



European  
Commission



# Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

Diverse approaches to supporting Europe's most deprived

## FEAD case studies

2019

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## Foreword .....

The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) is an instrument which shows Europe at its best: a Europe which protects. Covering basic needs is essential to ensure human dignity in an inclusive and caring society. The fund is used to alleviate the worst forms of poverty in the EU and to promote social inclusion for those at the margins of the society.

The Europe 2020 strategy aims to reduce the number of people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million by 2020. Today, one in five Europeans still experience at least one form of poverty. But the numbers are going down due to steady economic growth. The number of people experiencing material deprivation has dropped by five million since the peak of the 2008 economic crisis.

Contributing towards achieving this goal, FEAD supports two types of actions: The first consists of food and/or basic material assistance programmes, such as the distribution of food, clothes. The second finances supporting activities outside active labour market measures, such as non-financial and non-material assistance.

At its best, the fund combines the distribution of clothes with accompanying measures, such as advice and information on available social services, basic counselling activities such as psychological support and therapeutic measures or workshops, for example on how to manage a household budget or on healthy nutrition.

The case studies in this report show how FEAD is protecting and caring for Europe's citizens and helping to lift them out of poverty, using a combination of material support and access to services.

Looking ahead, we have renewed our commitment to alleviate the worst forms of poverty post-2020. We propose that Member States allocate at least 2% of their future ESF+ resources for measures targeting the most deprived. Integrating FEAD into the ESF+ will allow the continuation of the good practices outlined in this report and will better link material support with stronger social services and other forms of assistance.

*Marianne Thyssen*

*European Commissioner for Employment,  
social affairs, skills and labour mobility*




COMMUNITY

SUPPORT

MONEY

COOP

VOLUNTEER

SUPPORT

ASSISTANCE

RESOU

SUPP  
RELIE  
LOVE LIFE FRIE

## Introduction

The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) was created with the objective of contributing to alleviating the worst forms of poverty in the EU, such as homelessness, child poverty and food deprivation. FEAD can be used to support the most disadvantaged groups in society by providing food and basic material items such as clothing, footwear and toiletries, or by organising social inclusion activities.

During the 2014-2020 programming period, FEAD is being implemented in all EU Member States via Operational Programmes (OP) I and II, approved by the European Commission. OP I includes food and/or basic material assistance and OP II is focused on the social inclusion of the most deprived individuals. However, social inclusion is also implemented through OP I, responding to the basic material needs of the most disadvantaged and helping them make a step towards reintegration into society. Member States have the freedom to choose whether to engage with OP I and/or OP II, and determine the target groups, the specific types of support provided and the geographic coverage of their programmes.

Member States cooperate with partner organisations, which can be public bodies or non-profit organisations, to implement FEAD-funded activities. This cooperation means that the Fund is also supporting capacity building within the partner organisations in the area of social policy.

FEAD involves hundreds of actors and stakeholders who are working towards the same objective – to reduce the worst forms of poverty in European countries. In that respect, the Commission recognised the need to establish the FEAD platform for exchange of experience and dissemination of outcomes, giving FEAD a new meaning – being more than just a source of funding, but also a network. Therefore, it supported the development of the FEAD Network in 2016.

The Network is an open membership community for people providing assistance to the most deprived in Europe. This includes national FEAD Managing Authorities, organisations delivering or interested in FEAD-funded activities, EU-level NGOs and EU institutions. It is a space for members to share good practice, encourage new ideas and to discuss how to provide non-financial assistance to the most deprived in Europe.

The FEAD Network offers opportunities for online engagement through the official webpage and Facebook group, information sharing through publications and news, and network meetings. The official webpage and Facebook group are online spaces that connect members, encourage discussion and share the latest policy news and information from the Network. The aim of the FEAD Network meetings is to contribute to mutual learning and exchange of experience on particular implementation topics, operational issues and programming topics of the FEAD funding.

FEAD serves as an instrument which is able to address social emergencies targeting the groups of people who are the most difficult to reach and to provide them with immediate relief, particularly through food distribution. The social inclusion aspect of FEAD, on the other hand, helps to integrate disadvantaged people into society with a view to lift them out of poverty. These features of the FEAD programmes also highlight the specific value of the Fund – it provides dedicated support to people who may not be in a position to directly access and benefit from other EU funding instruments, while putting the emphasis on the implementation of supported activities through full involvement of the implementing actors.



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## Belgium – Charter for Unsold Food Products: Consultation Platform for Food Aid Sector and Supermarket Chains

FEAD Belgian Managing Authority

### WHY?

In Belgium, FEAD food packages distributed to the most deprived consist of products purchased by the Managing Authority, complemented with unsold products donated to foodbanks and local food aid organisations by (big) supermarkets. This practice contributes to a wider and more **balanced food package** for end recipients and contributes to Belgium's **fight against food waste**. A number of logistical challenges exist, however. In order to coordinate on the issue and guarantee the quality of products to end recipients, the Belgian FEAD Managing Authority is in the process of setting up the "**Charter for Unsold Food Products**".

### WHAT?

The Charter of Unsold Food Products helps to facilitate and optimise the donation and distribution process between FEAD partners (food banks, local public bodies and social/food aid partner organisations) and supermarket chains. It aims to improve the variety of food products available to food aid organisations, including a good mix of basic products with long durability provided by FEAD. An additional objective of the Charter is to **monitor the quality of unsold products**, taking into account the fact that a lot of the food donated includes fresh products (vegetables, meat, fish and bread). Finally, the effectiveness of the Charter should be increased thanks to a VAT exemption scheme launched in parallel, which will bring financial benefits to the food distribution sector when donating food products.

## WHO?

The official charter is driven by the Managing Authority of the Belgian FEAD – Federal Public Planning Service for Social Integration (SPP IS – POD MI) together with its FEAD partner organisations.

## HOW?

The idea of establishing an official charter of unsold products was developed as part of **quarterly consultations** between the Belgian Managing Authority, FEAD partner organisations and representatives from supermarket chains. These consultations provide a space to discuss the overall implementation of the FEAD, but also, more broadly, all aspects of the food aid sector. Within this context, partners met to discuss best practices in the donation of unsold food products to food aid organisations, as well as in contributing to the fight against food waste.

The charter is in its last draft, and is expected to be adopted and signed by platform participants by the end of 2019. When put into practice, this project will streamline the collaboration between the professional staff of the food production and distribution sector, and the volunteers of the partner organisations.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Mrs Sara Risoli**

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Images © Cédric Droyers, 2019

## Belgium – IT Tools for Improved and Faster FEAD Delivery

Saint Vincent de Paul - Giraud

### WHY?

Distributing FEAD food aid packages requires careful organisation between partner organisations and a network of volunteers, who dedicate their limited free time to help with the process. The introduction of digital tools can help to enhance the distribution cycle and improve the service to end recipients. This is demonstrated at the centre of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Giraud (Brussels), where the introduction of an **IT tool** has produced notable productivity improvements.

### WHAT?

Under the umbrella of the Saint Vincent de Paul organisation in Brussels, the **FOOD IT digital tool** was developed to handle the distribution of FEAD goods more quickly and efficiently. This user-friendly application is linked to tablets, which volunteers in the organisation use during the distribution process. Its application at the centre has **decreased distribution time by more than 40%**, with recipients now served very quickly. In addition, it enables food packages to be 'made to measure' to the needs of every end recipient. The digital system allows the **registration of all indicators** requested by the European regulations (number of women, number of children, etc.). In turn, the tool can easily be used to generate statistics. These could include statistics on the amount of products distributed per distribution centre, or the amount of products used per week, for example. The tool also allows for an integrated follow-up of all data at all times (distributed stock, remaining stock, amount and characteristics of the people who are receiving the products, etc.). As a result, the tool is also being **used to calculate order amounts for FEAD food products**.



The use of the tablet computer has facilitated and improved the composition and distribution of food aid packages. The time for beneficiaries waiting in line has been reduced from about 2 hours to about 20 minutes!”

— Volunteer

## WHO?

The organisation managing the project is Saint Vincent de Paul – Giraud. The mission of the society is to seek out persons in need, without distinction of race or religion, and to bring them both moral support and concrete material aid.

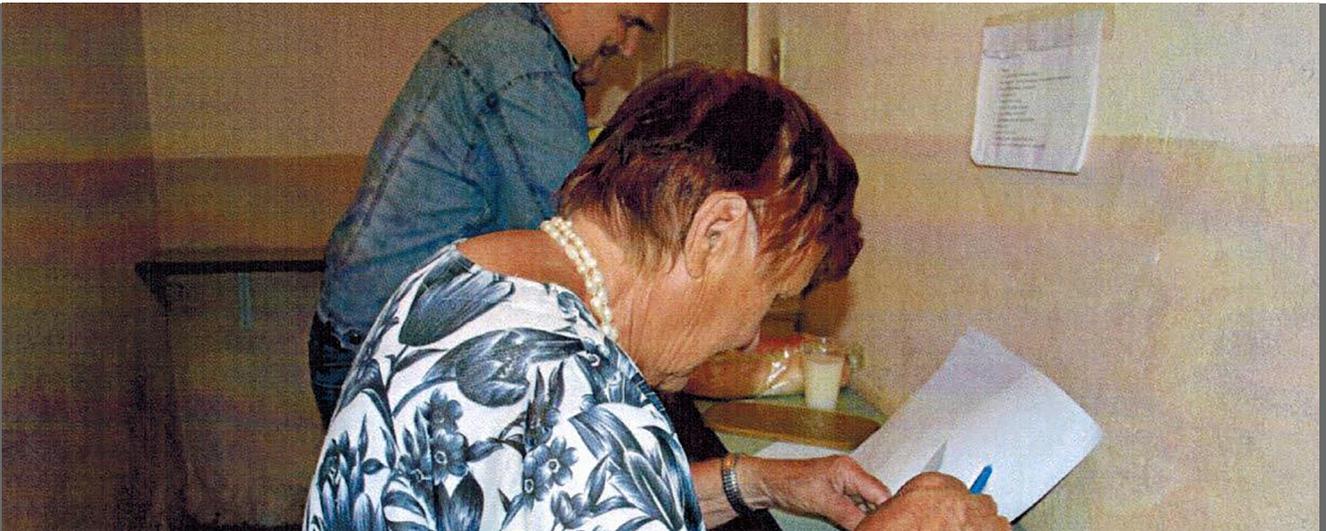
## HOW?

