



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Social Affairs  
Disability and Inclusion  
The Head of Unit

Brussels,  
EMPL.C.3/RCH/OMB

Josefina Marti  
Calle de Juan Bravo 62  
28006 Madrid  
España

e-mail: [ask+request-6261-  
e345850c@asktheeu.org](mailto:ask+request-6261-e345850c@asktheeu.org)

**Subject: Your access to documents request under Regulation 1049/2001**  
**Reference: GestDem 2019/55**

Dear Ms Marti,

I refer to your e-mail dated 05/01/2019 in which you make a request for access to documents, registered under the above-mentioned reference number.

After careful assessment of your request, I would like to inform you that the first two points in your request do not fall under Regulation 1049/2001 for access to documents, as they are requests of information publicly available. With regards to these, you will find below some information which I trust you will find useful.

Concerning your first point on the number of homeless people in the EU, the main challenge when it comes to collecting data and statistics in the field of homelessness and housing exclusion is the lack of a single definition of the phenomenon accepted in all the EU member states.

At the 2010 European Consensus Conference, stakeholders and the European Commission agreed on the ETHOS<sup>1</sup> definition, which refers to four living circumstances as homelessness or extreme forms of housing exclusion<sup>2</sup>. However, the methodologies for counting the number of people who are homeless or experiencing one or several of the living circumstances described by ETHOS differ between member states and there exists no common indicator at EU level.

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<sup>1</sup> ETHOS stands for "European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion".

<sup>2</sup> More information here: <https://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2005/04/01/ethos-typology-on-homelessness-and-housing-exclusion>

The European Commission supports through its funding programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)<sup>3</sup> the work of the European network of associations working with the homeless, FEANTSA, which includes the provision of estimates of the number of homeless in member states, published in their annual housing exclusion overview<sup>4</sup> in collaboration with the Fondation Abbé Pierre. Although the figures are not comparable country by country, due to the different methodologies for counting the homeless, they allow monitoring the evolution of the issue in member states over time. You can find this information and other publications from FEANTSA in the portal of the organisation: <https://www.feantsa.org/en>.

With regards to your second question on public policies carried out at EU level to combat homelessness, I would like to recall that, in accordance with the Treaties on which the European Union is based, the primary responsibility for tackling homelessness and housing exclusion lies with member states at national, regional or local authorities' level depending on the internal distribution of competences. The European Union has however a key role to complement and support the efforts of member states in this field, namely through policy guidance and orientation and funding opportunities.

Homelessness and housing exclusion are addressed in the 2013 staff working document "Confronting homelessness in the EU"<sup>5</sup>, which was part of the Social Investment package<sup>6</sup>. In addition, the recently proclaimed European Pillar of Social Rights<sup>7</sup> recognised the importance of housing and assistance for the homeless as a key social principle<sup>8</sup>.

On this basis, the Commission gives policy guidance and monitoring under the European Semester, an annual process which enables the EU member countries to coordinate their economic policies throughout the year and address the economic challenges facing the EU. In recent years there has been an increased coverage of social policy concerns in general and housing-related issues in particular in the European Semester country reports and country-specific recommendations.<sup>9</sup>

The European Commission also supports the member states through facilitating mutual learning in the area of social protection and through support from the EU Funds, such as the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the European Fund for Strategic Investment. These funds are used to support housing solutions and the development of accompanying services in order to improve the housing outcomes of people in a situation of homelessness, or at risk of housing exclusion.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081>

<sup>4</sup> [www.feantsa.org/en/report/2018/03/21/the-second-overview-of-housing-exclusion-in-europe-2017](http://www.feantsa.org/en/report/2018/03/21/the-second-overview-of-housing-exclusion-in-europe-2017)

<sup>5</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52013SC0042>

<sup>6</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1044&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes>

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en)

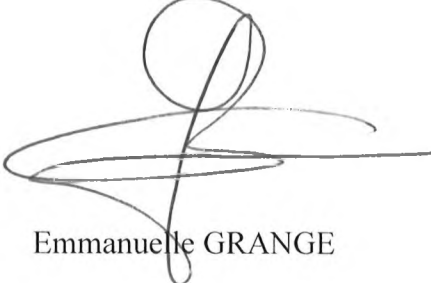
<sup>8</sup> Principle 19 on "Housing and assistance for the homeless"

<sup>9</sup> For more information on the European Semester process and country reports from 2018 Semester see: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester/framework/european-semester-why-and-how\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester/framework/european-semester-why-and-how_en)  
[https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports_en)

Points 3 and 4 in your request are addressed in the annexes to this letter. Please note that, concerning your request for correspondence, the documents provided include parliamentary questions addressed by members of the European Parliament to the European Commission and official correspondence between the European Commission and representatives of organisations. Citizen's letters are however not included as they contain numerous personal data of a sensitive nature and their disclosure would undermine one or more of the interests protected by Article 4 of Regulation No 1049/2001.

I hope you will find the information provided in this letter and annexes useful.

