

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002172/25
to the Commission
Elena Kountoura (The Left)
(30 May 2025)

Subject: The need for substantial action in the European Union to end homelessness by 2030

Homelessness has been rising steadily in recent years, as a result of the ever-increasing cost of housing, the impact of the economic crisis, the reduction of social protection and the lack of effective policies to address it, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable sections of the population. According to recent data, approximately 1.3 million people in the EU are homeless, including almost 400 000 minors. ⁽¹⁾

Considering that:

- access to decent and affordable housing is a fundamental human right, enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU; ⁽²⁾
- the 27 Member States committed in 2021, in the Lisbon Declaration, to work towards ending homelessness by 2030;
- the EU has not yet developed a European strategy to end homelessness by 2030 ⁽³⁾:

1. Will the Commission propose a single European definition of homelessness and develop a European strategy to end homelessness by 2030?
2. Will the Commission propose legislative measures to ensure the right to housing in practice and promote the widespread implementation of ‘Housing-Led’ social inclusion models, providing housing security, such as the ‘Housing First’ model ⁽⁴⁾ in all Member States?
3. Does the Commission intend to propose the creation of a dedicated European Fund to Combat Homelessness, allowing local authorities to manage part of the funds directly, under the next MFF?

Submitted: 30.5.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(29 July 2025)

Homelessness is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon with multiple drivers and no universally accepted definition. The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) Light, developed in the context of a Commission study in 2007 ⁽¹⁾, is increasingly used by Member States as the reference framework for understanding and measuring homelessness in the EU.

ETHOS Light defines six operational categories of homelessness and housing exclusion, corresponding to different living situations from rough sleeping to inadequate housing.

The development of a common operational definition and counting methodology to be tested in 35 cities across 20 Member States is the one of the main goals of the European Homelessness Count pilot project funded by the Commission ⁽²⁾.

Housing remains a competency of the Member States. The Commission will continue to support Member States in the development of national strategies based on the principles of the Lisbon Declaration ⁽³⁾, including by the announced European Affordable Housing Plan.

In addition, the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness ⁽⁴⁾ represents the strategic framework at EU level to fight homelessness, promoting policies based on a person-centred, housing-led and integrated approach.

¹ For more information, see <https://www.feantsa.org/en/report/2024/09/19/report-9th-overview-of-housing-exclusion-in-europe-2024>.

² In practice, the right to housing varies considerably between Member States and housing is still treated mainly as a commodity, rather than a social right.

³ The European Parliament has repeatedly called on the Commission in its resolutions to propose a common definition of homelessness in the EU and a European strategy to end homelessness in the EU. See e.g. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-10-2025-0032_EN.html.

⁴ The European Platform to Combat Homelessness, in the framework of the Lisbon Declaration, promotes the exchange of good practices and support for Member States in implementing the ‘Housing First’ model. The ‘Housing First’ model prioritises the immediate provision of permanent and independent housing to people experiencing homelessness, without conditions.

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/2007/study_homelessness_en.pdf.

⁽²⁾ https://www.kuleuven.be/lucas/en/eu_homelessness_counts.

⁽³⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=24120&langId=en>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/social-protection-social-inclusion/addressing-poverty-and-supporting-social-inclusion/homelessness_en.

Regarding funding instruments, the Commission presented its proposals for the next multiannual financial framework on 16 July 2025.
