



Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

Meeting report

SIXTH NETWORK MEETING: Adopting a 'Whole person approach' in FEAD Support Activities

19 June 2017, Hotel Bloom, Brussels

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, the organisers would like to thank all speakers, presenters, rapporteurs, panellists and delegates whose active participation, input and support made this event possible.

This document was produced by Ecorys for the use of and financed by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Views expressed at the conference and summarised in this report do not necessarily represent the Commission's official position.

© European Union, 2017.

Contents

Session 1 – Introduction	5
Session 2 – Welcome from the Commission	5
Session 3 – Discussion panel on the “whole person approach”	6
Session 4 – FEAD Network update	8
Sessions 5 and 6 – “Marketplace” sessions on adopting a “whole person approach” in FEAD support activities	8
Session 7 – Closing plenary session.....	14
Keep in touch! – Join the FEAD Network	16

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, the organisers would like to thank all speakers, presenters, rapporteurs, panellists and delegates whose active participation, input and support made this event possible.

This document was produced by Ecorys for the use of and financed by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Views expressed at the conference and summarised in this report do not necessarily represent the Commission's official position.

© European Union, 2017.

6th FEAD Network Meeting, Hotel Bloom Brussels, 19 June

On 19 June 2017, the European Commission hosted the sixth network meeting of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). The meeting brought together the EU-wide network of actors involved in FEAD to discuss issues related to adopting the “whole person approach” in FEAD support activities. The meeting was organised by Ecorys on behalf of the European Commission. 83 delegates from 24 European Union countries attended the event, held at Hotel Bloom in Brussels, representing a range of stakeholders, including Managing Authorities; partner organisations; other local, regional and national actors; European Commission representatives; EU-level partner organisations and the wider EU community.

Session 1 – Introduction

Jan Aulehle, Director of Communications, Programme Management and Communications, Ecorys opened the 6th FEAD Network Meeting by welcoming guests to the event and asking delegates to reflect on the meaning of the “whole person approach”. They were given time to discuss in small groups what they personally felt to be the meaning of the whole person approach and to reflect on how it could be used in their daily activities. A few participants were subsequently invited to report on their discussions to the wider audience. Following this initial icebreaker, Jan introduced Loris di Pietrantonio of the European Commission for the welcoming address.

Session 2 – Welcome from the Commission

Loris Di Pietrantonio of the ESF and FEAD: Policy & Legislation Unit at the European Commission welcomed the participants and remarked that he was glad to see so much continued interest in the FEAD Network events. In conceptualising the whole person approach, he noted that the most obvious solution is not necessarily the most helpful. The whole person approach is about seeking to understand needs and challenges at a more personal level. He remarked that it is important that end recipients have access to assistance that is varied and personalised. He continued that, for countries that adopted OP I, there is potential for the provision of accompanying measures, while Member States that have opted for OP II can design their social inclusion measures accordingly. He remarked that the day’s meeting would be useful in addressing questions related to the current implementation of FEAD, as well as the form that future measures will take. He concluded by announcing that Boris Kandziora, project manager of the FEAD Network within the European Commission, will be leaving the Network and thanked him for his work on FEAD, before announcing that Marie-Anne Paraskevas will be taking over the role.



Session 3 – Discussion panel on the “whole person approach”

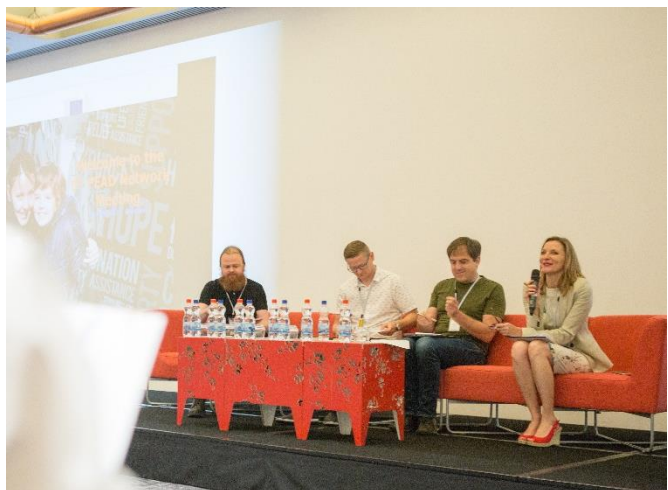
Patrizia Brandellero, moderator of the panel discussion, introduced the panel session by welcoming the group and praising the diversity of the audience. She underlined the importance of discussing the whole person approach and also noted the importance of considering FEAD in a holistic way. Patrizia raised the question of how FEAD actually addresses the whole person approach and what the challenges involved in its implementation are. She subsequently introduced the panellists: Frederik Spinnewijn, Michał Krupka and Marcus Herz.



