



## Decent Housing and Homelessness

*Homelessness and housing deprivation are perhaps the most extreme examples of poverty and social exclusion in society today and in all European countries.*

Best known causes include a mix of factors such as lack of affordable housing, low paying jobs, substance abuse and lack of needed services, mental illness, domestic violence, unemployment, poverty, prison release and re-entry into society, change and cuts in public assistance, as well as many other reasons.

Access to good quality and affordable accommodation is a fundamental need and right. Ensuring that this need is met is still a significant challenge in a number of Member States. In addition, developing appropriate integrated responses both to prevent and address homelessness is another essential challenge for some countries.

Acknowledging the multi-dimensionality of homelessness, the EU is addressing the issue through its Social Protection Social Inclusion Strategy and with a special emphasis on the elaboration of common definitions and indicators. Indeed, the prevention of homelessness and the re-housing of homeless people require an understanding of the pathways and processes that lead there and hence a broad perception of the meaning of homelessness.

In addition, in 2006, the Social Protection Social Inclusion strategy enabled a number of organisations – through European Projects on mutual learning or the Key European Networks (as [FEANTSA](#)) to continue developing and improving social inclusion policies related to homelessness and housing exclusion, through a number of projects, campaigns, studies and meetings involving the European Commission, the Member States, parliaments and local authorities.

## Key documents

### Best practice (links to the Peer Review website)

- [National Action Plan against substandard Housing \(France - 2007-\)](#)
- [National strategy to prevent and tackle homelessness \(Norway\)](#)
- [Preventing and tackling homelessness \(Denmark\)](#)
- [The Rough Sleepers Unit \(England\)](#)

### Studies

- [Measurement of homelessness at EU level](#)