The delivery team consists of 14 people, including a full-time social assistant. Volunteers receive ten hours of training to acquire the skills required to handle the IT tool. Overall, the tool has allowed the delivery process to be streamlined. A qualified social assistant puts the social enquiry file of each beneficiary together. The file is composed of all elements needed to assess whether food aid should be given or not, and on which conditions. Once the composition of the package is confirmed, the content list appears on the tablet of a volunteer, who physically puts the package together. The **‘made to measure’ package** is quickly put together ‘live’ when the beneficiary shows up. The volunteer only has to pick the products from each pallet and put them together. Following this, the volunteer hands the package to the beneficiary, who can complement it with additional fresh products donated by partners from the distribution sector. Given uncertainty about the amount and quality of donated food, the complementary food items are not put into the IT system and are therefore not measured.

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Images © Miglena Vaglenova, 2019

## Bulgaria – Provision of a ‘Warm Meal’ in the Gabrovo Municipality

Bulgaria Social Assistance Agency

### WHY?

In 2018, the proportion of the Bulgarian population at risk of poverty or social exclusion was close to 32.8%.<sup>1</sup> This constitutes the highest rate in the European Union. The risk of poverty is particularly pronounced in the northern, less developed part of the country, where the city of Gabrovo is located. Against this backdrop, this project aims to meet the basic food needs of the most vulnerable individuals in the municipality of Gabrovo. In addition, it aims to combat social exclusion by **connecting food recipients with other social services**, such as health, education and administrative municipal services.

### WHAT?

The main activity of the project is the **provision of a daily lunch** at a public dining facility. Within the framework of the program, this activity aims to satisfy the basic food needs of 200 people from disadvantaged groups. In order to be inclusive of end recipients with physical disabilities, the project also delivers food aid directly to the homes of disabled end recipients.

In addition to food aid, the project also has a strong social inclusion component. It provides **weekly individual consultations** and **monthly group consultations** with food aid recipients, in order to raise awareness about the administrative and social services provided in the municipality of Gabrovo. Through these consultations, beneficiaries are provided with information ranging from how to access health and education services and how to manage family budgets, to how to lead a healthy and balanced diet. Individualised forms of support and assistance, tailored to the specific needs of the end recipients, are also provided (i.e. some of the homeless people were provided with personal identification documents, as well as with necessary medical services and financial assistance).

Depending on the outcomes of the project, the services aim to raise awareness among the public about the problems the target group is facing, increasing public sensitivity to the subject. In order to do that, the Gabrovo municipality develops periodical and informative materials on topics of interest for the consumers.

<sup>1</sup> At risk of poverty or social exclusion in Bulgaria, Eurostat, 2018. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/10163468/3-16102019-CP-EN.pdf/edc3178f-ae3e-9973-f147-b839ee522578>



**A warm meal every day”**

— Bulgaria Social Assistance Agency

## WHO?

The Bulgarian Agency for Social Assistance is the Managing Authority of this project. The Implementing Authority is the municipality of Gabrovo. The project conducted a public procurement procedure for the delegation of services, which was won by the Gabrovo company Sonya Trading Ltd.

Until now, the **project activities have reached 367 people**, as follows:

- 143 (nearly 40%) elderly people over 65 years of age
- 187 (50%) women
- 7 people from minorities, 4 of which have self-identified themselves as Roma
- 173 (nearly 50%) physically disabled people
- 35 homeless people

Overall, **161,464 warm lunches** were served to end users by 30 April 2019 in Gabrovo. Across the country, the same FEAD supported programme is implemented today in 211 of the 265 municipalities in Bulgaria in **278 soup kitchens**. In 2018, the programme provided 11,500,000 warm lunches reaching to 50,800 end users. Regularly collected feedback forms from recipients have shown overwhelming satisfaction with the quality and quantity of the food, as well as with the attitude of the personnel on a daily basis.

## HOW?

This project is fully funded under the Operational Programme FEAD 2014-2020. In order for the eligible individuals to benefit from the service, a form (the application is also available online, for people who cannot physically apply in person) needs to be filled in and brought to the Municipality of Gabrovo. Applications are accepted throughout the project period and a waiting list is managed, in case of a vacancy in the 200 places available.

The daily lunch is served at a restaurant called ‘Site Bulgari Zaedno’ in Gabrovo, near the municipality building. The people who benefit from the service receive a starter (soup), a main course, dessert and bread. According to the terms of the programme, the cost of lunch per person per day amounts to BGN 2.50 (approximately EUR 1.27)<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, within the framework of the programme, a **shelter for homeless people** is provided, during the autumn and winter seasons, equipped with beds, a bathroom and a toilet. A health check is also provided prior to accommodating people in the shelter. Every case is approached individually, and long-term and lasting solutions are sought to sustainably lift the end recipients out of poverty. For example, many of the homeless included in the project have been supported through the provision of **financial assistance for urgent needs**. Personal identification documents have, similarly, been issued in the context of the project, while actions have been taken to provide public housing for end recipients.

The daily preparation of the food, and its serving to the recipients, is carried out by 8 employees from the catering company, dedicated to the social service: the manager, chef, chef’s assistant and kitchen workers, as well as a driver who delivers the food to the recipients with moving impediments. Three employees of the Gabrovo municipality are engaged in the administration of and reporting on project activities. Depending on the specific individual needs for accompanying measures, other specialists are engaged on a voluntary basis, such as lawyers, psychologists, doctors, therapists, health and social workers, teachers, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> The currency amounts were converted using the InforEuro exchange rate (<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/graphs/inforeuro.html>) in July 2019



Images © Marija Dugalić, 2018

## Croatia – Caritas Packages of Joy

### Caritas

#### WHY?

Sisak-Moslavina is a county with one of the highest unemployment rates in Croatia. The county also has one of the highest numbers of retired people, who often struggle to cover everyday expenses, especially when they live alone and do not have family support. The **Caritas Packages of Joy** project (2018 – 2019) was set up to alleviate poverty by providing non-financial assistance to the most deprived.

#### WHAT?

The project provided food, hygiene and textile packages to the most deprived citizens of 45 parishes located across the Sisak-Moslavina and Zagreb counties. The most deprived, in this context, were recipients of social welfare services, or those who had been Caritas beneficiaries before and were not necessarily part of the mainstream social welfare system.

In addition to food and material assistance, the project disseminated information through flyers and workshops (e.g. on maintaining a balanced diet and managing a home budget). The project organised over 30 lectures and workshops at the public kitchen of the Caritas Diocese of Sisak and different distribution centres across the Diocese of Sisak. The aim of these lectures and workshops was to alleviate social exclusion and poverty among the beneficiaries, and to support them with their needs, in order that they may live better, healthier lives.

The project supported more than **2,500 beneficiaries**, who learned about maintaining a balanced diet and healthy food preparation, as well as personal hygiene, household cleanliness, and the importance of waste management. More than **18,500 packages of food**, over **19,000 packages of hygiene supplies** and around **3,000 packages of household textiles** were distributed. More than **200 volunteers** distributed the food packages, hygiene supplies and household items, and around 12 packages of food were distributed to the public kitchen.

## WHO?

The project was managed by Caritas of the Diocese of Sisak, working closely with six parishes that acted as distribution centres and a project manager who oversaw the coordination of volunteers.

## HOW?

One of the biggest achievements of the **Caritas** project was its access to, and distribution of support to, **beneficiaries living in rural areas** of the Diocese of Sisak. These beneficiaries were, in most cases, elderly. Due to insufficient resources and geographical isolation, beneficiaries living in rural areas were, previously, nearly impossible to reach. However, thanks to six different delivery points covering the whole of Diocese, together with a network of volunteers who selflessly worked on accessing those locations by splitting the delivery between themselves, all people in need received the packages.

To promote and disseminate the information further, the project also designed and printed 16 posters and 5,400 leaflets. These covered home budget management and the basics of financial literacy, as well as balanced nutrition and adequate meal preparation. Leaflets were handed to lecture participants, while posters were present at all lecture sites.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Kristina Radić**,  
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Images © Caritas of the Diocese of Sisak, 2019

## Croatia – Humanitarian Package for Slavonia and Pounje

Red Cross

### WHY?

Slavonia and Pounje are some of the poorest rural regions in the EU. The FEAD funded project **Humanitarian Package for Slavonia and Pounje** aimed to alleviate the most severe forms of poverty in these regions by providing non-financial assistance to the most vulnerable, through the distribution of food and hygiene supply packages, as well as measures targeted at beneficiaries living in rural areas. These aim to allow beneficiaries to break out the circle of poverty through education on crop growth and storage.

### WHAT?

The Humanitarian Package project reached more than **11,500 people** between July 2018 and August 2019, in the form of **almost 42,000 food packages** and over **32,500 hygiene products packages**. The packages were aimed at target groups with income difficulties, who were assisted with direct support and counselling to help improve their access to social rights and services. For this purpose, 400 volunteers were trained and a manual distributed, summarising available state social provisions. In addition, every package included a manual titled **'From the Fields to the Table'**, which presented detailed instructions on how to produce and maintain various vegetable crops in one's own garden and/or balcony, the cost of cultivating these crops, and instructions for how to process and winterise them. The manual also educated users on the potential fiscal benefits resulting from this practice compared to the average market prices for the same products. Through one workshop, **30 beneficiaries** were trained to be able to produce their own vegetable crops, and also learned how to prepare storage areas within their own homes. Finally, expert counselling provided beneficiaries with knowledge and advice on the production of vegetable crops through a three-day workshop.

## WHO?

The activities were carried out by three professional employees - a project manager, administrator and food donor coordinator. More than 150 volunteers were engaged in transport and food donor activities. The project developed a successful collaborative network, and the Red Cross Branch in Županja worked together with eight other Red Cross branches located in Vinkovci, Vukovar, Ilok, Nova Gradiška, Slavonski Brod, Novska, Hrvatska Kostajnica and Dvor, as well as the main Croatian Red Cross.

## HOW?

An important initiative of the project involved the collection of **donations in food, hygiene products and clothes** for the packages. Various campaigns were targeted at raising awareness in citizens and the business sector (i.e. food manufacturers and supermarkets) of the importance of donating to people in need. In addition, the campaigns also helped to raise awareness about the related benefits of food donation for reducing food waste. Thanks to this campaign, the project collected 110 tonnes of different food articles.

Food packages were distributed through direct collection, or delivered to beneficiaries living in rural areas with poor public transportation options. Packages were delivered by the organisation's own vehicles. An **IT platform** was designed to facilitate the collection and distribution of humanitarian aid, and every beneficiary who received a food and/or hygiene supplies package was recorded and entered into this database.

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## Denmark – Supporting Homeless People through Mobile Café & Locker Room

### PROJEKT UDENFOR/PROJECT UDENFOR

#### WHY?

According to 2019's latest national mapping, there are 6,400 homeless people living in Denmark. In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the number of rough sleepers who do not benefit from or use the Danish social security service. For this reason, the FEAD partner organisation **Project UDENFOR** has designed initiatives which seek to improve the living conditions of rough sleepers.

