

PRESS RELEASE

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A homeless man moves into the European Parliament

The European Parliament is about to get a new member. This Tuesday, the homeless sculpture "Man on a Bench" moves into Parliament on a permanent basis.

Behind the presentation of the sculpture - which is a gift from the Danish parliament Folketinget – is the well renowned artist Jens Galschiøt, the Danish MEP Britta Thomsen and the NGO 'Projekt UDENFOR' (project outside).

"We want to put homelessness on the political agenda. Not just with a single happening but with a permanent manifestation. This sculpture will remind the politicians that a group of people are in need of our help," says Britta Thomsen.

Coming back home

The artist Jens Galschiøt created the sculpture for an exhibition in the European Parliament in 2010. He has a clear ambition with his work.

"I have donated "Man on a Bench" because I want to remind the Parliamentarians that they also have a responsibility for the people that do not fit perfectly into society. Very few MEP's know people who live without a roof over their head, and it is not easy to understand their situation and needs. I want the politicians and the lobbyists to see the sculpture in their daily life, and think about what they can do in their law making, to help the socially neglected,"

The exhibition in 2010 was set up by the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless. 'Projekt UDENFOR' is a member of that organisation from Denmark, and managing director Nina Hoegh is satisfied with the new gift to the European Parliament.

"The fact that a homeless – even if only a sculpture – now gets a permanent place in the European Parliament will help keep awareness on homelessness, especially the kind that crosses borders. That is very important because many of the problems we see at street-level in the European cities calls for pre-emptive international measures," she says.

The donation will be revealed with a reception at the European Parliament on Tuesday the 8th of April.

For further information please contact:

Artist, Jens Galschiøt: +45 4044 7058

MEP, Britta Thomsen: +45 2071 6740

Director of the Ngo Projekt UDENFOR, Ninna Hoegh: +45 5360 2027

