

Brussels, 23 April 2021

Open letter concerning European commitment to end homelessness at the Porto Social Summit

Dear President of the European Council Michel,

Dear Prime Minister Costa,

Dear Members of the European Council,

Dear Members of the Employment and Social Affairs Council,

In its Communication on the Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Commission rightly states that the number of homeless people has risen sharply and is currently unacceptably high. The European Commission also refers to the fact that the European Parliament and stakeholders want the EU to set an objective to end homelessness by 2030, which was most recently called for in the report on ‘Access to Decent and Affordable Housing’.

As Nicolas Schmit, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Ana Mendes Godinho, Minister of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security in Portugal, and Yves Leterme, Goodwill Ambassador for the Fight against Homelessness in Europe, jointly stated in June 2020¹:

“Though complex, homelessness is not insurmountable and can be overcome. Ending homelessness requires resolute action addressing its root causes, and investing in prevention and empowerment strategies. The European Union also has an important role to play: **it can rally all interested stakeholders around a shared goal**, galvanise the political commitment of Member States, facilitate exchange of best practice and support the scale-up of evidence-based policies via the EU budget.”

While we welcome the proposal for an EU Platform on Combatting Homelessness and the High Level Conference on it as important steps for putting homelessness on the European agenda and supporting Member States’ actions, we regret that the European Commission did not include a shared European goal to reduce and ultimately end homelessness as a sub-target of the poverty reduction target in the action plan.

We believe that the Porto Social Summit is the perfect occasion to not only endorse the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, but to raise the bar even further when it comes to strengthening the social dimension of the Union. In the wake of the COVID19 pandemic, reducing poverty and social inequality has become the number one issue the EU should focus on for EU citizens according to a recent Eurobarometer². Furthermore, the temporary moratorium on mortgage loans repayment that many member states have implemented in the coronavirus context are likely to start phasing-out. This will have a severe impact in distressed households and can lead to an unprecedented peak of homelessness in Europe.

That is why we are calling for a commitment to end homelessness by 2030 in both the Porto Social Summit Commitment of 7 May as the political declaration of the informal meeting of the Heads of State or Government on 8 May.

Homelessness is an extreme form of poverty and a violation of human rights that we simply cannot tolerate or ignore in the EU. Without specifically targeting homelessness under the poverty reduction target, we fear homeless people will be left by the wayside, at a time of increasing precarity.

¹ In the article “Homelessness cannot be just another fact of life in the EU” <https://www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/opinion/homelessness-cannot-be-just-another-fact-of-life-in-the-eu/>

² <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2020/parlemeter-2020/en-key-findings.pdf>

Tackling homelessness should also be fully incorporated in the architecture of the economic and social policy coordination of the EU and followed up through the Social Scoreboard of the Semester process. If a reduction of homelessness will not be visible in the results for the poverty reduction target in the Social Scoreboard, because not measured, it would risk being irrelevant for this category of people living in extreme poverty. The EU Platform on Combatting Homelessness can also only reach its full potential if it's underpinned by solid data.

The European Union will not solve homelessness alone. Much of the work needs to be done at national, regional and local level. However, an unequivocal European commitment, together with concrete support, can strengthen the work done by all actors. That's why we, from the European to the local level are calling on you to be bold and give real political impetus to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan by adopting an EU goal to end homelessness by 2030.

We urge you to consider these issues in the preparation of the Porto Social Summit 7-8 May.

Yours sincerely,

Members of the European Parliament

Co-initiators

Kim van Sparrentak (Greens/EFA)
Manuel Pizarro (S&D)
Cindy Franssen (EPP)
Leïla Chaïbi (The Left)
Yana Toom (Renew Europe)

