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European Observatory on Homelessness

Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States

A Statistical Update

4

EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness

Brussels – December 2014

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Lars Benjaminsen, Maša Filipovič Hrast
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EUROPEAN OBSERVATORY ON HOMELESSNESS

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Disclaimer

The interpretation and reporting of the results of the questionnaire data collected by the research team may not reflect the interpretations of individual experts responding to the questionnaire. Responsibility for any errors lies with the authors.

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Foreword

This edition of FEANTSA's European Observatory on Homelessness Comparative Research Series concerns the important issue of data collection.

Policymakers frequently justify the lack of progress in tackling homelessness on the absence of reliable data. Even if this argument is often false, it is clear that policies and practices informed by accurate data tend to be more effective.

The lack of data at a European level is an obstacle to gaining recognition for the fight against homelessness as a necessary European Union (EU) priority. This report aims to help address this gap.

It is important to know how many people experience homelessness, and how that number evolves over time. But what is maybe even more relevant for policymaking is information about the changing profile of the homeless population. This report provides information on both.

The European Observatory on Homelessness has looked in detail at the available recent data on homelessness from the majority of EU Member States. We were pleasantly surprised to find that sufficient data exist in most countries to allow identification of major trends in the scope and nature of homelessness.

The number of people experiencing homelessness has increased in all countries under review, with the notable exception of Finland. The sustained political ambition to end homelessness and the effective policies in place explain most of the decrease in Finland.

Several EU member states are witnessing a worrying rise in homelessness numbers, with double digit increases over the last few years. It is significant to note that the trends related to homelessness do not necessarily follow social trends measured through other indicators such as the level of relative poverty.

In terms of demographic features of the homeless population, the increase in youth homelessness is probably the most striking. Recognition of this will hopefully encourage the European Union to make a greater effort to reach the most excluded young people in its efforts to reintegrate *NEETs* (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) under 25.

This report also demonstrates that significant progress is still needed – but is also possible – in order to increase the quality and timeliness of data on homelessness. But we should not be complacent about this. The report shows that, using the existing data, some level of transnational comparison is possible, as is quality analysis that can steer homeless policies and practices.

The last statistical update produced by the European Observatory on Homelessness dates back to 2009. The present report is well timed to capture some of the most recent trends. We are optimistic that it can be the start of a 5-year reporting cycle to provide regular updates on the latest numbers related to homelessness.

Mike Allen
FEANTSA President

1. Summary

Experts in fifteen EU Member States completed a questionnaire exploring the extent of statistical data on homelessness in their countries. The experts were also asked to summarise any relevant statistical research on homelessness published in their countries since 2009, the year in which the last *European Review of Statistics on Homelessness* was published by the European Observatory on Homelessness (EOH).[1] The countries included were the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

1.1 Methods

The research was based on a standardised questionnaire, which was sent to experts in each of the fifteen countries. The questionnaire was divided into four main sections. The first section explored the definitions of homelessness used by national statistical agencies and by researchers. In this first section, the experts were asked to contrast their national statistical definitions of homelessness with the ETHOS Light typology of homelessness. The second section focused on the methods used to collect data on homelessness in each country. The third section was centred on the extent of homelessness in each country, including trends in homelessness. The final section focused on statistical data on the characteristics of homeless people.

1.2 Definitions of Homelessness

There were both consistencies and considerable variations in how homelessness was defined in the fifteen EU Member States. Some countries, such as Finland, Ireland and Sweden, draw distinctions between people who are experiencing long-term and recurrent homelessness associated with complex needs (e.g., comorbidity of mental health problems and problematic drug/alcohol use) and other groups of homeless people. The UK defines different types of homelessness in reference to the operation of homelessness laws, rather than simply through reference to the characteristics of homeless people themselves.

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1 Edgar, B. (2009) *European Review of Statistics on Homelessness* (Brussels: FEANTSA/EOH).

Only some countries, for example Finland, Sweden and, with one exception, Denmark, effectively define all the categories of homelessness within the ETHOS Light typology as being forms of homelessness. Almost every country defines people living rough and people in emergency accommodation as homeless. ETHOS Light defines people living in institutions who are about to be discharged into a situation in which they will *become* homeless as part of the homeless population, but most of the fifteen countries do not define this group as being homeless. People living with family or friends because they have no home of their own are defined as homeless, in line with ETHOS Light, in the Scandinavian countries, Germany and the UK. The research showed that the extent to which ETHOS Light categories were reflected in national definitions of homelessness could not be predicted by looking at the form of welfare system that each country had.

1.3 Measuring Homelessness

Earlier comparative research by the European Observatory on Homelessness found that the attempt to enumerate homelessness using a shared standard in the 2011 population censuses had not been successful.[2] There were some improvements in counting homeless people because of the attempt to include homeless people in the 2011 census. However, at the time of writing, only six out of fifteen countries had published any 2011 census data on homelessness and it was evident that several had not made any specific effort to count homeless people separately.

Administrative data on homeless people are inherently limited in quality because they are confined to those who are in contact with services. This may lead to populations who avoid homelessness services, such as women experiencing homelessness, being underrepresented in estimations of the extent and nature of homelessness based on administrative data. Equally, services that collect data on homeless people have a tendency to be concentrated in major population centres, which may mean that rural homelessness is not always recorded in administrative data.

Nevertheless, administrative data represent significant resources for research on homelessness and have the potential to be used for longitudinal analysis. National level administrative databases exist in Denmark, Hungary and Ireland, but there were reports suggesting that the Hungarian data was less reliable than the datasets available in Denmark and Ireland. Both the Danish and Irish databases provide a comprehensive picture of service use by homeless people at the national level. The

2 Baptista, I., Benjaminsen, L., Pleace, N. and Busch-Geertsema, V. (2012) Counting Homeless People in the 2011 Housing and Population Census (EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness, No 2) (Brussels: FEANTSA/EOH).

UK runs administrative databases on the operation of homelessness law in the four main administrative (national) regions, but differences in law make these data difficult to merge.

A number of countries undertake periodic large-scale surveys designed to understand the extent and characteristics of their homeless populations, including Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Poland, Spain and Sweden. The Finnish survey has been undertaken annually since 1987 and the Danish survey bi-annually since 2007. Some questions have been raised about the accuracy of point-in-time (cross-sectional) surveys of homeless people, but this is still the main method employed. Since 2009, single surveys – not designed to be repeated – were conducted among homeless people in Italy and Portugal.

In some countries, data on homelessness varies by region. In Germany, the region of North Rhine-Westphalia is the only one in which regular surveys of the homeless population are undertaken. In the UK, England has a national level database on the use of accommodation and mobile support services that includes homeless people, but equivalent data are not collected in Northern Ireland, Wales or Scotland.

1.4 The Extent of Homelessness

Census data from 2011 were inconsistent or were not collected, making the generation of an EU-level homelessness figure based on census results impossible. Equally, while national level statistics and estimates of the level of homelessness existed, these were based on varied definitions and measurements of homelessness, which meant that it was not possible to merge them to produce an estimate or count of total homelessness in the EU.

At present, the prevalence of homelessness at EU level is also not possible to describe, again in part because definitions of homelessness vary (meaning the definition of homelessness in one country covers more situations than it may in another country) and in part because there are variations in data quality and availability. In some cases, such as Denmark and Finland, a very small proportion of the population was reported as homeless at any one point in time (0.1%), despite employing a rather broad definition of homelessness covering almost all groups of ETHOS Light. The Czech Republic (0.3% of the population), France (0.24%) and Germany (between 0.35% annually and 0.11% point-in-time), Italy (0.2%) and the Netherlands (0.16%) also reported a low prevalence of homelessness, although their definitions of homelessness are narrower than those used in Denmark and Finland. Ireland and Spain appeared to have the lowest levels overall (0.05%), although some regional variation was reported in Spain, and, again, their definitions did not include some ETHOS Light categories of homelessness.

Point-in-time surveys and estimates reported in excess of 2 000 people living rough in Hungary, Poland, Spain and the UK. The UK also reported the largest number of people in emergency accommodation at any one point in time, though figures were also relatively high in Hungary and Spain.

1.5 Trends in Homelessness

Trend data were only available for some countries and for the most part indicated some increase in homelessness since 2009. Only Finland reported a recent decrease in homelessness levels, although there were greater achievements in reducing long-term homelessness than for some other forms of homelessness. France had seen an increase, estimated as up to 50%, between 2001 and 2011. Denmark reported a 16% increase between 2009 and 2013, and Germany a 21% increase based on data from one region and a national level estimate. The Netherlands also saw a 17% increase between 2010 and 2012, and Sweden a 29% increase in people living rough, using homelessness services and living in institutions with no home to go to, although in the Swedish case, definitions of homelessness had been broadened.

The UK showed apparent decreases in people using supported housing in England, but this was linked to expenditure cuts that saw places in these services being significantly reduced. On other indicators, the numbers of homeless households requesting and being accepted for assistance under homelessness laws were reported as rising by 6% and 8% respectively between 2009 and 2010 and between 2012 and 2013. Quite marked increases in people living rough were reported in England between 2009 and 2010 and between 2012 and 2013 (37%), based on street counts and estimates. In the Czech Republic, the city of Brno saw a 44% increase in homelessness between 2010 and 2014, although fewer data on trends were generally available from Eastern EU Member States.

1.6 The Characteristics of Homeless People

Gender variations were reported as existing between different countries. These could be associated with the ways in which different welfare systems and homelessness services reacted to homelessness. In most countries, men predominated among homeless people, but women were always present – sometimes among younger people experiencing homelessness in particular. Some evidence suggests that homeless women may have a greater tendency to use informal arrangements with friends, family and acquaintances, avoiding living rough and entering homelessness services. This may mean that homeless women are less

likely to be represented in the population recorded by homelessness administrative data. Women whose homelessness is linked to domestic/gender-based violence and who are using refuges, shelters and other domestic violence services may not be classified as using 'homeless' services, which may again mean the extent of homelessness among women is undercounted. Lone women with children may, in some circumstances, be able to avoid homelessness because welfare systems tend to offer at least some social protection for poor and vulnerable households with children.

The data showed that homelessness tends to be relatively concentrated among young people and, in some countries, particularly among people in middle and late middle age. In Hungary and Poland, older people were reported as making up a considerable part of the homeless population (17% and 22% aged 60 or over), but they were unlikely to be homeless in some other countries, such as Ireland and Denmark (3% over 65 and 5% over 60). These variations may be linked to differences in the levels of social protection for poor and vulnerable people over retirement age in different welfare systems.

It emerged that migrants and the children of migrants are more likely to be homeless in some circumstances. In Denmark, 17% of homeless people migrated to Denmark or have parents who were migrants. Black British people are overrepresented among the homeless people helped under English homelessness laws (14.5% of people in the system, 3.5% of the population). New migrants, including economic migrants from the Eastern EU, sometimes appeared to be heavily represented among people living rough in the Northern EU – e.g., in Berlin, Dublin, London and Paris.

Homeless people are less likely to have partners than the general population, though this is less true for homeless women than for homeless men. Homeless families, including lone parents, appear at differential rates in EU Member States. These groups are evident in the UK because of the specific homelessness laws designed to assist them, but families facing the same risks can receive assistance from welfare and other support services in other countries and may not be counted as being homeless.

It is increasingly thought that homelessness may exist in two broad forms: a smaller, long-term and repeatedly homeless population with high support needs, and a population of people and households whose homelessness occurs primarily for economic and social reasons, rather than because of unmet support needs. Evidence is variable in the EU, but small populations of repeatedly and long-term homeless people with high rates of severe mental illness and problematic drug and alcohol use were reported in Denmark, Finland, Ireland and, based on partial data, in the UK.

All homeless people are unlikely to be in paid work, but the levels vary quite markedly between countries. In some EU countries it is almost impossible to live on subsistence welfare benefits making work, begging or, sometimes, activities defined as criminal and essential to survive. Thirty-five per cent of homeless people in Hungary were in casual or regular work, as were 28% of homeless people in Italy and 24% in France. By contrast, in Ireland, only 8% of homeless people were employed, with only 5% working in Poland and Sweden. Variations in work may reflect variations in how homelessness is defined and in the composition of homeless populations; where the proportions of high need, long-term and recurrently homeless people are higher, many homeless people may be less able to work than people of the same age in the general population.

Youth homelessness could be associated with high and complex support needs. Sharp increases in youth homelessness were reported in some countries, including Denmark. Economic marginalisation, disruption to the family and experience of childcare systems could be associated with experience of youth homelessness.

1.7 Discussion

There are ongoing challenges in arriving at a common definition of homelessness that will allow clear comparisons of homelessness across the European Union. Beyond the need for clarity about what is meant by homelessness, there is also a need to explore widening current definitions in many countries, as many households that are without their own homes are not recognised or counted as homeless.

Variations in methodology and the robustness of data on homelessness in the EU are profound. This is not an issue confined simply to differences between countries; often the level and quality of data on homelessness within individual countries is inconsistent.

More positively, there is some evidence of an increased interest in understanding and reducing homelessness throughout much of the EU. Progress has been made in terms of the extent and availability of data since the European Observatory on Homelessness last reviewed the statistical evidence base in 2009.

While much of the data available has limitations, a number of common trends appear to be evident. Some evidence shows women do not experience homelessness in the same way as men. There is also some evidence indicating the presence of a small group of homeless people with complex support needs who experience long-term and repeated homelessness. Interestingly, this long-term and recurrent homeless population seems to be present in countries with very different welfare systems and levels of social protection. There are also pan-EU issues in homeless-

ness, such as a seemingly widespread and worrying rise in youth homelessness, and some increases in people living rough in the Northern EU that appear to be associated with economic emigration from the South and East.

Ultimately, improving data on homelessness is a matter of political decision-making and depends on the attitude of European Member States towards the most extreme form of poverty and social marginalisation that can happen to European citizens. In some countries the focus on understanding homelessness is more advanced than in others, reflecting a broader concern with preventing and reducing this most acute of social problems.

2. Introduction

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the 2014 research undertaken by the European Observatory on Homelessness (EOH). This research explored the state of knowledge on the extent of homelessness and the profile of homeless people in selected European countries.

2.1 The Research Questions

The goal of this research was to explore the current state of knowledge on the extent and nature of homelessness in selected EU Member States. The research was designed to include the most recent central, regional and local government statistics, the results of recent and newly completed academic research and any available data from the counts of homeless people conducted for the 2011 population census. Administrative data from homelessness services were also included.

2.2 Methods

A questionnaire was circulated to experts on homelessness in fifteen EU Member States. Respondents were chosen mainly on the basis of their published work and their expert knowledge on measurement issues. An attempt was made to seek a representative range of EU Member States, ensuring a fair geographical balance. Experts from the following countries were asked to complete the questionnaire:

- The Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- The Netherlands

- Poland
- Portugal
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- UK

Respondents were requested to describe the situation and state of knowledge in their own countries. Respondents were asked to answer in English. The questionnaire had four sections:

- The first section explored the definition of homelessness used in national statistics and research. In this section, experts were asked to explain which categories of ETHOS Light were shared with the national definition(s) used in their country.
- The second section was about the methodology and data sources used in national statistics and research on homelessness. National experts were asked to describe the methods used to count and survey homeless people in their country and to provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of these methods.
- The third and fourth sections asked for a summary of data on the extent of homelessness and on the needs, characteristics and experiences of homeless people in each country. National experts were asked for the most recent statistics and research, including any data on trends in homelessness in their country.

2.3 The Structure of the Report

The remainder of the report explores the findings of the research. Chapter 3 focuses on how homelessness is defined in different EU Member States, exploring the implications of varied definitions for cross-country comparisons in the EU. Chapter 4 looks at how homelessness is measured, exploring the variations in methodology and the sometimes profound differences in the quality and extent of available homelessness data across different EU Member States. Chapter 5 explores the extent of homelessness within the EU. Chapter 6 is a short exploration of the trends in homelessness since 2009, while Chapter 7 explores what is known about the characteristics of homeless people in the EU. The final chapter discusses the implications of the research.

3. Defining Homelessness

Introduction

This chapter opens by looking at definitions of homelessness used in the European countries included in this research and exploring how these definitions relate to the ETHOS Light definition of homelessness. Additional variations in data collection are then explored.

3.1 National Definitions used for Statistical Purposes

In the fifteen countries, homelessness is generally defined as including people sleeping rough, people in emergency shelters and those in specialist accommodation for homeless people. For example, the official definition in Portugal is as follows:

> A homeless person is considered to be an individual who, regardless of nationality, age, sex, socio-economic status and mental and physical health, is roofless and living in a public space or insecure form of shelter or accommodated in an emergency shelter, or is houseless and living in temporary accommodation for the homeless.

Similar definitions are used in Hungary, in some national counts in Poland, Spain and the Czech Republic, in Italy and in the Netherlands. In some countries, a lack of any address,[3] or registration with social services,[4] is used as the criterion for defining someone as being a homeless person.

In other countries, much wider definitions of homelessness are used, covering people in various forms of insecure or unsuitable accommodation and sometimes including people sharing temporarily with friends and relatives.[5] For example, the Danish definition of homelessness is as follows:

> Homeless people do not have their own (owned or rented) dwelling or room, but have to stay in temporary accommodation or stay temporarily and without a contract [tenancy] with family or friends. People who report they do not have a place to stay the next night are also counted as homeless.

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3 Including a 'care of' address – e.g., using a homeless service as a proxy address.

4 E.g., in Slovenia.

5 Two or more concealed or 'doubled up' households living in housing designed for one household; also referred to as 'hidden homelessness' and 'sofa surfing'.

The Finnish definition is similar. Both the Danish and Finnish definitions also include people living in institutions, such as a long-stay hospital or drug treatment facility, who are about to be discharged,[6] but who do not have housing available.

In Sweden, the most widely used definition (adopted by the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare) is divided into four categories:

1. Acute homelessness: people living rough, in emergency accommodation and accommodation for homeless people.
2. Institutional care and category housing: people living in institutions, who are staying longer than necessary because of a lack of housing options and/or have no housing to move into when they leave.
3. Long-term housing solutions: people who are not able to access the main, contribution-based welfare system in Sweden because of their marginal labour market position, living in long-term housing solutions in what is defined as the 'secondary' housing market, which is administered by municipalities and includes transitional housing, emergency shelters and supported housing.
4. Short-term insecure housing solutions: homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends.

Like Sweden, both Finland and Ireland use definitions of long-term homelessness that focus on people with comorbidity of mental health problems and problematic drug/alcohol use, who experience recurrent or sustained homelessness. For research and policy purposes, these groups are sometimes estimated or counted separately from other homeless people. The UK also draws some distinctions between people living rough for long periods and other homeless populations.[7]

Definitions of homelessness can also vary within individual countries. Some data can be collected using one definition while other data are collected using a different definition of homelessness. In some cases, academics – referencing FEANTSA's work on ETHOS and ETHOS Light – use wider definitions than are employed for official statistics.

In a number of countries, the definition used for statistical purposes is also determined by logistical considerations – i.e., homelessness is defined and counted in relation to the distinct systems of support that different groups of homeless people

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6 Within one month, in Denmark.

7 NatCen (2009) *Profiling London's Rough Sleepers: A Longitudinal Analysis of CHAIN Data* (London: Broadway). [on-line] Available from: http://www.broadwaylondon.org/ResearchInformation/Research/main_content/ProfilingLondonsRoughSleepersFullReport.pdf [24.11.2014].

can access. The German definition of homelessness covers all persons who have no secure home (regular tenancy security or owner-occupied housing) and who need support to access a home, distinguishing between two basic groups:

1. People who are not provided with (temporary) accommodation/shelter by any public bodies (NGOs, local authorities). This includes rough sleepers and people sleeping in 'make-shift' accommodation, including squatting and living in buildings not designed for permanent habitation, alongside people temporarily sharing with friends and relatives because of a lack of their own home. People who are temporarily accommodated, at their own cost, in hotels or similar accommodation, because of a lack of their own home are also within this group.

2. People who are provided with temporary accommodation/shelter by local authorities or NGOs, namely those provided with temporary accommodation/shelter under the police laws, or through other legal measures of local authorities against rooflessness. This group also includes people provided with places in shelters, hotels, hostels and other types of institutions, or temporary accommodation that is paid for through social welfare benefits.

Much of the statistical data on homelessness in Germany is confined to Group 2, but annual statistics in North Rhine-Westphalia also cover people in Group 1 who seek help from advice centres during the month prior to the day-long count of homelessness that takes place on the 30th of June each year. Theoretically, Group 2 also comprises persons who, because of the lack of a home, stay longer than needed in therapeutic or social institutions, or whose release from a therapeutic or social institution or prison is due within four weeks but who have no home available to go to. However, no statistical data are actually being collected on this group at the time of writing.

