

Urban Poverty Partnership – Public Feedback/Consultation Guidance.

The Urban Agenda’s thematic partnership on Urban Poverty Partnership has opened its action plan to consultation from the public. The Urban Poverty Partnership has a focus on homelessness, among one of four priority areas. FEANTSA has been involved in drafting the action plan.

This document provides some guidance notes on how key factors to consider when responding to the consultation. The consultation is open until August 22nd 2017 and can be completed here <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/UrbanAgenda-UrbanPoverty>

The guidance notes provided below only relate to the homeless actions. These notes are only suggestions, please provide feedback from your local or national context.

Action 2: Setting up one-stop-shop in EC website on data on urban poverty based on national observatories experiences	
Question in Consultation	Things to consider:
Why is this action important?	Data is key to combatting homelessness. Reducing poverty/homelessness means understanding where the poverty exists and how to target limited resources. This is important to better understand needs of people who are homeless (e.g women’s, youth, chronic homelessness needs differ) Data can provide insights into i) affordable housing, ii) access to social rights, iii) access to social benefits and services, iv) access to healthcare or v) access to education, training or employment opportunities.
Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?	Yes, it should have a positive impact. Collection of data means we can assess rises/falls in homelessness, and help draw link to both national and local policies. EU wide harmonised data means bridging the current information gap where we cannot capture the full picture of homelessness in the EU Role of cities and relevant stakeholders and NGOs is unclear Data should also be qualitative and not just quantitative Collecting data should help us to understand how a person became homeless, what services and supports were available to them, and what services did they need. Homeless service providers are best placed to support National Observatories in this work.
According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?	As noted above, service providers need to be engaged in the work of national observatories. There needs to be consideration of what comes next, simply collecting data is not sufficient. There should be a mechanism at the local and national level that allows data to inform policy making. There should be some connection made between the observatories and the relevant policy makers. At European level, the data should inform the work of DG EMPL and DG Regio. The value of one stop shop is not only in understanding the extent of a problem but in developing effective policies and strategies to homelessness.
Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that	The annual FEANTSA and Foundation Abbé Pierre report, An Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe, is an important tool in data collection and monitoring.

could be relevant for this action?	It collects, at the national level, official homelessness data from across Europe, though this data is not harmonised and not comparable It captures the state of housing exclusion in Europe using EU SILC data on overcrowding etc, and provides an analysis of housing rights in Europe. FEANTSA and Foundation Abbé Pierre should be considered key partners for the collection of data at the one-stop-shop
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Action 3: Further development of EU-SILC to incorporate comprehensive and specific indicators related to child poverty at the local level and to harmonise data collection on homelessness	
Question in Consultation	Things to consider:
Why is this action important ?	Collection of data on homelessness is key to reducing and ending homelessness. The collection of data at the local and national level, gives key insights which can link various economic and social policies to the rise or fall in homelessness. The collection of harmonised data across the EU creates the potential to assess whether homelessness is rising or falling. We know from the local level that homelessness has risen in all EU countries with one exception in recent years. The establishment and collection of this data can assist with the development and implementation of more effective EU policies (European Funds, the Social Pillar, Skills Agenda, Poverty Targets, European Semester)
Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?	In the context of homelessness this action is important EU harmonised data empowers European policy makers to develop and target their resources, policies and funds in the most effective means possible to eradicate homelessness. Many countries, the OECD and many universities use ETHOS in defining what homelessness is, there should be a broad consensus that this is the correct definition to use.
According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?	Please provide any personal thought/comments you may have on how to improve data collection, or your thoughts from your local context.
Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?	EU-SILC has prepared an ad-hoc module on retrospective housing difficulties. It will be tested and piloted in 2018. This survey will specifically gather data on previous experiences of homelessness. The data will inform on routes into and exits out of homelessness. This is information which should be included in the one-stop-shop. It is not a mandatory module, and Member States should be encouraged to implement the module.

Action 9: Ending homelessness by 2030, through the reform of social inclusion strategies at the national level	
Question in Consultation	Things to consider:

Why is this action important ?	Homelessness has risen in the past years, when the EU has excluded homelessness from how it has measured poverty. An EU wide target to reduce and end homelessness, reinforces the existing commitments made by the national governments in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It goes further and creates a framework for European, national and local policy makers to provide funding and investing in social innovation and evidence based practices that can have a lasting impact. No target and no timeline means no action and no impact.
Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?	In the absence of indicators to measure homelessness in the 2020 targets we have seen homelessness fall off the European agenda. Re-affirming the deadline creates a political momentum to act. A definition for what ending homelessness means is also welcomed. Housing first and housing led solutions have been well tested and evaluated, and their success in combating homelessness is clear, not only in improved outcomes for clients but also reduced costs, compared to shelter based care. Please also include your thoughts on whether an EU deadline empowers local actors to acquire funding to end homelessness.
According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?	Please provide any personal thought/comments you may have on how a target and deadline to end homelessness would be valued in your country. Are there other actions which can support this commitment.
Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?	The provisions of the draft European Pillar of Social Rights outline a right to housing and shelter. Re-affirming the 2030 commitments to eradicate poverty can be supported by the recognition of this right. The European Semester process can also play a role in identifying homelessness as a problem in the member states, and can propose country specific recommendations to implement policies which can have a positive impact in the fight to end homelessness

Action 10: Capacity building for the use of the EU funds to end homelessness	
Question in Consultation	Things to consider:
Why is this action important ?	Capacity building for better use of the funds is essential and will support a 2030 deadline to end homelessness. European funds are often "creamed" meaning they do not reach the most in need. This happens frequently with the homeless sector. Capacity building that involves the homeless sector and managing authorities is imperative in building an awareness of effective and innovative use of the funds
Based on your experience, do you believe that this action would contribute to addressing the abovementioned bottlenecks?	This action will help share and disseminate best practices. This action helps the European Commission ensure funds reach the most in need and provides service providers and managing authorities with a framework for how best to use the funds at the local level

<p>According to your experience, do you believe that the bottleneck presented above could be better tackled through other action(s)?</p>	<p>Please provide any personal thought/comments you may have on capacity building for funds.</p>
<p>Are you aware of initiatives or documentation developed at EU, national or local level that could be relevant for this action?</p>	<p>FEANTSA in conjunction with DG Regio have had organised a seminar on using ESF funds to promote better use of the funds, which was very successful. This is a model which could be pursued.</p>