Yours sincerely,



Emmanuelle GRANGE

**Annex I – Point 3 of the request: A list of meetings of DG EMPL officials and/or representatives (including the Commissioner and the Cabinet) with any other organization or person, in which homelessness has been addressed during 2018. The list should include the names of the individuals and organisations attending; the date; the place; and any agendas / minutes / notes produced.**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Meeting-related documents (if applicable)</b>
Meeting between the Cabinet of Commissioner Thyssen and FEANTSA	Tuesday, 16 January 2018	Commission premises (BERL)	Inge Bernaerts, Vasilikki Kokkori and Raquel Cortes Herrera Freek Spinnewijn	n.a.
Meeting between DG EMPL and the board of FEANTSA	Friday, 2 February 2018	FEANTSA's premises	Raquel Cortes Herrera and Arben Kanber Ian Tilling, Freek Spinnewijn and Ruth Owen	n.a.
Participation of DG EMPL at the Housing Europe-Committee of the Regions Policy Breakfast "Social Housing as an essential right for the 21st century EU Welfare State"	Thursday, 8 March 2018	Committee of the Regions premises	Raquel Cortes Herrera The list of other participants should be requested from the organisers of the event	n.a.
Participation of DG EMPL at the launch of the 2018 Housing Exclusion Overview by FEANTSA and	Wednesday, 21 March 2018	European Parliament premises	Raquel Cortes Herrera The list of other participants should be requested from the organisers of the event	n.a.

Meeting	Date	Location	Participants	Meeting-related documents (if applicable)
Fondation Abbé Pierre				
Meeting between DG EMPL and Depaul International	Tuesday, 15 May 2018	Commission premises (DG EMPL)	Raquel Cortes Herrera , Olga Martínez de Briones and Emilia Mellone  Charles Tannock, Ian Brady, Ewan Day-Collins and Tessa Callender	n.a.
Participation of DG EMPL at the seminar: "Affordable Housing. Delivering to the Social Pillar" "6 months after the EU Social Summit in Gothenburg – working towards greater social protection and inclusion"	Wednesday, 16 May 2018	Gothenburg European Office	Raquel Cortes Herrera  The list of other participants should be requested from the organisers of the event	n.a.
Meeting between DG EMPL and Housing Europe	Friday, 1 June 2018	Commission premises (DG EMPL)	Raquel Cortes Herrera and Olga Martínez de Briones  Sorcha Edwards, Julien Dijol, Edit Lakatos and Alice Pittini	n.a.
Presentation by FEANTSA of the 2018 Housing Exclusion Overview at the meeting of the Social Protection Committee	Friday, 1 June 2018	Commission premises (CCAB)	Raquel Cortes Herrera and Olga Martínez de Briones  Chloe Serme-Morin  SPC delegates	<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20381&amp;langId=en">https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20381&amp;langId=en</a>

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Meeting-related documents (if applicable)</b>
Meeting between DG EMPL and OECD on the Affordable Housing Database project	Tuesday, 12 June 2018	Commission premises (DG EMPL)	Raquel Cortes Herrera and Olga Martínez de Briones Willem Adema	n.a.
Participation of DG EMPL at the FEANTSA's Annual Policy Conference	Friday, 15 June 2018	Berlin, Germany	Raquel Cortes Herrera The list of other participants should be requested from the organisers of the event	n.a.
Meeting between DG EMPL and Aedes (Dutch member of Housing Europe)	Wednesday, 11 July 2018	Commission premises (DG EMPL)	Raquel Cortes Herrera and Olga Martínez de Briones Robin van Leijen	n.a.
Meeting between the Cabinet of Commissioner Thyssen and the UN Human Rights Office (Regional Representative for Europe)	Tuesday, 11 September 2018	BERL premises	Vasilikki Kokkori Birgit Van Hout	n.a.
Meeting between DG EMPL and DVS/Aedes	Friday, 12 October 2018	Commission premises (DG EMPL)	Raquel Cortes Herrera and Olga Martínez de Briones Cornelis Berend van Boven, Adriaan Cornelis Boidin, Wilhelmus Mieczyslaw Karel Krzeszewski, Roelof Christiaan de Jong and Robin van Leijen	n.a.

Meeting	Date	Location	Participants	Meeting-related documents (if applicable)
Meeting between the Director General of DG EMPL and the UN Human Rights Office (Regional Representative for Europe)	Thursday, 18 October 2018	Commission premises (DG EMPL)	Joost Korte Birgit Van Hout	n.a.
Meeting between the Cabinet of Commissioner Thyssen and Housing Europe	Monday, 26 November 2018	Commission premises (BERL)	Vasilikki Kokkori and Raquel Cortes Herrera Julien Dijol, Virginie Toussain and Alice Pittini	n.a.

**Annex II – Point 4 of the request: All correspondence (including emails) between DG EMPL officials and/or representatives (including the Commissioner and the Cabinet) and any other individual or organisation relating to homelessness, during 2018.**

Incoming mail			Outgoing mail		
Date and reference	Remittent	Document (if applicable)	Date and reference	Addressee	Document (if applicable)
Ares(2018)417312 24.01.2018	Frederik Spinnewijn (Director of FEANTSA)	Letter	Ares(2018)6128303 29.11.2018	Frederik Spinnewijn (Director of FEANTSA)	Reply to letter
E-002970/2018	Eider Gardiazabal Rubial (S&D)	Written Parliamentary Question			
P-005497/2018	István Ujhelyi (S&D)	Written Parliamentary Question			
E-002743/2018	Rory Palmer (S&D)	Written Parliamentary Question			
E-003474/2018	Maria Grapini (S&D)	Written Parliamentary Question			
E-003791/2018	Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)	Written Parliamentary Question			
E-005865/2018	Lefteris Christoforou (PPE)	Written Parliamentary Question			
E-004941/2018	Dominique Martin (ENF)	Written Parliamentary Question			



Incoming mail			Outgoing mail		
Date and reference	Remittent	Document (if applicable)	Date and reference	Addressee	Document (if applicable)
E-005370/2018	Péter Niedermüller (S&D) and Csaba Molnár (S&D)	Written Parliamentary Question			
E-003014/2018	Dubravka Šuica (PPE)	Written Parliamentary Question			