse stakeholders and on-the-ground realities. A European Consensus Conference on Homelessness was initially called for in 2008. The conclusions of the annual Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion drew attention to the need for a consensus conference on homelessness at EU level in order to facilitate more effective policy co-ordination. This call was supported by the conclusions of the 2008 informal meeting of Housing Ministers. The French Presidency therefore requested that the European Commission organise such a consensus conference. The European Commission granted support and funding for the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness in 2010, under the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Rationale

Homelessness represents a very severe form of poverty and social exclusion and is a violation of fundamental human rights. Despite progress on understanding and tackling homelessness in recent years, it continues to affect significant numbers of people in all the Member States of the EU.

The EU and its Member States have committed themselves to tackling poverty and social exclusion. The EU provides an important arena for policy development and coordination in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, including homelessness. Since 2000, the EU has supported and co-ordinated Member States' policies in this area through the Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC). Whilst meaningful advances have been achieved on homelessness in this context, there is now a need to establish a consensual basis from which to step up progress in the fight against homelessness at European level. The broad range of perspectives, realities and practices on homelessness and homeless policies within and between different actors and Member States provides a challenging context for establishing consensus. The aim of the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness has been to deliver consensual responses to key questions about homelessness, which can be built upon to guide future policy development and co-ordination in this area. This basis is necessary in the new political context of the EU's Europe 2020 Strategy[6]. While the principal aim of the consensus conference is to inform an EU-level framework for progress in the fight against homelessness, it has involved and is relevant to a broad range of actors and stakeholders in the fight against homelessness at national, regional and local level.

Methodology and process

Originating from the health and technology sectors in the 1970s, consensus conferencing is a tool for facilitating progress on complex issues where a lack of shared understandings blocks policy progress. A consensus conference may be described as a public enquiry at the centre of which a jury is charged with the assessment of a socially controversial topic. Experts in the field provide the jury with evidence and the jury has the opportunity to ask questions before assessing the evidence in a private meeting after the conference and delivering an outcome report containing recommendations. A consensus conference combines elements of the following models:

- judicial process with a jury;
- scientific meeting between peers;
- town hall-type meeting with public participation (Jorgenson, 1995).

Consensus conferencing is a flexible tool, transferable to a broad range of contexts and purposes. The European Consensus Conference on Homelessness was the first application of this tool in the field of social policy at European level. An important precedent to the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness was a consensus conference called 'Sortir de la Rue', which was organised on homelessness in Paris in 2007.

A thorough preparatory phase is essential for a consensus conference. A Preparatory Committee[7] was established and began work at the end of 2009. This committee consisted of 20 diverse stakeholders in the fight against homelessness. Representatives of NGOs, the research community, public authorities, people with experience of homelessness and representatives of related sectors such as social housing were included in the Committee, which was also geographically balanced. The Preparatory Committee identified the key questions to be addressed by the Consensus Conference; selected the members of the independent jury; and selected the experts who would provide evidence to the jury on the key questions.

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5 For further information on the conference, including all relevant documents see http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=88&langId=en&eventsId=315&furtherEvents=yes

6 Available at http://europa.eu/press_room/pdf/complet_en_barroso___007_-_europe_2020_-_en_version.pdf

7 See annex 2 for a full list of members

The following six key questions were identified where a lack of consensus impedes policy progress at EU level:

1. What does homelessness mean?
2. Ending homelessness: A realistic objective?
3. Are 'housing-led' policy approaches the most effective methods of preventing and tackling homelessness?
4. How can meaningful participation of homeless people in the development of homelessness policies be assured?
5. To what extent should people be able to access homeless services irrespective of their legal status and citizenship?
6. What should be the elements of an EU homelessness strategy?

The members of the jury were selected as experts in the social domain who were independent of the social sector and could be considered "wise people" at EU level. A range of experts were selected to ensure that different types of expertise were represented, and that diverging perspectives on the key questions were integrated.

Experts submitted written responses to the key questions to the jury[8], as well as presenting at the conference itself where there was an opportunity for questions and debate. Two studies were specifically commissioned[9] to provide additional evidence. First, a team of researchers from the European Observatory on Homelessness produced the report *Homelessness and Homeless Policies in Europe: Lessons from Research,* which summarises the state of existing knowledge on homelessness and homelessness policies in Europe. Second, the Front Commun des SDF (a national platform of homeless and formerly homeless people in Belgium) co-ordinated a transnational consultation on the key questions with people experiencing homelessness.

Approximately 400 policy makers, homeless service providers, people with experience of homelessness, researchers and other stakeholders attended the conference. The audience had the opportunity to contribute to the formation of the consensus by putting questions to the experts.

Policy context

The European Consensus Conference on Homelessness and its outcomes are situated in a unique policy context, which provides great opportunities for the fight against homelessness at EU level. The conclusions of the jury will provide a basis for ambitious future progress on homelessness within this policy context.

The Lisbon Treaty, which came into force on 1 December 2009 has strengthened the basis for EU co-ordination and co-operation in the area of social inclusion. Article 9 of the treaty creates a new horizontal social clause; 'in defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of

adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health' (European Union, 2009). Furthermore, the Treaty guarantees the freedoms and principles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, introducing them into primary law and giving them binding legal force.

Since 2000, the EU has supported and co-ordinated Member States' policies to combat poverty and social exclusion on the basis of shared objectives, a reporting mechanism, agreed indicators and reports on social protection and social inclusion adopted jointly by the European Commission and the Council in the framework of the Social OMC. Over a ten year period, homelessness has emerged as a clear thematic priority in this framework. The Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion, which supports the European Commission and the Social Protection Committee as steering bodies of the Social OMC concluded in a 2009 report on homelessness and housing exclusion across the EU that 'it is essential that homelessness be considered an integral part of the Social OMC and be consolidated and continued post 2010' (Frazer and Marlier, 2009). Furthermore, the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion calls on Member States to develop integrated national homelessness strategies, as well as putting forward some key elements of these strategies. The outcomes of the Consensus Conference aim to provide a firm basis for supporting and monitoring these strategies at EU level; providing guidelines for effective follow up of the 2010 Joint Report.

On 17 June 2010, the European Council adopted the new Europe 2020 Strategy, which sets out priorities for the next decade. The strategy aims at 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.' This is the first time the EU has set a headline target on poverty reduction; aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. Member States have committed to developing complementary national targets within this framework. This new governance context also includes ten integrated guidelines for implementing Europe 2020, including the tenth guideline which is on promoting social inclusion and combating poverty. Overall, this new political context provides a real opportunity to enhance EU progress on homelessness. A key element of the Europe 2020 Strategy is the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, one of seven flagship initiatives. The platform aims to reinforce commitment to fighting poverty and social exclusion and to provide a framework for action that connects Member States, European Institutions and key stakeholders. In the European Commission's Communication on the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, released on the 16th December 2010, homelessness is identified as 'one of the most extreme forms of poverty and deprivation, which has increased in recent years' (European Commission, 2010). Furthermore, the Communication states that the Commission will 'identify methods and means to best continue the work it has started on homelessness…, taking into account the outcome of the consensus conference' (European Commission, 2010). The jury's recommendations provide a basis for developing a more ambitious, concrete EU framework for progress on homelessness within this new context.

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8 A booklet containing the experts' contributions presented at the conference is available at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=88&langId=en&event sId=315&furtherEvents=yes . Annex 1 of this report provides a full list of the experts involved in the consensus conference.

9 Both publications are available at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=88&langId=en&eventsId=315&furtherEvents=yes

2010 was the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The year aimed to raise awareness of poverty and social exclusion and to reaffirm and strengthen the initial EU political commitment, at the start of the Lisbon strategy, to make 'a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty' (European Commission, 2008). It has placed particular emphasis on homelessness. In its final declaration on the European Year, the Council of the European Union 'expresses its strong commitment to prevent and to reduce poverty and social exclusion, and invites all relevant actors to take full account of this priority in the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy'. The Council states that 'particular attention should be given…to extreme forms of poverty such as homelessness' (Council of the European Union, 2010).

The European Parliament has also taken a number of initiatives in support of strengthened EU-level action on homelessness. In 2008 the Parliament adopted a written declaration on ending street homelessness (WD 111/2007). Furthermore, in December 2010, a second written declaration was adopted calling for an EU homelessness strategy (WD 61/2010) which would 'support Member States in developing effective national strategies following the guidelines of the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion adopted in March 2010 and as part of the EU 2020'.

