

# EU Homelessness Platform: What & How?

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Contribution Freek Spinnewijn FEANTSA  
BAWO conference – workshop – May 2022 – Vienna

# Origin

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- 15 years of FEANTSA advocacy
  - Support EP
  - Support EESC & CoR
  - Support individual Member States
  - Support EPSCO
  - Support Commissioner
- Op-ed on Platform as idea
  - Commissioner Schmit & Portuguese Presidency
- Launch during EU Presidency
  - Ministers' Meeting June 2021
  - Buy-in of all MS was surprise

# Lisbon Declaration

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- Political basis for work and structure of Platform
- Signed by
  - all EU Member States
    - Minister level
  - EP, Commission, EESC & CoR
  - SPC
  - EU Social Partners
  - European NGOs
    - FEANTSA, Red Cross, Social Platform, Social Economy Europe, Eurocities, CEMR, ESN
- Commitment
  - To work together at EU level on homelessness
  - To advance towards ending homelessness by 2030
    - Paradigm shift

# Governance

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- Chair
  - Yves Leterme – former PM of Belgium
- Ministers' Meeting
  - At least every two years
- Steering Board
  - Trio Presidency, EESC, CoR, EP, SPC, FEANTSA & Eurocities
    - Only expert is FEANTSA
- Plenary
  - See previous slide
  - App 60 people
    - Right representatives of government
- Secretariat
  - DG EMPL

# Work programme

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- Adopted by Ministers in Feb 2022 under French EU Presidency
- 4 streams of action
  - Data collection
  - Steering & Monitoring of policy progress
  - Mutual learning
  - Access to funding and financing
- *Fight* between DG EMPL & FEANTSA + others
  - Label vs real *dynamic*
  - See difficulties with budget

# Data collection

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- European data collection project
  - 1 million euro
    - Will probably be renewed
  - To be tendered
    - Before Summer
  - Focus on promoting cost-effective local data collection
    - Probably replication of Belgian model
      - Koen Hermans – University of Leuven
- Lifetime experience of homelessness
  - Eurostat
    - As from 2023
- ISG
  - Analysis of existing data
    - In framework EU Semester
  - Development of EU monitoring framework
    - In coop with OECD

# Steering and monitoring policy

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- Toolkit for national homeless strategies
  - OECD
  - Timeline – by mid-2023
  - Unclear what format...
  - Should help MS deliver national strategies as promised in work programme
- SPC & EC
  - Policy monitoring in EC Country Reports
  - Analysis and recommendations in annual SPC report

# Mutual learning

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- 3 peer reviews/mutual learning events per year
  - Organised by EC with support of commercial consultancy
  - Focus unclear
    - Initial focus on national strategies
  - Only for members
    - Intergov dynamic
  - 1<sup>st</sup> event
    - 22-23 June 2022 in Brussels
    - Presentation and analysis of strategies from DK, IE, PT
- *Random* collection of events of stakeholders which are member of Platform
  - Including FEANTSA events
  - Leads to lots of confusion...
- EU call for local projects in 2023
  - Uncertain
  - 10 million for 8 projects



# Access to funding & financing

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- Nothing planned
- Argumentation
  - EU legal framework is ready and now it is up to the MS to seize the opportunities
  - BUT
    - Proactive approach required...

# What does FEANTSA want ?

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- Data collection
  - Proper data analysis of existing data
    - Beyond capacity of ISG
    - FEANTSA's OBS could play role
    - Can undermine dynamic of Platform
- Mutual learning
  - Proper mutual learning programme
    - Beyond events
      - Research, evaluation, technical webinars, training (Housing First), site visits, etc...
    - Answering genuine needs/interest members of the Platform
      - Demand needs to be explicit
    - Involvement of FEANTSA as co-organisers

# What does FEANTSA want ? (2)

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- Access to financing
  - Pro-active cooperation with EIB and CEB
    - Under leadership Yves Leterme
    - Develop pilot projects & promote investment
      - Technical assistance
  - Supporting ESF & ERDF Managing Authorities
    - Promote projects on homelessness
    - Identification of good practices
    - Working towards simplified costings
- Monitoring of policy progress
  - More capacity of SPC to do proper monitoring
  - Homelessness to be covered by all EC Country Reports of the Semester
  - Homelessness in CSR

# What does FEANTSA want ? (3)

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- Proper governance
  - Steering Board to steer ...
  - EC to support ...
  - Members to decide...
  - Chair to chair...
  - Dysfunctional at the moment
- Proper budget
  - For recurrent activities + governance
  - 1 million euro per year
  - Sub-contract work to partners including FEANTSA

# What will future bring?

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- Negotiations with DG EMPL
  - At highest level
  - To bridge gap between ambitions of Commissioner – support provided by admin
- Close cooperation with EU Presidencies
  - Esp ES & BE
  - EPSCO Council Conclusions
- Mobilise Member States
  - Together with FEANTSA members
  - Make demand explicit
  - Keep ambition high
- FEANTSA will have to decide how to position itself toward Platform
  - Delivery partner of traditional activist approach

# Conclusion

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- Lots of enthusiasm about the Platform but a very fragile initiative
  - If no concrete added value soon, Platform might collapse
- Focus should be on learning & financing rather than monitoring
  - Uncomfortable territory for the European Commission

# Questions???

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- What kind of European activity on homelessness would be useful from Austrian perspective?
- How to combine our lobbying efforts?