The UK defines homelessness referencing legal frameworks that centre on a lack of housing that someone could reasonably be expected to occupy, ranging from a lack of any housing, through to housing that is too insecure, overcrowded or otherwise unfit for occupation. As in Germany, people living temporarily with friends and relatives because they have nowhere else to go, and people living in accommodation-based homelessness services, are counted as homeless.

Also like Germany, the collection of UK administrative and research data tends to reflect the logistical and bureaucratic systems designed to deal with homelessness. British and Northern Irish homelessness laws[8] have framed debates about the nature of homelessness policy in the UK since the late 1970s. There has been a tendency to collect statistical data on two homeless populations, which are distinguished according to whether they have access to full assistance under the terms of the homelessness laws.

Lone adults and couples of working age – people who are not vulnerable in a way that limits their capacity to secure and sustain housing – are defined as being within the non-statutorily homeless population. Statutorily homeless people, by contrast, are eligible for assistance under homelessness laws. The statutorily homeless population includes lone people defined as 'vulnerable' (requiring assistance with securing and sustaining housing), women at risk of gender-based/domestic violence who have become homeless for that reason, and families containing one or more dependent children and/or a pregnant woman. Out of these two populations, more administrative data are collected on statutorily homeless households, although in England, administrative data are also collected from services working with non-statutorily homeless people.

Inconsistencies in how homelessness laws are interpreted, severe shortages of affordable housing available to local authorities and, sometimes, inequities in decision-making, mean that whether or not a family or individual enters the statutory homelessness system can be arbitrary or even a matter of luck.[9] This means that the logistical separation between data on statutory and non-statutory homelessness in the UK reflects administrative practice and variations within that practice, rather than data on two clearly distinct homeless populations.

In France, the homelessness survey of INSEE (the French Statistical Institute) uses the following definition of homelessness:

> A person is considered as homeless if she/he has found herself, the night preceding the survey, in a place not intended for habitation or if it is supported by an organization providing free hosting or accommodation at low participation

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8 There are four homelessness laws in operation in the UK. The Welsh Government recently gained control over homelessness law in Wales and is the process of revising the law at the time of writing. The Scottish Government already has direct control over its own homelessness law and has legislation that differs considerably from that in England (there is no requirement to be in 'priority need', there is only a need to be homeless, removing the vulnerability criteria for assessment), whereas the law in Northern Ireland reflects that of England but differs in some small details.

9 Bretherton, J., Hunter, C. and Johnsen, S. (2013) 'You can judge them on how they look…': Homelessness Officers, Medical Evidence and Decision-Making in England, *European Journal of Homelessness* 7(1) pp.69-92.

> costs. These organizations can provide places in collective structures, hotel rooms or ordinary dwellings. Such accommodations can be provided for different lengths of time: one night to a few days, or even several weeks or several months. The places not intended for housing are the following: cellars, parking garages, attics, huts; cars, wagons, boats; factories, offices, warehouses, technical buildings; common areas of residential buildings; ruins, construction sites, tents; metro or train stations, mall corridors; the street, bridges, outdoor parking, public gardens, wastelands [and the] railway… A person will be called homeless in a given day if the night before the survey, she/he was in one of the following two situations: either she/he has resorted to a free hosting service, or she/he slept in a place not intended for habitation.

In Ireland, the definition of homelessness is based on Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988, which states that a person shall be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless for the purposes of this Act if:

> (a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or (b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a), and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.

The recently introduced Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) national administrative system for managing homelessness accommodation in Ireland also defines homelessness by accommodation category. This definition has evolved from the legal definition used in 1988 but uses a more up-to-date list of provisions that includes:

- Accommodation rented directly from private landlords, B&Bs (Bed and Breakfast hotels) and hotels of the Housing Authority;
- Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA; hostel accommodation with onsite support);
- Temporary Emergency Accommodation (TEA; hostel accommodation with low or minimal support); and,
- Long-term Supported Accommodation.

3.1.1 The definition of the 2011 Population and Housing Census

The European Commission and the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) attempted to encourage the use of a standardised definition of homelessness when the EU Member States conducted their 2011 censuses. A specific definition of homelessness was recommended, distinguishing between two main categories:

- 'primary homelessness': persons living in the streets or without shelter;
- 'secondary homelessness': persons with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation (including dwellings, shelters and other living quarters) and persons usually resident in long-term (also called 'transitional') shelters or similar arrangements for homeless people.

The CES recommendations were interpreted and implemented variably. In a few cases, the issuing of guidance had a very positive effect, in that the first real attempts to count homeless populations took place, but a considerable number of EU Member States also did not follow the guidance.[10]

3.2 ETHOS Light

FEANTSA has devoted significant efforts to the development of the European Typology of Homelessness (ETHOS) as a means of drawing attention to the multiple dimensions of homelessness that exist. ETHOS is also intended to provide a path towards standardised and comparable measurements of homelessness in the EU. As the main ETHOS homelessness typology is quite complex and includes categories that are difficult to count, a specialist version of ETHOS, known as ETHOS Light, has been developed for use in surveys and statistical research. ETHOS Light was used as the basis for standardising data and making comparisons in the present research.

[10] For details see Baptista, I., Benjaminsen, L., Pleace, N. and Busch-Geertsema, V. (2012) *Counting Homeless People in the 2011 Housing and Population Census* (EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness, No 2) (Brussels: FEANTSA/EOH).

Table 3.1: ETHOS Light

Operational Category		Living Situation		Definition
1	People living rough	1	Public spaces / external spaces	Living in the streets or public spaces without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight shelters	People with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3 4 5 6	Homeless hostels Temporary accommodation Transitional supported accommodation Women's shelters or refuge accommodation	Where the period of stay is time-limited and no long-term housing is provided
4	People living in institutions	7 8	Health care institutions Penal institutions	Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing No housing available prior to release
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9 10 11	Mobile homes Non-conventional buildings Temporary structures	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person's usual place of residence
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person's usual place of residence	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person's usual place of residence

Source: Edgar, W., Harrison, M., Watson, P. and Busch-Geertsema, V. (2007) *Measurement of Homelessness at European Union Level* (Brussels: European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities).

3.2.1 Coverage of categories of the ETHOS Light typology in national statistics

The national experts were asked to review the categories of the ETHOS Light definition and explain which of the groups listed in this typology are generally defined as homeless in their country and which are not. For some countries this question was difficult to answer, as statistical data and research did not employ a consistent definition of homelessness.

- **People living rough** were universally defined as being homeless in the countries analysed, but the extent of statistical data varied between countries. Some countries conducted street counts while others only had data from advice centres, which recorded whether or not someone was living rough (for example, Germany and Spain). In Slovenia, using the postal address of a homeless service because someone had no address of their own was used as a proxy for defining

some people as living rough. In France and the UK, data were collected on whether people using homelessness and/or meal services were living rough. Scotland also recorded recent prevalence of rough sleeping among people seeking help under the homelessness law. National counts of people living rough did not occur everywhere; sometimes there were only regional data on this group (for example in the Czech Republic, Spain and UK).

- **People in emergency accommodation** (overnight shelters) were included in all countries in statistical definitions of homelessness, though sometimes the number was merged with rough sleepers and other groups of homeless people.
- **People living in accommodation for homeless people** were covered in almost all homeless statistics (with the important exception that they are excluded from national homeless estimates in the Netherlands). However, in almost half of the countries, persons in women's shelters or refuge accommodation for victims of domestic violence (living situation 3.6, see Table 3.1) were not covered by homelessness statistics, because these services (while often working with women made homeless by domestic violence) were not *defined* as homelessness services.
- **People living in institutions** (and due to be released with no home to go to) were not covered in homelessness statistics in most of the EU countries covered by our study. There are conceptual doubts about whether these groups are actually homeless or only threatened with homelessness,[11] and also logistical difficulties in determining who might and might not *actually* become homeless on leaving an institution.
- **People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing** (in mobile homes, non-conventional buildings and temporary structures) were defined as homeless in slightly more than half the countries covered. Others still collected statistics on this group, even if not defining them as homeless. In a number of countries (e.g., in Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands) to sleep in mobile homes, barracks and temporary structures was treated as a subcategory of living rough. Only in four of the fifteen countries (France, Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK) were some people in this group explicitly excluded from homelessness statistics. In Ireland and the UK, specific populations living in mobile homes that were defined as Traveller/Roma communities

[11] See Amore, K., Baker, M. and Howden-Chapman, P. (2011) The ETHOS Definition and Classification of Homelessness: An Analysis, *European Journal of Homelessness* 5(2) pp.19-37 and Amore, K. (2013) Focusing on Conceptual Validity: A Response, *European Journal of Homelessness* 7(2) pp.223-236.

were not counted as 'homeless', because they are regarded as a distinctive subculture actively choosing a mobile lifestyle (both countries collected separate data on this group).

- **People living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing).** This category was included in homelessness statistics of eight of our fifteen countries, though in two of the eight countries (Slovenia and Spain) the extent of statistical coverage was variable. In the North of Europe, homeless people sharing temporarily with friends and relatives were a very significant part (or even the majority) of all homeless people counted. In Finland, 75% of all lone people counted as being homeless in 2013 were sharing with friends and relatives. In Denmark, 28% of all people defined as homeless – i.e., those covered by the homeless count – were sharing temporarily with friends and relatives. In Germany, where homeless people in contact with NGOs are recorded in a day count within the largest regional state (North Rhine-Westphalia), those staying temporarily with friends of relative made up more than a third (37.2%) on the 30th of June 2013.

Table 3.2 summarises how homelessness was conceptualised and measured across the different countries in relation to ETHOS Light.

Table 3.2: Operational categories of ETHOS Light (the harmonised definition of homelessness) generally defined as homelessness in national (local) statistics

Country	Operational categories of ETHOS Light					
	People living rough	People in emergency accom-modation	People living in accom-modation for the homeless	People living in institutions	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)
Czech Republic	Only in some statistics	Yes	Yes	Only in some statistics	Only in some statistics	Only in some statistics
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes without 3.6[11]	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes without 3.6[11]	No	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
The Netherlands	Yes	Yes	Only in regional statistics and without 3.6[11]	No	No	Yes
Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Only in some statistics	No
Portugal	Yes	Yes	Yes without 3.6[11]	No	Yes	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	Yes without 3.6[11]	Only in some statistics	Only in some statistics	Only in some statistics
Spain	Only in some statistics	Yes	Yes	Only in some statistics	Only in some statistics	Only in some statistics
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes, often without 3.6[11]	No	Yes	Yes

12 Definition excludes sanctuary schemes, shelters and refuges for women who are homeless due to gender-based/domestic violence

3.2.2 Groups of homeless people who are not in the ETHOS Light typology

Only a few national experts reported definitions of homelessness that are not included within the ETHOS Light typology. Young people about to leave social service care were mentioned several times (e.g., in the Czech Republic and Spain).

Some national statistics showed the share of long-term homeless people in each category, for example in Finland, where long-term homelessness is particularly relevant in the context of the Finnish strategy to end long-term homelessness. In France, data were also collected on applicants qualifying under the national right to housing (DALO), reflecting the logistical and administrative distinctions between homelessness datasets also found in Germany and the UK.

Some additional categories mentioned, like residents of permanent homes for elderly homeless people or those living in health care facilities for homeless people (both in Hungary), could be contained within the ETHOS Light categories of accommodation for the homeless (operational category 3, Table 3.1).

Residents of accommodation with no security of tenure, such as dwellings in the Swedish secondary housing market let through social leases, residents in the unregulated private sector of the UK with no legal tenancy, and residents of accommodation for seasonal workers and immigrants in Spain were mentioned as additional categories that were covered by some statistics and research. In Spain, some additional regional studies and national NGO registration systems also defined people experiencing housing insecurity for economic reasons as homeless.

4. Measuring Homelessness

Introduction

This chapter explores how homelessness is measured across different EU Member States. The chapter begins with a section discussing the measurement of homelessness in the 2011 censuses, moves on to explore collection of administrative data and then discusses recent statistical research focused on homelessness.

4.1 Measuring Homelessness in the Census 2011

The methodological approaches used in the 2011 censuses were the main theme of our comparative research in 2012.[13] Therefore, only a brief discussion of the 2011 census enumeration of homeless people is presented here.

Only six of the fifteen countries had published census results on homelessness. In some countries with register-based systems (i.e., censuses were conducted using continually updated national databases linked to place of residence), including Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the Netherlands, no separate count of homeless people was attempted as part of the 2011 censuses. However, all of these countries did conduct separate, dedicated surveys to *estimate* their homeless populations. In Germany, which also had a register-based census, and in Hungary and the UK, which undertook dedicated enumeration exercises for the 2011 census, specific attempts were made to cover homeless people in hostels, night shelters and similar types of accommodation for homeless people. However, in these cases, the data on homelessness services was part of a much larger collection of information on communal living situations, and the data released from these counts did not differentiate between homeless people and other people living in communal establishments, such as students in university halls or older people in congregate or shared supported housing.[14]

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13 Baptista, I., Benjaminsen, L., Pleace, N. and Busch-Geertsema, V. (2012) *Counting Homeless People in the 2011 Housing and Population Census* (EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness, No 2) (Brussels: FEANTSA/EOH).

14 The UK attempted to count active rough sleepers by asking people in communal establishments if they were living rough, but the attempt appeared unsuccessful, suggesting much lower numbers than would have been anticipated.

In some countries attempts were made to include people living rough in the 2011 census, such as in Ireland, Poland and Portugal. In other countries, people living rough were simply not counted, despite their living situation being defined as primary homelessness in the EU census recommendations, e.g., the Czech Republic and Germany. In Italy, homeless people were defined only as those officially without a fixed address and in Slovenia only homeless people who used the address at a Centre for Social Work or a humanitarian organisation, because they had no address of their own, were counted.

4.2 Administrative Data

Administrative data can be an excellent source of information on the nature and extent of homelessness. Data on users of shelters, hostels and other services for homeless people are collected for operational reasons, but can provide a good basis for estimates or counts of the homeless people using such services and also give an indication of their needs, characteristics and experiences.

Obviously, a significant shortcoming of administrative data is that they completely leave out those homeless people who are not in contact with the services that are collecting data. There is also a service paradox effect with administrative data, because administrative data are, of course, concentrated in those areas with the most extensive homelessness services. By contrast, in regions with a relative lack of services, including many rural areas, there will be fewer administrative data collected because there are fewer homelessness services, and thus homelessness may appear to be less prevalent than may actually be the case.

In Denmark, annual shelter statistics are collected and processed by the Social Appeals Board[15] through client registration systems in all homeless shelters, creating a national level database. Similarly in Slovenia, all shelters for homeless people report the number of their users to the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, which co-funds their activities. The Slovenian Social Protection Institute publishes this data yearly.

In Hungary, a central online database called KENYSZI[16] was set up in 2012 to record data on all users of services in the social and child protection sector (including homeless services) as well as those receiving any type of social benefits. Every service provider in Hungary has to register all personal data[17] of all their service users in this database and report all service use on a daily basis. This creates a

15 An agency of the Ministry for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs

16 Social Register and Database of Claimants

17 Personal identification number, health insurance number, etc.

national level database on homelessness service activity, including the emergency shelter system and daytime services, but the data are not entirely comprehensive as outreach service provision for homeless people is not included. While potentially a significant resource for research, the emphasis of the KENYSZI database is primarily to monitor expenditure[18] and, at present, published data do not differentiate between homelessness services and other services. There have also been some complaints about reliability, as the database can only register service users in one daytime service and one shelter on a single day, so if they use several services on that day, not all those services can submit data on them.

In Ireland, statutory and non-statutory agencies providing publicly funded services for homeless people are required, under their service level agreements, to input data on service usage into the PASS (Pathway Accommodation and Support System) system. The Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE[19]) established the Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) in 2011. The PASS system was rolled out nationally as the National Client Shared Database in 2014 and is a major data resource on the extent of homelessness, the characteristics of homeless people and their patterns of service use. The National Client Shared Database provides real-time information on people presenting themselves as homeless to services and on the occupancy of supported housing and emergency accommodation for homeless people across Ireland.

In the Netherlands, the Dutch Statistical Office (CBS[20]) publishes an annual national estimate of people living rough. This estimate is derived from three datasets: a national population register (GBA), which records whether someone is using a night or day shelter; an administrative dataset on people claiming welfare benefits, which is specifically targeted at homeless people; and the database run by the national alcohol and drug information system. These datasets are not entirely comprehensive. For example, the GBA register is only updated monthly, such that there is quite a large population that is not registered yet is also not recorded as having left the country or as being deceased. The administrative data on welfare benefits allows for local authority discretion as to whether or not someone is defined as living rough, which might generate inconsistencies.

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18 The database is run by the Nemzeti Rehabilitációs és Szociális Hivatal [National Office for Rehabilitation and Social Affairs] http://nrszh.kormany.hu, an office working directly under the Ministry of Human Resources (responsible for social affairs). The official aim of the database "is to signal which services are needed and where more development or service should be placed".

19 See http://www.homelessdublin.ie [25.11.2014].

20 See http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/home/default.htm [25.11.2014].

In Portugal, AMI[21] services have a common database in all their local branches,[22] which can filter homeless people using AMI services. These data give evidence of the prevalence of homeless people accessing AMI support services. In Spain, major NGO services such as Caritas also have databases that can be used in this way, though no single service provider in either Portugal or Spain has administrative data of sufficient scope to judge the scale and nature of the national homeless population.

In the UK, the main national-level datasets are the records kept by local authorities, which monitor the activity of local authorities in implementing the homelessness laws. Scotland has the most developed data, recording household characteristics, whereas the remainder of the UK tends, at present, to collect headcount data (e.g., just recording how many homeless families there are, rather than who is in those families, how they became homeless and what their needs are). In England, a database established to collect administrative data on the Supporting People programme – a national level strategy designed to bring strategic coherence to funding of housing-related support services – ceased to receive central government funding when the programme was effectively abolished. The Supporting People database persists, however, covering activity by all forms of housing-related support – i.e., outreach, emergency shelters, supported housing and mobile (floating) support services – and recording some of the characteristics of the homeless people using these services.[23]

The UK health systems and the welfare system also have the capacity to record whether someone is living rough. However, there is evidence that the question of whether someone is living rough is often not asked by administrative staff because it is seen as stigmatising individuals, and data on other forms of homelessness are not collected.[24]

The UK provides an interesting contrast to some other EU Member States. In many ways it is a data-rich environment, probably with some of the most extensive administrative data on homeless populations that exist in Europe, but these datasets are also disjointed and uncoordinated. Differences in law and administrative practice, and in whether data are collected, leads to variation in the data held by individual cities, local authorities and across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Data protection laws also mean that data cannot be held, or

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21 Assistência Médica Internacional. See http://www.ami.org.pt/[24.11.2014].

22 Covering 10 units in mainland Portugal, one in Madeira and one in the Azores

23 Supporting People, Client Records and Outcomes. [on-line] Available at: https://supporting-people.st-andrews.ac.uk/index.cfm [25.11.2014].

24 Pleace, N. and Bretherton, J. (2006) *Sharing and Matching Local and National Data on Adults of Working Age Facing Multiple Barriers to Employment* (London: Department for Work and Pensions).

combined, without the consent of the people from whom information is being collected.[25] In Germany, too, the relatively data-rich environment in one region, North Rhine-Westphalia, is in marked contrast to the level of data on homelessness collected elsewhere.

4.3 Recent Studies and Surveys

4.3.1 Recurrent surveys

In Hungary, Germany and France, regular surveys and counts of homeless people have been conducted, allowing for some analysis of trends as to the extent and nature of the homeless population. These surveys tend to follow a model developed in the USA of simply asking homelessness services to report how many people they are working with and what the characteristics of those people are during a given time period. In Scandinavia more extensive counts are carried out, including a wider range of social and health services and local authorities.

In some countries, including Sweden, Denmark, France and Hungary, individual questionnaires are completed by, or for, each homeless person, whereas in Germany and Finland only aggregated data are collected from local authorities and/or NGO services.

Point-in-time surveys are often used to provide a 'snapshot' of the extent of homelessness on a given day or night. While this technique lessens the risk that someone will be counted twice, this approach has been found to over-represent the recurrently and long-term homeless populations who are frequently using homelessness services. As people with severe mental illness and problematic drug and alcohol use can experience homelessness more frequently or for longer periods, using a point-in-time approach means this group can be over-represented, simply because they use homelessness services more often or for longer than other groups of homeless people.[26] By contrast, people who are homeless for a shorter period and who may have lower support needs are less likely to be included in point-in-time surveys, essentially because they spend less time in homelessness services.

