

OUR MANIFESTO IS A CALL TO ACTION. WE ENVISION A WORLD WHERE MENTAL HEALTH CARE IS COMPASSIONATE AND HOLISTIC, HOMELESSNESS IS ERADICATED, SUBSTANCE USE IS TREATED WITH HUMANITY AND RESPECT, AND ALL FORMS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE ARE ELIMINATED. WE STAND FOR A SOCIETY THAT VALUES DIVERSITY AND FOSTERS INCLUSION. TOGETHER, WE CAN CREATE A FUTURE WHERE EVERYONE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO THRIVE IN DIGNITY AND SECURITY.

The **Home4Health** project aims to establish a unified framework across Europe that encourages vocational education and training (VET) organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), institutions, and public authorities to tackle the challenges faced by people in situation of homelessness with complex health and trauma issues, including substance addiction, from a socially inclusive perspective. The initiative seeks to enhance opportunities for ongoing professional and organizational development by sharing best practices and experiences across Europe.

Home4Health partners and stakeholders are dedicated to addressing the **interconnected challenges of homelessness**, mental health issues, and substance use in our European societies. We view these issues as reflecting broader systemic shortcomings and societal neglect within hierarchical structures that often marginalize the most vulnerable. Our manifesto advocates for thoughtful changes in public policy, societal attitudes, and support systems to promote justice, dignity, and equity for all individuals.

HOMELESSNESS

Access to stable housing is a crucial issue in many European cities today. The remaining presence of homelessness points to the need for public policies that balance economic interests with a focus on the well-being of individuals. We advocate for policies that prevent forced evictions and support the growth of social housing and community initiatives. However, addressing homelessness involves more than providing shelter; it also requires ensuring security, privacy, and personal autonomy and recognising that for specific population groups homelessness presents even harder challenges.

Our approach should be comprehensive, offering support tailored to the varied needs of those experiencing homelessness and encouraging community efforts to reduce stigma and provide assistance for those struggling with addiction.

MENTAL HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

We advocate for a mental health system that is understanding to the challenges people face when dealing with mental health issues, whilst experiencing homelessness and to consider using a holistic approach. The challenges of living on the streets, dealing with mental health issues, and facing daily survival needs call for a compassionate and holistic approach. We support harm reduction and comprehensive strategies as important principles in mental health care, acknowledging that effective recovery and well-being come from empowering individuals and addressing their overall biopsychosocial needs. It is essential to enhance access to psychological and psychiatric support, ensuring that services are widely available, high-quality, and responsive to trauma.

GENDER AND HOMELESSNESS

We are committed to addressing all forms of gender discrimination and violence. Women often face significant challenges in society, and those experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, harassment, and abuse, often with fewer resources to address these issues. It is important to maintain a harm reduction and feminist perspective that addresses substance use, recognising the individual autonomy to make their own decisions about whether to use a drug or not.

Also, members of the LGBTIQ+ community encounter unique challenges and stigma due to prevailing heteronormative gender roles. We advocate for increased visibility and targeted support for these groups, ensuring that their specific needs are met and their rights to self-expression are respected. Prevention of gender-based violence, support for mothers with children and child caretakers, and addressing underlying patriarchal norms are key priorities for us. Our practices should reflect these values, promoting equality and inclusivity in every aspect.

SUBSTANCE USE AND HOMELESSNESS

Problematic substance use should be addressed as a public health concern rather than a criminal issue. We support harm reduction strategies to mitigate damage and improve lives. This includes offering safe and legal access to appropriate treatment options, along with comprehensive information and supportive care, including peer support. It is important to value the perspectives and experiences of those who use drugs as part of the broader human experience. We oppose the stigma and punitive measures often associated with drug use, understanding that its use may respond to a coping strategy towards such a violent situation as homelessness or to self-medication resulting from untreated mental health issues and trauma. Our approach should be focused on health and support, rather than punishment, and should always respect the dignity of each individual.

VIOLENCE, STIGMA AND HOMELESSNESS

Violence and stigma are significant drivers of social exclusion. We firmly oppose all forms of violence and the stigma that isolates individuals from society, particularly those experiencing homelessness who face aporophobia and classism. It is crucial to address and eliminate the stigma faced by homeless individuals, those with mental health issues, and drug users. We advocate for education and training to help understand and overcome biases, fostering a culture of non-violence and inclusion. Addressing structural violence, which is linked to power dynamics and societal norms, requires community engagement and policy change. We support efforts to work with both victims and perpetrators to break the cycle of violence and build a more just and compassionate society.

TRANSCULTURALITY AND HOMELESSNESS

In our diverse world, understanding different cultural backgrounds is crucial for effectively addressing the needs in our societies. We should encourage intercultural training and provide opportunities for cultural experiences to enhance empathy and inclusion. Health, well-being, and social support should be considered within the cultural contexts of those we serve. Our interventions need to be tailored to recognize and respect the unique backgrounds and identities of individuals. We are committed to being open-minded and engaging in participatory approaches that consider intersectionality, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.