

Press release 10.04.2010

European Parliament Occupied by the Homeless

The artist and activist Jens Galschiøt (DK) joins the homeless organizations to put focus on the great number of homeless in Europe by visiting the European Parliament 12th to 16th April.

Galschiøt has created 13 big bronze sculptures of homeless people, all in natural size. These very heavy sculptures are by now on their way to the European Parliament to act as the start signal for a debate in all member countries about the conditions under which the homeless have to cope.

It has been a huge task to cast and create the many sculptures on which I have worked for two years. But they are intended to initiate a dialogue and put these problems on the agenda, and that makes it all worth while. I do not think that homelessness should exist anywhere in the EU, says Jens Galschiøt. Bronze sculptures are usually put up to honour kings and other important powerful persons. I have chosen to act the other way round and use the noble material and my art to tell the story of the back side of society and that way give voice to these people who are normally ignored.

Hearing in the EU on homelessness

In connection with the exhibition there will be a hearing where European politicians have a unique opportunity to learn about homelessness. The project UDENFOR (outside) and among others the Danish MEP Britta Thomsen (social democrat) in cooperation with the European umbrella FEANTSA will put focus on homelessness .

This takes place during a hearing in the European Parliament on Wednesday April the 14th which Britta Thomsen and a number of other MEPs will host. The hearing will lay forward the challenges to the European societies and present some relevant solutions to concrete problems. Present at the hearing will be László Andor EU Commissioner for employment, social affairs and inclusion, Philippe Courard, representative for the Belgian Government and Eric Marlier, independent expert. Former homeless will also attend the hearing to relate about their experiences and to contribute to find solutions for the future.

Tour de Europe

After the visit to the European Parliament the sculptures start on a great tour de Europe. A number of exhibitions in public places are intended to start up discussions about unemployment in cooperation with local organisations for the homeless. The following towns in Denmark are to be visited this spring, København, Odense, Århus, Aalborg.

The exhibition and the campaigns are implemented on the initiative of "Projekt UDENFOR" and the project can be followed on www.welcomehomeless.org

For more information:

Free photos of the sculpture: www.aidoh.dk/EU-Homeless

The artist Jens Galschiøt tlf.: +45 6618 4058/ mobil +45 4044 7058

aidoh@aidoh.dk Info: www.aidoh.dk

Projekt UDENFOR: Ninna Hoegh, tlf.: +45 6162 0463, nh@udenfor.dk, www.Udenfor.dk

Britta Thomsen, MEP tlf.: +32 2284 5452 / +45 2071 6740