



# Be Fair, Europe – Stand Up for Homeless People

## FEANTSA Roadmap – CRIMINALISATION OF HOMELESSNESS

Cities, regions and countries are increasingly penalising and criminalising homelessness. This roadmap explains the current situation and what needs to change for Europe to defend the rights of homeless people.

### Where are we?

People who are forced to live outside are finding it increasingly difficult to remain in public spaces

Recent years have seen the introduction of legislation banning sleeping, sitting or storing personal belongings in public spaces, as well as increasingly visible anti-homeless architecture.

Homeless people can also often be indirectly affected by measures to make public spaces safer.



An amendment to the Hungarian constitution (June 2018) further criminalizes rough sleeping. Article 22 paragraph 3 states that “It is forbidden to live in a public space”.



A growing number of Public Space Protection Orders fine and convict people for begging and rough sleeping.



A recent advert on buses in Riga encourages travellers to report to the police any homeless people because their ‘odour’ is causing a public disturbance.



Countries where laws against begging have been introduced.



Countries which are debating bringing in anti-begging laws.



Displacing, sanctioning, repressing or arresting homeless people does not solve the problem and governments need to both provide targeted services, as well as respect and uphold their rights, in particular the right to housing.

## What needs to change?

The European Union Institutions & Member States should promote rights-based approaches to homelessness and commit to the following:



Raising awareness about the criminalisation of homelessness. As guardians of the Treaties, the EU should ensure that its policies respect human rights and do not explicitly or inadvertently contribute to the criminalisation and penalisation of homelessness.



Promoting alternatives to criminalisation by developing Principle 19 of the European Pillar of Social Rights: the right to housing and assistance for the homeless in the framework of the Agenda 2030 with the clear goal of ending homelessness.



Including a clear rights-based approach in the EU Urban Agenda and making sure the commitments of the UN New Urban Agenda are respected by EU Member States.



Encouraging European cities to endorse the Homeless Bill of Rights to reaffirm their commitment to human rights.



Being vigilant to assess if EU policies criminalise and penalise homelessness, for example in recent measures and funding to secure open public spaces from terrorist acts.



Condemning the banning of begging in the EU, also when it constitutes indirect discrimination and disproportionately affects Roma people