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25 Pleace, N. (2007) Workless People and Surveillant Mashups: Social Policy and Data Sharing in the UK, *Information Communication and Society* 10(6) pp.943-960.

26 O'Sullivan, E. (2008) Pathways Through Homelessness: Theoretical and Policy Implications, in: J. Doherty and B. Edgar (Eds.) *'In My Caravan, I Feel Like Superman': Essays in Honour of Henk Meert, 1963-2006*, pp.79-108 (Brussels: FEANTSA / Centre for Housing Research, University of St. Andrews).

Finland has been recording the extent of homelessness since 1987 using the housing market survey conducted by ARA, the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland, an organisation with major responsibilities in the implementation of Finnish housing policy. Each municipality in Finland is asked to report the extent of homelessness as at the 15th of November every year. Data from social housing applications, social services and homelessness services are employed and sometimes cross-checked with the population register. The survey, while a very important historical and current record of homelessness levels, does have some limitations; for example, not all municipalities use the same techniques when answering the questions on homelessness and not all will use multiple data sources.

In Denmark, a nationwide bi-annual national survey on homelessness has been conducted since 2007 by SFI, the Danish National Centre for Social Research, on behalf the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs. These national counts are conducted by asking all local services and authorities who are in contact with, or have knowledge about, homeless people to fill out a two page individual questionnaire for each homeless person during a 'count week'. The survey is comprehensive, covering homeless shelters, addiction treatment centres, psychiatric facilities, municipal social centres, job centres and social drop-in cafés. Double counting is controlled by cross-referencing with Central Personal Register Numbers, initials, birthdates and other information. The count covers the entire country and can be broken down by municipality. While there will always be homeless people who are not enumerated in a count, the data are generally of high quality and there is a high response rate from local services, especially from important services, including homeless shelters and municipal social centres.

Sweden conducted national homelessness surveys in 1993, 1999, 2005 and 2011. The most recent survey was conducted by the National Board of Health and Welfare in the week of the 2nd to the 8th of May 2011. Data were collected from organizations that come in contact with homeless people, with municipalities being asked to provide lists of services in contact with homeless people, which were cross checked with the agencies that had responded to the 2005 survey. In total, 2 360 different agencies were contacted in 2011. Primary respondents in the survey were the social services. Other informants were voluntary organizations, different treatment institutions, correctional and probation offices, jails and prisons, psychiatric hospitals and clinics, child and adolescent psychiatry, youth, women's and men's centres, addiction centres, clinics, churches, parishes, deacons, health care clinics and emergency rooms.

The overall aim of the survey is to monitor the number of homeless people in Sweden, with double counting being controlled by cross-checking with social security numbers. In 2011, returns were received on 34 309 unique homeless individuals. While comprehensive, the survey is infrequent, obviously only includes homeless people in contact with services and relies on municipalities being aware of all the homelessness services and services working with homeless people in their area. In common with other surveys of service providers, considerable good will is required from the agencies that are expected to complete and return the questionnaires. Data collection on homelessness has broadened in Sweden in recent years, with municipalities and other organizations beginning to report the number of apartments within the secondary housing market used by homeless people, which was not previously the case.

The Hungarian 3rd of February survey has been conducted every year since 1999. Homeless people using services and living rough are contacted and questioned at the same point each year. The survey is organized and carried out by service providers for homeless people. Participation in the survey is voluntary for homeless services, and only data on users of cooperating services (shelters, hostels and outreach teams) are collected. Participation is also voluntary for the users of services. The data collected in the 3rd of February survey is used to improve knowledge of homelessness and also intended to improve the quality of services. The main method of data collection is an anonymised self-completion questionnaire. While a major source of data on homelessness in Hungary, limitations include the use of self-completion questionnaires, which may lead to more inconsistent results than using trained interviewers.

BAG W, the umbrella organisation of non-profit homeless service providers in Germany, also produces an annual estimate of homelessness prevalence, which includes all the ETHOS Light categories and also an assessment of hidden homelessness. This estimate is, however, based on extrapolations from an original study undertaken in 1992 and it is difficult to assess the current level of accuracy as many changes have occurred in Germany since that time. BAG W has, however, been lobbying for years for the collection of national-level homelessness statistics in Germany. Data on the profile of clients of NGO services for homeless people is provided by a national dataset on core variables used by the majority of such services. The annual analysis of these data on a national level cannot be used to assess the extent of homelessness as not all NGO services participate, but it provides interesting information about the profile of homeless people using NGO services.

In France, homelessness surveys are conducted by the National Statistical Institute (INSEE) and the National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED). Two such surveys have been conducted, both using a very similar methodological approach

– one in 2001 and one in 2012. The 2012 survey [SD 2012][27] focused on 80 towns and cities with populations in excess of 20 000 residents, collecting data on a random selection of 4 500 homeless people using free food services (soup runs) and emergency accommodation services, from January to March 2012. Non-French speakers were included, something which had not been possible in the preceding 2001 survey. For the purposes of the 2012 survey, a homeless person is defined as a person who slept in accommodation provided by a homelessness service or in a place not intended for habitation on the night before they were surveyed. The nature of the data collection and the definition employed mean that the survey provides statistical data on the needs and characteristics of homeless people, but does not incorporate all forms of homelessness, nor does it provide full geographical coverage of homelessness.

France also has a 'rolling census', which covers a part of the population each year. The rolling census only includes a sample of municipalities – those with fewer than 10 000 people – and is therefore not a true census. There is also a five-yearly census of people living in boats, in tents, living rough or who are homeless and temporarily living in hotels within municipalities of 10 000 or more inhabitants. However, data on homelessness from this five-yearly census are not currently released publicly. In addition, DREES[28] conducts a survey every three years (ES-DS Survey) focused on institutions and services for people in social and economic difficulties, part of which also relates to homeless people in emergency and temporary accommodation; the most recent survey took place in 2012.

In Poland, a number of point-in-time counts of homeless people took place between 2009 and 2013. These counts were organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MPiPS) and were conducted in December 2009 and January 2010 (recount), July/October 2011 and in February 2013. A number of methodological limitations have been reported. For example, in 2011, data from homeless NGOs were combined with data from social assistance datasets and produced what appeared to be an inflated count of homeless people. A later survey, conducted on the 7th – 8th of February 2013, collected data from NGO homelessness services and local authority facilities, also using reports from individual workers and the police, but this relied on voluntary participation, which may have affected the coverage and accuracy of results.

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27 Yaouancq, F., Lebrère A., Marpsat, M., Régnier, V., Legleye, S. and Quaglia, M. (2013) *L'hébergement des sans-domicile en 2012. Des modes d'hébergement différents selon les situations familiales,* INSEE Première N°1455 [Homeless Persons' Accommodation in 2012. Differing Modes of Accommodation According to Family Circumstances]. (Paris: INSEE).

28 Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques; Research Studies, Evaluation and Statistics Division, http://www.drees.sante.gouv.fr/la-direction-de-la-recherche-des-etudes-de-l-evaluation-et,1984.html

In Spain, the most important national survey on homelessness was conducted by the National Statistical Institute (INE) and it followed closely the methodological approach of the French INSEE/INED homelessness survey. Two surveys have so far been conducted, in 2005 and 2012. In both surveys, samples were drawn from people using free food and emergency accommodation services in municipalities with more than 20 000 inhabitants, who were then asked to complete individual questionnaires. In 2012, the survey period was between the 13th of February and the 25th of March, covering 68 accommodation-based services and 82 free food services. The limitations of the approach are the same as for the French INSEE/INED surveys.

4.3.2 'One-off' surveys

In Italy, the first national survey of homelessness was conducted in 2011 by the National Institute of Statistics (Istat) under an agreement with the Italian Ministry of Employment and Social Policy, the Italian Federation of Associations for the Homeless (fio.PSD) and the Italian Caritas organization. The study was funded by the government and Caritas and, as the first attempt at this type of survey, represented a significant positive step in trying to understand the extent and nature of Italian homelessness.

The Italian survey focused on homeless people who used canteens – i.e., free or subsidised food services – or emergency shelters at least once during the period of the 21st of November to the 20th of December 2011. The 158 main Italian municipalities were included – i.e., those with more than 70 000 inhabitants, provincial capitals with more than 30 000 inhabitants and all municipalities with at least 30 000 inhabitants in areas surrounding municipalities with a population of over 250 000 (the hinterland of major towns and cities). A special weighting procedure based on information about the repeated use of services was used to control for double counting. Again, while generating important data on the nature of Italian homelessness, the survey nevertheless excluded various elements of the homeless population because of the methodology employed; these limitations were similar to those of the French and Spanish surveys of homeless people.

In Portugal, a number of surveys of homeless people have been conducted without reference to one another. The most important national-level survey was undertaken by the Institute for Social Security (ISS) in 2009.[29] Originally, this data collection was to have been the start of a continuous information and monitoring system of homelessness within the framework of the Portuguese National Homelessness Strategy. However, the data collection was not repeated in later years. Data was collected only in those territories that had, in an earlier survey, identified homelessness as

[29] GIMAE (2010) *Estratégia Nacional para a Integração de Pessoas Sem-Abrigo – Prevenção, Intervenção e Acompanhamento* [National Homelessness Strategy]. (Lisbon: ISS).

numerically 'significant'. A total of just 53 out of the 308 Portuguese municipalities were defined as falling within this group; these included those municipalities where local homeless units (NPISA) were already in place and those which had been considered priority territories under the scope of the National Homelessness Strategy, which included the largest municipalities in Portugal.

The questionnaires were filled in by local organisations working with homeless people and were aggregated for Portugal as a whole by the NPISA. The data collected in the third quarter of 2009 included people sleeping rough – including those living in abandoned buildings, cars, building lobbies or in stairwells; and houseless people – for example, people living in emergency or short-term temporary shelters, as well as those in bed and breakfast hotel accommodation or private rooms paid for by the social security services.

While the goal was a national-level understanding of homelessness, coverage of homelessness in Portugal was, as in surveys conducted in Italy, Spain and France, restricted to certain areas, although in Portugal there were also further restrictions because the survey only took place in areas with a NPISA in place. There were also limited controls on double counting. The survey is, however, notable as an attempt to employ data collection criteria established at EU level in the MPHASIS project[30] and, as with the Italian survey, represented an important first step in trying to understand homelessness by public policy makers.

4.3.3 Local and regional surveys

The national experts reported a large number of local and regional homelessness surveys, especially in countries where national level data are weak or non-existent. However, this European level comparative study cannot possibly cover all these regional or local studies. There were also many statistical surveys focused on increasing understanding of, but not on enumerating, both specific homeless populations and the prevalence of physical health problems, severe mental illness, drug and alcohol use and specific questions of morbidity – e.g., the prevalence and characteristics of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and other infections within homeless populations.

The kinds of data that are collected include city level research; for example, a year-long survey of homeless people was carried out in Lisbon in 2011/2012 involving data collection by outreach teams, emergency and supported accommodation (including a Housing First project), day centres and other services. In

30 See http://www.trp.dundee.ac.uk/research/mphasis/ [25.11.2014].

Spain, a whole range of regional and local studies were conducted in recent years, for instance in Madrid (2012), Barcelona (2013), Zaragoza (2012) and twice in the Basque Country (2012 and 2013).

England conducts local level street counts and estimates of people living rough, but this is confined to those cities and areas where living rough is viewed as a problem. 2 414 people were reported to be living rough at any one point in 2013, compared to 2 309 the year before, and representing an increase on 2010 when the figure was 1 768.[31] These counts have a number of significant methodological limitations, centred on their being point-in-time counts, as there is evidence that the flow of people sleeping rough (total experience over one year) is much greater than the stock of those sleeping rough (point-in-time; the number on one day) in the UK. The counts are also based on a small number of small geographical areas and do not cover the entire area of the city or local authority in which they take place. Enumerators also only look for easily visible rough sleepers rather than, for example, also going into disused or empty buildings where people may be sheltering.[32] Some of the data employed for these statistics are also estimates rather than actual counts. These surveys and estimates are too small in scale and too imprecise to be useful as a way of understanding the scale of living rough across England or the whole of the UK.

In Germany, there is an annual survey of homelessness in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), which is the most populous region of Germany with a population of 17.6 million. Homelessness statistics have been collected annually in this region since the sixties, but until 2009, statistics were confined to homeless households that were provided with temporary accommodation by local authorities. Since 2011, data have been collected on all homeless people who, on the 30th of June of the given year, are living in temporary accommodation provided by local authorities or by NGOs. In addition, data are collected on all people who have made use of an NGO providing a homelessness advice service during the whole of June.

This approach gives the North Rhine-Westphalia homelessness survey good coverage of people sleeping rough, and staying in emergency shelters and in supported and temporary accommodation for homeless people. The inclusion of the advice services means that there is also coverage of people living with friends and relatives (concealed or hidden homelessness) and of people who may be squatting or living in temporary structures. Theoretically, the survey should cover

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31 Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)(2014) *Rough Sleeping Statistics England – Autumn 2013 Official Statistics* (London: DCLG). [on-line] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284024/Rough_Sleeping_Statistics_England_-_Autumn_2013.pdf [25.11.2014].

32 Fitzpatrick, S., Pleace, N. and Bevan, M. (2005) *Final Evaluation of the Rough Sleepers Initiative* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive).

all ETHOS Light categories with the exception of refuges for women at risk of domestic/gender-based violence or about to leave an institution (see also Chapter 3). The survey has methodological limits, in that it does not cover homeless people who were not in contact with an advice service in June or those who were not resident in a homelessness service or local authority-provided temporary accommodation on the 30th of June.

19 823 persons were reported as homeless by the NRW survey on the 30th of June 2013. Overall, 10 843 persons were provided with temporary accommodation by local authorities and 8 980 either stayed in NGO accommodation-based services for homeless people or had been in contact with their advice services at least once in the preceding month.[33] People reported as homeless in the NRW survey were equivalent in number to 0.11% of the total population.

It is not possible to extrapolate a figure for the whole of Germany from the North Rhine-Westphalia survey. This is because the region has superior homelessness prevention services, which could reduce overall homelessness prevalence relative to other regions, and because the region is also relatively urbanised compared to most of Germany, though less so than the city states of Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg. Some other regional states[34] are attempting data collection on homelessness, but no data have been published at the time of writing.

There are, in addition, regional level and city level administrative databases. For example, two UK cities, Edinburgh and London, have coordinated databases that contain longitudinal data on people using homelessness services. The CHAIN database in London is in some senses comparable to the PASS system developed in Dublin, but it is also significantly more restricted than the current Irish datasets, because alongside being confined to London, CHAIN only covers services for people living rough and street-using populations, not the homelessness sector as a whole.[35] CHAIN is used to target services to long-term and repeat rough sleepers, as well as for monitoring the extent of these forms of homelessness.

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33 Ministerium für Arbeit, Integration und Soziales des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (2014) *Integrierte Wohnungsnotfallberichterstattung 2013 in Nordrhein Westfalen* [Integrated Reporting on Households in Urgent Need of Housing]. (Düsseldorf: MAIS NRW).

34 Bavaria, Lower-Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate and Baden-Württemberg.

35 NatCen (2009) *Profiling London's Rough Sleepers: A Longitudinal Analysis of CHAIN Data* (London: Broadway). [0n-line] Available from: http://www.broadwaylondon.org/ResearchInformation/Research/main_content/ProfilingLondonsRoughSleepersFullReport.pdf [24.11.2014].

5. The Extent of Homelessness

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the extent of homelessness in the fifteen EU Member States covered by the research. The chapter begins with a discussion on the results of the 2011 census on homelessness, before moving on to explore the extent to which each country was able to provide data on homelessness within the ETHOS Light framework.

5.1 National Census and Survey Data

5.1.1 The 2011 Population and Housing Census results

Table 5.1: Data on homelessness from the 2011 censuses

	Number of homeless people as reported from the 2011 Census		
Country	Number provided	Rate per 1 000 inhabitants	Remarks
Czech Republic	11 496	1.10	Only people in overnight shelters and accommodation for homeless people were covered. Rough sleepers were not covered
France	16 339	0.25	Rolling national census (conducted January 20-28, 2011), covering 8% of the population living in municipalities with more than 10 000 inhabitants. This number is almost certainly an underestimate. INSEE/INED surveys on homelessness indicated some 86 000 homeless people in 2001 and 141 500 in 2012
Ireland	3 808	0.82	All people found in the 928 properties providing accommodation to homeless people on an emergency, transitional or long-term basis on census night were covered. Rough sleepers were also included
Italy	34 653	0.58	Only people registered as having no fixed address at which to be contacted were included as homeless people in the census
Poland	8 699	0.23	Rough sleepers and residents in accommodation for homeless people (collective living quarters), based on lists provided by local governments. The number of properties on which this total was based is lower than that reported in other counts
Portugal	696	0.07	Data derived from a street count of rough sleepers and from a survey covering mainly overnight shelters for homeless people
United Kingdom	240	No data	The census was based on an estimate from service providers in England and Wales as to how many people were sleeping rough. The data are almost certainly unreliable. The CHAIN database showed that 1 908 British citizens slept rough in London during 2010/2011 and street counts suggested a rough sleeping population of some 1 800 people in England (at any one point in time during the same period). Data were not collected on other forms of homelessness in the UK census

No census data were available in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain or Sweden. Just before publication of this report the "Census Hub" was made available in the internet (https://ec.europa.eu/CensusHub2). Missing data have been replaced in this data base by "0" (zero). This is of course misleading as all the countries mentioned here have substantial numbers of homeless persons, but have made no data available on homelessness from their census counts.

In eight of the fifteen reporting countries, census data were not available on homeless people. This was either because data were not collected or because homeless people were not counted separately, only being recorded as part of the population living in shared (communal) accommodation, a total that included people in student halls and retirement communities, as well as in emergency accommodation and hostels.

No census data specifically on homeless people were available in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain or Sweden. Only the Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Portugal both collected and published data specifically on the homeless population. The UK tried to collect separate data on people living rough, but failed to differentiate between homeless people and those living in congregate settings. Where census data were reported separately, they often only covered some of the groups within the ETHOS Light definition. Looking at the rates of homeless people per 1 000 inhabitants, the few results available showed a relatively wide range, from 0.07 in Portugal to 1.10 in the Czech Republic.

5.1.2 Other national data

5.1.2.1 Barriers to establishing the extent of homelessness across all fifteen countries

It is not possible to produce a figure on the 'total' level of homelessness in the fifteen countries reviewed in this report. This is, in part, because data collection on homelessness varies to such an extent between these Member States. Some are relatively data-rich, while some have very little data and only very few, such as Denmark, have something that is probably quite close to a true picture of the nature and extent of homelessness.

There are also definitional inconsistencies that make cross-comparison between countries and the generation of a total homelessness figure across all fifteen countries difficult. In the Scandinavian countries, Czech Republic, Germany and the UK, the definition of what constitutes 'homelessness', including the hidden homelessness of people having to live with friends and family, is much wider than for some other countries, some of which define homelessness as people in homelessness services or living rough.

There are also methodological limitations. Numbers are quite often largely based on administrative data, only recording the homeless population in contact with services, and/or are reliant on point-in-time surveys, which can both miss those not experiencing homelessness on a given day and over-represent the extent of long-term and recurrent homelessness (see Chapter 4).

5.1.2.2 Country level estimates and counts

In 2012 the Czech Republic estimated a national total of 27 500 homeless people, or approximately 0.3% of the Czech population.[36] Some 19 300 people fall within the definition of homelessness, including people living rough, using emergency shelters or sharing with friends or relatives, and some 8 200 fall into the category of living in accommodation for homeless people or about to be released from institutions into a situation of homelessness. The Czech estimate merges categories 1, 2 and 6 of ETHOS Light into one group, and categories 3 and 4 into another group. It is not clear whether the estimate is a measure of stock (point-in-time; the number of homeless people on one day) or flow (total experience of homelessness over one year).

The last Danish national homeless count found that 5 820 Danish citizens and legal migrants were homeless during the sixth week of 2013.[37] This represented the equivalent of 0.1% of the population. The figure covered all ETHOS Light categories, with the exceptions of women in refuges and homeless undocumented and illegal migrants, who were separately enumerated.[38] The latest shelter statistics, covering all of 2012, showed that there were 6 157 (unique) persons who used a homeless shelter. This annual figure showed that the flow of shelter users corresponded to 0.12% of the Danish population.

Finnish homelessness data are collected in November each year as part of the housing market survey and in 2013, a point-in-time figure of 7 500 single homeless people and 417 homeless families was reported.[39] This measure is a combination of actual figures and estimates from municipalities (see Chapter 4). Overall, 0.15% of the total population were estimated to be homeless at any one point in 2013. However, 75% of the reported homeless population were reported to be sharing with family or friends – i.e., hidden homeless; ETHOS Light category 6. Most families (90%) and lone homeless people (70%) were in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. One third of lone homeless people were long-term homeless, a group who often had high support needs.