Some of the key learning points from their discussions will be presented below.

Frederik Spinnewijn, Director of FEANTSA, outlined the work of his network, which brings together organisations working with homeless people across Europe. FEANTSA represents the most organised shelter providers and oversees 500,000 beds in shelters across the EU. In FEANTSA's experience, homeless people are among the most deprived, so it is highly appropriate that they should be the target of FEAD. Frederik conceptualised the whole person approach as a set of principles, rather than a clearly defined approach. FEAD has its restrictions, however Frederik argued that focus should lie on working effectively within the framework and flexibility that FEAD provides.

He argued against always taking food aid as a central component for social integration. He felt that it would be useful in many cases to think about how material aid could instead support the whole person approach, therefore reversing the traditional FEAD model. In the case of housing, for example, material components like curtains or cooking utensils can be complementary to the creation of a home within a space. Having a home is key to giving people a sense of personal empowerment and dignity, which speaks to the aims of the whole person approach. Frederik argued for greater emphasis on the provision of housing and the importance of not taking food aid as a principle focus when attempting to address complex needs. We should instead attempt to build material aid around a whole person approach.



Frederik felt that simple interventions can sometimes be more effective when helping people, underscoring the importance of really understanding the needs of end recipients. He noted that there is a lack of longitudinal data on homelessness, which is a particularly useful indicator when assessing the complexity of need. Citing an Australian [study](#) which found gendered differences in food insecurity experienced by homeless people, Frederik underlined the importance of really understanding the situation and varying needs of end recipients.

Michał Krupka, Head of the Social Welfare Centre in Zbójno, Poland has been a social worker for eight years and currently works as the Manager of the Municipal Social Welfare Centre in Zbójno. There are just three social workers in Zbójno who try to assist around 200 families (700 people) of a population of around 4,500. Michał noted that Zbójno is neither a city nor a town but that it experiences the same social challenges as larger localities, sometimes more so, due to the lower level of available public

services. Michał emphasised that, in his experience, just distributing food or financial assistance should not be the only way that people are helped. Additional support, including workshops and training opportunities, is also necessary to really help end recipients. Michał did however emphasise the importance of initially addressing hunger before engaging further with end recipients, thereby underlining the key importance of food aid in overall engagement, at least as a starting point.

As a social worker, Michał felt it was important for end recipients to be involved in the process of changing their lives. He also noted that, in his experience working largely with unemployed people and those experiencing domestic violence or alcoholism, it was sometimes necessary for social services to help to identify needs. He gave an example whereby sometimes people felt that access to housing was their primary requirement, but that ultimately this did not resolve their problems. Sometimes there are other issues that require assistance in areas that end recipients themselves may not recognise. The activities for end recipients that are organised by Michał and his team reflect the needs and expectations of the local cultural context. Michał noted for example that traditional gender roles are still very much present in Polish society, which is why they run workshops on cooking and managing the household budget that are specifically aimed at women and young mothers.

Marcus Herz, Senior Lecturer and Researcher in the Department of Social work at Malmö University, Sweden noted his experience studying the organisation of social work, both in Sweden and also in Europe more widely, as well as his direct experience as a social worker. He remarked that adopting a holistic approach to social work is not an original idea but praised the fact that FEAD promotes this approach. Adopting the whole person approach in practice, however, can be a challenge. For example, the Red Cross in Sweden has at times struggled to maintain close contact with clients. Similarly he remarked that social workers in Sweden now only spend around ten minutes with their clients a day. Marcus underlined the importance of investing enough time in people and, related to this, the importance of respecting people's rights in these processes. When there is no time to build relationships with people, it is much harder to bring about change.