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Adding to growing political momentum on the issue of homelessness at EU level, the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union identified homelessness as one of three key priorities within the social domain. Furthermore, in an own initiative opinion[10] published in October 2010, the Committee of the Regions called on the EU to do more to combat homelessness and to develop an overarching, integrated homelessness strategy underpinned by national policy-framing.

The Informal Meeting of EU Housing Ministers has repeatedly called for strengthened EU ambition regarding homelessness. Under the French Presidency in October 2008, the Ministers requested that 'a consensus conference should be organized at EU level to generate a shared comprehension and common diagnostic of the situation' (Final communiqué of the informal Housing Ministers meeting, 24th November 2008, Marseille).   In 2010 under the Spanish Presidency, the Ministers asked and encouraged the European Commission 'to integrate the results of the forthcoming consensus conference on homelessness within the EU social inclusion strategy' (Final Communiqué of the informal Housing Ministers meeting 21st June 2010, Toledo).

It is clear that the new policy context of the Europe 2020 Strategy provides new possibilities in terms of ensuring adequate follow up of the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion's call for the development of integrated national homelessness strategies. Furthermore, considerable political momentum has developed on the issue of homelessness at EU level and there is a strong mandate for strengthened ambition and action, for which the outcomes of the Consensus Conference can provide a sound basis.

What does homelessness mean?

Understanding homelessness

Contrary to popular perceptions, homelessness is not a fixed state. Evidence from research shows homelessness to be a complex, dynamic and differentiated process with different entry routes and exits, or "pathways", for different individuals and groups (Busch-Geertsema et al 2010). It is clear to the jury that a diverse group of people experience homelessness, and that it covers a diversity of living situations. Narrow definitions of the phenomenon, including the common conception of homelessness as rough sleeping, are unable to capture its complex reality. Such definitions reduce homelessness to its most visible forms whilst obscuring 'hidden' forms of homelessness, and can perpetuate the stigmatisation of homeless people.

Homelessness is the result of a complex interplay of structural, institutional, relationship and personal factors. The Consensus Conference has shown that this way of understanding homelessness represents a "new orthodoxy" that moves beyond a dichotomy between individualistic or personal factors and structural explanations of the causes of homelessness (Busch-Geertsema et al 2010). The jury underlines that homelessness is not a "chosen" life-style. However, homeless persons are not simply passive victims of external forces and often make choices, albeit between limited options, under difficult circumstances.

The jury emphasises the risks to wellbeing associated with all forms of homelessness. People living rough are exposed to many risks associated with lacking decent shelter, problems in obtaining consistent and quality medical treatment, poor social support and stigmatisation. There is widespread evidence of mental illness and problematic drug and alcohol use among people living rough. People living in shelters experience overcrowding, and a lack of privacy and security. Living in inadequate or unfit accommodation, including under the threat of eviction or domestic violence, also has serious negative impacts on mental and physical health and well-being.

The diversity of those who are classified as homeless means that the experience of both entering and exiting homelessness is structured by age, gender, ethnicity, geography, etc. There is evidence that women's homelessness is often hidden by highly gendered understandings of the phenomenon. The jury emphasises that understandings of homelessness must take account of the full diversity of people who experience it.

Furthermore, the consensus conference has confirmed that the profiles of homeless people are changing. In particular, more young people, women, migrants and families with children are experiencing homelessness. The jury emphasises the need for homeless policies to account for changing profiles and to adapt to emerging needs. This means that information on the changing profiles of homeless people must be monitored and fed into the policy process.

ETHOS: A common EU framework definition of homelessness

The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion, known by the acronym ETHOS, is a conceptual definition of homelessness developed by FEANTSA in 2005. The jury considers that the ETHOS typology should be used as the common framework definition of homelessness and housing exclusion at EU level. This common framework definition must underpin continued EU-wide policy co-ordination and development in the field of homelessness. The ETHOS typology begins with the conceptual understanding that there are three domains which constitute a home, the absence of which can be taken to delineate homelessness. Having a home is understood as: having an adequate dwelling over which a person and his/her family can exercise exclusive possession (physical domain); being able to maintain privacy and enjoy relations (social domain) and having a legal title to occupation (legal domain). This leads to four main concepts, all of which can be taken to indicate the absence of a home:

- Rooflessness;
- Houselessness;
- Insecure housing;
- Inadequate housing.

ETHOS thus classifies people who are homeless according to their living or 'home' situation. These conceptual categories are divided into 13 operational categories that can be used for different policy purposes such as mapping the problem of homelessness, developing, monitoring and evaluating policies.

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Table 1 ETHOS - European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion

			Operational Category		Living Situation		Generic Definition
Conceptual Category	ROOFLESS		1	People Living Rough	1.1	Public space or external space	Living in the streets or public spaces, without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters
			2	People in emergency accommodation	2.1	Night shelter	People with no usual place of residence who make use of overnight shelter, low threshold shelter
	HOUSELESS		3	People in accommodation for the homeless	3.1	Homeless hostel	Where the period of stay is intended to be short term
					3.2	Temporary Accommodation	
					3.3	Transitional supported accommodation	
			4	People in Women's shelter	4.1	Women's shelter accommodation	Women accommodated due to experience of domestic violence and where the period of stay is intended to be short term
			5	People in accommodation for immigrants	5.1	Temporary accommodation /reception centres	Immigrants in reception or short term accommodation due to their immigrant status
					5.2	Migrant workers accommodation	
			6	People due to be released from institutions	6.1	Penal institutions	No housing available prior to release
					6.2	Medical institutions (*)	Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing
					6.3	Children's institutions/homes	No housing identified (e.g. by 18th birthday)
			7	People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)	7.1	Residential care for older homeless people	Long stay accommodation with care for formerly homeless people (normally more than one year)
					7.2	Supported accommodation for formerly homeless people	
	INSECURE		8	People living in insecure accommodation	8.1	Temporarily with family/friends	Living in conventional housing but not the usual or place of residence due to lack of housing
					8.2	No legal (sub)tenancy	Occupation of dwelling with no legal tenancy -Illegal occupation of a dwelling
					8.3	Illegal occupation of land	Occupation of land with no legal rights
			9	People living under threat of eviction	9.1	Legal orders enforced (rented)	Where orders for eviction are operative
					9.2	Re-possession orders (owned)	Where mortgagee has legal order to re-possess
			10	People living under threat of violence	10.1	Police-recorded incidents	Where police action is taken to ensure place of safety for victims of domestic violence
	INADEQUATE		11	People living in temporary/ non-conventional structures	11.1	Mobile homes	Not intended as place of usual residence
					11.2	Non-conventional building	Makeshift shelter, shack or shanty
					11.3	Temporary structure	Semi-permanent structure hut or cabin
			12	People living in unfit housing	12.1	Occupied dwellings unfit for habitation	Defined as unfit for habitation by national legislation or building regulations
			13	People living in extreme overcrowding	13.1	Highest national norm of overcrowding	Defined as exceeding national density standard for floor-space or useable rooms

(*) Includes drug rehabilitation institutions, psychiatric hospitals, etc

ETHOS provides a robust conceptual definition of homelessness but is flexible in that it allows specific operational definitions to be focused on for different purposes. ETHOS is already used as an international reference and its adoption as a common framework definition would facilitate EU Member State involvement in the fight against homelessness by formalising a shared language and frame of reference at EU level.

Importantly, the jury is of the view that ETHOS covers the full spectrum of living situations that need to be understood and accounted for in relation to the policy objectives of prevention, crisis intervention and rehabilitation that are required in order to fight homelessness. The ETHOS typology accounts for categories of living situation that constitute 'hidden' forms of homelessness, such as staying temporarily with family, friends or acquaintances. The jury highlights that homelessness amongst women is often hidden in this way, which can make homeless women especially vulnerable to exploitation or abuse. It is therefore vital that definitions of homelessness take full account of this aspect. Furthermore, the jury underlines that the categorisation of living situations within the ETHOS definition avoids the stigmatisation of homeless people.

The jury considers that over time it could be useful to complement ETHOS by developing a better understanding of the temporal aspects of homelessness within the EU. Longitudinal research in the USA has highlighted the dynamic nature of homelessness – the fact that people move in and out of homelessness - and has identified three subgroups of the homeless population:

- the transitional homeless, who rapidly exit and do not return to homelessness;
- those who experience episodic bouts of homelessness;
- The chronic homeless, who are long-term users of homeless services and/or rough sleepers (Busch-Geertsema et al., 2010).

In the framework of future research on homelessness at EU level, the jury considers that it would be useful work towards consensual definitions of transitional, episodic and chronic homelessness at EU level, which could support ETHOS. This would be extremely valuable in informing policy development because these different forms of homelessness require different policy interventions.