#### WHAT?

Project UDENFOR targets marginalised homeless people in Copenhagen and Aarhus through targeted initiatives that provide them with access to food, safety and accommodation, as well as support in addressing their psychological and health-related issues. In Copenhagen, outreach work in the streets is conducted through the **Locker Room** project and its related sub-projects (field trips, counselling services, psychological support etc.).

Since 2016, FEAD has expanded its activities in Aarhus. **Café UDENFOR** offers a meeting point for a variety of groups of homeless people. Here, they can contribute to the project by cooking and working on practical tasks in the café.

Moreover, some of these homeless people have also been involved in the project '**byg UDENFOR**' (build outside). Together with two partners (an organisation of architects and a building company), the project involved helping six homeless people to build their own **mobile houses**. Subsequently, the municipality of Aarhus granted permission to host these mobile houses on a dedicated ground. This project is co-financed by other parties and FEAD has contributed to this subproject by financing the craftsmen educating the homeless people.

Building from the 'byg UDENFOR' initiative, the organisation has developed the **Living Community** (Levefællesskab) project, which is aimed at building a community for those homeless people living in the mobile houses and promoting their social inclusion and integration.



The aim should always be to improve the conditions for the most vulnerable homeless rough sleepers of our society”

— Gitte Aalbæk and Anne Kierkegaard

## WHO?

UDENFOR collaborated with **Architects Without Borders** and **MONSTRUM** for the realisation of mobile houses for homeless people. Architects without borders is an association addressing the housing issues faced by the most disadvantaged segments of the Danish society, while MONSTRUM is a construction company that provided its expertise and materials to build six mobile houses.

## HOW?

Project UDENFOR works together with other partners, such as other homeless organisations, municipalities, hospitals and social workers, to employ homeless people in different activities, providing them with the opportunity to receive a small salary whilst living on the streets. This contributes to invoking a **sense of dignity** in beneficiaries, whilst also helping them to finance a few **daily expenses**. Finally, the opportunity to attend workshops and receive technical support from partner organisations collaborating on the different projects provided homeless people with **skills-development** and **capacity building** opportunities.

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## Finland – Food Aid and Fellowship

Finnish Red Cross

### WHY?

The Finnish Red Cross provides food aid in 50 branches across the country. In addition to material deprivation, Red Cross volunteers have identified that people at high risk of poverty often encounter barriers to participation in their communities, which may cause their social exclusion. As a result, since 2017, the **Food Aid & Fellowship** project has provided peer support and fellowship to beneficiaries of the Finnish Red Cross food aid programme.

### WHAT?

The ultimate objective of this project is to facilitate the transformation of food beneficiaries into active members of their communities. Food aid beneficiaries undertake short courses on personal relations and help with the organisation of different social activities. Other FEAD beneficiaries also have the opportunity to participate in activities, in order to learn from each other and share information. This allows them to develop their social skills and build self-confidence.

This three-year project has been running for more than a year now. Based on the last project progress findings, around **30 trained volunteers** and **50 participants** have taken part in the project thus far. The participants are dispersed across three districts, and have reported that the project has helped them with mitigating loneliness, improving their quality of life and increasing their experience of social participation. By doing volunteer work and becoming members of the Red Cross community, participants believe that they are heard and involved in meaningful activities.

COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT  
MONEY  
ASSISTANCE  
RESOU  
RELIE  
LOVE LIFE FRIE  
SUPP

## WHO?

In 2018, the Finnish Red Cross launched the Food & Fellowship project, with the support of partner organisations in the district offices of Satakunta, Oulu and Lapland, as well as four Finnish Red Cross local branches.

## HOW?

The project piloted multiple different kinds of activity, including different workshops. During **idea workshops**, participants brainstormed together on the future implementation of the project, while in **info workshops** they invited local social workers, who shared the available information on state help, and the channels they could use to access it. **Meeting cafeterias** gathered people involved in the project every second week to discuss and engage in a variety of themes, such as poetry reading and techniques for positive thinking.

The project is implemented by the project coordinator and project worker, who dedicate 50% of their working hours to implementation, and one full time employee, who covers the Oulu and Lapland districts. Volunteers still require some support from Red Cross employees in organising activities and events, but the aim is to reach a point where volunteers can carry out activities autonomously.

In addition to food aid provided by FEAD, the project receives the most support from the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA), in co-operation with three local branches providing food aid locally.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Jari-Pekka Hietsilta**

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## France – ‘Job Insertion Workshops’ in Aubervilliers: Assisting the Transition to Life Beyond Les Restaurants du Coeur

Les Restaurants du Coeur

### WHY?

Les Restaurants du Coeur are well-known throughout France for their provision of food aid to the most vulnerable. Through an **innovative social model**, they employ those from disadvantaged backgrounds to provide food to those in need, helping to combat unemployment and hunger simultaneously. Many of the people involved in the programme lack practical skills and have difficulty integrating into society beyond the programme, however. With the aim of resolving this problem, the FEAD partner organisation **Les Restaurants du Coeur** supplement their food provision activities with **job insertion workshops** in Aubervilliers.

### WHAT?

Les Restaurants du Coeur hire local people in financial difficulty or at risk of poverty on **6-month rolling contracts** to work at their restaurant sites for **26 hours per week**, preparing or distributing meals. During their employment, they are given the opportunity to take part in a range of **insertion workshops**, designed to develop their employability skills and to maximise their chances of securing full-time work beyond the project. Delivered by volunteers and other partners of the organisation, these workshops offer extensive **training** in specific competencies such as communication, road safety and cooking. The cooking workshop teaches the workers how to **cook with FEAD products** and the meals prepared are then delivered by les Restos du Coeur to feed people in need. Over 30% of the project's employees so far have been refugees, so courses in the French language are also offered through the workshops. In addition, over 80% of the project's employees have issues with their personal housing and accommodation, so the project also supports them in applying for the requisite welfare and accommodation services.

Through the insertion workshops, which are delivered alongside employment, the project assists those in need first, by supporting them in defining their career objectives and **designing a realistic career plan**. The training offerings then help them to develop the practical skills essential for securing work beyond the project, meaning that they will be able to provide for themselves in the future.



A meal is not enough.”

— Les Restos du Cœur

## WHO?

The Job Insertion Workshops are managed by Les Restaurants du Coeur, a FEAD partner organisation that provides food and material assistance to those in need across France through its social restaurant programme.

## HOW?

Les Restaurants du Coeur informs the Pôle Emploi (French Employment Agency) of the availability of a position, and the agency then recruits candidates through their usual procedures. There are no special criteria for recruitment, other than for drivers, who need to possess a valid driving license.

In Aubervilliers, the programme has **employed 65 people** on temporary 6 month contracts through this process, which guarantees those employees a monthly wage of €850.58. Of these employees, 58% were unemployed for over 2 years before getting involved with the project, and 62% would have been considered to be unqualified, meaning these workshops are vital in helping them regenerate their skills, offering them a viable platform into the wider job market, giving them self-confidence.

Over the last 5 years, 44% of the project's employees have found a permanent or temporary job beyond the project. Of the many who joined the project with housing difficulties, 58% were assisted. Considering the fact that many of the employees are refugees (32%), 34% successfully completed a French language course. Since 2000, the project has helped over **700 employees in Aubervilliers**.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Louis Cantuel**,  
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## Germany – ‘First Step: A Bridge to the Community’: Facilitating the Integration and Inclusion of Immigrants into German Society

Salzgitter Public Administration – Specialist Service for Children, Youth and Family

### WHY?

The German town of Salzgitter has been the recipient of sizeable flows of migrants in recent years, many of whom moved to the area in order to escape conflict and poverty in their home countries. However, due to the difficulties these migrants have faced in integrating properly into the local society, many of them have been unable to find secure work, settle and provide stability for their families in Salzgitter. In order to combat this issue, **Salzgitter’s Specialist Service for Children, Youth and Family** seeks to assist and support the integration of new citizens and recent migrants in Salzgitter through the **First Step project**.

### WHAT?

The First Step project was designed to inform, advise, introduce and support end recipients on a range of issues related to the successful integration of them and their families into Salzgitter society. The programme supports European Union citizens who have recently migrated, from Eastern Europe primarily, with enrolling their children in early education or social care, accessing vital public services, obtaining regional family support, participating in local events and, more generally, **integrating into the city’s social space**. These support services take the form of regional family aids, early childhood education provision (like child day care or nursery schooling) and the provision of local events related to fields such as education, social care and health. They are also **offered in the native languages** of the recipients, who primarily speak Polish, Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian. The programme informs recent citizens on their rights and duties in Germany, including opportunities available for them and their children (i.e. public services and social inclusion).

Positive experiences and participation in local society have helped some of the beneficiaries and their children **form a connection to their new ‘home’**, and many of the target group have been able to learn the local language as a result. This has all contributed to many end recipients being able to live autonomously and financially independent in Salzgitter, allowing them to make a positive contribution to society and enabling them to enjoy peace and security.



“First Step: A Bridge to the Community.”

— Salzgitter Public Administration

## WHO?

The ‘First Step’ project is managed by Salzgitter’s Public Administration (Stadt Salzgitter) and, specifically, it’s Specialist Service for Children, Youth and Family (Fachdienst Kinder, Jugend und Familie). It is also supported by the AWO Kreisverband Salzgitter-Wolfenbüttel, the SOS-Mütterzentrum/ Mehrgenerationenhaus Salzgitter and Diakonie im Braunschweiger Land

## HOW?

Families in Salzgitter from Eastern Europe with **children aged from preschool to 7 years** are directed to the offerings of the programme through flyers and information cards, which draw attention to the availability of local institutions, like kindergartens and primary schools. The information cards are translated into eastern European languages and are actively directed to the target families. They can also be found at all the major public sites within the city, such as the Town Hall. In addition, outreach is conducted through presenting the offerings of the project at local family festivals.

The project works exclusively with professional social workers, who deliver the support services and also train like-minded and capable volunteers to be able to assist the project by performing similar activities. A professional social worker or trained volunteer works in each of the 5 integrated local ‘Hot Spots’ in the city. These workers offer personalised support to the beneficiaries regarding how to get involved in local community events and opportunities for further social integration. They also offer support with, and may accompany the beneficiaries to appointments with local public authorities. When necessary, the workers also visit the homes of the beneficiaries.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Dr. Rosithwa Krum**, Stadt Salzgitter - Fachdienst Kinder, Jugend und Familie.