From Marcus' perspective, taking food aid as a central component to assistance is a valid argument, as it is harder to engage people on the ground when they are hungry. Overall, however, he echoed Frederik in emphasising the provision of housing as a particularly effective way to address a range of social issues. He made reference to the implementation of the ESF's Housing First project in Sweden, which shows that this approach works. Drawing on his academic experience studying gender and specifically masculinity, Marcus warned of the dangers of placing people (e.g. young single mothers) in particular categories as this runs the risk of reproducing existing inequalities. He also felt that it was crucial to take the local context into account when conducting social work, working on all levels to



understand the overall situation. Marcus highlighted that broader political issues were not being discussed and that, to implement a whole person approach but also trigger the necessary political change, it is important to hear the views of the end recipients.

The three speakers then answered questions from the audience on issues including adopting a rights based approach to social work and how to define clear operational objectives for FEAD.

Session 4 – FEAD Network update

Mary-Clare O'Connor, Senior Content Strategist in the Programme Management and Communications division of Ecorys gave an overview of the latest developments in the [FEAD Network](#) and outlined the main features of the online FEAD Network content. Mary-Clare reminded delegates to sign up and make use of the FEAD Network Yammer group, noting that it now has over 335 members and 11 groups covering the main themes arising from the Network meetings. She concluded by letting the delegates know how to join the various online strands of the FEAD Network by [signing up](#) online, engaging via [email](#) or Twitter (#FEADNetwork) or connecting with other Network members on [Yammer](#).

Sessions 5 and 6 – “Marketplace” sessions on adopting a “whole person approach” in FEAD support activities

The following session was organised in a marketplace-style and sought to explore challenges, lessons and interesting approaches to the application of a whole person approach in FEAD support activities. In order to achieve these aims, there were six market “stalls” at which case studies were presented. Participants were asked to move around from stall to stall in an interactive way to meet new people and exchange ideas regarding the case studies. They therefore had the opportunity to attend four out of the six presentations across two sessions. Each participatory sub-group consisted of approximately 10-15 individuals. The key messages and learning outcomes of the six case studies are presented below.

Table 1 – The Srečevalnica project (Slovenian Red Cross)

Klara Debeljak, project manager at the Ljubljana branch of the Slovenian Red Cross presented the Srečevalnica project, which is an accompanying measure in Slovenia.

This project offers a range of activities whereby individuals are able to develop particular skills. The project started out by simply offering a space for FEAD end recipients to gather, drink tea and coffee and socialise. Following discussions with end recipients, it was decided that activities of interest, including sewing and cooking classes, would also be offered. The target group was originally long-term unemployed women,



however anyone interested is free to join. A crucial aspect of the project is that activities are open to everyone, not just FEAD end recipients.

The Srečevalnica project was established in different locations in order to cater to a broader range of individuals. Volunteers gauge the interest of the end recipients and then decide on which activities to offer. As a large group of the participants are young mothers, the project also offers activities for children. An important aspect of the project is that it is run both for and with end recipients. Participants are encouraged to take on the role of “mentors” and lead their own activities where possible. While food aid is often considered an entry point into other support activities, the Srečevalnica project has demonstrated that support activities can also act as the main entry point to assistance. Klara noted that the project has been driven by the principles of maintaining an ongoing exchange of ideas between

staff and participants, ensuring that all activities are open to everyone and ultimately the belief that together they can achieve more.

In terms of **key success factors**, accommodating the diverse needs of different target groups (e.g. by providing childcare facilities for mothers or considering ways to overcome language barriers) has contributed to the project's overall success. Involving end recipients at every stage of the project helped them to develop a greater sense of ownership and engagement. Ongoing review and evaluation processes also ensure that the project remains effective.

A number of **key learning points** emerged from the project, including the awareness that employment is not necessarily the only path to activation and social inclusion. Furthermore, a low-barrier approach to involve people in community activities is a good way to re-engage them, particularly if they have been isolated for long periods of time. Finally the project underscored the value that volunteers add to this and similar projects.