Data collection

The jury considers that homeless policies should be evidence-based and underpinned by adequate data collection that assures solid understanding of the phenomenon. The jury therefore recommends an EU-wide monitoring system on homelessness based on robust national data collection systems. A common framework and common guidelines for measuring, monitoring and reporting on homelessness are required. Member States should ensure that there is proper governance of data collection on homelessness by

specifying a strategy for data collection in the context of a broader integrated national/regional homelessness strategy. In addition, the jury considers that the EU should continue to play a role in building capacity for data collection within Member States, building on the progress made by the EU Study on Measuring Homelessness (Edgar et al., 2007) and the MPHASIS[11] project.

The jury draws attention to the risk that those ETHOS categories for which data is more difficult to collect (e.g. people staying with family and friends) may be further hidden and therefore inadequately addressed by policy interventions if a focus on more easily quantifiable data becomes dominant within homelessness monitoring. For these reasons, the jury argues that homeless policy co-ordination at EU level, including monitoring of national/regional strategies, must be underpinned by ETHOS as a holistic conceptual framework definition of homelessness and that all categories should be accounted for, including those which are more difficult to quantify. Both quantitative and qualitative data are important in this respect.

Policy makers should be aware that the ETHOS approach does not allow a truly adequate quantification of the problem of homelessness by means of one single, one-dimensional indicator. In the opinion of the jury, data collection in the context of national/regional homelessness strategies should aim to collect data on all categories of the ETHOS definition, even if this is a long term objective. The jury notes that it is necessary to use a combination of survey and administrative sources of data to provide the evidence base for policy purposes in the framework of national/regional integrated homelessness strategies. This is because adequate data collection on homelessness needs to use and distinguish between different types of data (stock, flow and prevalence) and different types of indicators (about the entry and the exit from homeless systems and about the homeless system itself), which are relevant for different policy purposes and for effective homelessness strategies.

At EU level, the jury recommends that the indicators sub-group of the Social Protection Committee (SPC) continues work to develop indicators on homelessness in the framework of the ETHOS definition. The jury welcomes the fact that the SPC has adopted secondary indicators on overcrowding and housing deprivation. This provides the basis for more comparative analysis of some ETHOS categories using EU-SILC data (European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) and the 2011 Census. EU-SILC is the main source of comparable indicators on social inclusion used for policy monitoring at EU level in the framework of the Social OMC. The jury therefore calls on Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, to develop a retrospective question on episodes of homelessness in the EU-SILC household surveys. Since it will take time to develop a complete EU-wide monitoring system based on national data collection, this would provide a best proxy of the extent of homelessness in Europe in the short-term.

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11 See http://www.trp.dundee.ac.uk/research/mphasis/

Key Recommendations

- The jury calls for the ETHOS typology to be used as a common framework definition of homelessness at EU level. This common framework definition should underpin an overarching, integrated EU homelessness strategy.

- The jury calls for an EU-wide monitoring system on homelessness based on straightforward and robust national/regional data collection strategies. This requires the adoption of common guidelines for measuring, monitoring and reporting on homelessness.

- Policy makers at the national/regional level should develop data collection strategies in the framework of integrated national/regional homelessness strategies, as called for by the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion. These strategies should aim to collect data on all ETHOS categories. The jury draws attention to the added value of the EU in helping to build capacity for national/regional level data collection on homelessness and calls for ongoing work in this area in the framework of an integrated EU homelessness strategy.

- In the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the jury recommends that the indicators sub-group of the SPC continues work to develop indicators on homelessness in line with the categories of the ETHOS definition.

- The jury calls on Eurostat to use the ETHOS definition to develop a retrospective question on episodes of homelessness in the EU-SILC household surveys.

- Further increasing knowledge and understanding on homelessness should be a key element of an overarching, integrated EU homelessness strategy framing national/regional strategies. In this respect, the jury recommends more longitudinal research on homelessness in order to better understand its temporal aspects and its dynamics, with a view to complementing ETHOS by arriving at shared understandings of episodic, transitional and chronic homelessness within the EU. This should also account for the way in which homelessness is structured by gender.

Ending homelessness: A realistic objective?

The aim of homelessness policies

The jury considers that homelessness represents a grave injustice and a violation of fundamental human rights that cannot be tolerated. Public policy should seek to progressively reduce, and to end homelessness. Ultimately, ending homelessness would mean the provision of a home (consisting of physical, social and legal domains) for all, with the provision of adequate support in order to maintain this home as required. This effectively means the realisation of the right to housing. Housing rights are widely recognised in international human rights instruments. The jury considers that homelessness policy should aim at the realisation of these rights.

Furthermore, there is growing jurisprudence that is gradually setting norms in this regard. Under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), living conditions have been taken into account in cases concerning human dignity and the Convention recognises that a home is more than a dwelling; that human rights and fundamental freedoms require respect for 'home' and private/family life (Kenna, 2005). In addition, under Article 31 of the Revised European Social Charter, everyone has a right to housing, requiring nation states to take measures to promote access to housing of an adequate standard; to prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination; and to make the cost of housing affordable. Regular national reports on compliance are submitted to the Council of Europe's Committee of Social Rights (CSR). The Committee of Ministers can make a recommendation to a State asking it to change the situation in law and/or practice and reports published by the Committee offer benchmarks for national housing and homelessness policies (Kenna, 2005).

From 'managing' to ending homelessness

Ending homelessness necessitates a paradigm shift away from the traditional policy response, which can be described as 'managing' homelessness. 'Managing' homelessness involves largely reactive solutions, often focusing on the most extreme manifestations of homelessness, with service provision consisting mainly of temporary accommodation and emergency interventions that overall keep homeless people within a 'homeless system'. The evidence presented in the framework of the consensus conference shows that such policy approaches are often inadequate in the extent to which they can prevent entries into homelessness and secure sustainable exits from homelessness. Indeed, such approaches can serve to entrench and reproduce homelessness, as demonstrated by the experience of Finland, where it was found that large-scale shelters actually perpetuated homelessness.

The feasibility of ending homelessness

The jury considers that ending homelessness is a realistic objective. Whilst there will always be a potential flow of people into situations of homelessness (due to, for example, natural disasters, fire or flooding, arriving in a new area, or fleeing domestic violence), the jury considers that ongoing prevention and intervention measures, in the context of national/regional integrated homelessness strategies, can both prevent people from entering homelessness and ensure that long-term solutions are secured quickly for those who face situations of homelessness. In this respect, the jury argues that ending homelessness will require ongoing homelessness policies. There will always be a need for high-quality emergency accommodation provisions, including separate accommodation for women where necessary. However, such provisions should serve only as a gateway to a permanent accommodation solution within a reasonable time frame.

A common argument against the feasibility of ending homelessness in this sense is that some homeless people are too "difficult to house". However, evidence shows that regular revision of homelessness strategies; adequate targeting and tailoring of measures; and the provision of adequate support as required can provide sustainable solutions for all homeless people, including people who have experienced long-term homelessness and have complex support needs.

Intentionality can be used to argue that it is impossible to end homelessness. According to this argument, if homelessness is a "choice" for some people then it follows that it cannot be ended. The jury refutes this point of view. In the opinion of the jury, homelessness is not an act of free choice. The Scottish homelessness legislation, which means that from 2012 there will effectively be a duty on local authorities to ensure that all households in Scotland have some form of accommodation, is a useful example of how the question of "choice" can be negated by policy interventions that actually seek to end homelessness. The legislation distinguishes between 'intentionally' and 'unintentionally' homeless households. However, local authorities still have a duty towards those households identified as 'intentionally' homeless. They are offered fixed-term (12 month) tenancies and support to deal with whatever 'act or omission' resulted in the decision that the household had become homeless intentionally (for example persistent non-payment of rent or serious breach of tenancy conditions).

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The need for an integrated approach

The jury emphasises that ending homelessness is only possible in the context of an integrated approach encompassing all relevant policy areas such as social policy, housing, health, employment, education, training, and migration etc. This includes taking account of the gender dimension of homelessness in the context of gender mainstreaming. The jury calls for an overarching, integrated homelessness strategy at EU level, underpinned by policy framing in the form of integrated strategies at national/regional level. This requires robust political commitment to the shared responsibility of policy makers in relevant areas, as well as to adequate resourcing.