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36 Hradecký, I. *et al.* (2012): *Souhrnný materiál pro tvorbu Koncepce práce s bezdomovci v ČR na období do roku 2020* [Summary Text for Setting Up the Conception of Work with Homeless People in the Czech Republic until 2020]. [on-line] Available from: http://www.esfcr.cz/file/8471/ [18.06.2014].

37 Benjaminsen, L. and Lauritzen, H.H. (2013) *Hjemløshed i Danmark 2013. National kortlægning*. [Homelessness in Denmark 2013. National Mapping] (Copenhagen: SFI).

38 Only 73 persons were enumerated in this group

39 ARA (2014) *Asunnottomat 2013,* Selvitys 2/2014 [Homeless People, 2013]. (Lahti: ARA)

French research was published in January 2011[40] that drew on a 2006 census and a survey conducted by DREES[41] and INSEE. This research estimated that in the second half of the 2000s, 133 000 people experienced homelessness in France. It was also estimated that some 33 000 people had experienced living rough or staying in emergency shelters, and a further 66 000 had stayed in services offering accommodation and support,[42] with 34 000 using accommodation funded by ALT (temporary housing allowance). A further 38 000 were estimated to have stayed in hotels because they had no alternative, some of whom were paying for themselves while others were supported by the welfare system. These estimates exclude children and homeless people in accommodation specifically for migrants; it has been estimated by the correspondent for France that the homeless migrant population was close to 150 000 or 0.24% of the population in 2011. A week-long survey conducted in January 2012 at free food and other services frequented by homeless people showed that 81 000 people had slept rough or in a homeless shelter the night before they were interviewed.[43] The INSEE/INED surveys on homelessness in France estimated some 86 000 homeless people in 2001 and 141 500 in 2012.

In Germany, BAG W, the umbrella organization of non-profit homeless service providers, estimated that 284 000 people experienced homelessness during 2012,[44] following broadly the definitions of homelessness used in ETHOS Light.[45] This was equivalent to 0.35% of the German population and suggests a greater prevalence

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40 Briant, P. and Donzeau, N. (2011) *Être sans domicile, avoir des conditions de logement difficiles. La situation dans les années 2000,* INSEE Première N°1330 [Being Homeless, Experiencing difficult housing conditions. The Situation in the Decade after 2000]. (Paris: INSEE).

41 Mainaud, T. (2011) *L'hébergement d'urgence en CHRS. Résultats de l'enquête ES 2008*. Études et Résultats N°777 [Emergency Accommodation in Sheltering Centres. Results of the 2008 ES Survey]. (Paris: Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques).

42 CHRS (Centres d'Hébergement et de Réadaption Sociale) – centres that provide accommodation and support, including emergency housing, temporary housing and assessment

43 Yaouancq, F., Lebrère A., Marpsat, M., Régnier, V., Legleye, S. and Quaglia, M. (2013) *L'hébergement des sans-domicile en 2012. Des modes d'hébergement différents selon les situations familiales,* INSEE Première N°1455 [Homeless Persons' Accommodation in 2012. Differing Modes of Accommodation According to Family Circumstances]. (Paris: INSEE).

44 See BAG W, (2014) *Schätzung der Wohnungslosigkeit in Deutschland 2003-2012* [Estimate of Homelessness in Germany 2003-2012]. (Berlin: Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe) [on-line] Available from: http://www.bagw.de/de/themen/zahl_der_wohnungslosen/ [01.09.2014]; BAG W (2013) *Statistikbericht 2012* [Statistics Report 2012]. (Bielefeld: Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe). [on-line] Available from: http://www.bagw.de/de/themen/statistik_und_dokumentation/statistikberichte/index.html [25.11.2014].

45 This estimate includes people about to leave prisons or hospitals without a settled home to move into; women who are homeless and staying in refuges because they are at risk of domestic/gender-based violence; and an assessment of hidden homelessness.

of homelessness than in some of the other economically prosperous Northern European Member States. This is an attempt to estimate the flow of the homeless population – i.e., the number who experience homelessness over one year.

The German BAG W estimate is based on extrapolations from an original study undertaken in 1992. Twenty years without an updated empirical database may mean that these extrapolations as to the extent of homelessness have become increasingly inaccurate, and the 2012 estimate may not be very close to reality. There is evidence of change in European homeless populations over this period; for example, more women, more young people and more migrants are evident in some countries. Our understanding of homelessness has also changed, particularly with regard to the growing evidence of a very small, very high needs group experiencing long-term and recurrent homelessness in several EU countries.[46]

Regional level data are also available in Germany. The North Rhine-Westphalia data suggest that 0.11% of the general population is experiencing homelessness at any one point in time.[47] However, these data are restricted to one region and cannot be used to extrapolate a figure for the whole of Germany.

In Hungary, the February 3rd survey of 2014[48] reported 10 549 homeless individuals, of whom 7 228 were using a shelter and 3 231 were sleeping rough. The total number of homeless people reported was equivalent to 0.1% of the Hungarian population. However, participation in this survey, both for services and homeless people, is voluntary and the figure may therefore not be entirely accurate. According to the KENYSZI database,[49] a total of 21 585 places in officially licensed shelter beds and day centres and 1 464 additional beds in winter shelters were available during 2013

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46 Busch-Geertsema, V., Edgar, W., O'Sullivan, E. and Pleace, N. (2010) *Homelessness and Homeless Policies in Europe: Lessons from Research* (Brussels: Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities).

47 Ministerium für Arbeit, Integration und Soziales des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (2014) *Integrierte Wohnungsnotfallberichterstattung 2013 in Nordrhein Westfalen* [Integrated Report on Households in Urgent Need of Housing in 2013 in North Rhine-Westphalia]. (Düsseldorf: MAIS NRW).

48 Győri, P., Gurály, Z. and Szabó, A. (2014) *Gyorsjelentés a hajléktalan emberek 2014 február 3-I kérdőíves adatfelvételéről* [Report on the Third of February Homeless Survey in Hungary – 2014]. [on-line] Available from: http://www.bmszki.hu/hu/eves-adatfelvetelek [24.11.2014].

49 Goldmann, R., Mester, D. and Mód, P. (2013) *A szociális, gyerekjóléti és gyermekvédelmi szolgáltatások igénybevevői – 2012* [Users of Social, Child Welfare and Child Protection Services – 2012]. (Budapest: NRSZH). See also Mester, D. (2013) *A hajléktaéanellátások az igénybeveői adatok tükrében* [Homeless Services Reflected by the Database of Claimants]. Conference Presentation at National Conference of Homeless Service Providers, August 2013, Balatonföldvár. [on-line] Available from: http://www.hajlektalanokert.hu/dokumentumok/konferencia/2013/Mester_Daniel.pdf [24.11.2014].

in Hungary. 22 032 users were registered in the week of the 4th to the 10th of February 2013, and 9 391 people slept in a homeless shelter between the 10th and the 16th of June 2013 (excluding shelters for families with children).

In Ireland, the PASS system[50] (Pathway Accommodation and Support System) recorded 2 478 homeless persons staying in accommodation for homeless people (including overnight shelters) in the week of the 7th to the 14th of April 2014. Other living situations were not included. The share of the population was 0.4%.

In Italy, an estimated 47 648 homeless people used a canteen or night-time accommodation service at least once between the 21st of November and the 20th of December 2011 in the 158 Italian municipalities in which the national survey was conducted.[51] The estimated number of homeless people corresponds to approximately 0.2% of the population regularly registered in the municipalities covered by the survey.

In the Netherlands, the last estimate of the number of homeless people was published by the Central Bureau of Statistics in November 2013.[52] It is a point-in-time estimate. The total number was estimated at 27 300, covering people living rough, living in emergency accommodation and in non-conventional dwellings (e.g., mobile homes and temporary structures) or sharing with friends and relatives due to a lack of housing. According to these data, 0.16% of the total population of the Netherlands was homeless. Overall, 45% of all homeless people lived in the four largest cities, known as the G4 cities – i.e., The Hague, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Utrecht. The population prevalence of homelessness in these four cities was considerably higher, equivalent to 0.55% of total population.

In Poland, the most recent national data for the night of the 7th to 8th of February 2013, using a point-in-time survey, show 31 933 homeless people, which is equivalent to 0.08% of the total population. This number includes 22 158 people in accommodation for homeless people, including night shelters, and 8 445 homeless people sleeping rough and in inhabitable places, including unconventional dwellings, with a further 1 330 people in supported apartments.[53]

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50 See above

51 ISTAT (2013) The Homeless. [on-line] Available at: http://www.istat.it/en/files/2013/06/Homeless.pdf?title=The+homeless+-+10+Jun+2013+-+Full+text.pdf [24.11.2014].

52 National Statistics Office (CBS) (2012) *Dakloos in Nederland* [Homeless in the Netherlands]. (The Hague: CBS).

53 MPiPS (2013b) *Sprawozdanie z realizacji działań na rzecz ludzi bezdomnych (7/8 luty 2013) i Badania Socjodemograficznego. Materiał informacyjny* [Report from Implementation of Activities for the Homeless (7/8 February 2013) and Sociodemographic Survey. Information Paper]. (Warszawa: MPiPS). [on-line] Available from: http://www.mpips.gov.pl/pomoc-spoleczna/bezdomnosc/sprawozdanie-z-realizacji-dzialan-na-rzecz-ludzi-bezdomnych-w-wojewodztwach-w-roku-2012-oraz-wyniki-ogolnopolskiego-badania-liczby-osob-bezdomnych-78-luty-2013-/ [24.11.2014].

In Portugal, no national data are available on the extent of homelessness other than the census results. The census recorded rough sleepers and people sleeping in overnight shelters. A recent survey by Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Lisboa (2013), in the Lisbon municipal area, identified 852 persons living rough and in shelters on the night of the 12th of December 2013, whereas the 2011 census had reported 696 persons in the same circumstances at national level.

During the last quarter of 2009 a total of 2 133 homeless people were identified as sleeping rough[54] and living in short term and emergency accommodation[55] in Portugal.[56] In 2011, the annual monitoring of the homeless population, supported by service providers for homeless people within the Lisbon Social Network, recorded that 2 399 homeless people had contacted services within the Lisbon municipal territory during the course of that year. This flow measure suggested that the equivalent of 0.44% of the population were using homelessness services in the Lisbon area in 2011, although not all services were included.

In Spain, the National Institute of Statistics (INE) estimated on the basis of their 2012 national survey that there was a total of 22 939 homeless persons on a single night. This corresponds with 0.05% of the Spanish population.[57] The methodology and definitions of homelessness were very similar to those used in the French INSEE/ INED surveys. In Spain, a large number of regional and local surveys have been conducted in recent years, with widely differing methodologies and definitions. Results vary in terms of the proportion of the population experiencing homelessness: 0.02% in Madrid, 0.03% in Zaragossa, 0.05% in Barcelona and between 0.08% and 0.1% in the Basque Country.

In Sweden, the national homelessness survey in 2011 reported 34 000 homeless people during the week of May 2-8, 2011.[58] This was equivalent to 0.36% of the Swedish population. Overall, 13 900 of these homeless people were reported as living in long-term housing solutions with special contracts – i.e., in the secondary housing market that is supported by municipalities; this meant that they were in housing situations that might not be regarded as situations of homelessness in

54 This included those living in abandoned buildings, cars, buildings lobbies and stairwells

55 People living in emergency or short-term temporary shelters and also in bed and breakfast accommodation or private rooms paid for by the social security services.

56 ISS (2009) *Relatório de caracterização* [Characterisation Report]. (Internal document).

57 INE (2012) *Encuesta a las Personas sin Hogar 2012* (metodología, diseño de registros y micro datos) [Survey Of Homeless People 2012 (Methodology, Recording Design and Microdata)]. [on-line]. Available from: http://www.ine.es/prodyser/micro_epsh.htm [24.11.2014].

58 NBHW (2011) *Hemlöshet och utestängning från bostadsmarknaden 2011– omfattning och karaktär* [Homelessness and Exclusion From the Housing Market 2011 – Extent and Character]. (Stockholm: National Board of Health and Welfare).

some other European countries. Another 6 800 persons were reported as living in short-time insecure housing, including 4 900 sharing with friends and relatives. The survey also included 2 400 people due to be released from prisons or health care institutions with no home to go to.

The 2011 Slovenian census found 3 829 people living in buildings not intended for habitation and who were using the address of a Centre for Social Work or humanitarian organisation because they had no permanent address of their own.[59] This was not an exact measure of homelessness, as some people living in the private rented sector also use a service address because landlords did not grant permission to use the housing they were renting as their own address, something that would not occur in some other EU countries. The report of the Social Protection Institute 2012[60] provides some numbers on people using different types of accommodation for homeless people – i.e., overnight shelters, homeless hostels, transitional supported accommodation and women´s refuges – estimated at some 1 500 per year.

In England in 2013, there were some 31 000 places in communal and congregate accommodation with on-site support staff for homeless people (called supported housing in the UK) and another 8 500 places for people in direct access accommodation – i.e., emergency shelters.[61] In some EU Member States, some of this supported housing and direct access accommodation, which can offer a self-contained studio apartment with security of tenure[62] for one or two years, would not necessarily be seen as homelessness.[63] These places in supported housing and direct access accommodation would have been close to full on any given night.[64] Although much of this supported housing would have been targeted to lone homeless adults, some provision would also include spaces for couples without children.

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59 SORS (2011) *Occupied Dwellings, Slovenia, 1 January 2011 – Provisional Data* (Ljubljana: Statistical Office of Slovenia). Those using the address of a service they attended because they lacked an address of their own numbered 1 395 people.

60 Smolej, S. *et al*. (2013) *Spremljanje izvajanja programov socialnega varstva* [Monitoring of Social Protection Programmes]. (Ljubljana: Social Protection Institute).

61 Homeless Watch (2013) *Survey of Needs and Provision 2013: Homelessness Services for Single People and Couples without Dependents in England* (London: Homeless Link). [on-line] Available from: http://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/SNAP2013_Full_Report.pdf [24.11.2014].

62 Under licence, not a full tenancy.

63 The UK had replaced much of the basic, large, dormitory services for homeless people by the 1990s, and although services can still vary in quality and the duration of support offered, programmes like the *Places of Change* initiative transformed some emergency accommodation into blocks of studio flats with intensive support services. See http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/838295 [25.11.2014].

64 *Ibid.*

There would, on average, have been another 56 492 statutorily homeless households living in temporary accommodation provided via local authorities in England at any one point in time during 2013. This group is mainly made up of families, but exact household composition is not recorded. In many cases, these temporarily accommodated households would have been living in ordinary private and social rented housing, secured specifically to serve as temporary accommodation by local authorities.[65] In some other EU Member States this would not be regarded as a state of homelessness, given that these households were often living in ordinary housing, albeit on a temporary basis. On any given night, an estimated 2 400 people were living rough.[66]

In total, some 98 300 households would have been homeless at any one point in time in England in 2013. This figure is an estimate, based on places in supported housing for homeless people and direct access accommodation, average levels of use of local authority funded temporary accommodation for statutorily homeless households, and a partial count and estimate of rough sleeping. As the statutorily homeless households in temporary accommodation included families, on whom data are not collated at national level, the number of *people* experiencing homelessness would have been greater. For example, if each household in temporary accommodation contained three people, some 169 000 statutorily homeless people would have typically been in temporary accommodation at any one point. These homeless *households* were equivalent to 0.44% of the 22.1 million *households* in England.[67]

These English data are, with the exception of the rough sleeper counts and estimates, only administrative counts of service activity and the operation of homelessness laws. Entire homeless populations, including people living with family or friends because they have nowhere else to go, are not recorded unless they approach and are then able to access either homelessness services or the statutory homelessness system.

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65 Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) *P1E statistics, Live Tables on Homelessness: Table 775: Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation at the End of Each Quarter, by Type of Accommodation*. [on-line] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/358199/Table_775.xls [24.11.2014].

66 DCLG (2014) *Rough Sleeping Statistics England – Autumn 2013 Official Statistics* (London: DCLG). [on-line] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284024/Rough_Sleeping_Statistics_England_-_Autumn_2013.pdf [24.11.2014].

67 Based on a 2011 estimate of households in England. Department of Communities and Local Government (2013), *Household Interim Projections, 2011 to 2021, England*. [on-line] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190229/Stats_Release_2011FINALDRAFTv3.pdf [24.11.2014].

Eighty-four per cent of the UK population lives in England, but some data are available on levels of homelessness in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A key issue is that there is no centralised recording of places in homelessness services or their activity, which restricts most of the available data to the administration of homelessness laws. In 2013, Scotland had an average of 10 281 statutorily homeless households in temporary accommodation at any one point in time,[68] Wales had 2 295[69] and Northern Ireland 4 571.[70] The populations of these countries were approximately 5 million, 3 million and 1.5 million people, respectively.

5.1.3 Data on prevalence or past experience of homelessness

National experts were asked for any data relating to prevalence or past experience of homelessness in the general population or subgroups of the general population. The only country where such data had been collected since 2009 was the UK. In England, in the late 1990s, the Survey of English Housing suggested a lifetime prevalence of homelessness of 4.3% across the general population – i.e., approximately four out of every 100 people experience homelessness.[71] There was a greater likelihood of homelessness among younger, economically inactive men. Prevalence data were also collected in the Scottish Household Survey in 2012, which in previous years suggested a prevalence of experience of homelessness of around 4%-7% in the Scottish population. However, Scotland accounts for only 8.4% of the UK population, compared to London's 13% and England's 84%, so these figures are not necessarily representative of the UK as a whole. In France, the 2006 census reported that 5% of the population have experienced homelessness.[72]

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68 HL1 statistics: Scottish Government (2014) Homelessness Annual Reference Tables 2013-14. [on-line] Available from: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables/adhoc-analysis/annualreferencetables201314 [24.11.2014].

69 See WHO-12 statistics on StatsWales. [on-line] Available from: https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Housing/Homelessness/Acceptances-and-Other-Decisions/DecisionsTaken-by-Year-Eligibility [24.11.2014]

70 See Northern Ireland Housing Executive Homelessness Statistics. [on-line] Available from: http://www.chni.org.uk/homelessstats.html[24.11.2014].

71 Burrows, R. (1997) The Social Distribution of the Experience of Homelessness, in: R. Burrows, N. Pleace and D. Quilgars (Eds.) *Homelessness and Social Policy* (London and New York, NY: Routledge).

72 Marpsat, M. (2009) *Une personne sur vingt s'est retrouvée sans logement personnel au cours de sa vie*, INSEE Première N°1225 [One Person in Twenty has Experienced Homelessness]. (Paris: INSEE).

5.2 Data for ETHOS Light in Each Member State

In a number of countries, a breakdown of existing data into the ETHOS Light categories (see Chapter 3) was impossible, as numbers were collected following a completely different system. This was the case for the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. For the remaining countries, the following tables show individual numbers, insofar as it was possible to isolate data for the respective categories. Quite often a number of different living situations are merged in the available data.

It was remarkable that even for the one group of people that every participating EU Member State defined as homeless – people living rough – national level data were only available in a few instances. In respect of the other categories of ETHOS Light, data collection was, if anything, even more variable.

5.2.1 Category 1: People Living Rough

Table 5.2: Data on People Living Rough

	Data on people living rough: Category 1			
	Most recent number	Period covered	Source	Remarks
Denmark	595	Week 6, 2013	National count	-
Finland	(1,2,9,10 and 11): 332	15 November 2013	National survey	Includes people in overnight shelters and in non-conventional dwellings
Hungary	3231	3 February 2014	National survey of service providers	Participation is voluntary, incomplete coverage of all services
Ireland	127	April 2014	Dublin Regional Homelessness Executive	Number relates to Dublin only
Poland	(1, 9, 10, and 11): 3781	7/8 February 2013	Governmental count (GUS)	Includes people in mobile homes, non-conventional buildings and temporary structures
Portugal	509	Night of 12 December 2013	Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa	Number relates to Lisbon municipal area only
Slovenia	-	-	-	No data
Spain	3280	Point in time during period of 13 February – 25 March 2012	National INE survey	
Sweden	280	2-8 May 2011	National count	
United Kingdom	2414	Autumn 2013	England count and estimate	England only

Sources: see Appendix 2.