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## Germany – Home II: Housing First

Diakonisches Werk Giessen/Diaconical Work Giessen

### WHY?

According to the Federal Association for Assistance to Homeless People (BAGW), over **650,000 people** across Germany live on the streets without a permanent home. With apartments on the city's rental market too expensive and out of the reach of many of the most vulnerable, there is a growing number of residents who have lived without housing for many years. Many of the homeless in the city have been found to have suffered from childhood and relationship trauma in their lives, and need support in rebuilding their confidence and creating stable relationships. The Diaconical Work organisation established the **Home II** programme to offer different support activities tailored to homeless people's complex and multi-dimensional psychological and social challenges.

### WHAT?

The Diakonisches Werk Giessen is an institution of the Evangelical Church that advises and supports those in difficult life situations. With this broad goal in mind, it runs the **Home II** programme, which supports those left outside the general social support system through the provision of a range of activities. Together, these activities help connect the homeless with help for the long-term. The '**Housing First**' initiative is the primary activity of the programme, and looks to link beneficiaries with housing agencies to ensure that they receive priority housing. It also works to ensure that they are supported in the practical aspects of re-learning to live autonomously in a new home. This progressive model of homelessness support is based on the principle that an apartment can serve as shelter and security, acting as a base upon which beneficiaries can, with support, learn to cope with everyday life. The other activities delivered by the programme include '**Living together**', '**Outreach help**' and '**Streetwork Inclusion**'.



**You're at home where you feel understood."**

— Diakonisches Werk Giessen/Diaconical Work Giessen

## WHO?

A total of three dedicated employees undertake the majority of the outreach and counselling work, with support and management from the Diakonisches Werk Giessen. 'Housing First' is delivered through a number of partner organisations. The closest cooperation partners are the Wohnbau Giessen GmbH (a housing association, responsible for the allocation of apartments to clients), the city of Giessen and the district of Giessen. In addition, there are numerous other network partners who work in close cooperation with the overall project. These are mainly public authorities, counselling centres and social organisations.

## HOW?

The employees of the project look for potential beneficiaries on the streets of Giessen, establish communications with them and invite them to the counselling centre. Here they **conduct in-depth conversations** with the beneficiaries to determine the individual problems pertinent to each case. The employees focus on trying to establish a stable **relationship of trust**, which helps them to overcome previous life experiences and traumas that have often contributed to their current circumstances, as well as their inability to resolve their problems through the general help system. This process involves cooperation with psychiatric clinics in Giessen to help deliver the psychological support and counselling aspects of the project.

The 'Housing First' initiative involves working closely with partner housing associations, who help allocate apartments to the recipients in need. This ensures that the urgent housing needs of beneficiaries are met as quickly as possible. Once they have been re-housed, the workers gradually establish a **bond of trust** with the participants through low-threshold contact, continuous presence at local events and close proximity to their new living environment.

As a result, many recipients finally managed to re-establish stable relationships and regain trust in themselves and society. Over the course of the programme, over **550 affected people** have been successfully reintegrated into society and connected back to the help system for the long-term. Eleven individuals have been placed into suitable housing, with only one of them falling back into homelessness. The others have **developed well and stabilised psychologically**, with some even finding regular work.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Holger Claes** or **Sabine Rinn**, both of the Diakonisches Werk Giessen.

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## Germany – Bella+ Advice Project, Stuttgart

Werkstatt PARITÄT gemeinnützige GmbH

### WHY?

Sex workers in poverty face multiple problems, including precarious housing, health issues, financial instability, drug abuse, and family disputes. Their social exclusion conditions pose particular barriers for them when attempting to access housing, health care and state support. In the Stuttgart area of Germany, most of the women in prostitution come from countries in South Eastern Europe, posing additional challenges for their **integration**. Given the difficulties of the target group in reaching targeted counselling services in Germany, the project **Bella+** was set up by the FEAD partner organisation Werkstatt PARITÄT.

### WHAT?

The project **Bella+** helps sex workers in the region of Stuttgart, providing them with advice and counselling sessions aimed at raising awareness about the support available to them and connecting them with suitable support organisations. During the first half of 2019, the project reached **90 women**. The majority of women assisted by the project are migrants, mainly from Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary.

Through **counselling support**, as well as the different services provided by the project and its partners, the women assisted receive help related to homelessness integrated into a day-care-centre, abuse counselling support, and medical care. The project also provides direct, specific counselling - relating to unwanted pregnancy, migration, legal advice, finding housing, opening a bank account or subscribing to health insurance, for example. In addition, the project supports migrant women enrolling in **German language courses**.



Help, support and perspectives for women in prostitution poverty!”

— Werkstatt PARITÄT gemeinnützige GmbH

## WHO?

The project is coordinated by Werkstatt PARITÄT gemeinnützige GmbH, which is a subsidiary of PARITÄTISCHEN in the German region of Baden-Württemberg, with more than 800 affiliations of independent member organizations. The organisation works in partnership with two organisations, Lagaya, and Caritas:Werkstatt PARITÄT.

## HOW?

The project counselling services are free of charge, anonymous and confidential to the target group. The team of counsellors is multi-professional, and includes female psychologists, who are vital for the running of a specific group focused on women. The counselling team covers different languages in order to be able to provide the help to migrants. For most of the women, direct contact with a street worker is the only way to learn about opportunities to receive free counselling. As a result, social workers focus on **building connections and trust** with the target group, in order to help them engage in the support services provided by the project.

Bella+ works in **cooperation** with other welfare organisations and institutions in Stuttgart. The main network partners are organisations that provide support for homeless people, medical institutions, organisations that provide abuse counselling, and organisations that help women in prostitution access employment services. The project is also closely connected to the health department and department of social services of the city of Stuttgart. As the target group is hard to reach, social workers from the partner organisations seek women in need through street work and meet them in person in specific places, such as in brothels.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Julia Sverak**, Project Coordinator, Werkstatt PARITÄT gemeinnützige GmbH.

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## Greece – ‘Centre of the Child’: Supporting Young Children and their Families through Economic Hardship

Network for Children’s Rights

### WHY?

Over 16,000 adults in the municipality of Athens depend on the FEAD programme, many of whom are responsible for the care of children below 15 years old. Children from FEAD-dependent households are subject to a number of socioeconomic challenges, which may constrain their **psychosocial development**. Against this backdrop, the Network for Children’s Rights (NCR) has designed different services as accompanying measures to FEAD assistance, aiming to support children’s development beyond covering their basic needs.

### WHAT?

On behalf of the City of Athens, the NCR provides a programme for children and their families designed to offer a combination of services to support their development. The breadth of services offered as part of the overall FEAD programme acts as a unique ‘one-stop shop’, giving beneficiary households access to a number of support services through a single source. The range of services include psychosocial support, speech therapy, teaching, job counselling and financial assistance. For children aged 0-15, these services may take the form of creative thematic workshops or sessions with a speech therapist. Families are offered sessions with a child psychologist, while discussion groups, seminars or labour counselling sessions with specialist advisers are available for parents. Moreover, the programme also offers support to mothers and those who care for children with their re-integration into the labour market; for example, through assistance handling family budgets, and overall psychosocial support services.

COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT  
MONEY  
ASSISTANCE  
VOLUNTEER  
RESOURCES  
RELIEF  
LOVE LIFE FRIENDS  
SUPPORT



“EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT”

— Network for Children's Rights

## WHO?

The 'Centre of the Child' project is implemented by NCR, on behalf of the Municipality of Athens. The services are delivered by staff of the NCR, according to the framework set out by the contractual agreement with the Municipality of Athens.

## HOW?

The activities of the programme are carried out by a team composed of ten service providers, supported by a large body of volunteers and partner organisations. Together, they deliver around **450 activity sessions** each month, with the majority being psychosocial support sessions. Moreover, 100 hours of additional support sessions are delivered specifically to children with learning difficulties, supported by study groups that enhance their skills and abilities and contribute to school readiness.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Evdoxia Ioannidou**, Head of the FEAD Implementation Unit on behalf of the Municipality of Athens.

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## Greece – ‘Explorers of the Mind’: Offering Learning Opportunities to Disadvantaged Youths in a Critical Stage of their Development

Regional Unit of Achaia

### WHY?

Poverty can have complex and multi-dimensional impacts on a child's development. Children from lower socio-economic level families often face particular challenges that can limit learning opportunities and have long-lasting, detrimental effects on their cognitive and social development. In this context, the Greek TEBA (FEAD) of the Regional Unit of Achaia, in coordination with the Western Greece Region, has designed the **Explorers of the Mind** project specifically targeting children and adolescents to promote their social integration and empower them to fulfil their potential, in the framework of FEAD accompanying measures.

### WHAT?

The **Explorers of the Mind** project provides greater opportunities for social integration of children in two target groups: middle-childhood (aged 10-12) and young adolescents (aged 13-14). Through a **play-based learning approach** and the **provision of a number of activities designed to stimulate multi-sensory learning**, the project seeks to encourage children's autonomy and cultivate their emotional development and social skills. Learning opportunities are delivered through the provision of three activities. In the **Human Performance Lab**, specialist educators use play-based learning to explain the brain's structure and functions, whilst also encouraging cognitive and emotional development through creative writing workshops and 'black-out' poetry. The Digital Photos Lab encourages the exploration of creativity and the use of photography as a means of expression. **Cartoon Story Making** educates children in coding and decoding visual messages, fosters their creative thinking and challenges their logical reasoning.

Through their exposure to these activities, children begin to explore their emotions, learn to cooperate, develop their means of expression and ultimately improve their self-esteem, develop positive resilience, improve their communication skills and cultivate a sense of social responsibility. This all contributes to ensuring that the young people participating are exposed to learning opportunities that their socioeconomic circumstances may have prevented them from accessing otherwise. It also ensures that the target group benefits from a variety of different approaches to social support, where such access is all the more important to enable them to fulfil their long-term potential.



The lifelong negative impacts of poverty in a child's life can be counteracted through equal opportunities for education, play and health. All are fundamental Children's Rights."

— Mary Xenou

## WHO?

The project is coordinated by the scientific personnel of the General Directorate of Public Health & Social Welfare (Western Greece Region), together with a number of public and private organisations in the region, including 'Hellenic MENSA', a private company that contributes to the provision of the Human Performance Lab, Cartoon Story Making and counselling services. 'Data Research' is a private sector media company that contributes to technical counselling within the programme, whilst 'Patras Events' helps deliver the Digital Photos lab and contributes to implementation support and publicity, along with a number of journalists.

## HOW?

In advance of the project, partners met for a month to set up an integrated training programme, in order to develop an effective social support approach for the target group. Over 40 children and 60 parents took part in the project, running from April to May 2019. The project was run by employed staff (i.e. social services, educators) and volunteers from different public and private sector partners, with different expertise in areas such as data research, communications or counselling.