The role of inclusive social welfare/social protection and labour market polices

The jury notes that low income/poverty is a key factor in the persistence of homelessness. The jury supports the view that broader social policies to reduce income inequality and other aspects of housing disadvantage are very important in the reduction and elimination of homelessness. Evidence presented in the framework of the consensus conference largely confirms that more inclusive welfare regimes have a greater range of protections against homelessness. However, while adverse structural conditions may generate a higher number of homeless households, or households at risk of homelessness, targeted policies can effectively counter this. Progress towards ending homelessness can thus be achieved even in the face of unhelpful structural trends. The jury therefore supports a specific policy emphasis on ending homelessness within the broader social policy framework.

Targets to progressively end homelessness

The evidence presented to the consensus conference shows that it is possible to progressively reduce homelessness in order to end it – a growing number of Member States have demonstrated a move away from reactive management towards progressive reduction through co-ordinated and comprehensive approaches within national/regional homelessness strategies. The 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion puts forward a number of suggestions relating to the areas that targets within homelessness strategies should address:

- the prevention of homelessness;
- a reduction in its duration;
- a reduction in the most severe forms of homelessness;
- improvement of the quality of services for homeless people;
- access to affordable housing.

The jury calls for targets on all of these areas to be integrated into national/regional homelessness strategies within an overarching strategic framework for support, co-ordination and monitoring at EU level. The jury also draws attention to the list of targets towards ending homelessness put forward by the European Parliament Written Declaration on an EU Homelessness Strategy (61/2010 adopted on the 16th December 2010), which cover some of these areas:

- no one sleeping rough;
- no one living in emergency accommodation for longer than the period of an 'emergency';
- no one living in transitional accommodation longer than is required for a successful move-on;
- no one leaving an institution without housing options;
- no young people becoming homeless as a result of the transition to independent living.

Although this list is not exhaustive, the jury considers these to be useful examples for Member States of specific targets that can be elaborated following the guidelines put forward by the Joint Report. The jury specifically calls on Member States to fix dates for ending both street homelessness and long-term homelessness (defined as ensuring that people do not stay in emergency accommodation for longer than the period of an 'emergency'; and do not stay in transitional accommodation longer than is required for a successful move-on, as put forward by Written Declaration (61/2010)) in the context of their broader homelessness strategies.

The jury highlights that an EU homelessness strategy must take account of the specificities and relative starting points in different national contexts. For this reason the jury considers that it is not currently possible to fix a single headline target at EU level for ending homelessness.

Key Recommendations

- In developing national/regional strategies, as called for by the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, Member States must outline a set of targets that aim to progressively reduce homelessness. An overarching, integrated homelessness strategy should support and monitor this process at EU level. National/regional strategies should develop targets in the following areas:

  ▸ the prevention of homelessness;
  ▸ a reduction in its duration;
  ▸ a reduction of the most severe forms of homelessness;
  ▸ improvement of the quality of services for homeless people;
  ▸ access to affordable housing.

- The jury calls on Member States to set dates by which they will end both street homelessness and long-term homelessness (defined as ensuring that people do not stay in emergency accommodation for longer than the period of an 'emergency'; and do not stay in transitional accommodation longer than is required for a successful move-on, as put forward by Written Declaration (61/2010)) in the context of broader strategies to end homelessness.

- The jury calls for policy makers responsible for housing and social affairs, as well as other related policy areas, to commit to a shared responsibility for ending homelessness in the context of integrated national/regional homelessness strategies.

- The jury calls for ending homelessness to be the long-term goal underpinning an EU homelessness strategy, whilst emphasising that monitoring and support towards this goal must take account of the specificities and relative starting points of different national contexts.

Are 'housing-led' policy approaches the most effective methods of preventing and tackling homelessness?

Definition of 'housing-led' policy approaches

The European Consensus Conference on Homelessness puts forward the term 'housing-led' in order to describe all policy approaches that identify the provision and/or sustaining of stable housing with security of tenure as the initial step in resolving or preventing situations of homelessness. These approaches treat housing as a fundamental right and a prerequisite to solving other problems, such as social, health and employment issues. 'Housing-led' represents a significant departure from the 'staircase' or 'continuum of care' approach, which until recently has largely dominated homelessness policy. According to the 'staircase' or 'continuum of care' approach, stable housing is the end goal in the reintegration process and homeless people, particularly those with complex support needs, should move through various stages in different residential services before becoming "ready" for re-housing. The evidence presented in the framework of the Consensus Conference has shown that this approach is deeply entrenched in homelessness policy and service concepts in many European countries. However, it has been increasingly contested since the 1990s as contributing to the exclusion of homeless people from regular housing and increasing homelessness by keeping homeless people within the homeless system.

Critique of the 'staircase' or 'continuum of care' approach has been largely informed by evidence on the effectiveness of 'Housing First' projects in tackling homelessness. 'Housing First' initially described a specific service delivery model developed by the *Pathways to Housing* organisation in New York. *Pathways to Housing* focuses on a relatively small proportion of homeless people with mental health and addiction issues. It provides access to affordable apartments, on the basis of a standard tenancy lease, directly from the street or emergency services. There are no conditions relating to treatment or sobriety. Housing is accompanied by a flexible, comprehensive support package to help address addiction, mental health, social and employment issues on a voluntary basis. *Pathways to Housing* has demonstrated that people regarded as "difficult to house" can maintain stable and independent tenancies in self-contained apartments if adequate support is provided. As the successful 'Housing First' model has been adopted and promoted at Federal level in the USA, and replicated in other countries, the term 'Housing First' has expanded to cover a range of interventions based on the original concept, although it remains largely associated with a small proportion of homeless people with complex support needs – particularly mental health and substance misuse problems. Given the history and specificity of the term 'Housing First', the jury follows the Preparatory Committee in using 'housing-led' as a broader, differentiated concept encompassing approaches that aim to provide housing, with support as required, as the initial step in addressing **all** forms of homelessness. 'Housing-led' thus encompasses the 'Housing First' model as part of a broader group of policy approaches aiming to

prevent homelessness, normalise the material living conditions of people experiencing or threatened by homelessness, and secure and sustain permanent housing as a precondition for further integration.

Moving towards 'housing-led' policy approaches

The jury supports a shift from using shelters and transitional accommodation as the predominant solution to homelessness towards increasing access to permanent housing and increasing the capacity for both prevention and the provision of adequate floating support to people in housing on the basis of need. The evidence presented to the consensus conference suggests that this provides better outcomes for homeless people and people at risk of homelessness, and is more in line with their preferences. The jury warns that short-term accommodation provisions for homeless people should not be reduced unless adequate alternatives are in place. In addition, the jury accepts that some short-term accommodation for homeless people will always need to be maintained for people losing their housing through natural disasters, fire, flooding, people newly arrived in an area, or those fleeing domestic violence etc. There is also an ongoing need for provision for people who fail to maintain a tenancy.

The Consensus Conference has highlighted the cost-effectiveness of housing-led approaches to tackling homelessness in comparison to the 'staircase' or 'continuum of care' model. However, the jury considers that too much focus on cost in the evaluation of approaches to tackling homelessness can lead to undermining the quality of outcomes. While cost is clearly an important factor, the primary consideration in evaluating homelessness policies should be the quality of outcomes for people in homeless living situations.

The jury encourages policy makers and service providers to develop 'housing led' interventions and considers that 'housing-led' approaches should underpin integrated national/regional homelessness strategies in the framework of an overarching EU strategy. The European Commission should play a key role in monitoring homelessness and in the development of national/regional strategies and take particular account of the need for 'housing-led' approaches.

Basis for promotion of housing-led approaches at EU level

The 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion provides a basis for promoting 'housing-led' approaches by emphasising the central role of housing in tackling homelessness and underlining the importance of 'integrated policies, combining financial support to individuals, effective regulation and quality social services, including housing, employment, health and welfare services' as well as addressing 'the specific obstacles the homeless have in accessing' such

services. The 2010 Joint Report also refers to the use of EU Structural Funds, in particular the European Regional Development Fund as an important potential source of funding for developing 'housing-led' approaches in the newer Members States of the EU. The jury calls for the continued use of EU structural funds in the development of housing interventions for people experiencing homelessness, particularly in the context of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, which seeks to promote greater and more effective use of the EU Funds to support social inclusion.

Key elements of successful 'housing-led' policy approaches

Access to adequate and affordable housing

Clearly, access to affordable and adequate housing is a key priority in implementing 'housing-led' approaches. The jury considers that social housing has a central role to play in tackling homelessness. The 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion states that 'social and public housing are a key element in housing policies, and often the main solution to homelessness'. Barriers of access to social housing for homeless people must be overcome. The jury supports allocation criteria for social housing based on housing need and supports approaches that ensure both the sustainable well-being of formerly homeless people and that of the neighborhoods in which they live. The Consensus Conference highlighted the emergence of good practices in this respect, including effective partnership working in order to provide floating support to people in social housing and capacity building within the social housing sector. The jury recommends developing transnational exchange and mutual learning within the EU in order to continue and strengthen the development of such approaches. Strategies to use the private rental and owner occupied sector can also play an important role in housing people who have been homeless and transnational exchange and mutual learning can also add value in this area.

