

Strengthening Gender-Responsive Approaches to Women's Homelessness in Europe

As anti-gender voices are gaining ground across Europe, FEANTSA continues to reaffirm its commitment to women's rights in the homelessness sector, emphasising how services should respond to women's specific needs. In this context, an online event was organized to celebrate International Women's Day, bringing together members of the FEANTSA Women Network, including both past and ongoing project partners.

During this event, FEANTSA launched a new good practice collection on women's homelessness. This collection features diverse projects from across Europe that support women experiencing homelessness and reflects the wide range of their needs, including support during pregnancy, assistance for survivors of gender-based violence, services for elderly women, and support for women who use drugs.

FEANTSA Women, a community of practice, also marked its fourth anniversary. Over the past four years, this network has been building a strong knowledge base and sharing best practices across Europe. Through projects, meetings, trainings, webinars, and peer exchanges, the community has contributed to improving support for women experiencing homelessness and to strengthening gender- and trauma-informed approaches within homelessness services. This growing body of knowledge has now been consolidated in the good practice collection and shared more widely with FEANTSA's membership and broader network, all working towards ending women's homelessness.

A key example highlighted in this collection is the ongoing Women's Voices European project, funded by Erasmus Plus. This project explores what safety means for women experiencing homelessness through a participatory research approach, where knowledge is shaped directly by women's own experiences and perspectives.

The Women's Voices project stands out as a strong example of good practice and a feminist participatory research closely linked to practice. It equips both women and professionals with tools to co-create safer homelessness services. Participants in workshops and trainings learn how to apply the Visual Voices methodology, analyse emerging themes, and translate insights into small but concrete changes in daily practice. These changes can also inform organisational strategies and policy development.

In addition, participants develop facilitation skills, design participatory learning activities, and create adaptable training plans that organisations can integrate into their work. These experiences will be compiled into a European-level toolkit, to be published in 2026, including case studies, exercises, and lessons learned. By making women's voices visible to practitioners and decision-makers, the project contributes to safer, more gender-responsive services and strengthens advocacy for policy change on women's homelessness across Europe.

The project also highlights the importance of European cooperation. Bringing frontline staff together allows for the sharing of experiences, discussion of common challenges, and mutual learning across different service and policy contexts.



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Women First: European Good Practices Addressing Women's Homelessness



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A dark male face looking into the warming center.
It scares me — it makes me feel unsafe.



VOICES
Erasmus+

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Women experiencing homelessness are frequently hidden and/or their voices and needs are marginal from how policies and services are designed and delivered. At the heart of this project is a critical feminist participatory model of education which aims to raise women's voices from the margins to the centre of responses to homelessness. The project methodology recognises women with lived experiences of homelessness as our teachers. Using critical and creative feminist methods to decolonise knowledge production, we produce a curriculum for social change that reflects the women's worlds as they experience it, see it and name it. Through this we achieve a central goal of the project which is putting women's voices at the centre of everything we do.

- Méabh Savage, SETU



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