At the end of the project, parents were **consulted individually** by educators regarding their children's abilities, and advised on how to further strengthen their child's skills and talents. The parents also received an assessment of their child's skills using the reliable psychometric tool used by the National Association for Gifted Children (NACG).

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Mary Xenou**, MSc Public Health Inspector/Speech Therapist at the Directorate of Public Health & Social Welfare, Regional Unit of Achaia, Western Greece Region.

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## Hungary – Providing In-Kind Benefits to Homeless People

Public Foundation for the Homeless (HKA)

### WHY?

It is widely known that material deprivation is often linked to health complications. More specifically, research on the health of homeless people shows that they are much more exposed to illness than the average citizen, with malnutrition representing a major cause of health deterioration. In addition to physical health problems, homeless people often suffer from mental health problems. These problems can be either a cause, or result, of homelessness. Moreover, the social institutions in place may have limited expertise or resources to help. In Hungary, the situation is particularly dire following a law that criminalises homelessness.<sup>1</sup> In order to **reduce hunger and malnutrition among the homeless**, the Hungarian Public Foundation for the Homeless (HKA) thus provides healthy food, vitamins and minerals in the form of warm meals to the homeless nationwide.

### WHAT?

Within the framework of the program, around 4,000 homeless people get warm food from Monday to Friday. In the scope of two years, about two million meals (1367 tonnes of food) were distributed at 85 locations, with the assistance of 47 partner organisations. By the end of 2018, a total of **18,906 homeless people** had received the service.

Additionally, the program also contributes to promoting social integration, especially for end recipients with mental disorders and addiction problems. Accompanying measures are carried out including **addictological, mental and psychiatric assessments**, as well as individual and group counselling/therapy sessions. The pilot project started in January 2017 and by the end of 2018, the involved addictologists, clinical psychologists, mental health professionals and psychiatrists had provided services to 5,149 homeless people at 20 different implementation sites.

Furthermore, providing meals at night shelters and day-care institutions indirectly encourages rough-sleepers to use social institutional services more. The admission of psychiatric and addiction patients to therapy helps to start the process of **social reintegration**. The provision of health care services takes place in the social institutional environment, which enables direct contact with end recipients and makes it possible to provide both social and healthcare services within a multidisciplinary framework.

<sup>1</sup> Palfi, R. and Tidey, A. (2018), 'Homeless people face prison in Hungary after tough new law is passed', Euronews. Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/2018/10/22/homeless-people-face-prison-in-hungary-after-tough-new-law-is-passed>



Health in focus!

— Public Foundation for the Homeless, HKA

## WHO?

The managing authority of this project is the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities. The project is implemented by the Public Foundation for the Homeless (HKA), collaborating with **47 partner organisations**, such as shelters operated by non-governmental organisations, the local government and the church. The activities of the project are carried out by the employees of the partner organisations. The specialists involved in the accompanying measures are employed by the HKA, but were selected by the partner organisations. To provide a high quality service all over the country, co-operation between the HKA, service companies, partner organisations (homelessness-care organisations) and involved professionals is essential.

## HOW?

The project is FEAD funded and carried out nationwide. Distributions take place at night shelters and day-care facilities. The activities are carried out by the employees - mostly social workers - of partner organisations, like NGOs and local governments. Prior to implementation, HKA conducted a **national survey on the needs** of both the target group and the homeless-care organisations, and it is continuously gathering feedback from them during the project.

The contract for the supply of **warm meals** allows minor changes to the service (i.e. the types of meals) based on the experience and feedback during distribution. HKA conducts its coordination tasks in close co-operation with the warm-food supplier companies and partner organisations. Concerning the accompanying measures, the homeless-care organisations play a vital part, as their capacity and premises maximise the number of homeless participants.

Centralised coordination minimises the administrative, data collection and documentation burdens of the partners (service companies, homeless-care institutions and health-care professionals), while data flows and feedbacks are carried out in a uniform, well-structured way, enabling a high-level service delivery. The HKA organises regular meetings and workshops, during which participants can share their experiences. The conclusions can then be used to improve the implementation of the current projects, as well as during the need-based planning of the next program.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Mr. Péter Varga**, manager of the Public Foundation for the Homeless

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## Ireland – Providing School Kits to Deprived Families

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

### WHY?

Beneficiaries of food aid are particularly affected by the cost of school kits for their children at the beginning of the year. In fact, one in nine children in Ireland grow up in consistent poverty, which means that they live in a household with a very low income. In an attempt to respond to this issue, an Irish project managed by the Irish Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection aims to ease the financial burden of FEAD food recipients with children in school by providing them with a **school kit**. More specifically, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection provides the children of FEAD food recipients with school packs containing over 15 items. The children provided with kits range from 4 to 18 years of age.

### WHAT?

The project aims to not only help FEAD food recipients, but also children of applicants for International Protection residing in Direct Provision Accommodation. Since its introduction in 2017, the **School Stationary Kits project** has provided school kits to more than **45,000 children**, hence supporting a large number of deprived families at the beginning of each school year. The local partner organisations distributing the kits report positive feedback from the beneficiaries and the families. In addition to this, during its pilot phase within the Limerick/South Claire area, an internal evaluation stressed the importance and usefulness of these kits. For this reason, the project was **extended and rolled out at national level** throughout 2018 and 2019.



The provision of school stationary kits eases the burden of return to school costs experienced by deprived families, whilst ensuring that the children can have the same school stationery as their school peers.”

— Susan McGowan

## WHO?

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, which liaises directly with suppliers, manages the choice of items. These choices are largely based on the feedback received from end recipients who have previously taken part in the project. The Managing Authority and the suppliers subsequently prepare a delivery plan, and the materials are delivered in July to the local partner organisations involved. The kits are then assembled and distributed by local partner organisations to the families, in time for the start of the school year. Volunteers support the organisations in order to fulfil this task.

## HOW?

The packages provided through the project differ, according to the age of the child. In this context, three separate age groups have been created: children between 4-8 years of age, children between 9-12 years of age and children over 13 years of age. Each pack contains **over 15 items**, such as twistable crayons, copybooks and triangular pencils for junior children. For the older group, the kit contains hardback science note books, USB sticks, maths sets, amongst other suitable resources.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Susan McGowan**

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## Ireland – Supporting Families' Transition to Secure Accommodation

### Mid-West Simon

#### WHY?

In Ireland, there are more than 10,000 homeless people, and more than a third of them are children<sup>1</sup>. The **Mid West Simon project** aims to support families experiencing housing issues in the Mid-West of Ireland. The project mainly targets families living in emergency accommodation, helping them to move into secure housing situations. The project also helps the families supported to maintain their new tenancies with the help of a **Resettlement Worker**, assigned to them for a six-month period.

#### WHAT?

Since 2014, the Mid West Simon project has supported families living in emergency accommodation situations in the Mid West Simon Family Hub. This service provides families with an accommodation unit, in order to ensure family wellbeing and child protection. The target group was chosen in order to further engage people already supported by the Mid West Simon organisation. In addition to **emergency accommodation** for disadvantaged groups, the organisation also provides support for end recipients through the food bank, and has reached more than **6,000 individuals** since 2014. In practice, while the food bank provides products to FEAD end recipients, the association helps Mid West Simon food aid recipients in need to move into their new homes. In addition, School Stationery Bags are supplied through FEAD material assistance funds. The association has, so far, supported **20 families** to sustainably overcome homelessness. To date, all the families supported have been able to maintain their tenancies. In fact, in order to help them with maintaining their households, the Mid-West Simon association also contribute to the emotional and physical wellbeing of the beneficiaries through ad-hoc activities, such as summer camps and arts and crafts classes. These activities are aimed at reducing the trauma and stigma associated with being homeless.

1 Baker, N. (2019), Homeless figures hit record high, Cork: Irish Examiner. Available at <<https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/homeless-figures-hit-record-high-921080.html>>

## WHO?

In addition to this, other activities are carried out by Mid West members of staff and volunteers in cooperation with partner associations. The Cookery and Health and Beauty programmes, for example, are organised with the support of **education and training providers**. Moreover, outdoor and recreational activities directly targeting children are organised in conjunction with the **ABC Start Right** programme, an early intervention and prevention initiative aimed at enhancing children's development and well-being.

## HOW?

In order to provide families with the opportunity to maintain their new tenancies, the project also features different services tailored to their individual needs. Adults, for instance, are offered **CV and interview preparation sessions** with the hopes of eventually attaining a job, enhancing the likelihood of maintaining their new tenancies. In addition to this, the Resettlement Worker allocated to each specific family will ensure that they have adequate finances to set up a new home, providing them with **budgetary skills**. The **Health and Beauty programme** provides homeless people with the opportunity to receive advice on healthy eating alongside beauty treatments, which help to support the emotional and physical wellbeing of families during their time in the family hub. Finally, through the **Cookery Programme**, the project also provides cooking classes for adults, in order to enable them to provide nutritious meals for their families and reduce the amount spent on groceries. This project also offers activities directly targeted at children living in emergency accommodation. In fact, the Mid West Simon staff, in collaboration with other partners, organise **summer camps** (i.e. arts and crafts, baking, sports) and **outdoor activities** aimed at combating the effect of living in confined spaces on the children.

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## Italy – Transitional Kits: Accompanying Measures for Homeless People

Services for adults in need – municipality of Turin

### WHY?

In 2017, it was estimated that over 1,500 people lived in homelessness in Turin, the majority of them adults between the ages of 40 and 49. An increasing number of young homeless people have been reported in recent years, however. The accompanying measures developed by the municipality of Turin aim to reduce the increasing number of **homeless people** living in Turin, providing provisional services to individuals facing emergency situations. As part of this initiative, the municipality provides transitional kits for homeless people and counselling services aimed at reintegrating them into society. In fact, the measures are not only aimed at increasing the forms of basic protection for homeless people in the region, but are also geared towards improving their personal wellbeing through **tailored and personalised services**.

### WHAT?

The '**Transitional Kits**' project began in 2016, and it is still ongoing. Since the beginning of 2019, it has helped approximately **30 people**, either living on the streets of Turin, or formerly detained. In particular, the transitional kits are aimed at supporting recipients during specific **transitional phases** of their life, such as the transition from accommodation to the street and vice versa, or from prison back to society. The transitional kits can be delivered to homeless people already included in social security programmes offered by the municipality of Turin (night hospitality houses or the Housing First programme) and to individuals exiting penitentiaries, who are at high risk of entering into homelessness. In fact, in addition to transitional kits for homeless people (including a bed, hygienic supplies or canteen services, etc.), the project aims to also support former detainees willing to be reintegrated into society through circular economy processes. These processes aim to offer to the beneficiaries those goods and items that might help them in their transition phase and that could not be provided through FEAD funding (electrical appliances etc.).