Reasonable house prices are necessary to ensure that people can access adequate housing. Regulation of housing markets so that they can better meet the needs of the population is an important factor in this respect. The jury emphasises that sufficient means must be made available to cover the cost of housing and subsistence for people who are moving on from homelessness. This means that adequate benefits have a key role to play.

Provision of adequate support as required

It is clear to the jury that 'housing led' does not mean 'housing only'. Adequate social support to help people sustain tenancies and progress towards integration and improved quality of life is required by a proportion of formally homeless people. It is crucial that such support is flexible in intensity and duration. A case-management approach and joint working with mainstream health and social services is required for a small proportion of homeless people, whereas others have lighter support needs and may only require help with financial problems, benefit claims, support for dealing with tenancy, problems

or particular crises etc. Other people moving on from homelessness will not require any support beyond access to adequate affordable housing and mainstream services. The capacity to provide adequate support around independent housing is an essential element of successful 'housing-led' policy approaches. The jury considers this to be the most important factor in promoting the sustainable reintegration of people who have been homeless. The availability of flexible support as required is also of central importance to the sustainable well-being of the communities in which people are re-housed.

Promotion of quality services

Quality of services is a key issue in the development and implementation of successful 'housing-led' policy approaches. There is a need to establish consensus on adequate quality of both housing and support services in terms of creating a 'home' in the sense of legal, social and physical domains. The jury considers that further research and exchange on quality issues regarding adequate social support and housing is required. Assuring quality entails making sure that 'housing led' policy approaches go beyond the physical and legal domains of a home and encompass also the social domain in order to maintain dignity, independence, family and social life, and privacy. European-level research and mutual learning can play an important role here. In particular, the effectiveness of different combinations of housing and support and of different types of social work approaches should be evaluated.

Prevention

The jury considers that 'housing-led' approaches to ending homelessness can only be successful if integrated policy ensures adequate prevention in the framework of an integrated homelessness strategy. Both *targeted* prevention (for example aimed at reducing evictions, intervening early in family breakdown situations including domestic violence, or stopping discharge from an institution leading to homelessness) and *systemic* prevention (through general welfare, housing, education, employment policies, the promotion of gender equality etc) are important. Ensuring legal security of tenure in the case of forced evictions; early intervention in cases of rent arrears; mediation and early intervention in domestic conflicts and family breakdown; and provision of housing advice and solutions to those leaving institutions are all examples of effective targeted prevention measures where good practices have been developed in Europe. The jury considers that continued mutual learning and transnational exchange in this area should take place in the framework of EU policy co-ordination and development. Prevention should be a key element of national/regional homelessness strategies.

Freedom and choice

The jury emphasises the importance of maximising service users' choice and freedom in determining the housing and support that is appropriate for them. This includes having access to innovative forms of housing, such as communal housing, where this is in line with the services user's wishes.

Developing the evidence base on the effectiveness of 'housing-led' policy approaches

EU-level research, mutual learning and transnational exchange should play a key role in strengthening the evidence base relating to the effectiveness of 'housing-led' policy approaches. The jury highlights the need to develop better understandings of:

- the effectiveness of different forms of housing and social support;
- quality issues relating to these services;
- prevention of homelessness;
- removing barriers to social housing and increasing the capacity of the private rental and owner-occupied sectors of the housing market to house homeless people.

In the context of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, which seeks to promote evidence-based social innovation, the jury calls on the European Commission to facilitate research projects to collect the evidence and promote mutual learning at European level about different projects that are currently testing the specific 'Housing First' service delivery model in a number of European cities.

Key Recommandations

- The jury calls for a shift from using shelters and transitional accommodation as the predominant solution to homelessness towards 'housing led' approaches. This means increasing access to permanent housing and increasing the capacity for both prevention and the provision of adequate floating support to people in housing on the basis of need. The jury calls for such 'housing-led' approaches to underpin national/regional homelessness strategies.

- The jury calls on Member States to ensure robust political commitment to an integrated homelessness strategy between policy makers responsible for social affairs and housing, as well as other relevant areas. Co-operation and mutual support between the housing sector, the social and welfare sectors, as well as other relevant policy areas such as health and employment, is a necessary condition for housing-led policies to be successful and sustainable.

- The European Commission should play a key role in monitoring the development of national/regional strategies and take particular account of the need for 'housing-led' approaches.

- The jury calls for the continued use of EU structural funds in the development of housing interventions for people experiencing homelessness, particularly in the context of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, which seeks to promote greater and more effective use of the EU Funds to support social inclusion.

- In the context of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, which seeks also to promote evidence-based social innovation, the jury calls for an EU homelessness strategy to collect evidence and promote mutual learning at European level about the effectiveness of 'housing led' approaches. In particular, there should be a focus on:

  - the effectiveness of different forms of housing and floating support;
  - quality issues relating to housing and floating support;
  - prevention of homelessness;
  - methods of overcoming barriers to social housing for people experiencing homelessness;
  - strategies to use the private rental and owner occupied sector to re-house people experiencing homelessness;
  - collecting evidence on different projects that are currently testing the 'Housing First' service delivery model in a number of European cities.

How can meaningful participation of homeless people in the development of homelessness policies be assured?

The importance and scope of participation

The jury emphasises the right of all homeless people (as defined by the ETHOS definition) to be treated with dignity and respect. People in homeless living situations should be informed, consulted and heard in relation to decisions affecting their lives. Although this key question focuses on participation at the level of policy development, the evidence presented in the framework of the consensus conference has shown that participation is a broader, differentiated process.

In addition to recognising rights and dignity, evidence presented in the framework of the consensus conference suggests that participation can help some homeless people to develop confidence, self-esteem and skills that can support exits from homelessness. Mechanisms for participation can also create opportunities to challenge negative stereotypes about homeless people by, for example, bringing homeless people, policy makers, other citizens and service providers together in contexts where they can overcome prejudice.

Participation in decision-making as individuals

The services that homeless people use should empower them. Empowerment means the enhancement of a person's capacity to make informed choices about their lives and transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes. The jury therefore supports a shift in understanding services for homeless people - moving away from an approach that sees them as passive recipients of help towards an approach that emphasises their rights and autonomy.

Empowerment to control one's own life may involve developing self-confidence; developing awareness of opportunities and resources and how to access these; recognising and developing personal capacities; and having opportunities to develop social networks and to take up responsibilities. In the opinion of the jury, services used by homeless people should as far as possible work in a way that is empowering to individuals by facilitating opportunities to engage in these processes. It is important to emphasise that empowerment does not negate the need for support but informs how support should be delivered.

Social workers and other service provider staff should be appropriately trained to use empowering methods. Working in an empowering way is an important aspect of the quality of services used by homeless people. Ongoing mutual learning and transnational exchange should take place to support the development of best practice in empowering homeless people as individuals. The jury therefore recommends the development of a training programme for the personnel of mainstream and specialised services that interact with homeless people. A key element of this programme should be recognising the rights and autonomy of homeless people.

Participation in decision-making as service users

People experiencing homelessness should have the opportunity to actively participate in the services they use. Service providers should develop mechanisms to inform, consult and hear the views of service users. Service users should be given a maximum of choice in defining the support that is most appropriate for them. Homeless people have valuable insights into what is needed from services which can have a positive impact on quality. The jury emphasises that being heard does not necessarily mean achieving desired change, so it is important that service users receive feedback on the impact of their involvement and that information about the scope of participatory practice is clear from the outset. There is a growing body of best practice in relation to effective participation at the level of services and the jury recommends continued mutual learning and exchange in this area in the context of an EU homelessness strategy.

Participation in the development of homeless policies

There is a growing emphasis on developing mechanisms to integrate the perspectives and opinions of homeless people in the development of homeless policy at local, regional, national and European level. It is increasingly recognised that the insight of homeless people can help to develop effective policies. The jury therefore calls for the development of mechanisms that mean the experiences of homeless people and the realities they face can be integrated into the policy cycle at different levels.