5.2.2 Category 2: People Living in Emergency Accommodation

Table 5.3: People living in emergency accommodation

Country	Data on people in emergency accommodation (overnight shelters): Category 2			
	Most recent number	Period covered	Source	Remarks
Denmark	349	Week 6, 2013	National count	Number relates to anonymous emergency night shelters
Finland	-	15 November 2013	National survey	Included in number of rough sleepers
Hungary	3877	10-16 June 2013	KENYSZI database	Data are from a central database on officially licensed shelters and day centres
Ireland	-	-	-	Data are included in numbers for Category 3 (accommodation for the homeless)
Poland	-	-	-	Included in (3) homeless hostels
Portugal	304	Night of 12 December 2013	Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa	Number relates to Lisbon municipal area only
Slovenia	136	2012	Report by Social Protection Institute	
Spain	2895	Point in time during period of 13 February – 25 March 2012	National INE survey	
Sweden	1100	2-8 May 2011	National count	
United Kingdom	8500	During 2013	Number of *places* in direct access accommodation	Number relates to England only. Direct access accommodation is not necessarily provided on a nightly basis; some emergency services can offer ongoing accommodation and support

Sources: see Appendix 2

5.2.3 Category 3: People Living in Accommodation for Homeless People

Table 5.4: People living in accommodation for homeless people

Country	Data on people living in accommodation for the homeless: Category 3 (3) Homeless hostels, (4) Temporary accommodation, (5) Transitional supported accommodation, (6) Women's shelters or refuge accommodation			
	Most recent number	Period covered	Source	Remarks
Denmark	(3): 2015 (4): 211	Week 6, 2013	National count	No data available for transitional supported accommodation (5) or women's shelters (6)
Finland	(3 and 4): 228	15 November 2013	National survey	Supported accommodation (5) has lease agreements and are not included. People in women's refuges (6) are included in the number of people in institutions
Hungary	(3,4,5 and 6): 5047	10-16 June 2013	KENYSZI database	Data are from a central database on officially licensed shelters and day centres
Ireland	2478	7-14 April 2014	Extracts from PASS	Data include people in overnight shelters
Poland	(2,3 and 6): 20253; (4 and 5): 1330	7-8 February 2013	Governmental count	
Portugal	(6): 382	7 February – 31 October 2013	Survey	Number relates to women entering women's refuges in mainland Portugal; no numbers available for living situations 3, 4 or 5
Slovenia	(3): 193; (5): 280; (6): 892	2012	Report by Social Protection Institute	Numbers for living situation 4 are not available
Spain	(3): 1068; (4) 10102; (5) 103 (6)	Point in time during period of 13 February – 25 March 2012	National INE survey	
Sweden	(3): 1100; (4): 1400; (5): 2200; (6) 430	2-8 May 2011	National count	There is a high number of people in the secondary housing market, living in (13900) special apartments with special contracts who are included in the Swedish homeless count, but do not fit the ETHOS Light definition
United Kingdom	(3 and 5): 31000	During 2013	Places in supported housing for homeless people	Number relates to England only

Sources: see Appendix 2

5.2.4 Category 4: People Living in Institutions

Table 5.5: People living in institutions

Country	Data on people living in institutions: Category 4 (7) Health care institutions, (8) Penal institutions			
	Most recent number	Period covered	Source	Remarks
Denmark	(7): 119 (8): 64	Week 6, 2013	National count	-
Finland	(5, 7 and 8): 996	15 November 2013	National survey	Includes people in refuges for women (6)
Hungary	-	-	-	No data
Ireland	-	-	-	No data
Poland				No data
Portugal	-	-	-	No data
Slovenia	(8): 67	2013	Ministry of Justice	Data relates to annual number of prisoners having lost their homes during their stay in prison
Spain				Data are unclear and refer to persons after release from institutions or to the total of institutional residents
Sweden	(7): 1 700; (8): 710	2-8 May 2011	National count	
United Kingdom	-			No data

Sources: see Appendix 2

5.2.5 Category 5: People Living in Non-conventional Dwellings (due to lack of housing)

Table 5.6: People living in non-conventional dwellings

Country	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing: Category 5 (9) Mobile homes, (10) Non-conventional building, (11) Temporary structure			
	Most recent number	Period covered	Source	Remarks
Denmark	(9-11): 370	Week 6, 2013	National count	The category 'other' in the Danish count includes people living temporarily in garden allotment houses and mobile caravans but also includes other situations
Finland	See category 1			Included in number of rough sleepers
Hungary	-	-	-	No data
Ireland	-	-	-	No data
Poland				Included in number of rough sleepers
Portugal	(10): 6612	Census night	2011 census	Data refers to number of units in non-conventional buildings
Slovenia	(10): 3829	Census night	2011 census	Data refers to persons living in buildings not intended for habitation and includes people registered at centres for social work or humanitarian services
Spain				No reliable data
Sweden				People living in caravans are included under (3): homeless hostels
United Kingdom	-			No data

Sources: see Appendix 2

5.2.6 Category 6: People Living Temporarily in Conventional Housing with Families and Friends (due to lack of housing)

Table 5.7 People Living Temporarily in Conventional Housing

Country	Data on homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing): Category 6			
	Most recent number	Period covered	Source	Remarks
Denmark	1653	Week 6, 2013	National count	-
Finland	5626	15 November 2013	National survey	
Hungary	-	-	-	No data
Ireland	-	-	-	No data
Poland	-	-	-	No data
Portugal	248	2013	AMI data, annual prevalence	AMI monitoring data regarding people supported by the 11 existing local support units
Slovenia	-	-	-	No data
Spain	5294	Point in time during period of 13 February – 25 March 2012	National INE survey	
Sweden	4900	2-8 May 2011	National count	
United Kingdom	-			No data

Sources: see Appendix 2

6. Trends in Homelessness

Introduction

This chapter briefly explores recent trends in homelessness within those countries for which data were available.

6.1 Recent Trends and the Main Factors Influencing Them

In a number of countries the available statistics do not allow for any reliable analysis of trends in recent years. Either there was no reliable data available to compare the extent of homelessness in different years (as in Hungary, Italy, Portugal[73] and Slovenia) or methods of measurement had changed and made trend analysis impossible (as in Ireland and Poland).

For those countries where the data allowed for a trend analysis, results are summarised in Table 6.1. Note that different periods are chosen, depending on intervals between data collection. For instance, national surveys in France, Spain and Sweden were carried out at greater intervals then those in some other countries. In Sweden and France, part of the reported increase in homelessness was due to improved coverage of certain groups of homeless people, such as people in the secondary housing market in Sweden.

The only country with a recent, clear decrease in homelessness is Finland. Within the framework of the national strategy to end long-term homelessness, places in shelters and hostels were reduced and, with substantial investment, new apartments with rental contracts and social support for the formerly homeless clients were built, drawing on a Housing First model. Numbers of long-term and recurrently homeless people with high support needs fell very significantly. However, the number of homeless people sharing with friends and relatives, particularly younger people, has actually increased. A serious lack of affordable housing in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area has made it more difficult for young people and immigrants to find access to permanent housing there.

[73] The only comparable information in Portugal was census data on housing not fit for human habitation. They show a sharp decrease between the 2001 and 2011 censuses regarding shanty units (from 11 540 units to 2 052) and other non-conventional buildings not fit for housing (from 15 779 to 4 560 units). No data about trends for other homeless categories were available.

Similar problems, such as the lack of affordable housing, increased barriers to the existing stock, especially in big cities, and an increase in youth homelessness is reported for a number of countries where evidence for a general increase in national homelessness exists, including Sweden, Denmark and Germany. Increased unemployment, the effects of the economic crisis, cuts in welfare benefits and barriers to health services and social services were mentioned as potentially contributing to rises in homelessness in the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK. An increased number of homeless immigrants was reported, particularly in France and Spain.

Table 6.1 Recent trends in homelessness

	Recent trends in homelessness		
Country	Trend	Extend	Remarks and reasons for trends
Czech Republic	Increase	+ 44% between 2010 and 2014 in one large city (Brno) where data allow trend analysis	No regional or national data allow trend analysis. Part of the recorded increase in Brno (about 20%) is due to an increase of services for homeless people. Structural factors and political changes like rising unemployment, deregulation of rents, and social benefit changes are seen as linked to a general increase in homelessness
Denmark	Increase	+ 16% between 2009 (4998) and 2013 (5820): national counts	While the number of shelters remained almost constant, increases in homeless people staying temporarily with friends and relatives are being reported, particularly in larger cities. More young people are being found to be homeless, possibly linked to decreases in the affordable housing supply and lower welfare benefits for young people
Finland	Decrease	- 8% between 2009 (8153) and 2013 (7500): national survey results	Numbers of long-term homeless people in dormitories and hostels, and homelessness among people about to be released from institutions have decreased due to national strategy to reduce long-term homelessness by replacing shelters and hostels with apartments with regular leases and support using a Housing First model. Short-term homelessness and number of homeless people sharing with friends and relatives has increased because of economic crisis and tight housing market, especially in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Young people and immigrants have particular problems finding affordable housing, and their homeless numbers have increased

	Recent trends in homelessness		
Country	Trend	Extend	Remarks and reasons for trends
France	Increase	+ 44-50% between national surveys in 2001 (87 000) and 2011 (142 000)	Numbers include homeless children and migrants. Part of the increase is due to technical improvements in the survey and increase of homeless migrants, but strong influence of structural factors such as long-term unemployment, housing shortages and reduction in numbers of long-term hospitalisation is emphasised by national experts
Germany	Increase	+ 21% between 2011 (16 448) and 2013 (19 823) according to statistics in NRW regional state + 21% between 2009 (234 000) and 2012 (284 000) according to national estimates by BAG W	Part of increase in North Rhine-Westphalia may be due to better coverage of recently introduced statistics, but housing shortages in large cities and an increase of young homeless people is seen as an increasing problem by many experts. Increases in rent levels, high poverty rates despite the economic boom, and deficits in local prevention systems are mentioned as well. Increases in youth homelessness are reported
The Nether-lands	Increase	+ 17% between 2010 and 2012: national estimations (from 23 300 to 27 300)	Cuts in benefits and social services and increased barriers to using (mental) health care are seen as linked to increases in the numbers of vulnerable homeless people. Young people, people with a psychiatric illness and those with a learning disability are mentioned as particularly affected
Spain	Increase	+ 5% between national surveys in 2005 (21 901) and 2012 (22 932)	Higher increases are reported from some local surveys like in Barcelona (+45% between 2008 and 2013) and Madrid (+13.5% between 2010 and 2012). Reasons given are the economic crisis and increased unemployment, shortage of affordable housing and increase in numbers of homeless immigrants
Sweden	Increase	+ 29% for rough sleepers, shelter users, hostels and homeless people in institutions with no home to go to between 2005 (6 600) and 2011 (8 500) + 55% for homeless people sharing with friends, relatives and others between 2005 (4 400) and 2011 (6 800)	The number of longer-term housing solutions in the secondary housing market is not included here, as it has grown by almost 600%, due partly to better coverage of this type of accommodation but also because this sector has grown in size. Reasons given for these increases are mainly related to the housing shortage and increased barriers to regular housing, with a requirement for steady income becoming widespread

	Recent trends in homelessness		
Country	Trend	Extend	Remarks and reasons for trends
United Kingdom	Increase of homelessness presentations and homelessness acceptances	Presentations (seeking assistance under homelessness law): England: 09/10: 89 120 – 12/13: 113 520 Scotland: 09/10: 57 288 – 12/13: 40 050 Wales: 09/10: 12 910 – 12/13: 15 360 Northern Ireland: 09/10: 18 664 – 12/13: 19 354 Acceptance as homeless and in priority need under homelessness laws: England: 09/10: 40 020 – 12/13: 53 770 Scotland: 09/10: 37 151 – 12/13: 30 767 Wales: 09/10: 5 565 – 12/13: 5 795 Northern Ireland: 09/10: 9 914 – 12/13: 9 878	Indicators based on administrative data from the statutory homeless system have increased on a national level between 2009/2010 and 2012/2013 (but they were marginally higher in 2008/2009 than in 2012/2013). Increases have not occurred across the UK, but are evident in England and to a lesser extent in Northern Ireland and Wales. Note that the statutory systems in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are distinct, operating under different laws.[73] High increases are reported from rough sleeper counts in England (+36.5% between 2009/2010 and 2012/2013). The fall in supported housing services for homeless people in England may reflect a reduction in funding levels for these services. However, the reduced numbers also reflect some reduction in data collection, as government funding for the collection of these statistics ceased during this period. Other indicators do not suggest that these forms of homelessness are falling in England
	Increase in people living rough	Rise from 1 768 counted and estimated rough sleepers in 2009/10 to 2 414 in 2012/13 (England only)	
	Decrease in supported housing activity	Use of supported housing by homeless households in England 2009/10: 86 973 – 2012/13: 49 126 (Supporting People statistics covering single homeless people with support needs, homeless families with support needs and people sleeping rough)	

Sources: see Appendix 2

74 While levels of statutory homelessness acceptances have increased in England, they are in a state of long-term decline from much higher levels (the most recent peak in 2003/2004 was 135 430 compared to 53 770 in 2012/2013). This long-term shift downwards is because of the rise in preventative services, which helped 165 200 homeless households in England in 2009/2010 and 202 400 households in 2012/2013. In Scotland, the more recent decline in acceptances in the statutory system is also widely thought to be linked to a marked rise in preventative activity. Some researchers have suggested that preventative services may in some instances be a barrier to the statutory systems, but this has not yet been clearly established. See Pawson, H. (2007) Local Authority Homelessness Prevention in England: Empowering Consumers or Denying Rights? *Housing Studies* 22(6) pp.867-883.

7. The Characteristics of Homeless People

Introduction

This chapter reviews the data available on homeless populations for each country. The chapter begins by exploring the characteristics of homeless people and then looks at the data on specific subgroups within homeless populations. Significant differences exist in how homelessness is defined and in the extent and nature of data collection across the fifteen participating countries. This means that data on the characteristics of homeless people are not always directly comparable.

7.1 The Characteristics of Homeless People

7.1.1 Gender

Table 7.1 shows the gender distribution of homeless people. The table shows that in most countries the majority of homeless people are males, at about 75-85%, and females represent only about 15-25%. Women are more often recorded in the homeless populations of France and Sweden, representing 38% and 36% of the homeless population, respectively. It is important to note that some variations in age reflect differences in data collection and definitions of homelessness. This means that this table, as with all cross-country comparisons in this report, should be viewed as indicative, as different homeless populations are sometimes being compared.

In the UK, there is a marked difference in the representation of women between households accepted by the statutory system (66% of which were headed by women in England in 2013/2014) and in other UK homeless populations. In the UK, homeless families assisted under homelessness laws are often lone women parents,[75] increasing the recording of homeless women, but as in Denmark, women in refuges are not recorded as part of the homeless population. These UK figures cannot easily be compared to numbers in other countries as the statistics from the statutory system generally cover people in acute housing need who are provided with housing. In other UK homeless populations – e.g., people sleeping rough and

[75] Pleace, N., Fitzpatrick, S., Johnsen, S., Quilgars, D. and Sanderson, D. (2008) *Statutory Homelessness in England: The Experience of Families and 16-17 Year Olds* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government).

non-statutorily homeless lone adults using homelessness services – women are apparently less numerous (approximately 40% of the homeless people using supported housing and under 20% of people sleeping rough[76]).

Variations in gender ratios can arise in part due to differences in homelessness definitions. In Sweden, both women staying temporarily in women's refugees/ shelters due to domestic violence and people staying in long-term housing solutions, but without a permanent contract, are defined as homeless. This increases representation of women, as 54% of homeless women recorded in the Swedish count are living in long-term housing solutions compared to 37% of homeless men. By contrast, in Denmark, the definition does not include women in refuges nor people in long-term, non-permanent housing solutions, making the percentage of women in the homeless population appear much lower. People provided with housing through priority allocation systems are generally not counted in the homelessness figures in other EU Member States unless they are in a homelessness situation at the time when data collection occurs.

Table 7.1: Gender distribution amongst homeless people

Country	Year	Men	Women
Czech Republic	2012	78%	22%
Denmark	2013	78%	22%
Finland[76]	2013	76%	24%
France	2012	62%	38%
Germany	2013	74%	26%
Hungary	2011	79%	21%
Ireland	2014	66%	34%
Italy	2011	87%	13%
Netherlands	2012	82%	18%
Poland[77]	2011	77%	23%
Portugal	2013	76%	26%
Slovenia	-	N/A	N/A
Spain	2012	80%	12%
Sweden	2011	64%	36%
UK	2013/2014	Differs by population	Differs by population

Sources: see Appendix 2

76 Jones, A. and Pleace, N. (2010) *A Review of Single Homelessness in the UK 2000 – 2010* (London: Crisis).

77 For Finland, only the gender distribution amongst single homeless people is reported.

78 In Poland, survey data from 2013 (MPiPS, 2013b) showed that 80% were male, 14% female and 5% were children.

In Denmark, where trend data are available, the share of women has only increased marginally from 20% in the first national homelessness count in 2007 to 22% in the latest count from 2013. In the Netherlands, the relative share of women among homeless people has declined from 24% in 2010 to 18% in 2012, reflecting that an absolute increase in homelessness has solely happened amongst males, whereas the absolute number of homeless females has slightly declined. One potentially important caveat to bear in mind is that there is evidence from recent Irish research that homeless women may actively avoid homelessness services and be present among the harder to count groups of homeless people living with friends or relatives.[79] There is also some evidence from France suggesting a similar pattern.

In a few countries (Denmark, France and Hungary) the gender distribution is available within ETHOS categories:

- In Denmark, 15% of rough sleepers and 19% of shelter users are women, whereas amongst homeless people staying temporarily with family or friends 24% are women.
- In France, rough sleepers and emergency night shelter users are 79% male and 21% female. Amongst persons living in accommodation for homeless people, 60% are male and 40% female. People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing and people living temporarily with family and friends due to lack of housing are 55% men and 45% women.
- In Hungary, 21% of rough sleepers and 17% of shelter users are women. Amongst rough sleepers in Budapest, 26% are women.

7.1.2 Age

In most countries, homelessness was experienced most by younger people and those in middle age. Younger people between 18 and 29 years old make up about 20-30% of all homeless people in most countries. In France, 26% of all homeless people are 18-29 years old, and in the Netherlands the same age group contains 23% of all homeless people. In most countries the age group of 30 to 49 is the largest group, comprising about half of all homeless people in many countries (see Tables 7.1 to 7.3).

In Hungary and Poland, young people were less numerous and there was a greater representation of people aged over 50 in homeless populations (52% and 55%

[79] *Mayock*, P. and Sheridan, S. (2012) *Women's 'Journeys' to Homelessness: Key Findings from a Biographical Study of Homeless Women in Ireland*, Women and Homelessness in Ireland, Research Paper 1 (Dublin: School of Social Work and Social Policy & Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin).

respectively, see Table 7.2). One reason for this may be that Hungarian and Polish definitions of homelessness only include people living rough and in emergency shelters, although the numbers may reflect the lower likelihood of young people leaving home while still teenagers and in their early 20s in the Eastern EU, a pattern also in evidence in the Southern EU. In Poland, there is also some evidence that young people may be avoiding using emergency shelters and that, for administrative reasons, young people who are homeless but are using services targeted at drug users (for example) may not be recorded as homeless. This is similar to the tendency in several countries not to record homeless women using domestic/gender-based violence services as homeless, because those services are administratively separate from homelessness services. Young people may have fewer economic opportunities in these regions than in other areas of the EU, which may be a disincentive to leave home earlier. In the UK, which has a culture and history of young people leaving home early, housing costs, more limited economic opportunities and restrictions to welfare rights are slowing the tendency to leave home early.[80]

In some countries (e.g., Poland and Hungary), poverty and the low pensions of elderly people are problems leading to higher rates of older homeless people than elsewhere.

Table 7.2: Age of homeless people: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Germany

Age group	Czech Rep. 2012	Hungary 2011[80]	Poland 2011	Age group	Germany 2013
0-14	3%	<1%	7%	0-17	10%
15-19	2%			18-25	17%
20-29	19%	6%	6%	25-29	10%
30-39	22%	14%	11%	30-39	18%
40-49	22%	28%	19%	40-49	19%
50-59	21%	35%	33%	50-64	20%
60+	10%	17%	22%	65+	6%
Total (N)	100% (11 496)	100% (7 199)	100% (25 773)	Total (N)	100% (19 512)

Sources: see Appendix 2

Table 7.3: Age of homeless people: France and Netherlands

Age group	France 2012	Netherlands 2012
18-29	26%	23%
30-49	49%	55%
50+	25%	22%
Total	100% (81 000)	100% (27 300)

Sources: see Appendix 2

80 See website of Office for National Statistics: Social Trends. [on-line] Available from: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/social-trends-rd/social-trends/index.html [24.11.2014].

