**All Party Parliamentary Group on Ending Homelessness**

**Joint meeting with the APPG for Immigration Law and Policy meeting on ending the homelessness of EU nationals living in Britain**

7 February, 12midday – 1pm, Zoom

**Attendees:**

**Panellists:**

* **Lucy Mort,** Senior Research Fellow at IPPR
* **Matt Downie,** Chief Executive at Crisis
* **Daniel Ashwell,** Advice Services Manager at Praxis
* **Barbara Drozdowicz,** Chief Executive at East European Resource Centre

Stephen Timms MP, APPG Vice-Chair, Chair of meeting

Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill, APPG Vice-Chair

Bambos Charalambous MP

Kate Osamor MP

Baroness Masham of Ilton

Christina Rees MP

**Parliamentary staff:**

Christian Ariwa, Office of Lyn Brown MP

**Secretariat:**

Emily Batchelor, Secretariat to APPG

**Other:**

Ruth Jacob, Crisis

Jasmine Basran, Crisis

Saskia Neibig, Crisis

Stella Tsantekidou, Crisis

Alice Parsons, Crisis

Sarah Walters, Crisis

Maeve McGoldrick, Crisis

Serena Smith, Crisis

LaToyah Gill, Crisis

Aiofe O’Reilly, Public Law Project

Alice Welsh, York University

Andrea Gilbert

Anna Yassin, Glassdoor

Ayesha Saran

Bonnie Williams, Housing Justice

Bridget Anderson, Bristol University

Bridge Young, NACCOM

Caroline Shulman, NHS

Catherine Houlcroft, Islington Council

Charlie Berry, Shelter

Charlotte O’Brien, York University

Chris Clarke, Hope Not Hate

Cllr Adam Brown

Cllr Lauren Wall

Cllr Louise Mitchell

Dan Poursaeedi, Centrepoint

David Jepson, ACH

Deborah Hay, JRF

Denise McDowell, GMIAU

Emily Cretch, Centrepoint

Emma Cookson, St Mungos

Erin Mansell, Solace Women’s Aid

Ewa Jamroz, Migration Yorkshire

Fiona Costello

Franki Taylor, Centrepoint

Hannah Keilloh, CIH

Hazel O’Halloran

Henry St Clair Miller, Islington Council

Jacob Quagliozzi, Housing Justice

Jayni Gudka, Unseen Tours

Jennie Corbett, Homeless Link

Jim Crawshaw, Coventry Council

Josephine Owusu, St Basils

Josephine Whitaker-Yilmaz, Praxis

Kate James, Migration Yorkshire

Leon Elliot, NACCOM

Luke Piper, the 3 million

Maeve McCleanaghan

Marie Iglesias

Mariana Schiller

Marieke Widmann

Maud Gozlan

Michelle Langan

Monique Hawkins

Nina Allard, Pret

Paul Anders, PHE
Paul Wishart, Oak Fnd

Sam Pratt, Shared Health

Sarauniya Shehu

Saskia Neuberger, Treasury
Sophie Collings, The Wallich

Sylvia White

Aaron Lukas

Dean Cawsey

Heather Leslie

John Perry

Lidia Estevez, GLA

Louise Montgomery

Marley Morris, IPPR

Megan Hector, St Mungo’s

Sam Dorney-Smith, Pathway and QNI

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| **Welcome and apologies** |
| Introductions |
| Stephen Timms MP  | Stephen Timms (ST) opened the meeting by introducing himself as Chair of the APPG for Immigration Law and Policy, and Vice-Chair of the APPG for Ending Homelessness, Chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee, thanking Bob Blackman MP, welcoming attendees, introducing panellists and briefly outlining the event format. ST made some initial remarks including on the APPG for Immigration Law and Policy, and his concerns around immigration policy, and homelessness amongst people with NRPF. He said this group of EU nationals needs focus from the Government if they are going to meet their commitment to end rough sleeping by the end of this parliament in 2024.ST introduced the first panellist, Lucy Mort (LM). |
| Lucy Mort, Senior Research Fellow, IPPR | LM thanked ST and outlined the research undertaken by IPPR which was commissioned by Crisis alongside Heriot Watt University, which would help to better understand the scale of homelessness of EU nationals living in Britain. The research findings included:* Scale of homelessness among EU citizens: 22,000 from the EU were experiencing core homelessness before the pandemic. This means that they are almost twice as likely as the general population to experience rough sleeping.
* Interviews found that drivers were: structural factors, systemic failures and individual and relationship factors.
* Drivers of homelessness are complex and multifaceted.