## WHO?

The Transitional Kits project is part of the broader strategy of the municipality of Turin, aimed at fostering the social inclusion of homeless people. It is funded through the national FEAD operative plan (2014-2020). In order to develop and implement the different activities for beneficiaries, the municipality has launched a co-production programme in collaboration with several third sector actors. This includes the Caritas Diocesana of Turin, which develops the transitional kits for people exiting from penitentiaries, and the University of Turin, which is in charge of monitoring and evaluation of the project. In addition to this, a new partnership with the Local Health Service (Turin ASL - Azienda Sanitaria Locale) provides the opportunity to offer health-related services to beneficiaries of the project. Finally, other partners contribute to the project by providing ad-hoc services to the beneficiaries and supporting the work of employees of the municipality of Turin.

## HOW?

The Transitional kits are developed and distributed following a **participatory approach**, which allows beneficiaries to define their most urgent needs and the type of support that they require. In this way, it has been possible to also foster **social inclusion** of beneficiaries and to improve their personal wellbeing. In fact, for end recipients, the delivery of material goods also represents an opportunity to be involved in laboratorial, peer education, recreational or social work activities (i.e. social markets, hospitality centres, volunteering, etc.). These activities are implemented by the different partners and tailored to the needs and interests of the participants, in order to help them with developing social relationships and to contribute to their social inclusion.

The efforts placed on the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the city of Turin represent the strong added value of the project, as it not only targets people in need by providing them with basic material goods, but also with relevant **skills, guidance and advice** aimed at fully reintegrating them into society and increasing their employability.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Uberto Moreggia**, Executive Manager of the Service for Disadvantaged Adults

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## Latvia – 10 Simple Habits to Live a Greener Life

Latvian Red Cross (Latvijas Sarkanais Krusts)

### WHY?

The daily habits of disadvantaged people are usually determined by a lack of available material and financial resources. Thus, trying to meet the basic needs of every day life takes priority over living a greener, healthier and more eco-friendly lifestyle. Alongside food and material assistance, the Latvian Red Cross, therefore, organises various **educational activities** to help disadvantaged groups improve their overall quality of life.

### WHAT?

The various information sessions organised to promote healthier, more eco-friendly lifestyles have been named **'10 simple habits in order to live a greener life'**, and are a part of a broader educational programme entirely funded by FEAD and run by the Latvian Red Cross. Topics that are deemed practical and useful for end recipients in their daily lives, such as how to sustain a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet, and how to master budgeting and time management, are chosen. Participants are also offered sessions to expand their knowledge on how to change their daily routine to promote **clean and eco-friendly environments**.

The sessions are open to all who are interested in a healthy lifestyle and its link to a cleaner environment. Participants learn about the future lectures from various posters or leaflets distributed at the different branches of the Red Cross, as well as on their website. Overall, **almost 3,000 people** participated in **483 educational activities** organised by the Red Cross in 2018. Due to an expressed interest from the beneficiaries, the lectures on how to live a greener life were introduced in 2019. So far, 30 people have participated in lectures on a cleaner environment organised in Riga and Jurmala in 2019.



“Together we can help!”

— Latvian Red Cross (Latvijas Sarkanais Krusts)

## WHO?

The programme includes experienced staff members involved in the implementation of the FEAD programme. The lectures are designed and implemented by experts and volunteers from the Latvian Red Cross.

## HOW?

During the lectures, participants learn about ten easy daily habits that could lead to a more eco-friendly lifestyle.

1. **Vegetarian days** – avoiding meat products one or more days per week.
2. **Walking and cycling** more often to increase physical activity and reduce travelling by car, bus or motorcycle.
3. Using **environmentally friendly cleaning products**.
4. Using **natural make up and cosmetics**.
5. **Avoiding single-use packaging** such as coffee cups or plastic bags.
6. Implementing **zero waste policies** by donating clothing, footwear and household appliances to people in need.
7. Choosing **local products** to support local businesses and manufacturers.
8. **Saving water and electricity** by turning off household appliances and lights when leaving the house.
9. **Improving housing insulation** to reduce heating and air-conditioning.
10. Using **reusable shopping bags**.

Through the lectures, participants thus receive detailed information on how a small change in their daily routine could reduce their environmental impact and even **increase their savings**. Improving the insulation of a house, for example, can cut annual heating and cooling bills in half. Attendees also learn scientific facts about climate change and its causes. Towards the end of the lecture, it is emphasised that the implementation of all or some of the habits could lead to a greener, more eco-friendly lifestyle, with a **positive impact on the participant's health and environment**.

After the lecture, participants are also given the opportunity to provide feedback about what they thought was the most interesting and useful, and how the lectures could be improved in the future.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Agnese Trofimova**, head of International and Public Relations at the Latvian Red Cross

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## Latvia – School of Life: Teaching Life Skills to Improve the Well-being of the Most Deprived

St. John's Ambulance Latvia (Svētā Jāņa Palīdzība)

### WHY?

By providing FEAD food and material assistance, St. John's Ambulance Latvia identified a need for improvement in the daily habits and social interactions of beneficiaries. Due to their personal circumstances, beneficiaries lacked knowledge of personal hygiene, maintaining a healthy lifestyle or cooking. Thus, the organisation created 'the School of Life', where it **sustainably supports FEAD end recipients** in their transition out of poverty. Counselling and information sessions address the barriers of social exclusion, encouraging participants to actively improve their daily routine and become more independent in solving personal social issues.

### WHAT?

As one of the partner organisations implementing FEAD accompanying measures, St. John's ambulance organises three informal educational sessions every quarter in the administrative territory of Riga city, including the Vidzeme suburb and Northern district division. Since 2014, **the School of Life** has targeted vulnerable groups such as the homeless, the unemployed and retired, single mothers and those with low incomes, providing them with the opportunity to learn **life skills** such as cooking, laundry, cleaning, childcare and budget management. Over the five years of project implementation, group attendance has varied, with an average of 16 participants per group. Due to the target population, the average age of participants was 46.7 years.



We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone."

— Dr. Loretta Scott

## WHO?

The counselling sessions are organised by St. John's ambulance (Svētā Jāņa Palīdzība), which is one of 28 FEAD partner organisations in Latvia. Classes are provided by experienced staff members, such as social rehabilitators and creative class educators.

## HOW?

Classes are conducted as informal discussions, supporting the target group with solving everyday problems and informing them on **employment and educational opportunities**. Counselling is provided by experienced staff members and organised in small groups, where discussion among attendees is encouraged. The topics covered vary, depending on demand from the audience. Before the elections, for example, lecturers emphasised the importance of citizen duties and participation. In the past, participants have learnt about **effective ways to use FEAD food parcels to decrease food waste**, how to live a healthier lifestyle and about the health effects of alcohol and tobacco abuse.

Attendance to **information and counselling sessions** is voluntary. As a result, the organisation employs various tactics to attract participants. These include disseminating information materials to beneficiaries at the material distribution centres (i.e. follow-up action plans and various information sheets) and including **information leaflets in the food packages**. Targeting beneficiaries personally proved to be the most efficient method, however. In addition, the association provides incentives such as hot beverages, pastries or snacks to help increase participation.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Melanija Grundsteina**, director of St. John's ambulance Latvia

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## Lithuania – Food Bank Academy: Encouraging a Healthier and Low-Cost Diet

### Lithuanian Food Bank

#### WHY?

Maintaining a healthy and balanced diet is often perceived to be too costly for individuals at risk of poverty and social exclusion. It is even more difficult for those who depend on material and food assistance. Since 2018, the Food Bank Academy has therefore provided FEAD food aid recipients with information regarding nutrition and the creation of **diverse and nutritious everyday meals with FEAD** food products. Furthermore, end recipients also receive information sessions on **personal finance and future job opportunities** that could help them sustainably transition out of poverty.

#### WHAT?

The Food Bank Academy is a two-year project being carried out across Lithuania, in partnership with local municipalities. Information about the project is available online, and is often disseminated by Food Bank volunteers or social workers in order to reach the intended target group. The majority of the target group are **FEAD end recipients** of working age who are unemployed and facing financial difficulties, as well as seniors. As a FEAD accompanying measure, the Food Bank Academy provides various information and practical sessions on cooking healthy and making delicious, easy and affordable meals. Furthermore, professional lecturers provide information on job opportunities and how to manage personal savings. In 2018, around **1,700 participants** attended more than 80 workshops in 14 municipalities.

#### HOW?

As part of the Food Bank Academy, **culinary workshops** are offered by professional chefs or dietitians, who share easy and useful recipes, including using various FEAD products, to help participants maintain a healthier, more balanced diet. They also try to demonstrate to people that a quality dinner does not always need to be expensive. While cooking together, participants have so far acknowledged that they lacked **nutritional awareness** regarding various products, such as buckwheat or oatmeal. Many were also uncertain about how to incorporate these FEAD products into their daily diet. As such, through the workshops, participants develop independent culinary skills while also reducing food waste, as they learn how to use all of the FEAD food products that they receive. The second distribution of FEAD food parcels in 2019 also included fliers with new, cheap and easy to make recipes.



The genuine connections between end recipients is just as important as the knowledge provided.”

— Lithuanian Food Bank

## WHO?

The project is managed by the Lithuanian Food Bank, and is currently implemented with the help of **21 municipalities**. This represents a third of all municipalities in Lithuania. Food Bank volunteers also provide organisational support and cooperate with local social workers to ensure that activities reach the target groups, even in the most remote areas of Lithuania. Professional lecturers carry out all educational activities.

The Food Bank Academy also provides **financial planning sessions**, where participants are informed on how to manage a low-income budget. Lecturers demonstrate that by changing spending habits and more carefully planning financial decisions, everyone can save.

Many participants thus far have admitted to having a negative attitude prior to taking part in the workshops, including an expectation that they would not discover anything new, interesting or valuable. Based on the feedback received, however, the majority of participants wanted to come back or participate in other trainings. The majority of attendees also **shared their ‘little victories’** in changing their daily routine and incorporating various recipes taught during the workshops into their diet.

In addition, culinary workshops and information sessions allow participants to **socialise with others, share their experiences and combat social exclusion**. The value of the social element of the project is exemplified in this testimony, offered by an active participant: ‘Very tasty Oatmeal Cutlets, I’ll make them at home for sure. I’m not just here to learn how to cook, though - I come here to talk with someone, to meet others, too.’