Signing

Agnes Jongerius (S&D)
Alex Agius Saliba (S&D)
Alexandra Geese (Greens/EFA)
Alexis Georgoulis (The Left)
Alicia Homs Ginel (S&D)
Álvaro Amaro (EPP)
Alviina Alametsä (Greens/EFA)
Andreas Schieder (S&D)
Anna Donáth (Renew Europe)
Anne-Sophie Pelletier (The Left)
Antoni Comín (NI)
Aurore Lalucq (S&D)
Ausra Maldeikiene (EPP)
Bas Eickhout (Greens/EFA)
Benoît Biteau (Greens/EFA)
Benoit Lutgen (EPP)
Bettina Vollath (S&D)
Billy Kelleher (Renew Europe)
Carles Puigdemont (NI)
Carlos Zorrinho (S&D)
Caroline Roose (Greens/EFA)
Chris MacManus (The Left)
Christoph Hansen (EPP)
Ciarán Cuffe (Greens/EFA)

Major European Cities

Fernando Medina, Mayor of Lisbon
Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona
Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President Brussels
Gergely Karácsony, Mayor of Budapest
Kostas Bakoyannis, Mayor of Athens
Zdeněk Hřib, Mayor of Prague
Jelena Pavičić Vukičević, Mayor of Zagreb
Zoran Janković, Mayor of Ljubljana
Hazel Chu, Mayor of Dublin
Mihhail Kõlvart, Mayor of Tallinn
Matúš Vallo, Mayor of Bratislava
Jeanne Barseghian, Mayor of Strasbourg
Ahmed Aboutaleb, Mayor of Rotterdam
Pierre Hurmic, Mayor of Bordeaux
Joan Ribó Canut, Mayor of Valencia
Ricardo Rio, Mayor of Braga
Grégory Doucet, Mayor of Lyon
Juan Espadas, Mayor of Seville
Mathias De Clercq, Mayor of Gent
Luísa Salgueiro, Mayor of Matosinhos
Emil Boc, Mayor Cluj-Napoca
Jaroslav Polaček, Mayor of Kosice
Rinaldo Melucci, Mayor of Taranto
Willy Demeyer, Mayor of Liège
Mohamed Ridouani, Mayor of Leuven
Simone Kukenheim, Vice-Mayor of Amsterdam
Sanna Vesikansa, Vice-Mayor of Helsinki
Brian Dybro, Vice-Mayor of Odense
Maarten van Ooijen, Vice-Mayor of Utrecht
Anja Stahmann, Senator for Social Affairs, Bremen
Jari Saarinen, Vice-Mayor of Kuopio