However, the jury also considers that there are a number of significant barriers to the meaningful participation of people experiencing homelessness in policy development. There are limits to the extent to which it is realistic or desirable for elected decision makers responsible for homeless policy to transfer power to any particular stakeholders. Homeless people, like all other stakeholders, should be informed, consulted and heard within the policy cycle. Participation of homeless people is part of broader stakeholder involvement (including researchers, public authorities, homeless service providers, partners in sectors such as housing, health and employment, other citizens etc), and the scope of participation processes should be made clear from the outset. There should always be a commitment to feedback on the impact of stakeholder involvement. In the jury's view, effective stakeholder involvement entails informing, consulting and hearing stakeholders in an accountable fashion, rather than co-decision making.

Participation mechanisms can fail to address the diverse and differentiated nature of homelessness and the jury considers that discourse on participation can fall into the trap of envisaging 'homeless

people' as a more or less homogenous and stable group. Since many people experience homelessness transitionally (i.e. for a limited time), there are limits to the extent to which structures can be developed to ensure that the diversity of people experiencing homelessness is integrated into policy development. There is a real risk that the more visible forms of homelessness are over-represented and the needs of people experiencing other forms of homelessness are neglected. For these reasons, it is important that participation is envisaged in the context of the full ETHOS definition of homelessness, and that a diversified set of participatory mechanisms are developed to create the opportunity for diverse groups of homeless people to be heard. Without this, there is a danger of tokenism and of relying on privileged channels for participation. This can create new hierarchies at the expense of a broader and more representative perspective and also risks sustaining the homeless label for those involved.

Beyond participation mechanisms, it is useful for homeless people to be informed about their participatory rights in terms of voting and petition.

The jury recommends ongoing mutual learning and transnational exchange to pool existing expertise on successful participation of people in homeless living situations in policy development within the EU. In particular, it would be useful to collate evaluations of different approaches.

Participation in networks of homeless people

Fostering the development of networks of people with experience of homelessness can impact on policy making and increase the objective power available to homeless people who wish to influence policy. Within the EU social inclusion framework, the participation of people experiencing poverty in policies that concern them is an established priority. In this context, homeless people should have opportunities to influence EU policy making in this area. The difficulty is that in most countries homeless people are not organized into representative structures, and the diversity of homeless people is very difficult to integrate, especially given the transitional nature of homelessness; the 'hidden' nature of some homelessness and the fact that people in some homeless living situations may be less likely to identify themselves as homeless. The jury considers that it could be useful to build on existing informal European networks, such as the virtual HOPE (Homeless People) network and the network of homeless people involved in the consensus conference via the transnational consultation of homeless people (Front Commun des SDF, 2010) in order to facilitate participation in ongoing policy co-ordination and development in the area of homeless. The well-established annual meeting of People Experiencing Poverty could provide an initial context for this.

Key Recommendations:

- The jury calls on all actors in the fight against homelessness to move away from an approach that sees homeless people as passive recipients of help towards an approach that emphasises their rights and autonomy.

- The jury calls for quality services that empower homeless people and provide mechanisms for participation in decision-making at service level.

- The jury calls for integrated national/regional homelessness strategies to facilitate realistic participation of homeless people, where it is feasible, at the level of individuals, services and policy development. This must take account of the diverse and differentiated nature of homelessness.

- At EU level, the jury calls on the European Commission to facilitate ongoing mutual learning and transnational exchange to support the development of best practice in participation at the level of homeless individuals, services and policy development. In particular, it would be useful to collate evaluations of different approaches to participatory policy development in the area of homelessness.

- The jury calls on the European Commission to facilitate a training programme for the staff of mainstream and specialized services that interact with homeless people; a key element of which should be respect for rights and autonomy and an awareness of gender-specific needs.

- The jury emphasises that participation must be understood in the context of the full ETHOS definition of homelessness, and that diversified and realistic participatory mechanisms need to be developed.

- The jury recommends building on existing informal networks, such as the virtual HOPE (Homeless People) network and the network of homeless people involved in the consensus conference, in order to facilitate participation of homeless people in ongoing policy co-ordination and development at EU level.

To what extent should people be able to access homeless services irrespective of their legal status and citizenship?

Legal status: A basis for conditionality of access to homeless services?

This key question concerns the issue of access to services for homeless people whose legal or administrative status may present barriers. The evidence from the Consensus Conference confirms that this as an area of growing importance particularly because of the increasing number of non-nationals facing homelessness and turning to homeless services. The jury emphasises that there is a growing problem of homelessness and destitution amongst non-nationals, often related to access barriers linked to legal status. This is a major challenge in the context of EU policy development and co-ordination. As the Consensus Conference highlighted, there is concern and debate amongst stakeholders about the extent to which people who are not recognised as legally residing in a Member State should be able to access services for homeless people. There is considerable diversity in the responses of Member States to this question – with some defending unconditional access and others restricting access to people with recognised residents' status even for basic services such as night shelters.

The urgent need for a stronger evidence base

The jury considers that this question must receive more attention in the context of an EU homelessness strategy. There is an overall lack of evidence base on this issue. There is therefore an urgent need for an EU study into the relationship between homelessness and migration and EU free movement contexts. This should analyse the extent of homelessness amongst non-nationals in Member States; investigate the impact of migration and free movement within the EU on homelessness services; report on the living situations of homeless migrants and EU citizens who face access barriers stemming from legal or administrative status; and analyse different policy responses with a view to identifying best practice.

European Union framework for social protection and social inclusion

At the level of the European Union, Article 34 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU states that '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, in accordance with the rules laid down by Community law and national laws and practices'. According to Article 3 of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU), the Union shall combat social exclusion and discrimination and promote social justice and protection. Article 151 of the Treaty on the

Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) defines the promotion of proper social protection and the combating of exclusion as one of the objectives of the EU. However, the concept of social protection is not clearly defined by the EU treaties. Nonetheless, the policy principle of inclusion consisting of measures on social income, housing, social care and health care is clearly established. The competency of the Union in the areas of social protection and social security are supportive or complementary to those of the Member States whilst inclusion comes within the scope of shared competence. A key issue in regard to access to homeless services is the scope of persons covered. Inclusion standards apply to people who are recognised as resident in the Member State and who can demonstrate permanent intention. Overall, human rights treaties cover the needs of those legally resident or permanently working in a Member State to the level of social inclusion standards. In terms of housing, for people without this status there is a guarantee of temporary housing of human value in line with fundamental rights.

Fundamental human rights

The issue of access to services to meet basic needs engages European legal norms relating to fundamental human rights. The main legal sources in this area at European level are the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Social Charter and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU to which all the EU Member States have adhered. Respect for human dignity requires meeting basic human needs such as food, water, housing, health treatment and care. Exclusions preventing basic assistance may potentially engage absolute rights, namely, the right to life (article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights) and the right to freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment or torture (Article 3). In addition, they can engage related rights such as the right to private and family life (Article 8) and the prohibition of discrimination (Article 14), as well as the right to a fair trial (Article 6), the right to an effective remedy (Article 13) and protection of property (Article 1 protocol 1).

In order to respect human dignity and fundamental rights, the jury concludes that no person in the European Union, regardless of their legal status, should face destitution. This means that regardless of legal or administrative status people must be able to access accommodation, social and health support to meet at least their basic needs until a sustainable solution to their situation which is in line with human dignity has been found; either in the host Member State or the country of origin.

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The role of homeless services

There is a need for a co-ordinated approach across policy areas to ensure that the fundamental rights of migrants and EU citizens are respected and that they can access at least temporary accommodation, social and health support in EU Member States as outlined above. In particular, the jury emphasises the role of consistent migration and internal mobility policy in this respect. The jury underlines that the capacity of the homeless sector to effectively meet the needs of people facing barriers linked to legal status is limited in many Member States. This group of service users may not have the same needs as other users of mainstream homeless services who do not face specific barriers linked to legal status. Specific legal barriers in terms of accessing long-term housing and support solutions may lead to them staying long-term in emergency accommodation, which can have a negative impact on well-being. This is a particular challenge where the objective of homeless services is to make progress towards ending homelessness by providing long-term solutions.

The jury underlines that capacity building will be necessary in some national contexts in order to provide adapted services to meet the accommodation and support needs of homeless migrants and EU citizens from another Member State. This requires specific funding streams and the involvement of other relevant policy areas, particularly migration policy, which has an important role to play in preventing homelessness and destitution amongst migrants and EU citizens. In this respect, the jury underlines the specific vulnerability and needs of victims of trafficking and people dependent on spousal visas.

In the opinion of the jury, the needs of some groups may be best met outside the homeless sector within services provided under migration policy. For example, the jury considers that homeless facilities cannot be considered a substitute to guaranteeing adequate accommodation to people seeking asylum. Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 lays down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers which stipulates the guarantee from the Member States of 'certain material reception conditions, in particular accommodation, food and clothing, in kind or in the form of a financial allowance. Allowances must be such that they prevent the applicant from becoming destitute'. Furthermore, in the proposal for the recasting of the aforementioned directive, the Member States are required to guarantee access to material reception conditions, which must provide an adequate standard of living to asylum applicants.