Table 2 – Digniti Omnia (Sweden)

Fredrik Schirén from the Church of Sweden presented “Digniti Omnia – Better Life for All”, which is a project targeted towards vulnerable, mobile EU citizens. The project was developed in 2015 to address the complex needs of this specific target group in a holistic way, by building on the experience of the Church of Sweden and building on the material assistance (such as shelters, clothes, free meals) already provided by the five partner organisations.



The project adopts a whole person approach by carrying out activities across four areas of need. Broadly speaking, these relate to personal empowerment, [digital] communication, preventive healthcare and awareness raising of rights and obligations as EU citizens. Related activities may for example focus on literacy, IT skills, Swedish language, preventative healthcare and how to access key services in Sweden. While many end recipients actively seek the help of the organisation, the partners involved also conduct weekly outreach activities through which they inform potential end recipients of the available project services. The project mainly helps people from Romania and Bulgaria, including Roma people, who are temporarily in Sweden. As of today more than 400 participants have been involved in different activities, with between 40-50 people taking part in activities every week.

The **main challenges** encountered by the project relate to the mobility of the target group, which makes it more difficult to work towards long-term change. A further challenge relates to language barriers created by the fact that the target group mainly consists of people with low literacy levels and who speak mainly Romanian, Bulgarian and Romani. To overcome this, the project works with translators and volunteers who can engage in the languages most commonly spoken by end recipients. Former end recipients who work as “role models” are also vital when looking to overcome language barriers. In addition, a toolkit is being developed and includes (among other components) short videos in Romanian, Bulgarian, Romani and Swedish.

According to Fredrik, the **success factors** of the project relate to the fact that end recipients trust the Church of Sweden more than other social or public services, making them more likely to seek out and

accept the help of the Church. The project has therefore been able to assist end recipients who may not ordinarily have trusted similar services. In spite of the difficulties arising from the high mobility of the target group, a further success of the project has been its capacity to build solid, trusting and long-lasting relationships with end recipients.

Key learning points for the Network mainly related to the importance of taking the complexity of people's needs into consideration, and of building trusting relationships with both volunteers and end recipients in developing a path for long-term change. A further learning point related to the importance of "role models" and people who can relate to the target group in their native language and/or through shared experiences.

Table 3 – Linking FEAD end recipients to social workers (Slovakia)

Ivana Štefančíková from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs explained how the whole person approach is applied in the context of the activities implemented under FEAD in Slovakia. She was supported by **Monika Pribelová from Caritas Slovakia**, which is one of the three main FEAD partner organisations in Slovakia. At the national level, FEAD is implemented by three key partner organisations (Slovak Red Cross, Slovak Catholic Charity and Charity of Saint Elizabeth) who cooperate with more than 30 smaller partners.

The target group of FEAD assistance in Slovakia is defined by the law and based on national data. The compilation of an official list means that the end recipients are known to the partner organisations. Their task is to contact the end recipients and notify them when and where their food parcels will be distributed. If the food parcels are unclaimed for whatever reason (around 5% of the cases), the partner organisation can re-distribute them.

The parcels are distributed four times a year through a wide distribution network of over 2,600 distribution points that reach nearly every town and village. The parcels are distributed by accredited social workers who crucially also provide counselling and advice on a variety of topics. This may be on how to prepare



and store the food, how to manage a family budget or how to write a CV. Leaflets with key information are also distributed. If end recipients are not able to come to the distribution centres, social workers visit them directly in their homes. In many cases the social workers signpost end recipients to other non-FEAD services to receive more in-depth assistance. These might include ESF projects that provide training and help people to access the labour market.

The **main challenges** relate to trying to provide adequate accompanying measures with the 5% FEAD budget limitation. A further challenge is that a minority of people sell the food parcels they receive. A final challenge raised related to the possible duplication of funding (e.g. of FEAD and ESF).

In terms of **key learning points**, the experience of FEAD implementation in Slovakia has shown that food can act as a gateway to addressing additional issues. In addition, having a defined list of end recipients has helped to identify end recipients who were not previously known to charities. Furthermore, having a network of accredited social workers who distribute food parcels and provide counselling and advice is beneficial in being able to provide a well-rounded and professional service. Adopting a personalised approach through establishing a relationship with end recipients has also been crucial.