Members of the European Parliament

Clara Ponsatí (NI)
Clare Daly (The Left)
Claude Gruffat (Greens/EFA)
Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar (EPP)
Damien Carême (Greens/EFA)
Daniel Freund (Greens/EFA)
Daniela Rondinelli (NI)
Dan Stefan Motreanu (EPP)
David Cormand (Greens/EFA)
Dennis Radtke (EPP)
Diana Riba (Greens/EFA)
Dietmar Köster (S&D)
Dimitrios Papadimoulis (The Left)
Dragoş Pislaru (Renew Europe)
Eleonora Evi (Greens/EFA)
Elisabetta Gualmini (S&D)
Ernest Urtaşun (Greens/EFA)
Estrella Dura Ferrandis (S&D)
Evelyn Regner (S&D)
Francisco Guerreiro (Greens/EFA)
Francois Alfonsi (Greens/EFA)
François-Xavier Bellamy (EPP)
Gabriele Bischoff (S&D)
García del Blanco (S&D)
Guenther Sidl (S&D)
Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Greens/EFA)
Hilde Vautmans (Renew Europe)
Idoia Villanueva Ruiz (The Left)
Ignazio Corrao (Greens/EFA)
Ioan-Rares Bogdan (EPP)
Isabel Carvalhais (S&D)
Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (Renew Europe)
Javier Nart (Renew Europe)
Jordi Solé (Greens/EFA)
José Gusmão (The Left)
José Manuel Fernandes (EPP)
Josianne Cutajar (S&D)
Karen Melchior (Renew Europe)
Karima Delli (Greens/EFA)
Kateřina Konečná (The Left)
Katrín Langensiepen (Greens/EFA)
Kira Peter-Hansen (Greens/EFA)
Klemen Groselj (Renew Europe)
Konstantinos Arvanitis (The Left)
Krzysztof Hetman (EPP)
Lidia Pereira (EPP)
Loucas Foulras (EPP)
Manon Aubry (The Left)
Manour Satouri (Greens/EFA)
Manu Pineda (The Left)
Manuel Bompard (The Left)
Marc Angel (S&D)
Marc Botenga (The Left)
Margarida Marques (S&D)
Margrete Auken (Greens/EFA)
Maria da Graça Carvalho (EPP)
Maria Eugénia Palop Rodríguez (The Left)
Maria Manuel Leitão-Marques (S&D)
Maria Walsh (EPP)
Marie Toussaint (Greens/EFA)
Marie-Pierre Vedrenne (Renew Europe)
Marisa Matias (The Left)
Martin Häusling (Greens/EFA)
Martin Schirdewan (The Left)
Massimiliano Smeriglio (S&D)
Massimo Smeriglio (S&D)
Michael Bloss (Greens/EFA)
Michèle Rivasi (Greens/EFA)
Mick Wallace (The Left)
Milan Brglez (S&D)
Monika Beňová (S&D)
Monika Vana (Greens/EFA)
Niklas Nienaa (Greens/EFA)
Nikolaj Villumsen (The Left)
Niyazi Kızılyürek (The Left)
Olivier Chastel (Renew Europe)
Özlem Alev Demirel (The Left)
Patrick Breyer (Greens/EFA)
Paulo Rangel (EPP)
Pernando Barrena (The Left)
Peter Pollak (EPP)
Pierfrancesco Majorino (S&D)
Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D)
Rasmus Andresen (Greens/EFA)
Romana Jerković (S&D)
Romeo Franz (Greens/EFA)
Rosa D'Amato (Greens/EFA)
Salima Yenbou (Greens/EFA)
Samira Rafaela (Renew Europe)
Sara Cerdas (S&D)
Sara Matthieu (Greens/EFA)
Saskia Bricmont (Greens/EFA)
Silvia Modig (The Left)
Sira Rego (The Left)
Stelios Kouloglou (The Left)
Sven Giegold (Greens/EFA)
Sylvie Guillaume (S&D)
Tatjana Zdanoka (Greens/EFA)
Terry Reintke (Greens/EFA)
Tineke Strik (Greens/EFA)
Tom Vandenkendelaere (EPP)
Tudor Ciuhodaru (S&D)
Ville Niinistö (Greens/EFA)
Yannick Jadot (Greens/EFA)
Younous Omarjee (The Left)

NGOs

FEANTSA
Freek Spinnewijn
Director

The Shift
Leilani Farha
Global Director

Housing Europe
Sorcha Edwards
Secretary-General

Social Platform
Piotr Sadowski
President

Fondation Abbé Pierre
Sarah Coupechoux
Responsible Europe

Eurodiaconia,
Heather Roy
Secretary-General

Caritas Europa
Shannon Pfohman
Policy and Advocacy Director

Habitat for Humanity International
Rick Hathaway
Vice-President

European Anti Poverty Network
Anna Krozser
Policy and Advocacy Coordinator

Red Cross EU
Mette Petersen
Director (a.i.)

Members of the Committee of the Regions

Bernd Voss, Member of the Regional Assembly Schleswig-Holstein, Co-President of the Green Group

Satu Haapanen, City Councillor of Oulu, Co-President of the Green Group

Kate Feeney, City Councillor of Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown County, Coordinator SEDEC Renew Europe

Christoph Rouillon, Mayor of Coullaines, President of PES Group

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, Member of the Parliament of the German-speaking Community, PES Group

Ufuk Kâhya, Vice Mayor of Den Bosch, Green Group

Vasco Alves Cordeiro, Vice President Committee of the Regions, Member of Regional Assembly Azores, PES Group

Florian Siekmann, Member of Bavarian State Parliament, Green Group

Claudette Brunet Lechenault, Departmental Councillor of Saône et Loire, PES Group