81 February 3rd count, 2011

Table 7.4: Age of homeless people: Ireland and Spain

Age group	Ireland 2014	Age group	Spain 2012
18-24	18%	18-29	16%
25-44	55%	30-44	40%
45-64	20%	45-64	40%
65+	3%	65+	4%
Total	100% (2341)	Total	100% (22940)

Sources: see Appendix 2

A number of countries were described as still experiencing associations between experience of the care system as a child and subsequent youth homelessness.

Denmark has detailed information on the age distribution of homeless people. Homeless people staying temporarily with family and friends tend to be younger homeless people, with about half aged under 30. Data are also collected from a wide range of social services, such as municipal social centres, addiction treatment centres and job centres, which may be more likely to be in contact with young homeless people who are not using some services such as homeless shelters (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5: Age within homelessness situations (per cent): Denmark 2013

	<18	18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Total	N[81]
Rough sleepers	0%	11%	12%	23%	33%	17%	5%	100%	570
Emergency shelters	<1%	6%	10%	27%	38%	15%	5%	100%	278
Shelters	1%	12%	8%	20%	31%	20%	8%	100%	1995
Hotels	0%	24%	7%	17%	22%	18%	13%	100%	68
Family/friends	1%	35%	14%	22%	17%	10%	2%	100%	1607
Transitional	29%	13%	11%	18%	18%	7%	3%	100%	209
Release from prison	0%	27%	11%	35%	22%	5%	0%	100%	63
Discharge from hospital	0%	26%	20%	19%	20%	8%	9%	100%	111
Other	11%	21%	10%	20%	17%	15%	6%	100%	367
No information	1%	24%	12%	21%	25%	12%	5%	100%	350
Total %	3%	20%	11%	21%	25%	15%	5%	100%	5624

Sources: see Appendix 2

For Italy there is information on age distribution both amongst homeless people with an Italian background and homeless people with a foreign background. A clear difference is that amongst Italian homeless people, relatively few are young, whereas amongst homeless foreigners almost half are between 18 and 34 years old (Table 7.6).

82 For a small group of homeless people in the Danish homelessness count, no information on age was given, and therefore the figures in Table 7.5 for each subcategory of homelessness is slightly smaller than in tables 5.2-5.7 where age is not included as a variable.

Table 7.6: Age of homeless people: Italy, 2011

Age group	Foreign citizens	Italian	Total
18-34	47	10	32
35-44	28	22	25
45-54	17	30	23
55-64	7	27	15
65+	<1	11	5
Total	100 (25668)	100 (17561)	100 (43219)

Sources: see Appendix 2

In the UK, there is some information on the age distribution of people accepted through the four statutory homelessness systems. Table 7.7 shows the period from 2008/2009 to 2013/2014 in England. The percentage of homeless people aged 16 to 24 dropped from 40% to 28% and increases were reported in the age groups of 25 to 44 and 45 to 59. This may reflect the rise of preventative services in England, which may be deflecting more young people from the statutory system. By contrast, homeless applicants in Scotland remain relatively younger (47% were aged under 30 in 2013/2014), perhaps reflecting the broader definitions of homelessness used by Scottish law. In 2013/2014, 59% of housing support service users who were recorded as homeless in England (both statutory and non-statutory) were male, 45% were aged under 25, 40% were aged 25-45 and 15% were aged 46 and above.[83]

Table 7.7: Age of head of household accepted in statutory homeless system: England, 2008-2014

Year	Acceptances	16-24	25-44	45-59	60+	Total
2009/2010	40020	39%	48%	10%	3%	100%
2010/2011	44160	36%	50%	11%	3%	100%
2011/2012	50290	35%	51%	11%	3%	100%
2012/2013	53770	31%	53%	12%	4%	100%
2013/2014	52260	28%	55%	14%	3%	100%

Sources: see Appendix 2

For some countries, only partial data were available on age. In Finland, 25% of all homeless people are under the age of 25. In Portugal, half of all homeless men are between 40 and 59 years old, and 20% are between 30 and 39 years old. In Sweden, the average age of acutely homeless people – i.e., rough sleepers and people in homeless shelters – is 43, as reported in the latest national count from 2011.

83 Supporting People, Client Records and Outcomes. [on-line] Available from: https://supporting-people.st-andrews.ac.uk/ [24.11.2014].

7.1.3 Differences between men and women

Data on homeless women may be less complete than for some groups of homeless men in many EU countries. There is some evidence that women do not necessarily react to homelessness in the same way as men and the causation of their homelessness can also be different. Women may be more likely, on current evidence, to make use of informal arrangements, which can be precarious, with family, friends and acquaintances and less likely to make use of homelessness services, some of which they may actively avoid because they are disproportionately used by homeless men. Women's homelessness is very much more likely to be caused by, or associated with, gender-based/domestic violence than is the case for men, and this may mean that their homelessness is not always evident or recorded. The reason for this can be administrative, in that the housing situation of women is not always recorded by refuges/domestic violence services, and in many countries the women in those services are defined and counted as women at risk of gender-based/domestic violence and not always as homeless people.[84]

Some differences between homeless women and men are recorded in the available data on homelessness:

- In the Czech Republic, homeless women have been always in the minority, but are more strongly represented among young people who are homeless, as well as among older people who are homeless.
- In Denmark, women make up 26% of homeless 18-24 year-olds, but a lower proportion of older homeless people. Women are less likely than men to have problematic drug/alcohol use (51% compared to 68%), but near equally likely to have mental health problems (49% of women, 46% of men). Men are more likely (32%) than women (24%) to have both mental health problems and problematic drug/alcohol use.
- Women have increased as a proportion of the homeless population in Finland, and represented 24% of all lone homeless people in 2013. The proportion was 17% in 2001 and 19% in 2009. Women lone parents are protected from homelessness by extensive welfare systems if they have their children with them. Research in 2009 showed that 27% of the users of a reception centre in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, which works with homeless people with often very high and complex needs, were women. Women are, however, less likely to report

84 Women's Homelessness in Europe Network. [on-line] Available from: http://www.womenshomelessness.org/ [24.11.2014]; Baptista, I. (2010) 'Women and Homelessness', in: E. O'Sullivan, V. Busch-Geertsema, D. Quilgars and N. Pleace (Eds.) *Homelessness Research in Europe*, pp.163-186. (Brussels: FEANTSA).

sustained homelessness in Finland. Women's homelessness is much more clearly associated with experiences of domestic/gender-based violence than male homelessness.[85]

- Women who were homeless were more likely to be married or widowed than homeless men in Hungary in 2011 (32% compared to 12%).[86]
- In Ireland, the 2011 census showed that while 90% of people living rough were men, women were more strongly represented among homeless people in supported housing. Seventy per cent of homeless women were aged under 39, compared to 50% of men, whereas 30% of homeless men were aged over 50 and this was true for only 15% of women. Women tended to be healthier, but this may have been related to their typically being younger (although 30% of homeless women did report they were not in good health). Recent Irish research shows homeless women are much more likely to use informal and precarious arrangements with friends, family and acquaintances rather than resorting to homeless service use.[87]
- The Portuguese AMI studies show that in 2013, homeless women were more likely to have a partner and were more likely to use overnight stays with family or friends than was the case for men (27% compared to 11%). Women were also less likely to sleep rough than men (10% compared to 31% of homeless men) and more likely to maintain contact with family (66% compared to 50% of men). Women also sought financial help from family and friends more frequently (55% compared to 38% of men). Men, by contrast, were more likely to beg (19% compared to 7% of women).
- Swedish data indicate that homeless men are twice as likely to exhibit problematic drug/alcohol use as homeless women, while mental health problems appear at near equal levels across both genders.

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85 Erkkilä, E. and Stenius-Ayoade, A. (2009) *Asunnottomat vastaanottoyksiköissä. Asunnottomien vastaanottoyksiköiden asiakkaiden sosiaalinen tilanne ja terveydentila pääkaupunkiseudulla*, Soccan Työpapereita 2009: 2 [Homeless Reception Centres. The Social Situation and Health of Customers in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area]. (Helsinki: Socca – Pääkaupunkiseudun Sosiaalialan Osaamiskeskus).

86 Győri, P. (2013) *A Budapesten élő hajléktalan emberek főbb statisztikai jellemző* [Main Statistical Characteristics of Homeless People in Budapest], in: P. Győri and J. Vida (Eds.) Változó és változatlan arcú hajléktalanság (Budapest: BMSKI).

87 Mayock, P. and Sheridan, S. (2012) *op. cit.*

- UK data and research show women are more likely to experience homelessness when young (aged under 25) and that representation of women in the homeless population has increased over the last 20 years. Use of the statutory systems is highly gendered; lone women parents are accepted as statutorily homeless at a much greater rate than they appear in the general population.[88]

7.1.4 Ethnic background

In Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Sweden and the UK a clear majority of homeless people belong to the national majority population, although there could also be overrepresentation of some ethnic minority groups. By contrast, homelessness data from France, Italy and the Netherlands indicate a much stronger representation of ethnic minorities. For example, 60% of homeless people surveyed in 2011 in Italy were reported as being of foreign origin. In some CEE countries, such as Poland, the number of non-nationals among homeless people is very small.

Again, methodological differences in data collection may explain some of these patterns. Which populations are included is important, so, for example, undocumented migrants do not appear in Danish homelessness statistics, although separate estimates of homeless migrants are produced. By contrast, in Italy, the 2011 survey included undocumented migrants as part of the homeless population. Variations across different homeless populations are important. In the UK, London's rough-sleeping population was found to include high numbers of non-UK, EU citizens and other migrants,[89] but these groups are not present in statutory homelessness systems because they are ineligible for assistance.

In the Czech Republic, ethnic minorities are not overrepresented among homeless people. However, as in several other Eastern EU Member States, Roma people are overrepresented among populations who are very badly housed and in living situations that might be defined as homeless, but are not always counted as being homeless. This administrative distinction occurs elsewhere in the EU, the UK also not recording 'traveller' populations that live permanently in mobile homes – including Roma – as being homeless on the basis that it is a chosen lifestyle. By contrast, a British citizen who was not identified as a traveller or Roma and was living in a caravan because they had no home available would be defined as homeless.

Detailed data are available in Denmark from the national counts of homelessness. These show that 81% of homeless people in Denmark are Danish, including a small group (6%) of Greenlandic people who are Danish citizens. Citizens of other Nordic countries (2%) and other non-Nordic EU Member States account for another 3%,

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88 Pleace, N. *et al.* (2008) *op. cit*.

89 See CHAIN database at http://www.broadwaylondon.org/CHAIN.html [24.11.2014].

with 2% from non-EU European countries, 5% from the Middle East and 6% from Africa. Overall, 10% of homeless people had migrated to Denmark and a further 7% were born in Denmark but had parents who were migrants. In the general population, migrants and the children of migrants make up 11% of the population, compared to 17% in the homeless population.

Finland has proportionately high levels of homeless migrants, making up 26% of the homeless population in 2013 compared to 5% of the general population. Since 2009 there has been an increase of 273% in the levels of migrant homelessness (from 532 to 1 986 people). People speaking Somali, Persian, Kurdish, Albanian and Arabic are overrepresented in data on people who lack a permanent place of residence.[90] There is evidence that familial relationship breakdown, mental health problems, and a lack of social support and language skills contribute to migrant homelessness in Finland.

France has seen marked increases in migrant homelessness, from 38% in 2001 to 52% in 2012, although the proportion of undocumented migrants is unknown. Rates are higher in Paris than elsewhere in France; in some districts 40% of young homeless people are from Eastern Europe. It is also important to note that French homelessness services can be open to non-European migrant groups, which is not the case in some other countries.

In Germany, NGO data on family background for 2012 show about 27% of the people using NGO homeless services had a migration background (compared to 20% of the general population) and that 16% were of foreign nationality (compared to 9% of the general population).

Hungarian data exist on the extent of homelessness among Roma people. From the 2011 February 3rd count, there was evidence of strong representation of Roma among homeless people aged 20-29 (44%), and 29% of homeless women and 24% of homeless men were reported as Roma. Some uncertainty exists as to whether or not all these homeless people would actively chose to identify themselves as Roma.

In Italy, the majority of people recorded in the 2011 survey were people of foreign nationality (60%), while only 40% of homeless people were of Italian nationality. Again, Italian definitions of homelessness are close to the French definitions – people living rough and in emergency shelters – and rates may have been lower among other homeless groups.

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90 Kostiainen, E. and Laakso, S. (2012) *Vailla vakinaista asuntoa – liikkuvuus asunnottomuuden ja asuntokannan välillä* [Without a Permanent Place of Residence: Mobility between Homelessness and Housing]. (Lahti: ARA).

In Ireland, the Census 2011 reported that almost three quarters of the usually resident homeless population, 2818 persons, reported themselves as White Irish. The next largest ethnic group was Other White, with 296 persons (11%), while 203 persons described their background as either Black or Black Irish (7%). There were 163 Irish Travellers, including people of Roma origin, enumerated as homeless (4%).

In the Netherlands, about half of homeless people were native Dutch, while the other half had a foreign background. Overall, 10% were described as being from Western countries, while 40% had a non-Western background.

In Poland, the number of migrants and foreign-born people in the homeless population appears to be marginal. This mirrors the situation reported in the Czech Republic.

In Portugal, the 2011 census showed that 19% of the homeless population were not Portuguese in origin. The largest element within this non-Portuguese group (51%) were from other EU countries, while 39% were from African countries, 5% from South America and 5% from Asia. The 2011 Lisbon Social Network monitoring reported 30% foreigners, 68% Portuguese and 2% non-identified homeless people in Lisbon. The largest groups of foreign people in Lisbon's homeless population were most commonly from Portuguese-speaking Africa[91] (13%) and from elsewhere in the EU (6%). Some research has suggested that migrants can become homeless due to their immigration status, while others become homeless for the same reasons as the native Portuguese population.

In Spain, the most recent homelessness survey showed that 46% of the 12100 homeless persons covered by the survey were non-Spanish nationals. Of these, only about 22% came from other EU Member States and more than half (56%) came from Africa.

In the UK, P1E data on the statutory homelessness system in England show a relatively strong representation of homeless British citizens whose ethnic origin is not White European.[92] Scotland has relatively low numbers of people whose ethnic origin is not White European, as do Wales and Northern Ireland. However, England, particularly with respect to London and the major cities of the Midlands and the North, has far more ethnic diversity than other parts of the UK. Heads of households accepted as statutorily homeless in England were White European in 67% of cases, compared to 80% of the general population in 2011. Homeless people in the statutory system were more likely to be Black British (14%) than the general population in 2011 (4%) but almost equally likely to be Asian British (6% compared to 8% of the general population). In 2013/2014, the majority of statutorily homeless house-

91 Cape Verde, Angola and Guinea Bissau

92 Data based on head of household. See https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness [25.11.2014].

holds in England were White European (63%). It is important to note that the statutory homeless system is very active in London, which is a highly multicultural city, whereas much of the rest of the UK remains predominantly White European.

People using homelessness services that provide supported housing in England are most likely to be White European (78% in 2013/2014).[93] However, it should be noted that many homelessness services are not open to migrants. CHAIN data from London in 2013 showed that only 46-48% of the rough sleeping population were of British origin, with 27-31% of people sleeping rough being of East European origin, alongside migrants who were sleeping rough who had a wide diversity of origins. This pattern of a high prevalence of migrants in national capitals has also been reported in Dublin and Paris.[94]

7.1.5 Household structure

There is a strong representation of lone men in homeless populations throughout Europe, with a smaller population of lone women also being present. However, there is some evidence that women, making greater use of informal arrangements with family and friends to avoid rough sleeping and homelessness services, may be significantly undercounted by some administrative and survey data.[95] Families are represented to various degrees, depending on what homelessness services there are and how they work. There can be strong representation of women lone parents in some contexts.

In Denmark, 28% of homeless men and 33% of homeless women have children under 18 staying with them, but only 2% of homeless men have daily responsibility for children, compared to 14% of homeless women. Child homelessness is uncommon, with 144 children nationally being recorded as homeless, which may reflect the high level of protection given to families with children by the welfare system.

In Finland, the vast majority of homeless people are lone adults; 7 500 single people and 417 families (with 475 children) were recorded and estimated as homeless in 2013. There has been an increase in family homelessness of 61%, although it is notable that many of these families (61%) are migrants who may face barriers to using Finland's extensive welfare systems.

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93 Supporting People, Client Records and Outcomes. [on-line] Available from: https://supporting-people.st-andrews.ac.uk/ [24.11.2014].

94 Pleace, N. (2010) Immigration and Homelessness, in: E. O'Sullivan, V. Busch-Geertsema, D. Quilgars and N. Pleace (Eds.) *Homelessness Research in Europe: Festschrift for Joe Doherty and Bill Edgar*, pp.143-163. (Brussels: FEANTSA).

95 Mayock, P. and Sheridan, S. (2012) *op.cit.*

In France, 20% of (French-speaking) homeless households are couples (with and without children): 26% have children (as couples or as single parents) and 65% are lone adults.[96] However these data reflect how homelessness is defined in France, and some populations of homeless people may be underrepresented.

German NGO homelessness services are focused on lone adults. Data from the North Rhine-Westphalia region show that 96% of men and 85% of women using NGO homelessness services did not have children with them. Temporary accommodation provided by municipalities in North Rhine-Westphalia is also predominantly occupied by lone homeless people (76%), although the proportion of families with children used to be significantly higher than is now the case.

In Hungary, 37% of homeless people were single, 9% married, 7% widowed and a large group (43%) were divorced, based on 2011 count data. Most (79%) did not have a partner, although 21% did. The largest single group (58%) lived alone, including 6% who had a partner but did not live with them, 15% lived with a partner, 15% lived in a group and 8% with a family member.

In Ireland, the 2011 census reported that 296 families comprising 905 people were homeless out of a total homeless population of 2 478, most of whom were lone parents (185). The largest single group were lone parents with one child.

In Poland, the 2011 census showed that 32% of homeless people are single, 31% divorced, 6% widowed and 14% married. The civil status of 14% of homeless people was not known.

In Portugal, the AMI annual monitoring report showed that only 29% of homeless women had a partner, but that the partnership rate among homeless men was even lower at 10%, a pattern reflected in 2011 census data, showing that 29% of women and 14% of men in the homeless population were married. Women (11%) were more likely to be widowed than men (4%). Rates of contact with family tended to be somewhat higher among women (66%) than men (50%).

Research in Ljubljana[97] showed that the majority of Slovenian homeless people were single and had never married (60%), while 25% were divorced. Just over half of the homeless people surveyed had no children.

In Sweden, 48% of homeless women were parents to children under the age of 18, compared to 29% of men. In total about 11 300 people (36%) were parents of children aged 18 or younger. A high number of the homeless parents (46%) had children under the age of 18 who were born in a country outside Sweden.

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96 Yaouancq, F. *et al.* (2013) *L'hébergement des sans-domicile en 2012… op. cit.*

97 Dekleva, B. and Razpotnik, Š. (2007) *Brezdomstvo v Ljubljani* [Homelessness in Ljubljana]. (Ljubljana: Pedagoška Fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani).

The UK has a high number of lone women parents amongst people accepted as homeless in the statutory system. In 2013/2014, approximately 57% of households accepted as homeless in England were headed by a woman; this would be a lone adult woman, or much more frequently, a woman lone parent.[98] Approximately 42% of lone homeless people using homelessness services in England were women in 2013/2014 and 79% of homeless families with support needs using services were headed by a woman. By contrast, only 14% of people living rough and using homelessness services in England in 2013/2014 were women.[99]

In some other countries with similar housing allocation systems, but without a statutory homelessness definition like that used in the UK, lone woman parents may likewise be given a high priority for housing *without* being recorded as homeless, and therefore not be counted in homelessness statistics. As in other aspects of homelessness, this pattern in available data may mean women's experience of homelessness is being undercounted.

7.1.6 Duration of homelessness

Definitions of homelessness and the amount and nature of data vary. In some EU countries, there is evidence of a small, very high need population experiencing long-term and recurrent homelessness, alongside a sometimes larger population experiencing shorter term homelessness for economic and social reasons, who do not have high support needs. This pattern within homeless populations was first suggested in US research in the late 1990s[100] but is difficult to establish clearly without longitudinal data collection, as point-in-time data collection is likely to over-represent the long-term and recurrently homeless people who use homelessness services more often than other homeless populations.

In some countries, long-term and recurrent homelessness does appear to be widespread; for example, a Czech study in Plzeň reported that 42% of homeless people had been homeless for 1-5 years and 24% for more than five years, compared to

98 Gov.uk, Statistical Datasets. [on-line] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness [24.11.2014].

99 Supporting People, Client Records and Outcomes (*op. cit.*): 35271 lone homeless people with support needs, 7810 homeless families with support needs and 3235 people living rough (note these data may not have covered all homelessness services).