Table 4 – Combining food distribution with counselling and information provision (Bulgaria)

Bozhidar Sandev, Chief expert in the “Monitoring and evaluation” unit of the Directorate Agency for Social Assistance in Bulgaria outlined the FEAD programme in Bulgaria. The programme operates two measures: firstly, the Red Cross oversees the distribution of food packages, and secondly local municipalities provide warm meals to end recipients. A personalised approach is adopted in



response to the specific needs of end recipients as a way to best address social exclusion.

As part of the accompanying measures in Bulgaria, end recipients eligible for food packages also receive various leaflets and brochures designed to address a range of needs. They can include information on, for example, additional ESF-funded services, health and nutrition, managing the family budget and how to prepare for disasters or accidents. Accompanying measures also take the form of group meetings on similar themes, as well as individual or group consultations to provide advice and information on where to access additional services. Whenever food parcels are distributed, signs direct end recipients to the Social Assistance Directorates who also offer advice services.

Key success factors for the implementation of FEAD in the context of the whole person approach in Bulgaria relate to effective collaboration between different service and social work departments, as well as flexibility in the use of FEAD and ESF funds. A further positive component is that the FEAD programme has successfully been utilised as a means to make contact with end recipients to discuss their needs and problems, although the solutions proposed are not necessarily funded by FEAD. Organising discussion groups with FEAD end recipients has had an interesting ripple effect on communities whereby end recipients have brought other family or community members along to group meetings organised by the Red Cross.

In terms of some of the **main challenges** that have arisen, there is not much flexibility surrounding the compilation of the list of end recipients. They are identified on a yearly basis and there is limited scope to update or change the lists.

Key learning points identified by the Network included the fact that, in order to realise the social inclusion objective of the programme, it is crucial to combine food assistance with other types of support. Furthermore, in order to be able to define a holistic approach, it is important to have an in-depth understanding of the individual and their specific needs. It was also recognised that it is difficult to combine a whole person approach with strict targets and indicators and that instead there should be some flexibility in implementation. Related to this, it should be possible to use accompanying measures before or without direct food assistance, and vice-versa.

Table 5 – Future accompanying measures to address mental health issues and addiction (Hungary)

Ágnes Keresztúry from the Public Foundation for the Homeless presented future plans for the implementation of accompanying measures to assist the homeless population in Hungary. The hope is that they will be gradually implemented in Budapest later this year and in more rural areas in 2018. Ágnes began by contextualising the proposed measures, emphasising the challenges that homeless people face in accessing appropriate diagnoses and healthcare, particularly when



the social care and healthcare sectors are disconnected. Challenges faced by homeless people tend to differ geographically, for example alcohol addiction is more predominant in more rural areas, whereas in Budapest drug addiction is more common than in other areas. For this reason, participating homeless shelters will be encouraged to adapt the project based on the varying issues in different localities.

The aim of the proposed accompanying measures is to act as a bridge between the social and (particularly psychiatric) healthcare sectors, by linking homeless people directly to healthcare psychiatric doctors. The Foundation for the Homeless will act as a network coordinator of 23 homeless shelters and a team of professional psychiatric doctors. Sometimes homeless people need encouragement to engage with formalised services again, particularly when they have faced discrimination when trying to access healthcare in the past. Having a permanent address is typically required to access medical care, which acts as a further barrier for people who are homeless. The hope, however, is that they may be gradually encouraged to seek assistance by shelter staff. In total, the initiative aims to reach around 9,000 people over three years on an individual basis and 200-300 people through group therapy sessions.

In terms of the long-term sustainability of the project, it is hoped that the Hungarian government will integrate the programme delivery into the public healthcare system. FEAD funding will be used to operate it until 2020.

The **key learning points** identified by the Network related to the need for professionals to change their attitudes towards homeless people to avoid discrimination within the healthcare system. Some participants highlighted the fact that the proposed measures should be considered as *principle* rather than accompanying measures within FEAD, given that food is not always the central requirement of end recipients.

A further key learning point was the importance of adopting a tailored approach to specific needs and addressing the gaps in the current social and healthcare systems. There was recognition that homelessness, mental health and addiction are highly complex and require an appropriately complex response with the coordinated participation of many different service providers. Finally, some delegates suggested that it would be a good idea to involve people in the programme who have themselves faced challenges related to addiction or mental health.