LM concluded by sharing her recommendations: * Quick resolution on applications
* Those who cannot gather evidence required they are given proper support to progress their claim
* To ensure the welfare system is there to help those who need it and who have been granted pre-settled status
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| Matt Downie, Chief Executive, Crisis | ST thanked LM, and introduced the next panellist, Matt Downie (MD).MD thanked ST and outlined the Home for All campaign included comments on the following:* How EU nationals were supported during Everyone In but that now there is not a plan
* How Crisis has suggested a tailored package of support for EU nationals facing or experiencing homelessness, including employment support, language support, lead workers, provision of emergency accommodation
* How local authorities can apply for RSI funding for this package of support
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| Daniel Ashwell, Advice Services Manager at Praxis | ST thanked MD, and introduced the next panellist, Daniel Ashwell (DA).DA outlined Praxis how supported those applying for settled status, providing immigration advice and has a focus to support those facing or experiencing homelessness. He outlined the different barriers faced by their clients including:* Lack of understanding on the issues surrounding this.
* People’s multiple needs or language skills
* Challenges in accessing documentations
* Delays to decisions on applications being made
* Accessing independent immigration advice
* The move towards enforcement rather than trust and communication.

DA outlined the policy changes he would like to see, for example, improving employers and landlords understanding of the issues, making sure people can access advice, addressing delays, and ensuring people can access welfare, and the issuing of online-only status.  |
| Barbara Drozdowicz, Chief Executive at East European Resource Centre  | ST introduced the next panellist, Barbara Drozdowicz(BD),Chief Executive at East European Resource Centre.BD outlined the work of the centre including:* Providing immigration advice, housing and welfare support, supporting victims of crime, for example domestic abuse, hate crime, modern slavery
* Recent rise in demand for services
* That homelessness does not mean unemployment – but work is often precarious and unregulated
* Very often informal rental arrangements

Three things that BD would like to see:* Accessible immigration advice
* Accessible welfare advice (language and literacy skills)
* Accessible PRS and support to access
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| Questions to panellists, 36 minutes | ST then opened up the Q&A session with attendees.1. ST asked LM about the sample of research – a third had pre-settled status – what about the rest?

LM answered that the sample was a combination, some of them had settled and some had not yet applied for status. 1. Luke Piper (LP) asked what plans there were for engaging with the devolved nations on this issue?

MD said there were things devolved nations can do and delicate conversations ongoing.BW said conversations and work between sectors was important, and that Housing Justice were working to bridge the gap and make the action more coherent.1. Baroness Masham (BM) asked whether these problems had got significantly worse since Brexit and what happens when people fall sick?

LM said often sick pay wasn’t forthcoming, and that welfare wasn’t accessible. In terms of Brexit, the EUSS had been a crunch point and that organisations were under pressure to support people. 1. Kate Osamor MP (KO) thanked panellists and gave an update on the Westminster Hall debate where she had asked the minister to listen to her examples of constituents who were EU nationals and whose benefits had been suspended by the risk review team. KO said there was no explanation of their benefits being stopped and this had pushed many in homelessness or into using foodbanks. No cases had any evidence of fraudulent activity and it took in excess of 10 months/6 months to resolve these issues. KO said she wanted to continue to have these conversations around homelessness. KO said some of the letting agencies are seeing this and working with the claimants to resolve the issues, but DWP are not.

ST thanked KO. 1. Fiona asked whether there were any examples of reconnection when people were presenting as homeless for support i.e. flights back to country of origin.

MD said there that this had been a constant for many years, and often the only offer of help to individuals. DA said this showed the importance of independent immigration advice so they can make their own decisions.1. Daniel asked what plans there was to tackle wider forms of homelessness not just the most visible forms i.e. rough sleeping.

MD said a lot of the discussion is centred around the fact that there is a commitment on rough sleeping, but more needs to be done. Debate on rough sleeping is a gateway to discussion on other forms.1. Tracy asked about the review of the Home Office rough sleeping support service.

DA said that some of the input they had been giving into that is about making sure there is a break between immigration enforcement and the use of that service, so people can have trust in that service. BD said that it would be a useful service it there was a wall placed in between immigration and enforcement, and rough sleeping support.1. Bridget Young (BY) said we should be thinking broadly about the pathways of support for refugees.
2. Ewa asked if there had been approach plan for the wider group of EU nationals past the EUSS.

BD said this was important to sort out, and that immigration advice was complicated, and often expensive. People will not be able to access immigration advice to resolve their case.1. Caroline Shulman made a point about how this relates to health, and how an injury leads to unemployment, and homelessness.
2. Michelle Langan asked whether the panel had any advice towards those who were ‘rough begging’ who often have NRPF, and the punitive approach of enforcement policies in Liverpool.

MD said there was a guide on Crisis website on this. |
| Stephen Timms MP | ST welcomed Bob Blackman (BB). BB said his apologies for being late, and thanked panellists.  BB gave an update on efforts to repeal the Vagrancy Act.ST invited Secretariat to take a screenshot. He thanked panellists, attendees, Secretariat and closed the event. |
| Actions and deadlines | Secretariat to send around minutes to attendees and Chair. |