100 Kuhn, R. and Culhane, D.P. (1998) Applying Cluster Analysis to Test a Typology of Homelessness by Pattern of Shelter Utilization: Results from the Analysis of Administrative Data, *American Journal of Community Psychology* 26(2) pp.207-232.

33% who had been homeless for one year.[101] The 2013 count in Hungary showed that 34% of homeless people had been homeless for more than ten years and the 2011 Polish census reported that 31% had been homeless for over eight years, 50% for 2-8 years and 19% for less than a year.

By contrast, in Denmark, the national homeless count showed 23% of homeless people had been homeless for less than three months, 34% for 4-11 months and 21% for 1-2 years, with 22% reporting homelessness for more than two years. People living rough reported higher rates of longer-term homelessness than people in emergency accommodation (40% compared to 23%) and rates of long-term homelessness in Copenhagen were also higher, at 35% having been homeless for two or more years. In Finland, long-term homelessness is defined as homelessness enduring for more than one year or being homeless more than once in the last three years, and 44% of people living rough and 42% of those in homelessness services were long-term homeless in 2013, compared to 28% of those living with friends or relatives. One third of lone homeless people were long term homeless. Research in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area[102] homelessness reception centre, which deals with high need homeless people, showed that 18% had experienced homelessness for 3-5 years and 23% for five years or more, while 38% had been homeless for less than one year. In Sweden, the 2011 count showed that about one quarter of acutely homeless people had been homeless for less than three months, and another quarter between three months and a year, while 10% had been homeless for more than ten years.

In France, a study of homeless people receiving support showed that 22% of formerly homeless people had experienced living in a shelter for less than three months, 36% from three months to a year, 27% from 1-3 years, and 15% for more than three years.[103] The 2011 survey in Italy showed that 30% of homeless people had been homeless for less than three months while 15% had been homeless for more than four years. Overall, 59% had been homeless for less than a year, but rates among Italian nationals were lower than for the population as a whole; 48% of Italian nationals had been homeless for less than one year. In the Netherlands, data from the four largest cities (the G4) in 2012 showed that more than half of the

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101 Toušek, L. (2009) *Analýza situace „bezdomovců“v Plzni včetně identifikace jejich počtu. Zpráva z výzkumu* [Analysis of the Situation of 'the Homeless' in Plzeň Including Identification of the Number of them]. [on-line] Available from: http://www.antropologie.org/cs/vyzkum/aplikovany-vyzkum/analyza-situace-bezdomovcu-v-plzni-vcetne-identifikace-jejich-poctu [17.06.2014].

102 Erkkilä and Stenius-Ayoade (2009) *op.cit.*

103 Brousse, C. and Marpsat, M. (2006) *The Homeless*, Économie et Statistique N° 391-392 (Paris: INSEE).

people using a homeless shelter were homeless for less than a year, almost 40% were homeless for a period of 1-5 years, and 10% had been homeless for five years or more.[104]

In Portugal, 2009 survey data showed that 48% of homeless people had been homeless for more than a year and 2013 data on the AMI (emergency medical support) showed that 19% had been using this service for four years or more and 12% for 1-2 years. The 2011 census did not record data on duration of homelessness.

British data on duration of homelessness are quite limited. However, data from the CHAIN longitudinal database on people living rough and street-using populations who are using homelessness services in London does indicate the presence of a small, high need group experiencing recurrent and sustained homelessness. There is also some other statistical and qualitative research suggesting the presence of a small, high need population experiencing sustained and recurrent homelessness.

7.1.7 Income and employment

Some data on income sources for homeless people is available for most of the EU countries included in this research. There is widespread evidence of the association between homelessness and unemployment, although the extent to which homeless people are engaged in paid work varies considerably, from less than 5% in some countries to as much as 25% in others. As ever, variations will exist according to how homelessness is defined and the extent to which, and ways in which, it is measured. Variations may also occur according to broader patterns of homelessness – i.e., whether it is more strongly associated with complex support needs as opposed to affecting wider segments of people with very low incomes who do not have complex support needs.

Denmark has very detailed data on the incomes of homeless people (Table 7.8). Most homeless people receive welfare benefits. Only very few (3%) have wage income or receive unemployment benefit (4%), which can only be claimed by people who were previously in employment.

[104] van der Laan, J., van Straaten, B., Boersma, S., Schrijvers, C., van der Mheen, D. and Wolf J. (2013) *Cohort Study Amongst Homeless People in Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht (the G4): Second Report 2011-2014* (Rotterdam: IVO Institute; Nijmegen: Radboud University Nijmegen). [on-line] Available from: http://www.codag4.nl/english [24.11.2014].

Table 7.8: Income sources of homeless people in Denmark, 2013 (separate for homelessness situations)

	Wage	Unemployment benefit	Cash benefit	Student assistance	Early retirement benefit	Old age pension	Other	No income
Rough sleepers	1%	2%	56%	1%	21%	1%	3%	16%
Emergency night shelter	2%	1%	50%	1%	23%	1%	5%	19%
Homeless shelter	2%	5%	66%	2%	21%	2%	2%	1%
Hotel	3%	4%	58%	0%	22%	2%	6%	9%
Family and friends	3%	3%	78%	2%	9%	< 1%	2%	3%
Transitional housing	10%	10%	56%	8%	13%	2%	2%	1%
Release from prison without housing solution	2%	0%	58%	2%	13%	0%	10%	15%
Discharge from hospital/ treatment without housing solution	2%	5%	61%	2%	23%	3%	3%	3%
Other	5%	6%	59%	2%	16%	3%	6%	5%
Unspecified	6%	2%	68%	1%	15%	1%	1%	6%
Total	3%	4%	67%	2%	17%	2%	3%	5%

Source: National Mapping 2013 (Benjaminsen and Lauritzen, 2013).

In Denmark, people sleeping rough and people in emergency shelters were much more likely to report that they had no income than other homeless people (16% and 19% respectively), while those in regular homelessness shelters were very unlikely to report that they had no income (1%). These data reflect the relatively extensive income protection system in the Danish welfare system and also reflect the high rates of health problems and support needs among homeless people in Denmark, which may in many instances limit their capacity to work (see below).

National-level data on income are not available in Finland, but a Helsinki study that focused on a homelessness reception centre reported that 43% of homeless people were receiving pensions, sickness benefit or rehabilitation benefit and 29% received social income support without any other income. Fifteen per cent received unemployment benefit and less than 1% had income from wages.[105]

[105] Erkkilä and Stenius-Ayoade (2009) *op.cit.*

Access to emergency cash benefits can be arranged by social workers in France when a homeless person follows an integration pathway provided by a homelessness service. However, the 2011 survey in France showed 50% of homeless people did not want to enter homelessness services because of concerns about conditions, insecurity and a refusal of many services to take pets. In 2012, 24% of homeless people in France were recorded as employed, a high level compared to many EU Member States, and 39% were recorded as unemployed, while 37% were recorded as not seeking work.[106]

In Germany, only 8% of clients of NGO services for homeless people had an income from work and 25% had no income at all when they first contacted the service in 2012. Most of the remaining persons received welfare payments.

In Hungary, the February 3rd count asks about sources of income in the preceding month. In January 2013, income among homeless people in Budapest came from: regular work, 10%; casual work, 25%; recycling and selling items found, e.g., from garbage bins, 17%; cash benefits, 12% and begging, 11%.

In Italy, the 2011 survey showed that 18% of homeless people did not have any source of income, 28% stated they worked, 9% received a pension and 9% received benefits from a public institution. In addition, 27% stated that they had received money from relatives, friends or family and 37% from charities and NGOs. The majority of homeless people (53%) receive financial aid from the support network of family, friends or charities and NGOs, which in many cases represent their only source of subsistence. Fifty-eight per cent declared that they had a single source of income and 25% stated that they had two or more sources of income, including combinations of aid.

In Ireland, there were 3 351 homeless persons aged 15 and over in April 2011 based on census data. Of these, 1 660 (50%) were recorded as able to work, compared to 62% of the general population. Men (51%) were marginally more likely to be recorded as able to work than women (47%). Rates of employment can be expressed as 8.1% of the entire population or 17% of the group who were able to work (274 people). Overall, 22% of homeless people were recorded as unable to work, due to limiting illness or disability, compared to 4% of the general population of working age. Men (25%) were more likely to report being unable to work than women (18%).

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[106] Yaouancq F. and Duée M. (2014) *Les sans-domicile et l'emploi. Des emplois aussi fragiles que leurs conditions de vie,* INSEE Première N°1494 [Homeless People and Employment: Jobs as Fragile as their Living Conditions]. (Paris: INSEE).

In the Netherlands, 86% of the homeless people in the four largest (G4) cities receive social benefits (social welfare, unemployment, sickness benefits or old age pension). Around 25% of homeless people receive income from work, based on a legal employment contract.[107]

In Poland, the MPiPS (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy) study from 2013 gives detailed information on homeless people's sources of income (Table 7.9). The largest group received social assistance benefits, 11% pension/early retirement welfare payments and 6% other insurance benefits, while just 5% had income from employment. There was also a quite large group with income from collecting and selling (14%), while 13% had income from black market jobs. Just 3% reported income from begging.

Table 7.9: Income sources of homeless people in Poland, 2013

Sources of income	Percentage
Social assistance benefits	39.0%
No income	18.9%
Collecting	14.2%
Black market jobs	13.0%
Pension/early retirement due to inability to work	11.1%
Other work insurance benefits	5.5%
Employment	5.3%
Other	4.3%
Begging	3.3%
Alimonies	1.5%

Source: MPiPS survey

In Portugal, the 2009 ISS internal report on homeless people in 53 municipalities[108] reported that 29% were claiming social insertion income (welfare benefits) and 11% old-age or invalidity pensions. Around one quarter of homeless individuals had no income. The AMI data from 2013 showed that homeless people were reliant on social insertion income (20%), occasional support provided by charities and NGOs (14%) and retirement benefits and pensions (9%). Again, a large group had no formal source of income (29%) and within this group, reliance on financial support from family and friends was high (44%), followed by income from begging (16%). Women are more likely to depend on income from family and friends (55% compared to 38% of men) and men are more likely to depend on income from begging (19% compared to 7% of women).

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107 van der Laan, J. *et al.* (2013) Cohort Study Amongst Homeless People in Amsterdam (*op. cit.*).

108 GIMAE (2010) *Estratégia Nacional para a Integração de Pessoas Sem-Abrigo – Prevenção, Intervenção e Acompanhamento* [National Homelessness Strategy]. (Lisbon: ISS).

In Spain, according to the INE survey in 2012 the income of people living in public spaces comes mostly from other people living on the street (55%), the sale of objects (29%), money from friends (37%) and the provision of services (29%). Revenues among people living in collective accommodation come mostly from work (52%), pensions (widows and non-contributory) and family support (50%).

In Sweden, the mapping from 2011 shows that very few homeless people had income from paid work (5%). Forty-nine per cent of homeless people were dependent on social assistance (welfare benefits). Twenty per cent were on sickness benefits.

Recent data on employment levels in the UK are not extensive, but previous research has shown very heavy reliance on welfare benefits among homeless people. There is mounting evidence that barriers to the welfare system are increasing as unemployment benefits are more closely linked to very actively showing that one is seeking paid work, and the criteria for accessing welfare benefits that are designed for people who are unable to work become far more stringent.[109] Recent research on services targeted at helping lone homeless people with accessing education, training and arts-based activities in England and Scotland reported near universal unemployment among 10256 homeless people using these services in 2012 and 2013.[110]

7.1.8 Support needs

Data are available on the support needs of homeless people in several countries. There is a broad pattern, which suggests that Northern EU Member States may have greater concentrations of homeless people with complex support needs than those in the East and South.

Some care is needed in interpreting this apparent pattern. Different support services, which may be better equipped and able both to identify and meet complex support needs, may exist in contexts where welfare and health system funding is relatively high. In other words, more extensive homelessness services may make high support needs more 'visible', because a well-resourced service is designed to assess and meet those needs.

By contrast, a homelessness service that is only able to offer shelter and food might well recognise who needs help. However, such a service may be unable to be precise about what the true extent and patterns of support needs are among the homeless people they help because of a lack of resources with which to assess

[109] B. Sanders, L. Teixeira and J. Truder (2013) *Dashed Hopes, Lives on Hold: Single Homeless People's Experiences of the Work Programme* (London: Crisis).

[110] Pleace, N. and Bretherton, J. (2014) *Crisis Skylight An Evaluation: Year 1 Interim Report* (London: Crisis).

their needs formally. Equally, however, lower basic social protection in less extensive welfare systems may mean there is more homelessness, which may include short-term homelessness, for largely economic reasons.

In Denmark, 47% of the homeless people enumerated in the homeless count in 2013 have a mental illness – an increase from the 30% reported in 2007. Sixty-five per cent were reported as having problematic drug/alcohol use, 38% had problematic alcohol consumption, 36% were using cannabis, 20% were on hard drugs and 12% were misusing prescription medication. Nearly 80% had mental health problems and/or problematic use of drugs/alcohol, with one third reported as having both mental health problems and problematic drug/alcohol use. Overall, 27% have physical health problems, rising to 31% among people living rough.

Similar patterns exist in Finland among people living rough and in emergency shelters, with research in 2009 in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area showing 89% had diagnosed mental health problems and 82% had problematic drug/alcohol use, with much higher rates of problematic alcohol consumption (60%) than drug use (15%). The remainder used both drugs and alcohol (8%). Hepatitis C was present in 15% of homeless people and 23% had last visited a doctor due to trauma or injury. Skin complaints were also reported by 6%. However, this research was focused on the remaining low threshold services for street-using populations and did not represent the homeless population as a whole.[111]

The French SAMENTA survey,[112] conducted in 2009 with a random sample of people without housing in Île-de-France, found that among 21 176 French people without personal housing, nearly one third had a severe mental illness, with a similar proportion using psychoactive substances (problematic drug use). Higher rates of severe mental illness and problematic drug use were found in less supportive environments. The 2012 study on homelessness (SD 2012) showed that 4 600 out of 66 300 homeless adults (7%) were claiming AAH, a welfare benefit for disabled adults – three times the rate found in the general population (2.4%).

In Hungary, 35% of respondents in the 2013 February 3rd count reported that they consume alcohol several times a week or every day and 38% responded that they have a permanent illness or disability. The 2010 count showed that amongst homeless people in Budapest, 11% said they had used drugs in the preceding 12 months and 9% in the preceding month. This was higher than amongst Budapest residents in general, where these figures were 5% and 3% respectively amongst 18 to 64 year olds.

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111 Erkkilä and Stenius-Ayoade (2009) *op. cit.*

112 Laporte, A., Le Méner, E. and Chauvin, P. (2010) *La santé mentale et les addictions des personnes sans logement personnel: Quelques éclairages issus d'une enquête de prévalence en Île-de-France* [Mental Health and Addiction Among Homeless People: Some Insights From A Prevalence Study in Île-de-France]. (Paris: ONPES).

However, 83% of homeless people in Budapest reported having never used any drugs, as opposed to 91% in the general population between 18 and 64 years old, but the rates of drug use were higher among younger homeless people (25% of those aged 18-34) compared to the general population (8% of all 18-34 year olds). Thirty per cent of homeless people in the 2013 count reported they were too ill to work, 10% reported that they had a disability that prevented work and 5% reported anxiety as a barrier to employment.

In Ireland in the 2011 census, just over 60% of the homeless population indicated that their general health was 'Very good' or 'Good', compared to 89% of the general population. Homeless women were more likely to report good health (70%) than men (56%). Forty-two per cent of the homeless population described themselves as a disabled person compared to 13% of the general population, and almost one in five homeless people reported mental health problems.

The 2011 Italian survey showed that 35% of homeless people had a disability and/or reported problematic drug/alcohol use. Overall, 39% reported neither a disability nor problematic drug/alcohol use.

In the Netherlands, 87% of participants in the CodaG4 study[113] reported physical complaints – i.e., illness or disability – in the month preceding the interview. Forty-six per cent of the adults and 63% of the young adults use cannabis very frequently. Some 30% use alcohol and 10% use slot machines or gamble frequently. Moreover, studies show an overrepresentation of people with a learning disability among the homeless population. Around 25-30% of the homeless population has an IQ between 50 and 85.

In Poland, the extent of substance abuse and poor health/disabilities were measured as causes of homelessness in the MPiPS survey from 2013. It reported that 31% had problematic drug/alcohol use and 13% had poor health and/or a disability. Just under one third (32%) declared holding disability status (they were registered as being a disabled person). In the Pomeranian Survey from 2011, 54% of homeless people reported they were suffering from a long-term limiting illness and 46% answered that they did not feel healthy at the moment, while 47% held disability status.

In Portugal, the 2009 ISS study identified problematic drug use as the main support need (28%) among homeless people using local support in 53 municipalities, followed by problematic alcohol use (19%) and mental health problems (11%). Amongst homeless immigrants, a large percentage was recorded as having health problems (49%). Once again, problematic alcohol and drug use were the most

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113 van der Laan *et al.* (2013) Cohort Study Amongst Homeless People in Amsterdam (*op. cit.*); P.A.M. van den Broek (2012) *Rapport: (On)beperkte Opvang* [National Evaluation Report: (Un) limited Shelter] (Amersfoort/Utrecht: Federatie Opvang/MEE Nederland).

common health problems identified (35% and 20%, respectively). Mental health problems were present among 13% of the people surveyed. Some research has suggested very high rates of mental health problems among specific homeless populations (80%) along with high rates of blood borne infection (including HIV/Hepatitis) and poor physical health.[114]

In Slovenia, research in Ljubljana[115] showed that the majority of homeless respondents occasionally or regularly drank alcohol (61%) and 40% had used drugs. Additionally, almost a third of respondents reported that mental health problems were among their reasons for becoming homeless. Just under one quarter (24%) also reported experiencing hospitalisation in a psychiatric clinic.

The Swedish 2011 homelessness count showed that 40% of all homeless people had problematic drug/alcohol use, with almost two-thirds of this group reporting problems with alcohol. Just over one third had mental health problems (36%). One quarter of people experiencing acute homelessness (long-term and recurrent homelessness linked to high support needs) and those in temporary institutional care or category housing reported physical ill health.

Past research in the UK has suggested strong associations between severe mental illness and problematic drug/alcohol use and single homelessness, but there is very little longitudinal data, making the true prevalence of these support needs among lone homeless population hard to ascertain. While there is evidence of high-need subgroups experiencing sustained and recurrent homelessness,[116] the actual scale of these groups also cannot be ascertained because of the same lack of longitudinal data on lone homeless adults. The last major study of homeless families and young homeless people in the statutory homelessness system in England, conducted in 2005, found that homeless families were not really distinct from poor, housed families, other than somewhat higher rates of depression, but that support needs among young homeless people were high.[117]

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114 Carrinho, P. (2012) *A saúde mental dos sem-abrigo: comunidades de inserção* [The Mental Health of Homeless People: Insertion Communities]. PhD Thesis (Aveiro: Universidade de Aveiro).

115 Dekleva and Razpotnik (2007) *op. cit.*

116 Jones, A. and Pleace, N. (2010) *A Review of Single Homelessness in the UK 2000 – 2010* (London: Crisis).

117 Pleace, N. *et al.* (2008) Statutory Homelessness in England: The Experience of Families and 16-17 Year Olds (London: Department for Communities and Local Government).

7.1.9 People living rough

In the Northern and Western countries, where broader homelessness data are available, rough sleepers are a small group within the homeless population; they appear to have higher rates of mental illness and problematic drug/alcohol use than other homeless people, including some evidence of very much higher rates. This pattern is not always reported elsewhere; for example, in Hungary, a difference in support needs between people living rough and other homeless people is not evident.

Some caution is needed in relation to point-in-time data on people living rough, as North American evidence has indicated that long-term and recurrently homeless people are likely to be overrepresented in point-in-time research on this group.[118] Equally, lower welfare protection and criminalisation of homelessness in some countries may change the composition of people living rough, increasing the prevalence of people without high support needs. Again, however, the most extensive welfare systems with the best resourced homelessness services may be better placed to assess and document the patterns of support needs among people living rough than services only able to offer basic shelter and subsistence. Finally, of course, definitions, methodologies and data limitations can all affect how accurately the population of people living rough in an EU Member State is recorded.

In Hungary, detailed information of the situation of rough sleepers is available from the February 3rd count (as far as they could be covered in this count). The 2011 count showed that of a total of 7150 homeless respondents, 41% were sleeping rough and 78.7% of them were men. Table 7.10 shows the distribution of age, marital status, whether they have a partner, and the health status of rough sleepers compared to the rest of the homeless population recorded in the count.