Table 6 – Providing support through specialised solidarity centres and support services (France)

Sébastien Thollot, Supervisor of the Departmental Committee of Secours Populaire Français (SPF) in Lyon, presented SPF's holistic approach to tackling different forms of exclusion and the role of FEAD in the context of the organisation's wider work.

SPF, an independent and non-profit organisation founded in 1945, aims to help people in poverty to become actively involved in addressing their own situations through a comprehensive approach, offering different forms of "solidarity" (material aid, food aid, social activities). Sébastien explained that FEAD plays a key role in acting as a gateway to adopting the whole person approach by first addressing people's initial needs in the form of food assistance, and subsequently facilitating access to a diverse range of accompanying measures. He focused on two particular services – "Solidarity reception centres" (PASS) and "Solidarity self-service" (LSS) – two elements that are at the heart of SPF's holistic approach.

The PASS are places where people who come to access assistance also benefit from an open and welcoming environment. People visiting the centres participate in a confidential interview during which their personal circumstances are assessed. The aim is to work in partnership with end recipients, based on a relationship of mutual trust and equality. This approach enables volunteers to better understand the challenges people face in their everyday lives and to identify the most effective ways to address them. Alongside the permanent reception centres, SPF have also set up mobile devices in order to



respond via outreach to the specific needs of homeless people and those who live in rural areas.

Following an interview at PASS, people have the opportunity to access the "Solidarity self-service" (LSS) where they can access food support as well as clothes, hygiene products, home equipment, etc. As opposed to the traditional system based on the

distribution of food parcels, the LSS is a place where end recipients can choose the material products and food they prefer, which is seen as an important part of respecting their dignity. Crucially, when visiting the LSS, people also have the opportunity to talk with volunteers about their needs and to seek advice. Active engagement is fostered by working with end recipients to identify and further develop their particular skills, for example through workshops to train them to become volunteers themselves. In fact, of the 80,000 volunteers the SPF currently has, 15-20% were initially SPF end recipients.

The first of the **key learning points** that delegates took away from the presentation was that FEAD can act as an entry point to reach end recipients and as a means to signpost them to a range of accompanying measures within a wider network of support services. Participants also learnt that gaining the trust of end recipients is a challenging yet crucial component in effectively addressing their multifaceted needs. Finally, participants also acknowledged that, whilst volunteering offers a positive means to engage and integrate end recipients, their active inclusion in the labour market remains a key challenge.

Session 7 – Closing plenary session

A summary of the key learning outcomes from the marketplace session was presented by **Patrizia Brandellero**. She summarised the general impressions as follows:

- It takes time and trust (in services/volunteers) to build an empowering path for end recipients;
- An integrated approach is needed: importance of connecting services (e.g. health and social services) using FEAD flexibility – acting as a bridge;
- Assumptions (e.g. “it has to be long-term/complex”, “a general approach fits all”...) should be checked: is the approach truly individualised?
- Complexity needs to be acknowledged (addictions, language barriers) and FEAD dares to address these issues;
- It is important to acknowledge where the person is and what they are prepared to commit to (sometimes they only want material support);
- Tangible and realistic targets must be set *for* and *with* end recipients;
- Food is an entry point to access beneficiaries and allows signposting, and vice versa;
- Complementarity with ESF approaches is necessary, building connections between ESF and FEAD Managing Authorities;
- The empowerment of end recipients can lead to volunteering, while not forgetting labour market integration (from caring to integration and active inclusion);
- There must be space to express and share, create a rapport and work with other existing services to tackle what comes up;
- Outreach work is essential and helps identify new beneficiaries;
- End recipients must be involved in every step;
- FEAD provides flexibility but there needs to be better balance between OP I and OP II allocations (food vs. accompanying measures).

She subsequently asked the panellists to give their reflections on what had been discussed and presented at the event. Their main points are presented below.

