

Press release

WEB OF THE STREET – The digital international forum of social street workers 26-30 October 2020

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on people in street situations: post-lockdown difficulties?

The COVID-19 crisis has once again shown us that addressing poverty is still the absolute priority.

“They arrived six months before lockdown, and this Roma family living on the streets of Brussels simply did not see it coming. Why had the streets been empty for two weeks? Why did the shops suddenly close? How were they going to survive? In the end, a street worker explained to them that there was a global pandemic and that a decision had been taken to lock down society. A solution urgently needed to be found for this family.”

As soon as the coronavirus lockdowns started in March 2020, Dynamo International received numerous testimonies like this one, describing the reality on the streets. These testimonies, passed on by members of [Dynamo International Street Workers Network](#) in over 50 countries, came from communities in street situations and/or in very precarious circumstances.

Bolstered by these multiple and diverse testimonies, we decided to **speak out about these situations, which often go unnoticed**, discuss them with other civil society and public sector stakeholders at the local and international levels, and **put forward recommendations**.

Four international webinars are to be held on Wednesday 28 October 2020. They will be in French, English and Spanish and will focus on topics relating to the social impact of the coronavirus crisis: violence perpetrated by the authorities, children in street situations, domestic abuse, poverty, access to housing, and other realities. This week of exchanges, testimony and discussion is being arranged under the framework of [Web of the Street](#) on 26-30 October 2020 and will take the form of various virtual activities, including a webinar with the **Committee on the Rights of the Child, based in Geneva**, and a [débat sur « l'insécurité sociale »](#) with:

- **Olivier de Schutter**, United Nations special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.
- **Céline Nieuwenhuys** (secretary-general of the *Fédération des Centres de Services Sociaux*, and an expert member of GEES – the Exit Strategy Policy Group).
- **Maryse Bresson** (sociology lecturer at the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, and the author of *La pauvreté est-elle encore une question sociologique d'actualité ? Un enjeu de définition, de méthode et de théorie*).

➔ Information and registration process for the four webinars:
[DYNAMOINTERNATIONAL.ORG/WEB-OF THE STREET](https://dynamointernational.org/web-of-the-street)

The street workers are available to talk about the reality of life on the streets here and further afield.

Press conference

Friday 30/10/20 from 11:00 to 12:00

Résidence Palace

Rue de la Loi 155 - 1040 Brussels

SPEAKERS

Chairperson: Edwin de Boevé

Cis Dewaele	Representatives of Flemish street workers
Wouter Beke	Flemish Minister for Wellbeing, Families, Public Health, and Poverty Reduction
Edwin de Boevé	Director of Dynamo International, International Network of Street Workers (53 countries)
Adian Drissia	An account of lockdown supplied by a 20-year-old
Pascale Delcomminette	WBI general administrator (French-speaking Community of Belgium).
Valérie Glatigny	Minister for Youth Services, WBI (To be confirmed)
Journalists	Questions & Answers

PRESS CONTACTS

Sébastien Hertsens Director of Dynamo AMO +32 (0)484 98 04 29 sebastienhertsens@gmail.com	International – French Edwin de Boevé Director of Dynamo International +32 (0)477 54 71 39 edwin@travailderue.org	Dutch Cis Dewaele Street work coordinator in Flanders +32 (0)496 12 17 57 cis.dewaele@samvzw.be
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STREET WORKER INTERVIEWS - CONTACTS

Street workers are available to be interviewed about their work on the streets and answer journalists' questions.

They work in a range of sectors:

- Drug use – risk reduction (Brussels).
- Outreach – youth service (Brussels – rural setting in the Liège region – young people and residents in the Wallonia campsites).
- Street educators service from a district of Brussels (homelessness).
- Female sex work (Liège region) and male sex work (Brussels).

Please contact Sébastien Hertsens on +32 (0)484 98 04 29 sebastienhertsens@gmail.com