In the opinion of the jury, homeless services should not be used to systematically compensate for inconsistent migration policies that lead people to situations of destitution and homelessness. Migration policies have a responsibility to prevent migrants from entering homelessness. However, the jury also emphasises that access to homeless services must not be systematically used as a means to regulate migration. Specifically, homeless service providers should not be penalised for providing services to people presenting in need.

Equal treatment and non-discrimination

The jury draws attention to the need under EU law for equal treatment of all social and ethnic minorities. Article 18 of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU (TFEU) guarantees the right to non-discrimination including on the grounds of nationality for EU citizens. Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits discrimination including on the grounds of ethnic or social origin, language, membership of a national minority, and nationality. Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 lays down the implementation of the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin. In the implementation of EU law, the jury calls on the European Commission to act on measures relating to access to basic services which are currently discriminatory.

The relationship between homelessness and free movement

The jury calls on the EU to act upon its particular responsibilities concerning the relationship between homelessness and destitution and the free movement of EU citizens. The increasing numbers of EU citizens who are turning to homeless services (mostly people from "new" Member States who moved to "old" member states for work reasons) is closely related to free movement and internal mobility policies and legislation. There is a clear demand from policy makers and other stakeholders within the Member States for EU support and co-ordination in developing responses to the increasing numbers of EU citizens who are facing homelessness and destitution in another Member State. Given that the European Union is committed to removing barriers to free movement, there is a need to tackle obstacles to support that are linked to the nationality of a person. The jury believes that the European Commission should investigate the basis for complementing existing social security co-ordination with a legal initiative to ensure a basic level of support for all EU citizens who find themselves in a state of social emergency having exercised their right to free movement. Such a level of protection could be independent of a person's status as a worker or recognised habitual resident and be provided until a permanent solution in line with the human dignity is found; either in the host Member State or the country of origin. There is also a need to establish the possibilities for European-level funding mechanisms for such protection. Furthermore, the jury supports the promotion of mutual learning and transnational exchange on policy responses to homelessness amongst non-national EU Citizens.

Key Recommendations

- The jury calls on the European Commission to urgently facilitate an EU study on the relationship between homelessness and migration and free movement contexts. This should analyse the extent of homelessness amongst non-nationals in Member States; investigate the impact of migration on homelessness services; report on the living situations of migrants who face access barriers relating to legal or administrative status; report on the living situations of EU citizens facing homelessness in another Member State; and analyse different policy responses.

- In order to respect human dignity and fundamental rights, the jury concludes that no person in the European Union, regardless of their legal status, should face destitution. This means that they should be able to access accommodation, social and health support to meet at least their basic needs until a sustainable solution to their situation which is in line with human dignity has been found; either in the host Member State or the country of origin.

- The jury calls for an integrated approach to the situation of migrants and EU citizens facing homelessness related to their legal status. It highlights the particular responsibility of migration policy in preventing this situation. Homeless services must not be systematically used to compensate for inconsistent migration policies that lead people to situations of destitution and homelessness.

- The jury emphasises that access to homeless services must not be used as a means to regulate migration. Specifically, homeless service providers should not be penalised for providing services to people presenting in need.

- The increasingly cross-border nature of homelessness, which is the source of the debate on conditionality of access to homeless services, demonstrates the need for more unified policy in the fight against homelessness at EU level and strengthens the jury's call for an EU homelessness strategy.

- The jury calls on the European Union to take up its particular responsibilities concerning the relationship between homelessness and destitution and the free movement of EU citizens

- The jury calls on policy makers at all levels to respect the need under EU law for equal treatment and non-discrimination.

What should be the elements of an EU strategy on homelessness?

The need for an ambitious EU homelessness strategy

Homelessness has emerged as a clear priority within the EU's social inclusion process. EU-level policy co-ordination in the area of homelessness in the framework of the Social OMC has enhanced and added value to efforts at national, regional and local level over the past ten years. This has created a body of knowledge and infrastructure that can be built upon. Further progress necessitates continued and strengthened EU-level involvement in the fight against homelessness. The jury therefore calls for the development of an ambitious, integrated EU strategy, underpinned by national/regional strategies with the long-term aim of ending homelessness. This strategy should be integrated into the overarching social protection and social inclusion framework of the European Union, within the new context set by the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The policy context for an EU homelessness strategy

The jury highlights the strong basis for developing such an EU homelessness strategy, as well as the fact that the current policy context provides a number of opportunities in this respect.

The new Europe 2020 Strategy, and its headline target of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020 provides new impetus in the fight against all forms of poverty and social exclusion, including homelessness. A key element of the Europe 2020 Strategy is the flagship initiative the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion. This framework paves the way for strengthened and more ambitious action on homelessness at EU level in the form of an integrated homelessness strategy situated within the broader social inclusion framework.

Governance and involvement of stakeholders:

An EU homelessness strategy requires an appropriate governance structure permitting the incorporation of all relevant stakeholders. The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion opens possibilities for developing new partnerships between European institutions, Member States, and all European, national, regional and local stakeholders. (European Commission, 2010). In this context, the jury calls for all relevant stakeholders to be involved in an EU homelessness strategy. This includes national/regional and local policy makers, researchers, NGO homeless service providers, people experiencing homelessness and neighbouring sectors such as housing, employment and health. The jury recommends the establishment of a steering group to lead the development of a multi-annual work programme on homelessness at EU level.

Key elements of an EU homelessness strategy

ETHOS: a common framework definition of homelessness

The jury calls for ETHOS to be used as a common framework definition of homelessness underpinning an EU strategy. The jury calls on the Social Protection Committee and its indicators sub-group to promote agreement amongst Member States in applying this definition.

Measuring, monitoring and reporting on progress towards ending homelessness

An EU homelessness strategy must provide a framework, agreed by the European Commission and the Member States, for monitoring the development of national/regional homelessness strategies, as called for by the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion.

The jury supports the following as key elements of national homelessness strategies, as put forward by the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection:

- clear targets, particularly relating to prevention of homelessness; a reduction in its duration; the most severe homelessness; the improvement of the quality of services for homeless people and access to affordable housing
- an integrated approach covering all relevant policy fields;
- proper governance;
- proper data collection;
- a strong housing dimension;
- taking account of changing profiles of the homeless population, and particularly the impact of migration.

Progress towards developing and implementing national/regional strategies according to these elements should be monitored at EU level. The jury calls for an annual or bi-annual reporting strategy to report on progress. In relation to clear targets, the jury calls on Member States to initially fix specific time frames for:

- ending street homelessness
- ending long term homelessness (defined as ensuring that people do not stay in emergency accommodation for longer than the period of an 'emergency'; and do not stay in transitional accommodation longer than is required for successful move-on, as put forward by the European Parliament Written Declaration on an EU Homelessness Strategy (61/2010).

Progress towards the establishment and achievement of these two targets should also be a key element of the EU-level monitoring strategy.

Monitoring of the development of strategies should be complemented by monitoring and measuring of homelessness more broadly. The jury calls for an EU-wide monitoring system on homelessness based on straightforward and robust national/regional data collection strategies. This requires the adoption of common guidelines for measuring, monitoring and reporting on homelessness, and the jury calls on the European Commission and the SPC to develop these. Data collection is one of the key elements of integrated national/regional strategies. The Joint Report 2010 refers to 'the need to develop or improve ways of collecting statistical data to improve understanding of homelessness and housing exclusion in the various Member States'. It states that 'the lack of data is at least partly responsible for the lack of consistent and robust information and evaluation strategy in most Member States'. The jury believes that Member States should ensure that there is proper governance of data collection on homelessness by specifying a strategy and funding for data collection in the context of their national/regional homelessness strategy. Each Member State should identify a national "package" of data sources, and continue to develop its capacity as required.

Although an EU level monitoring system based on national data collection strategies should be developed, it will take time before measuring current levels of homelessness on the basis of comparative data will be possible at EU level. As a best proxy, the jury calls on Eurostat to measure past experience of homelessness, based on the ETHOS definition, through the EU-SILC survey. The jury also calls on the SPC to continue its work on improving data and indicators relating to homelessness through the indicators sub group.