Frederik Spinnewijn re-emphasised his argument that the impression of food aid as a primary means to reach out to the most vulnerable is complicated and does not always work. Sometimes projects' connection to food aid is somewhat artificial but included in project designs because organisers want to use FEAD funding. Frederik argued in favour of considering the whole person approach as an encompassing principle rather than accompanying measures. In reality, such measures should be seen to have a far more prominent importance, rather than superficially accompanying food aid. He noted that more than trust specifically, understanding the needs of end recipients and responding appropriately were most important. He supported the idea of an integrated approach but felt that sometimes these phrases can ring hollow and questioned exactly what they mean. He warned that where all elements are seen to be equally important in an integrated approach, there is a risk that no one takes the lead, meaning that nothing advances.

We should avoid the assumption that FEAD has been created as an ideal instrument to cater to the needs of the most deprived, rather Frederik argued that we should think about ways to improve it. Whilst there are complex needs across Europe, he emphasised that solutions can be very simple and that FEAD should perhaps focus on these more straightforward approaches. He remarked that the ERDF is a tool that should not be overlooked, particularly as it provides support for housing, which is a very important component. Addressing concerns about overlap between the ESF and FEAD, Frederik questioned whether the target group for FEAD had become too broad in recent years and felt it would be better if it were more explicitly targeted to the most excluded.

Complementing these views, **Michał Krupka** noted that he had seen many different ways of helping diverse end recipients at the marketplace stalls during the event, and had been inspired to adopt some of the components he had seen. He specifically noted that many of the presentations he attended had referenced volunteers and emphasised that the best volunteers are former end recipients, as they better

understand situations that they themselves may have gone through. Michał felt that end recipients should be included in every step of FEAD assistance in order to feel more connected to their own pathway out of poverty.

He concluded by emphasising that, ultimately, the aim of those involved with FEAD is to help people, and that sometimes there should be less emphasis on the broader politics of the fund. When operating at ground level, we are engaged in the immediate issues that people are dealing with. He emphasised that it is therefore **important to remember our responsibilities to the end recipients** we try to help and to remember that decisions taken by social workers and those in attendance at the Network meeting will affect the lives of end recipients.

Lastly, **Marcus Herz** emphasised that social work should be about social change. Throughout the day he noticed that questions remain on exactly what FEAD funding is for and where its boundaries lie. As an outsider this was a concern for him; it is a problem if every country interprets the funding differently, although of course all contexts are different.

Marcus acknowledged that the participation of end recipients is crucial but that there is a further question to be answered on how “participation” itself should be defined. A definition should also encompass instances where end recipients do not wish to participate. Whilst individualised or tailored approaches have been praised and are indeed important, Marcus also felt that generalised approaches can be effective, noting that the Housing First project as an example of a generalised approach (i.e. *everyone* should have access to housing). In conclusion, Marcus agreed with Michał, who had emphasised the importance of not becoming fixated on the politics of FEAD or to lose sight of the people the fund is ultimately trying to help.

Jan Aulehle concluded the 6th FEAD Network Meeting by thanking delegates and noting the positive discussions that had taken place throughout the day. He recapped the 2017 Network activities so far and reminded participants of the two additional Network meetings scheduled in Brussels and France in the latter part of 2017. Jan also reminded participants that a catalogue including 28 FEAD case studies would be published online in November 2017, before thanking them for their contributions and closing the meeting.

Keep in touch! – Join the FEAD Network

The FEAD Network is an active community of practice with lively exchange of experiences and shared learning. It allows the sharing of tools, ideas and resources that can help deliver the fund successfully.

The network discusses all aspects of planning, managing and delivering activities across Europe. Conversations within the FEAD Network can cover any theme related to the role of the FEAD in the fight against poverty, for example food aid, child poverty, issues relating to migration, access to social services or assistance for older people.

By joining the network, you'll be able to interact with people who do similar work to you in different European countries – wherever you are. You will also have the opportunity to continue the discussions arising in the network meetings in the subsequent **live chats** on Yammer, where a number of speakers from the events will be available to answer questions.

To join the online network and stay up to date with news, sign up at:

<http://uk.ecorys.com/feadnetwork>

Join the FEAD Network on Yammer:

<https://www.yammer.com/feadnetwork/>

Email us: Fead.Network@ecorys.com



Contact us

Visit our website: **<http://ec.europa.eu/feadnetwork>**

Or email us with your questions: **FEAD.Network@ecorys.com**

We look forward to hearing from you!

This service is provided by Ecorys on behalf of the European Commission. It is financed by FEAD technical assistance, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.