

tegic follow up of the progress already made on homelessness at EU level.

Addressing homelessness is currently established on the EU agenda as a political priority, but further work is needed to transform this into effective action for better policy development. The Joint Report of the Commission and Council on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009 stated that *'sustained work is required to tackle homelessness as an extremely serious form of exclusion.'* Furthermore, the OMC on social protection and social inclusion had homelessness and housing exclusion as a thematic priority in 2009. This meant Member States submitted national reports on homelessness and housing exclusion, on which the European Commission and Council will provide a first analysis in its 2010 Joint Report. The European Consensus Conference on Homelessness comes at precisely the right time to facilitate effective, concrete follow up of this Joint Report. In addition, in April 2008 the European Parliament adopted a Written Declaration on Ending Street Homelessness, calling on the Commission to develop a European framework definition of homelessness, gather comparable and reliable statistical data, and provide annual updates on action taken and progress made in Member States.

2010: A key moment for homelessness in Europe

Homelessness is widely recognised as one of the most extreme and damaging forms of poverty and social exclusion. It is a reality faced in all European countries, and violates fundamental human rights. A growing number of member states as well as regional and local authorities have established, or taken steps towards establishing homelessness strategies in recent years. In doing so, they demonstrate clearly a recognition of the need to confront homelessness as an urgent social priority.

2010 is the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The key objectives of the year are to raise public awareness and renew the political commitment of the EU and its Member States to combating poverty and social exclusion. 2010 is thus a potential turning point for policy progress on homelessness – a unique opportunity for EU level action to facilitate more effective policy development.



Partners

A range of actors are co-operating on the European Consensus Conference on Homelessness:



The European Commission



The Belgian Presidency of the EU
(Represented by the Belgian State Secretary for Social Integration and the fight against poverty)



The French Government
(Represented by the Government Commissioner for Homelessness)



FEANTSA
(the European Federation of National Homelessness Organisations)



Le Front Commun des SDF en Belgique



European Consensus Conference on Homelessness

9-10 December 2010