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Asta Dalytė-Kalvaitienė**, Project manager of the Food Bank in Lithuania

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## Lithuania – Empowering Older People through Volunteering and Training

Social Employment Agency (SOPA) in cooperation with the Food Bank of Lithuania

### WHY?

Research shows that older people have fewer employment opportunities and fewer chances to take part in social activities than other age groups. More specifically, in growing older, people experience new barriers to participating in social activities (limited mobility, for example), while also facing added obstacles in finding a job due to labour market competition from younger people. In 2016, for instance, only 66.1% of people between the ages of 55-64 were employed in Lithuania. In 2015, older people also held the lowest participation rate in volunteering activities of all active age groups (11%). As a result, the project **'Reserved for the Elderly'** aims to tackle these challenges and increase the self-confidence and social skills of older people, including FEAD food aid recipients, in order to facilitate their reintegration into the job market.

### WHAT?

The project's main implementing agency, namely the social employment agency 'SOPA', organises individual and group consultations and trainings to improve participants' social and professional skills. These consultations and trainings also aim to stimulate participants' motivation to return to work. In this context, throughout the project cycle, 'Reserved for the Elderly' (2018-2021) offers **personal development** opportunities for older people through courses, personal development sessions and participation in volunteering activities. In particular, the project targets people between 55-64 years of age who are unemployed and have trouble in securing employment. Participants are also encouraged to engage in **volunteering activities** with the Food Bank of Lithuania, operating as a partner organisation for the project. The Food Bank is one of the main distributors of FEAD support in Lithuania and a crucial actor in national efforts to alleviate poverty.

Moreover, project participants who get involved as volunteers in the Food Bank of Lithuania receive **information sessions** on food consumption, a healthy lifestyle, food waste prevention and the benefits of volunteering. While volunteering, they develop valuable **social and professional competences**, and get involved in decision-making processes in order to help combat social issues. They also have the opportunity to meet successful professionals, such as journalists, actors or chefs, who can share their tips on self-development, the consequences of various life choices and how volunteering can help professional

“ Volunteering is a great way to develop professional skills, build networks and find friends.”

— Source: Food Bank

## WHO?

The 'Reserved for the Elderly' project has been developed by the social employment agency 'SOPA', in collaboration with the Food Bank of Lithuania. Exploring synergies between the European Social Fund (ESF) and FEAD, the project is primarily funded through ESF, with a portion of participants also **receiving FEAD food aid support**. All activities of the project are carried out by professional lecturers and employed staff of SOPA. Some participants of the project were previously involved in the activities of the Food Bank.

development. As some of the project participants are also FEAD food support recipients, volunteering can provide them with a sense of dignity. Additionally, it provides an opportunity to give back to society and show appreciation for the support received.

## HOW?

Since its launch in March 2018, the project has been popular among project participants. Four **Job Search Laboratories** tailored to the needs of the elderly are foreseen in the future. The laboratories will include practical activities and simulations based on the 'Theatre of the Oppressed' method, developed by theatre practitioner Augusto Boal. The goal of these sessions is to boost self-confidence, critical thinking, initiative, creativity, and decision-making. In parallel, individual consultations aim to provide tailored information about job offers or volunteering opportunities. So far, almost **200 older people** have been involved in **consultations and courses** on motivation, social, civic and digital skills and entrepreneurship. This represents approximately 40% of the overall target set to be reached by the end of the project in 2021.

The organisers spread information about the project to the Food Bank's recipients. It is also advertised on both the 'SOPA' and Food Bank websites, where those who are interested can submit their applications. Participants who choose to volunteer can directly apply their acquired social and practical skills in the real world. Among their volunteering tasks, participants engage in food distribution, assist in sorting FEAD food and material products, and help chef Ovidijus cook storable products in the Food Bank kitchen. As such, volunteering helps participants to feel useful, find friends, network and introduce a more active daily routine into their lives. So far, fourteen participants have engaged in volunteering, and together they have contributed roughly 500 hours of work to the project.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Dovile Kovalskyte**, Volunteer programme manager at Food Bank

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## Luxembourg – Social Greengrocers and Integration Workshops

Luxembourg Red Cross and Caritas Luxembourg

### WHY?

Subsidised vouchers are typically used to support those in financial difficulty by allowing them to exchange vouchers for discounts on produce in participating grocery stores and supermarkets. An unintended consequence of this model is that the practical process of exchanging vouchers can be uncomfortable for the user, because staff in participating stores are often unaware of these voucher programmes. Having to stand and wait whilst a manager is brought over to validate their vouchers can be publicly humiliating for recipients, as it leaves other customers waiting and publicly highlights that they cannot provide for themselves. In order to help overcome the practical barriers of this exchange model and **reduce the social stigma and isolation** of individuals related to the practice, the FEAD partner organisations of the Red Cross and Caritas set up the **Social Greengrocer project** in Luxembourg in 2009, together with **workshops** supporting the integration of end recipients.

### WHAT?

The Social Greengrocer project now supports around **13,000 people** in financial difficulty with having a degree of self-sufficiency and purchasing power, through **12 social greengrocer stores**, which offer them the opportunity to do their own food shopping with more autonomy. The stores deliver quality food across Luxembourg for free regarding products bought under FEAD and at a fraction (10-30%) of the market value for products funded by the government, without the need for vouchers. Furthermore, in order to combat the social isolation of food aid recipients, the project has designed a number of **accompanying workshops**. These are free to users that promote the **social integration** of social greengrocer shoppers, who often find themselves socially marginalised and - because they depend on food assistance - have to conduct their shopping outside of mainstream shops and supermarkets.

The workshops are delivered using a range of designs, each targeting different recipients' needs and aiming to develop different social and practical skills. The **cooking skills workshop** is the most frequently delivered, and develops recipients' practical cooking skills and nutritional awareness, promotes food exchanges between beneficiaries (who are often from different cultural backgrounds) and fosters communication channels between beneficiaries who may not interact with each other through shopping alone. There are also **parent-child**

## WHO?

These accompanying social integration workshops are delivered in conjunction with the social greengrocer programme administered by the Luxembourg Red Cross and Caritas Luxembourg.

**workshops**, which aim to provide support and a platform for discussion on a range of parental issues, such as how to limit a child's screen time or how to ensure that a child's diet is nutritionally sufficient. In addition, the programme delivers **IT, job search and sewing workshops**.

## HOW?

The workshops are coordinated by the manager of each social greengrocer store, whose role is not only to manage the operations of the store, but also to interact with the beneficiaries, understand their needs and encourage participation in these accompanying measures. For each specific workshop, one volunteer is responsible for organisation, delivery and mobilisation.

In 2018, the Luxembourg Red Cross delivered 99 of these workshops to over 550 participants, whilst Caritas Luxembourg delivered 5 parent/child workshops, 10 cooking workshops and a number of private lessons in IT and maths, to a **total of 145 participants**.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Isabelle Vekemans**, Luxembourg Red Cross or **Sylvie Debernade**, Caritas Luxembourg

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## Poland – Academy of Exceptional Activity

Food bank in Lodz/ Bank Żywności w Łodzi

### WHY?

People struggling with addiction should be given a second chance at becoming functioning members of society. This belief is the cornerstone of the Polish project, Academy of Exceptional Activity. The project represents a collaborative effort between the Food Bank in Lodz, and Monar, a Polish NGO that provides **therapeutic support for people struggling with addiction**. The Food Bank in Lodz recognised the enthusiasm and commitment displayed by participants in Monar treatment programmes, especially among young people. As a result, the Food Bank decided to **engage Monar programme participants in delivering FEAD food parcels** to beneficiaries of the Social Welfare Centre in Lodz.

### WHAT?

This project represents an interesting example of engaging socially excluded end recipients in assisting other individuals in need. More specifically, the project facilitated these end recipients' social and psychological reintegration, by providing them with opportunities to make a difference. Accordingly, the project aimed to positively impact their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Overall, approximately **140 volunteers** from Monar were involved in delivering food aid. In addition to food distribution, the volunteers were also trained in a zero waste approach and informed on healthy dietary regimes, and had the opportunity to socialise and meet new people. The volunteering initiative has proven to be a great success among Monar programme participants, which demonstrates the quality of the project. Many volunteers who have completed their therapy with Monar continue to participate in volunteering activities and, whenever there is a food delivery, the Food Bank engages Monar participants.

In parallel, since the start of the FEAD programme in 2014, around **4,000 people** have received food aid, amounting to a total of 200 tonnes of food distributed. The project has brought benefits, both for FEAD beneficiaries, and Monar volunteers. The involvement of people who are at higher risk of social exclusion, such as recovering addicts, has consequently become an incubator of new solutions and has prompted local discussions about solving social problems through different approaches.



Let's help each other"

— Food bank in Lodz/ Bank Żywności w Łodzi

## WHO?

The Food Bank in Lodz implemented the project. They collaborate with more than 100 NGOs and reach around 70,000 people annually, across the whole of Lodz province. The Food Bank is one of FEAD's regional partner organisations in Poland, and their other activities are carried out by different volunteers, depending on the type of activity. During the annual food collection, which lasts between two and three days, more than 1,500 volunteers help out.

## HOW?

The local Food Bank established a core team of three people, who focused on the implementation and delivery of the project. Subsequently, the team recruited project participants from three Monar branches in the Lodz province, Monar Lodz, Monar Sokolniki and Monar Kębliny. Eligible Monar participants then had the opportunity to volunteer by preparing FEAD food packages for end recipients in the city. Food parcels were delivered every three months for an overall period of three weeks. Participants changed every quarter and, before each new delivery, scheduled volunteers were briefed on the scope of activities, particularities regarding the place of distribution, and occupational health and safety. **Therapists also took part in the project, accompanying the volunteers** to the Food Bank and providing onsite help and support, as needed. Volunteers were also provided with warm meals, hot and cold drinks and accident insurance.

They worked in a food depot in teams, where the work was divided into three stages: bringing collective packages, preparing food parcels, and distributing them to FEAD beneficiaries.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Wojciech Jaros**

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## Poland – Preventing Lifestyle Diseases

Polish Committee of Social Welfare in Przemyśl

### WHY?

Obesity is a worldwide issue, with significant impact on the quality of people's lives and their overall life expectancy. In 2013 and 2014, more than 24% of men and 23% of women struggled with obesity in Poland.<sup>1</sup> To tackle this obesity crisis, the World Obesity Day was launched in 2015, with the aim of **promoting healthy lifestyle solutions** around the world. This annual event served as the inspiration for the Polish project '**Preventing lifestyle diseases**', which ran from October 2018 to June 2019 in the city of Przemyśl.

### WHAT?

The main aim of the project was to enhance the quality of people's lives by influencing their eating habits and promoting the importance of physical activity in urban areas. To meet these objectives, the project developed a comprehensive approach, based on a constant flow of support and guidance to participants. The underlying idea was to thoroughly explain why a healthy diet and increased physical activity was good for their wellbeing. To visualise and operationalise this process, the project presented a **success map**, indicating what changes should be undertaken and which routes to take in order to achieve one's goals.