Katja Meier, Repr. Regional Body Landtag Sachsen

Javier Vila Ferrero, Director General of European Affairs, Asturias, PES Group

Lidia Muñoz Caceres, Mayor of Sant Feliu de Llobregat, Not Affiliated

Alison Gilliland, Dublin City Councillor, PES Group

Isolde Ries, First Vice-President of the Saarland Regional Parliament, PES Group

Isilda Maria Prazeres dos Santos Vargues Gomes, Mayor of Portimão, PES Group

Enzo Bianco, Municipal Councillor of Catania, PES Group

Hannes Weninger, Councillor of Gießhübl, PES Group

Cécile Hemmen, Councillor of Weiler-la-Tour, PES Group

Filip Reinhag, Regional Commissioner of the Gotland municipality, PES Group

Claudette Brunet Lechenault, Councillor of the Saône et Loire department, PES Group

Dan Boyle, Cork City Councillor, Green Group

Koen Van den Heuvel, Member of Flemish Parliament, EPP
Karin Brouwers, Member of Flemish Parliament, EPP

Further signatories

Municipalities and towns

Pedro del Cura Sánchez, Mayor,
Rivas Vaciamadrid (ES)

Christiane Thommes Bach, Mayor, Grevels (LU)

José Antonio Montero Domínguez, Mayor,
Montornès (ES)

Isabel Garcia Ripoll, Mayor, Santa Perpètua (ES)

Magdalena Davis, Mayor, Zeleni (CZ)

Lluís Mijoler, Mayor, El Prat de Llobregat (ES)

Tonni Hansen, Mayor, Langeland (DK)

Nora Forgiarini, Vice-Mayor, Schuttrange (LU)

Brian Dybro, Vice-Mayor of Labor market and Social
services, Odense (DK)

Jean-Albert Kalmes, Vice-Mayor, Schifflange
(LU)

Tine Heyse, Vice-Mayor, Gent (BE)

Rudy Coddens, Vice-Mayor, Gent (BE)

Isabelle Heyndrickx, Vice-Mayor, Gent (BE)

Lies Corneillie, Vice-Mayor, Leuven (BE)

Bieke Verlinden, Vice-mayor, Leuven (BE)

Veronique Seyral, Vice-Mayor, Bordeaux (FR)

Harmonie Lecerf, Vice-Mayor, Bordeaux (FR)

Steve Schleck, Vice-Mayor, Mondorf-les-Bains
(LU)

Martin Kox, Vice-Mayor, Esch-sur-Alzette (LU)

Andy Gilberts, Vice-Mayor, Steinfort (LU)

Marc Krier, Vice-Mayor, Grevenmacher (LU)

Petry Viviane, Vice-Mayor, Kayl (LU)

Ondřej Syrovátka, Vice-Mayor, Nový Jičín (CZ)

Catherine Brüll, Vice-Mayor, Eupen (BE)

Mieke Hullebroeck, General Manager City,
Gent (BE)

Sisse Marie Welling, Councillor, Aarhus (DK)

Thomas Medom, Councillor, Aarhus (DK)

Natascha Chmelar, Member of the federal executive
committee of the Greens, Tyrol (AT)

Nicolas Lonfils Member of the Social Affairs Council,
Forest (BE)

Oisín O'Connor County Councillor, Dún Laoghaire-
Rathdown (IE)

Alan O'Connor, County Councillor, Cork (IE)

Karen Power, County Councillor, Fingal (IE)

Mark Hackett, County Councillor, Offaly (IE)

Janet Horner, City Councillor, Dublin (IE)

Oliver Moran, City Councillor, Cork (IE)

Colette Finn, City Councillor, Cork (IE)

Donna Cooney, City Councillor, Dublin (IE)

Liam Sinclair, City Councillor, South Dublin (IE)

Laura Donaghy, City Councillor, South Dublin (IE)

Gebke van Gaal, International Secretary and vice-
president of the GroenLinks, (NL)

Dimitra Limperopoulou, Head of regional party in
Peloponnese (GR)