Supporting the development of national/regional strategies

An EU strategy on homelessness should go beyond monitoring and reporting and deliver a package of activities to support the development and sustaining of effective national/regional homelessness strategies. In accordance with the key elements of national/regional strategies set out by the 2010 Joint Report (and outlined above), this means promoting integrated approaches and good governance; building capacity for data collection within Member States; developing and promoting knowledge and best practice in relation to housing-led approaches; promoting quality services; and developing EU level responses to the growing problem of homelessness amongst migrants. Below, the jury sets out its recommendation concerning mechanisms to achieve this.

A strong research agenda

A key element of an EU homelessness strategy must be a strong research agenda. The jury recommends that the European Commission facilitate a ten year research programme in the framework of PROGRESS and its successor as a central strand of an EU homelessness strategy. Issues of particular importance for this agenda include the relationship between migration and homelessness; the relationship between free movement of EU citizens and homelessness; longitudinal research on homelessness in order to better understand its temporal aspects and its dynamics; the effectiveness of different types of 'housing-led' policy interventions and particularly quality issues relating to different types of housing and support.

Social innovation

The European Commission's recent communication on the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion (European Commission, 2010) emphasises that 'evidence based social innovation particularly in the form of "social experimentation" will be needed to implement the Europe 2020 vision for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.' Social experimentation involves testing policy innovations before adopting them more widely. The European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) should provide funding for testing innovative actions, together with the PROGRESS programme. There is considerable scope for social innovation in the area of homelessness. The jury suggests that this approach could be used to further explore and develop 'housing-led' approaches to ending homelessness and calls in particular for testing of the 'Housing First' service model in European contexts.

Ongoing mutual learning and transnational exchange

The jury calls for a strengthened focus on mutual learning and transnational exchange in the framework of an EU homelessness strategy. This means making effective use of tools such as thematic peer reviews, conferences and seminars, expert meetings and training in order to maximise impact.

Promoting quality services

A key lesson from the Social OMC process has been the importance of ensuring access to high quality public services in order to prevent and to tackle poverty and social exclusion. The promotion of high quality services to prevent and respond to homelessness must be a central focus of an EU strategy. This pertains to housing and support services. Good practice in relation to the development of standards should be identified and promoted. The Commission has committed to developing the Voluntary European Quality Framework on social services at sector level, including in the field of homelessness in the framework of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion. An important aspect of quality is training and skills development, which are identified as a key issue under the Europe 2020 Strategy. The jury calls for the development of a training programme to provide skills development to workers in mainstream and specialised services that work with homeless people.

Funding

The European Social Fund (ESF) is used in many Member States to fund homeless services. Recently, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has been opened up to fund housing interventions for marginalized communities including homeless people. In the framework of an EU homelessness strategy, the jury calls for the promotion of strategic interventions on homelessness through the use of ESF or ERDF in the framework of national/regional strategies. The jury recommends a financing stream on homelessness in the ESF and ERDF for which the European Commission could create some concrete guidelines.

Mainstreaming homelessness across relevant policy domains

Since it cuts across a broad range of policy issues, the jury calls for homelessness to be mainstreamed across relevant policy domains as an aspect of the fight against poverty and social exclusion. The Consensus Conference demonstrated the need for integrated approaches to ending homelessness. For example, the policy areas of migration and internal mobility in the EU have been shown to be closely linked to homelessness. One important mechanism for mainstreaming homelessness is the use of social impact assessments as part of the Commission's integrated impact assessment process. Homelessness should be fully taken into account in the further development of social impact assessment in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Key recommendations

- In the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and particularly the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, the jury calls for an ambitious, integrated EU strategy, underpinned by national/regional strategies with the long-term aim of ending homelessness. This strategy should be integrated into the overarching social protection and social inclusion framework of the European Union.

- The jury calls on the European Commission to establish a steering group for an EU homelessness strategy and to involve all stakeholders in the fight against homelessness.

- The jury calls for ETHOS to be used as a common framework definition of homelessness underpinning an EU strategy, and on the Social Protection Committee and its indicators sub-group to promote agreement amongst Member States in applying this definition.

- The jury calls for a framework, agreed by the European Commission and the Member States, for monitoring the development of national/regional homelessness strategies, as a central element of the EU homelessness strategy. In this context the jury calls for an annual or bi-annual reporting strategy to report on progress. The following key elements of homelessness strategies (put forward by the 2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion) should be monitored and reported upon:

  - clear targets, particularly relating to the prevention of homelessness; a reduction in its duration; a reduction in the most severe forms of homelessness; the improvement of the quality of services for homeless people and access to affordable housing;
  - an integrated approach covering all relevant policy fields;
  - proper governance;
  - proper data collection;
  - a strong housing dimension;
  - taking account of changing profiles of the homeless population, and particularly the impact of migration.

  In addition, the jury specifically calls for this monitoring framework to address progress of the Member States towards ending street homelessness and ending long-term homelessness.

- The jury calls for an EU homelessness strategy to go beyond monitoring and reporting and deliver a package of activities to support the development and sustainment of effective national/regional homelessness strategies.

- In order to develop knowledge and understanding in the framework of an EU homelessness strategy, the jury calls for a strong research agenda; a focus on 'housing-led' approaches under the social innovation strand of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion; and ongoing mutual learning and transnational exchange on key issues in the fight against homelessness.

- The jury calls for an EU homelessness strategy to focus on the promotion of quality services for homeless people and to develop strong links to EU funding streams.

- The jury calls for homelessness to be mainstreamed across relevant policy domains as an aspect of the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

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ANNEX 1: List of experts who provided contributions on the key questions of the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness

Key Question 1: What does homelessness mean?

Bill Edgar, European Housing Research Limited and University of Dundee, United Kingdom
Primož Časl, Društvo Kralji Ulice (Kings of the Street), Slovenia
Stefania Parigi, Samusocial Paris, France
Yvan Mayeur, Samusocial Brussels, Belgium

Key Question 2: Ending homelessness, a realistic goal?

Juha Kaakinen, National Programme to Reduce Long-term Homelessness, Finland
Raffaele Tangorra, Member of the Social Protection Committee and General Director, Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs, Italy
Isobel Anderson, Department of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling, United Kingdom

Key Question 3: Are housing-led policy approaches the most effective methods of preventing and tackling homelessness?

Volker Busch-Geertsema, GISS, Bremen and European Observatory on Homelessness
Claire Roumet, European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (CECODHAS)
María José Aldanas, Provivienda, Spain

Key Question 4: How can meaningful participation of homeless people in the homelessness policies be assured?

Brigitte Hartung, Initiative Bauen Wohnen Arbeiten Cologne, Germany
Pedro Meca, Compagnons de la Nuit, France
Christian Stark, Professor of Social Work at the University of applied Sciences Linz/Upper Austria
Margaret-Ann Brünjes, Director of the Glasgow Homelessness Network, UK

Key Question 5: To what extent should people be able to access homeless services irrespective of their legal status and citizenship?

Sorcha McKenna, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, United Kingdom
Preben Brandt, City of Copenhagen's Council for Socially Marginalised People and projekt UDENFOR, Denmark
Xavier Vandromme, Emmaüs, France

Key Question 6: What should be the elements of an EU strategy on homelessness?

Freek Spinnewijn, FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless)
Hugh Frazer, Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion and National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland
Julien Damon, ECLAIRS/Sciences-Po, France

ANNEX 2: Members of the Preparatory Committee of the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness

Robert Aldridge (Chair), Scottish Council for Single Homeless, UK

Rina Beers, Federatie Opvang, the Netherlands

Stig Badentorph, Member of the board of SAND (a national organisation of people with current or past experience of homelessness), Denmark.

Pedro Cabrera, Commillas University, Spain.

Teresa Caeiro, Ministry of Work and Solidarity, Portugal.

Boróka Fehér, BMSZKI, Hungary

Peter Fredriksson, Ministry of Environment, Finland

André Gachet, ALPIL, France

Ernie Gillen, Caritas Luxembourg Caritas Europa, and Caritas Internationalis, Luxembourg

Ilja Hradecky, Nadeje, Czech Republic.

Luc Laurent, Cecodhas, EU

Magda De Meyer, cabinet of the State Secretary of Social Integration and the Fight against Poverty, Belgium

Ides Nicaise, HIVA (KU Leuven), Belgium

Anna Orban, Member of The City Belongs to All (a service user organization), Hungary

Antoine Saint-Denis, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

Eoin O Sullivan, Trinity College, Ireland

Jean Peeters, Front Commun des SDF, Belgium

Paolo Pezzana, FIO-psd and Caritas Italiana, Italy.

Alain Régnier, Government commissioner on homelessness appointed by the Prime Minister, France

Heinz Schoibl Director of Helix Research & Consulting, Austria

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