Through workshops, participants further learned how to handle the changes to their lifestyles. This included mapping what kind of **phases, reactions and emotions** they might encounter at different stages of the process, and how to support themselves and their children. The theoretical approach of the workshop was tailored according to the **change curve** developed by psychiatrist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross.

Finally, a crucial element involved building support groups willing to help each other throughout the process. These groups aimed to strengthen the level of learning about high quality diets and the overall uptake of physical activities. More than **2,000** people participated in the project. These participants learned how to follow balanced diets, and have changed their lifestyles and eating habits accordingly. Similarly, attitudes towards regular physical activities have reportedly changed for a number of participants.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.worldobesitydata.org/map/overview-adults#>



A sound mind in a sound body.”

— Roman poet Juvenal (10.356)

## WHO?

The regional branch of the Polish Committee for Social Assistance in Przemyśl carried out the project activities, with the support of a nutritionist and a therapist.

## HOW?

Project implementation entailed several steps. Firstly, social workers from the Social Welfare Centres selected participants based on their needs and situations. Participants were mainly adults and their children. The project subsequently prepared different resources, such as a multimedia presentation called '**Home Meal vs. Fast Food**'. Other resources included communication materials on nutrition (e.g. a food and physical activity pyramid). Workshops on healthy eating practices, as well as support groups and individual activities, were organised and conducted.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Krystyna Makara**

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## Slovenia – Building the Community: Social Involvement for Vulnerable People

Škofijska Karitas Celje, Caritas Slovenia

### WHY?

Single parents are faced with additional barriers to finding a job, as they need to align their job schedules with available child care. Similarly, for people with severe health restrictions or disabilities, it is particularly challenging to find a suitable job. Such additional barriers prevent many people who are unemployed from easily finding employment and, in turn, increase their chances of social exclusion. As such, the main aim of the Slovenian **Building the Community volunteering programme**, organised by Caritas in Celje, is to integrate people who suffer from social exclusion into a local parish, while also providing them with an opportunity to gain skills and work experience and, in turn, increase their chances of finding a job.

### WHAT?

More specifically, Caritas Slovenia in Celje organises numerous voluntary activities for people who are unemployed, receiving financial assistance, suffering from mental health problems and people with disabilities. The program offers regular opportunities for socially isolated people to volunteer and engage in **skill-building activities**. These aim to increase employability, but also to help end recipients socialise and feel part of a community. The program **integrates around 150 people** into a wide range of volunteering activities, based on their interests and abilities. Activities include gardening, assisting in the distribution of food packages, craftsmanship, a cooking group, and a group helping with different household tasks (carried out in Caritas Humanitarian Warehouse or the Diocesan Caritas House in Vrbje).





Ljubeča skrb Cerkev za človeka. /  
Loving care of the Church for person”

— Škofijska Karitas Celje, Caritas Slovenia

## WHO?

The **Building the Community** programme is carried out by the Škofijska Caritas Celje centre with a number of partner organisations, including Ljudska univerza Celje, Center za krepitev zdravje Žalec, UPI Žalec and the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The 23 local Parish Caritas centres also support with identification and outreach, in order to recruit eligible participants for the volunteering program.

## HOW?

Volunteers visit the groups twice or more per month, and work a full 7 hours per session. They are provided with a **hot meal**, and are invited to attend **training sessions** and **workshops** to help them cope with challenging life situations, overcome challenges related to social deprivation and increase their quality of life. These interactive sessions intend to help volunteers build a social network and to socialise in a safe environment. Volunteers have reported feeling useful and productive, while also showing appreciation for the opportunity to spend quality time in a welcoming social environment.

For more information regarding the project,  
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## Slovenia – A First Aid Workshop for the Youngest

Slovenian Red Cross – Local Association Zagorje ob Savi

### WHY?

First aid workshops are usually paid and therefore not accessible for children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. In the Slovenian region of **Zagorje ob Savi**, the Red Cross organises a **first aid workshop for the youngest** citizens as part of social inclusion measures focused on those families who have difficulties paying for extracurricular activities for their children. Through this activity, the FEAD partner organisation helps children to become more resilient and proactive in their own protection and the protection of their communities.

### WHAT?

In addition to food and material assistance, the project aims to provide children with the tools and social skills for life-threatening situations. Beyond learning how to respond in the event of an accident, the workshops provide a space for children to develop different soft skills. The workshops help strengthen their sense of **solidarity** in society, and in their communities, by allowing them to share and disseminate the knowledge they gain with friends and family.

Workshops include **practical training** on how to manage injuries and what the appropriate initial reactions to injuries are. During the sessions, children learn about how to properly examine a body and identify the injury. Part of the sessions involves a simulation of injuries, where children must identify what the problem is and confidently handle the injury. Moreover, children attending the workshops are eligible for reduced fees for the first aid exam. This can help promote **children's development** in the future, for example by enabling them to obtain their driving license, or increasing their chances of finding employment where first aid examination is a requirement for employees.



“First aid saves lives”

— Slovenian Red Cross – Local Association  
Zagorje ob Savi

## WHO?

The project is implemented by the local association of Red Cross in Zagorje ob Savi, Slovenia.

## HOW?

The workshops are organised entirely by the local association in the region, which is part of the Slovenian Red Cross. They are offered free of charge to children. The invitation to the workshop is forwarded to local organisations dealing with the most deprived people. When the Red Cross delivers food packages to families, they also encourage parents to enrol their children in the workshop, as well as in other extracurricular activities. **Six volunteers** from the local Red Cross first aid team are involved in organising the first aid workshops, and another **two staff** are employed to deliver the sessions for children.

As a result of attending the first aid workshops, young people become more aware of how to react in critical situations, and their confidence increases. The results of the project are positive - throughout the year, the project has trained and supported around 20 children from disadvantaged backgrounds free of charge.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Štefka Suša**

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## Spain – Centre for Elderly People

Las Hermanitas de los Pobres, Málaga

### WHY?

'Las Hermanitas de los Pobres' (The Sisters of the Poor) cares for the wellbeing of elderly people who have little or no financial resources to be able to afford home care. Through its public care home for the elderly, situated in Malaga, this FEAD partner organisation gives individuals in vulnerable situations the opportunity to live in a new home, supported by a team of professionals who care for their physical, mental and social needs.

### WHAT?

The 'Sisters of The Poor' old people's home has **63 residents**. Residents are people above (and, in exceptional cases, below) 65 years of age, who have limited or no economic resources to be able to afford private care homes. The centre relies on donations and financial support from public bodies to provide food and clothing. In 2019, the centre received over 2 tonnes of food. Thanks to FEAD, the centre is able to rely on food products, which the cooks use to prepare meals for residents.

The main objective of the centre is to provide a space where people can live together and feel at home in later life. To support the residents' health and social wellbeing, the centre runs different activities and workshops, including the **Basic Activities of Daily Life** workshops (where residents learn to take care of their basic needs), **physical activity sessions** (gym, walks), **outdoor leisure activities** (cinema, board games, cultural visits, excursions) and **artistic expression activities** to improve their **motor and mental skills** (theatre class). As well as helping to improve the residents' health and preventing health issues, these activities bring additional benefits, helping participants to gain more confidence, social competences and skills. Moreover, by participating in the different workshops and activities, residents feel more integrated into their new, shared home.

## WHO?

The private home for elderly people in the most vulnerable financial conditions was funded in 1863 by 'Las Hermanitas de los Pobres' (The Sisters of the Poor), a non-governmental entity with catholic background.

## HOW?

The new potential residents are interviewed by an occupational therapist, who determines whether they are eligible. At this stage, the occupational therapist develops a tailored integration plan, matching the needs of each individual and before being accepted, individuals are invited to come to the centre during the day, helping to begin their integration.

The care home is run by **35 staff**, including a technical professional team composed of a social worker, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and a nurse. Together, the team follow the residents' needs, and design and plan daily activities. The activities are supported by a group of **volunteers** (helping, for example, with administration tasks, or with the residents) supervised by the professional staff. Some residents also help the professional team with the day-to-day running of the home (e.g. sewing and preparation of activities). This type of involvement increases the residents' engagement, making them feel responsible as in the running of their own home.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Sor Maria Dolores**, Director

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## Spain – Workshops on Domestic Economy

Red Cross Spain, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

### WHY?

Individuals facing poverty and social exclusion often risk falling into long-term unemployment. This can exacerbate the challenges in their day to day lives and social interactions. Through the **Domestic Economy Workshops**, the Spanish Red Cross in Las Palmas aims to support individuals beyond food and material assistance with strategies, knowledge and skills that can help them manage and optimise their financial, social, and personal resources, allowing them to overcome unemployment and social exclusion.

### WHAT?

The Red Cross has designed a series of workshops tailored to long-term unemployed people who are often resistant to receiving training. The project aims to offer people, through these workshops, means of transitioning out of unemployment and becoming active participants in society. The workshops use a combination of theoretical and practical training, divided into different modules.

The topics covered include **domestic economy**, where participants learn to develop a family budget or to manage a financial crisis at home, or to maximise savings, by learning about **shopping habits**, such as the difference between indispensable and dispensable products. In addition, participants are educated on different **consumer habits and their environmental impacts**, aiming to empower them to become self-sufficient in the use of products and services. Finally, the workshops also provide a module which teaches participants the importance of maintaining a **work-life balance**, without excessive costs.



Ahora + que nunca, AHORRA + que nunca.”

— Red Cross Las Palmas, Gran Canaria (Spain)

## WHO?

The project is run by the Spanish Red Cross in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, one of the main FEAD partner organisations in Spain.

## HOW?

The workshops are delivered by Red Cross employees, as well as the Red Cross volunteer network, and provide a space for participants to share their experiences. They have been delivered to nearly **40 families** who are supported by FEAD more widely. Participants who take part in the different modules often receive direct assistance through other Red Cross projects and activities.

For more information regarding the project, please contact **Rosa Guerra Pons**

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# Diverse approaches to supporting Europe's most deprived

## FEAD CASE STUDIES 2019

This catalogue presents 28 case studies of Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) implementation across the European Union and encompasses a range of initiatives related to the organisation of food and material assistance schemes, accompanying measures and social inclusion initiatives as well as the manner in which FEAD initiatives can potentially complement other EU-funded (e.g. ESF) programmes.

The catalogue is one of several outputs deriving from knowledge-sharing activities of the FEAD Network in 2019. This community of practice has been established by the European Commission to allow all stakeholders and partner organisations to share tools, ideas and resources that can help with the delivery of FEAD-funded initiatives.

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