The data from Hungary show fewer differences between people living rough and the rest of the homeless population than reported in Denmark and some other Northern and Western EU countries. Some notable differences are centred on levels of support needs and the tendency to have partner, which are respectively lower and higher than in some populations of people living rough in the North and West of the EU. People living rough in Hungary are also quite likely to report being in casual work (27.6% in the countryside, 18.5% in Budapest) and some have regular work (3% in Budapest, 2.7% in the countryside), although rates of begging and subsisting from rubbish bins are also high (43% in Budapest, 25% in the coun-

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118 O'Sullivan, E. (2008) Pathways through Homelessness: Theoretical and Policy Implications, in: J. Doherty and B. Edgar (Eds.) *'In My Caravan, I Feel Like Superman': Essays in Honour of Henk Meert*, 1963–2006, pp.71–100. (Brussels: FEANTSA).

tryside). Almost the same percentage amongst rough sleepers (17%) consider themselves Roma as among the total homeless population (16%,) while in the population census only 3.5% declared themselves as Roma.

However, the Hungarian definition of homelessness is quite narrow and focused on the extremes of homelessness. Homelessness in Hungary is not defined as including people living with family and friends, for instance, and the lower support needs among people living rough may also reflect more limited welfare protection, which results in more rough sleeping for primarily economic reasons.

Table 7.10: Profiles of rough sleepers and other homeless people in Hungary

Category	Rough sleepers (2870)	Other homeless people (4329)
Age		
<19	0.3%	0.3%
20-29	6.1%	6.1%
30-39	16.7%	14.2%
40-49	33.8%	27.8%
50-59	32.1%	34.7%
60-69	10.1%	14.4%
70+	0.9%	2.6%
Marital status		
Single	38.7%	37.4%
Married	11.2%	9.0%
Widowed	5.6%	7.2%
Divorced	40.3%	43.3%
Have a partner		
Have a partner, live together	24.5%	14.6%
Have a partner, don't live together	4.0%	6.0%
Do not have a partner	71.4%	79.4%
Living situation		
Live alone	44.7%	57.7%
Live with family member	11.8%	7.5%
Live with a group	24.2%	15.1%
Other	19.3%	19.8%
Health – have a permanent disease or disability		
Yes	27.1%	37.5%
No	72.9%	62.5%

In Denmark, rough sleepers account for only about 10% of the overall homeless population. Data from the 2013 national count show that people living rough are less likely to be young (11% are 18-24, compared to 20% of all homeless people) and more likely to be in late middle age, 33% are 40-49 and 17% are 50-59, compared to 25% and 15%, respectively, of the homeless population as a whole. Most are male (85%) and few are aged over 60 (5%). Rates of mental health problems (52%) and problematic drug and alcohol use (71%) are high, although this

in a context of high rates across the homeless population as a whole (47% and 65%, respectively). Rates of hard drug use are higher (28%) than in the other segments of the homeless population (20%). Most people living rough still claim welfare benefits (77%, 56% getting support with income and 21% early retirement benefits), although 16% had no official income. The Danish data need to be seen as reflecting what is, by many standards, a very small population of people living rough.

In Finland in 2009, people living rough were characterised by a chaotic lifestyle and a reported use of emergency hospital services that was sixteen times the level of the general population. There was also evidence that living rough was something they only did some of the time, using alternatives where they could find them.[119] Populations of people living rough have been systematically reduced in recent years, within the wider Paavo 1 and Paavo 2 national strategies to reduce long-term homelessness, and levels of people living rough are amongst the lowest in the world. While support needs may still be high, the population of people living rough is small and is falling.

France has data from the SD 2012 survey, which shows that one in five people living rough spent the night before the survey in open air locations (on the street, under a bridge, in a park, etc.), 36% stayed in a more sheltered location (cellars, attics, lobbies and abandoned buildings and multi-storey car parks) and 17% stayed in public spaces, including transportation stations and churches, while 14% used tents, huts and caves as makeshift shelter. Access to sanitation and places to store possessions was poor.

Irish information on the profile of rough sleepers comes primarily from Dublin, where a street count takes place twice a year, in April and November. The number of rough sleepers in the Dublin region was a minimum of 139 based on data collected on a night in November 2013. The Spring 2014 rough sleeper count was conducted on the night of 8 April 2014 and the count showed that there were 127 individuals identified as rough sleepers. In November 2013, 80% of people living rough were male and 24% were 18-30, while 49% were aged 31-50 and 53% were Irish. However data on age, gender and ethnicity were incomplete.

In Portugal, the most recent study conducted on rough sleepers was the 2013 night count in Lisbon coordinated by the Santa Casa da Misericórdia. The only information available was in media reports and related to 509 rough sleepers and 343 homeless individuals sleeping in emergency shelters. Based on this information, 87% were male, 45% single, 58% Portuguese and almost half (48%) were aged 35-54. Around 8% could not read or write and 5% had completed a higher education qualification. More than half of these homeless individuals had children, although

[119] Erkkilä and Stenius-Ayoade (2009) *op. cit.*

one third referred having no contact with them. Overall, 72% stated they had no source of income and 69% received food support, while 45% said they had a health related problem. Thirty-one per cent had lived rough for one year and 17% for 1-3 years. The census data included both people sleeping rough and people sleeping in night shelters. The profile is similar to that of the population included in the 2013 night count mentioned above: 82% were male, 67% were single, 81% were Portuguese and the average age was between 44 years old (men) and 41 years old (women). Thirteen per cent had not completed any school level and less than 1% had attended or completed university.

In Sweden, rough sleepers are included in a wider group of 'acute homelessness', which also encompasses people in emergency shelters. This wider group of acutely homeless people comprised approximately 4 500 people, which was 14% of all homeless people. The proportion of women in this group was 33% while 67% were men. The average age of the group was 43 and 40% were born in a country outside Sweden.

In the UK, the best data on people living rough are from the longitudinal London CHAIN database. Of 6 508 people seen sleeping rough in London in 2013/2014, 13% were women, 19% exhibited problematic drug/alcohol consumption, 12% had poor mental health, and a further 22% had a combination of problematic alcohol and/or drug use and poor mental health. Some 24% had been in prison at least once, 7% had been in the care system as a child and 7% had been in the armed forces.

7.1.10 Profiles of young homeless people

There is evidence of substantial subgroups of young homeless people within the homeless populations of many EU Member States. However, the extent to which data are available on young homeless people is variable. The available data suggest that youth homelessness can be associated with high and complex needs, including mental health problems and problematic drug/alcohol use. There also appears to be some overrepresentation of young people with ethnic minority backgrounds among young homeless people and overrepresentation of young people with experience of social work care as a child.

In Denmark, 1 138 young people between 18 and 24 years old were recorded as homeless in 2013. This figure had increased sharply since 2009, when 633 young people were recorded as homeless, while in 2011 the figure was 1 002 persons. These figures represent an increase of 80% in the number of homeless 18-24 year-olds over four years from 2009 to 2013. Only 6% of young homeless people were recorded as rough sleepers and 1% used low-threshold emergency night shelters, although 22% used ordinary homeless shelters. Most were staying temporarily with family or friends (50%). Six per cent of young homeless people were

recorded to be first-generation immigrants and 16% second-generation descendants of immigrants. There was evidence of high support needs among homeless young people in Denmark (51% had mental health problems and 58% problematic drug/alcohol use). Overall, 32% were recorded as having both mental health problems and problematic drug/alcohol use.

In Finland, there were 1 862 single homeless people aged 18-24 in 2013, together forming one quarter of the Finnish homeless population. In Helsinki, having no permanent place of residence has been found to be most common among 20-29 year-olds.[120] Youth homelessness does not tend to be prolonged in Finland, however.

In the Netherlands, the second CodaG4 report highlights profiles of young homeless women and men. The report shows that young men are more often roofless than young women, while young women are more often residentially homeless. One quarter of young women has a child with them when they use an emergency shelter. Almost 35% of the young women and almost 45% of the young men are reported as have been homeless for 1-5 years. There is very strong overrepresentation of ethnic minority groups, at 75% of young men and 50% of young women experiencing homelessness. Almost all young homeless people have an incomplete education (90%).

A three-year project in Portugal[121] included interviews with young homeless people aged 16-24. This report suggests three types of young homeless person: young women, young people leaving care and young people who are the children of immigrants or who have a Roma background. As only 54 interviews were conducted, the data were essentially qualitative, but suggested that young homeless women were more likely to have partners and more likely, if they had a child, to be acting as a parent to that child.

The Swedish national homelessness survey in 2011 showed that about 7 000 (21%) of the homeless population were aged 18-26. Of these, 59% were male and 41% female, while 32% were born outside Sweden. Homelessness causation seemed linked to housing market position and relationship breakdown, violence or abuse between or involving their parents. Young people with high support needs experiencing recurrent and sustained homelessness, classified in Sweden as acute

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120 Kostiainen, E. and Laakso, S. (2012) *Vailla vakinaista asuntoa – liikkuvuus asunnottomuuden ja asuntokannan välillä* [Without a Permanent Place of Residence: Mobility Between Homelessness and Housing]. (Lahti: ARA).

121 Menezes, F. and Rodrigues, V. (2010) *Thematic Report 1: Trajectories into Homelessness and Reinsertion Points.* CSEYHP Project: Combating Social Exclusion Among Young Homeless Populations: A Comparative Investigation of Homeless Paths among Local White, Local Ethnic Groups and Migrant Young Men and Women, and Appropriate Reinsertion Methods (Lisbon: CIES/ISCTE).

homelessness, were relatively rare at 8% of young homeless people. However problematic drug/alcohol use was reported as a contributory cause of homelessness by 25% of young homeless people.

In the UK it was estimated in 2008 that at least 75 000 young people (aged 16-24) experienced homelessness in 2006-2007.[122] This included 43 075 young people (aged 16-24) who were accepted as statutorily homeless (8 337 young people were accepted as priority need because they were aged 16-17; other groups included young women who were homeless lone parents). In addition, at least 31 000 non-statutorily homeless young people used Supporting People services during 2006-2007. Repeating this exercise in 2011, the data were less reliable, but based on the most complete set available, it was estimated that the UK youth homeless population was between 78-80 000.[123] There were a number of limitations with this estimate because it was based on administrative data that were inconsistent in scope and quality across the UK, including some data that were collected only in England. There is longstanding research evidence of associations between childhood poverty, disruption to family life and schooling during childhood, experience of the child care system, contact with the criminal justice system as a young person and youth homelessness.[124]

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122 Quilgars, D., Johnsen, S. and Pleace, N. (2008) *Review of Youth Homelessness in the UK* (York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation).

123 Quilgars, D., Fitzpatrick, S. and Pleace, N. (2011) *Ending Youth Homelessness: Possibilities, Challenges and Practical Solutions* (London: Centrepoint).

124 Quilgars, D. *et al.* (2008) *op. cit.*

8. Discussion

Introduction

This final chapter discusses the findings of the report and considers the extent to which the nature and extent of homelessness is understood in the European Union. This discussion explores the implications of the main chapters in turn, starting with definitions and concluding with what is understood about the extent and characteristics of homelessness.

8.1 Definition

The call for standardisation, for some sense of coherence and comparability in how homelessness is defined in the EU, has been made so often before that it can almost seem futile to repeat the need for consistency. Beyond the need for coherence, there is a need for comprehensiveness that is equally fundamental. The problem, as ever, is twofold:

- Narrowness of definition is fundamentally limiting understanding of the true nature and extent of homelessness in the EU. It is essential to move beyond defining homelessness simply as people living rough and in emergency accommodation. Many situations in which people do not have their own living space – a private sphere that they recognise and wider society recognises as their home – are currently neither being recognised nor enumerated. The basic challenge established by the ETHOS categorisation of homelessness developed by FEANTSA is still to be met in relation to truly understanding the scale, nature and, ultimately, the impact of homelessness.
- Comparability is essential; without it, the relative effectiveness of everything from wider welfare, health and housing policy, let alone specific homelessness strategies and different models of homelessness services, cannot be properly compared. Without clarity of definition, it cannot be assessed how the nature and shape of homelessness is influenced by different contexts and policies. Moving beyond what is actually little more than guesswork, an assumption that homelessness is worse in countries with less extensive welfare systems is currently problematic because of a lack of clear data. Understanding more about

the interrelationships between homelessness and the societies in which it occurs has the potential to enhance policy and service-effectiveness in preventing and reducing homelessness.

Yet, the problems with definition are not simply a matter of international comparability, clarity and comprehensiveness. There is another equally pressing issue, which is a lack of consistency and comprehensive data collection within individual countries. What is important here is that homelessness tends not to be looked at as a whole, with the notable exceptions of Denmark and Finland. It is, instead, explored, defined and enumerated according to individual services, strategies or research projects. What many countries lack is a dataset that provides a true reflection of the nature and extent of homelessness at the national level. In Denmark and Finland, unemployment, disability, mental health and many of the support needs that can be associated with long term and recurrent homelessness are understood at a strategic level, because data can be collated at a strategic level.

However, a lack of clarity as well as comprehensiveness in definition prohibits the development of what would, in effect, be national homelessness databases. Ultimately, this is a result of homelessness not being comprehensively defined and measured as one social problem, but instead being partially, selectively and inconsistently measured within many EU Member States. For example, Germany does not have consistent, merged, comprehensive data on homelessness and instead has data largely confined to one region and estimates, while the UK has databases that are based on different definitions of homelessness, that partially overlap, that are present in one area but not in others, are inconsistent in what they collect, and which currently cannot, in practical terms, be merged.

8.2 Measurement

In discussing the variety of measurement techniques in use across the EU, it is an easy matter to note the inconsistencies in methodology and in the quality and comprehensiveness of the data that are collected. Denmark has an understanding of homelessness that is unparalleled, and Finland a clear comprehension of the nature and extent of the homelessness problem that exists at national level. Elsewhere the data are less comprehensive in terms of the range of information collected, who is enumerated and surveyed, and how frequently data collection takes place. France has some detailed understanding of homelessness, but the major surveys it has used to secure this knowledge did not cover all of the country and took place 11 years apart. Again, one region of Germany, North Rhine-

Westphalia, knows a lot more about homelessness than the rest of the country, just as London understands who is living rough, and how many of them there are, far more thoroughly than the rest of the UK does.

However, one very positive finding, allowing for all the inconsistencies in definition and methodology and the frustrations they bring to understanding homelessness at the national and international level, is that everyone knows at least something about homelessness. This finding that something, even if it is only partial and limited, is known about homelessness in all fifteen Member States participating in this research is of considerable significance. The 2011 census, for all that it was almost a textbook example of a failure to coordinate at European level, where even a modest attempt to standardise measurement of homelessness was either ignored or incorrectly administered, nevertheless brought attention to homeless populations for the first time in some Member states.[125] Statistics are being collected on homelessness. They are, for the most part, far from perfect statistics, but they do represent data on homelessness from a wide array of situations and contexts. Even partial data that allows some understanding of how homelessness exists in different contexts is useful; knowing something about how many people are homeless, what their characteristics are, and how and why they enter and exit from homelessness – even if it is flawed and limited data – still gives some insight into homelessness.

In many EU Member States there is a very long way to go in terms of developing robust and effective measurements of homelessness, which involves the development of methodologies that are acceptably robust after arriving at a coherent, clear and comprehensive definition. The most advanced countries still have gaps in their data and there are aspects of homelessness that are inherently difficult to measure. People staying temporarily with family, friends and acquaintances because they have nowhere else to go are methodologically challenging to count and to survey accurately, as is anyone staying illegally in an empty or derelict home or other building and as are people living rough who stay hidden for safety reasons (which may, in particular, lead to undercounting of women living rough). Yet at the same time, the need for longitudinal data and the limits of point-in-time estimates are starting to be understood; past mistakes in attempting to understand homelessness have been learned from.

Recent research in Northern Ireland,[126] which looked at whether ETHOS should and could be employed, concluded that even in that relatively data-rich environment, it is inherently difficult for service providers, commissioners and policy-makers to

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[125] Baptista, I., Benjaminsen, L., Pleace, N. and Busch-Geertsema, V. (2012) *Counting Homeless People in the 2011 Housing and Population Census* (EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness, No 2) (Brussels: FEANTSA/EOH).

[126] Pleace, N. and Bretherton, J. (2013) *Measuring Homelessness and Housing Exclusion in Northern Ireland: A Test of the ETHOS Typology* (Belfast: Northern Ireland Housing Executive).

learn about the extent and nature of homeless populations that do not connect with. Surveys can, of course, be used to reach these difficult–to-reach homeless populations who do not make contact with the State's database systems because they do not access welfare, health or criminal justice systems, or use homelessness services that collect and share data on their service users, but the challenges of finding and accurately representing groups that are inherently hard to count remain.

It is also very evident that many EU Member States are not in a position where it is possible to supply the data to complete ETHOS Light. Not only are there gaps in data for individual countries, but in some cases entire categories – such as people living in mobile homes, non-conventional buildings and temporary structures – are largely blank. As noted in Chapter 5, with the data available in the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, the breaking down of data by ETHOS Light categories was simply not possible.

Nevertheless, if the research reported here shows anything, it shows that for all the flaws, limits and gaps, something is known about homelessness almost everywhere – that there are some data and that there is some understanding. The position is not ideal, but it is better than hopeless; data exist, data are being collected and analysis is taking place. Importantly, there also seem to be some commonalities in what those data are saying, which give interesting hints about the possible nature of homelessness and areas where robust research might be productively directed.

8.3 The Extent and Characteristics of Homelessness

In looking at what can be ascertained from this research, a number of potentially interesting findings can be identified. None are completely new – they have all been indicated by previous research into homelessness at national level and sometimes at international level – but this research has shown that there is some evidence of similar patterns of homelessness existing in a range of different EU Member States. These can be summarised as follows:

- There appears to be increasing numbers of young marginalised people becoming homeless in a number of countries, including a higher representation of women among young homeless people.
- There is some evidence that the experience of homelessness is differentiated by gender; women appear more frequently in some subgroups of homeless people than in others, and the causation of their homelessness and their reaction to homelessness appears to exist in patterns that are distinct from those of men. Key issues include the role of gender-based/domestic violence in causation, the use of informal arrangements with friends, family and acquaintances, and the

differential responses of welfare systems to homeless and potentially homeless lone women with children, compared to responses to lone adults without children. This is an area that requires more investigation.

- Experience of homelessness can be linked to ethnicity and to migrant status. There is evidence that certain groups may experience homelessness at heightened rates, which may reflect relative economic disadvantage among citizens who are the descendants of migrants and also the many barriers to welfare, health, social housing and homelessness services for some migrant groups. Rough sleeping in some major cities, such as Dublin, London and Paris, is, in part, a social problem of homelessness among economic and undocumented migrants.

- There is some evidence of the presence of a small, high cost, high-risk group of homeless people who are characterised by long-term and recurrent homelessness and who have complex support needs centred on severe mental illness and problematic drug/alcohol use. This population appears to exist across a range of the most comprehensive welfare systems, such as are found in Denmark, Finland and Sweden and, although the evidence is more limited, in the UK. There are some very important questions about whether this population exists to the same extent, or is the same relative to other forms of homelessness, in different European contexts. However, there are enough data to be reasonably confident that there are patterns in homelessness – patterns associated with needs, characteristics and experiences and perhaps shared patterns of failures in social protection, mental health and other systems – that appear to exist across different contexts.

- There are other dimensions of homelessness that may exist across different contexts, a potentially important one being the possibility of quite simple associations between some forms of homelessness and poverty. Starting to explore and think about how homelessness may be a process resulting from how society, individuals and households interact could bring about a better understanding of homelessness and also more effective policy responses. This may be particularly important in relation to short- and medium-term homelessness among people with lower support needs, or whose homelessness is primarily, or entirely, linked to their economic position.

These findings show that there are clear reasons to think about the potential advantages of improving data collection on homelessness. These improvements need to happen in terms of improving both clarity and comprehensiveness, because if there are commonalities in the nature of homelessness, there may be lessons to be shared that may lead to preventing and reducing homelessness more effectively. In some areas – one example being the relationships between migration status and

some forms of homelessness in certain contexts – there may be the potential to use consistent data collection and sharing to plan coordinated responses to some aspects of homelessness across all, or several, EU Member States.

The final questions centre on what future direction should be taken in terms of data collection. It is arguable that this is a question of political will as much as it is a question of resources.

There is no simple relationship between the relative wealth of a country, the nature of the welfare system that it has, and the level of understanding and data that exist on homelessness. This is an important point, because it is not simply the case that Southern and Eastern Member States know less about homeless than the relatively more prosperous countries in the North and West, some of which have amongst the most developed welfare systems that exist anywhere on Earth.

Germany and the UK, for example, are prosperous, have by international standards extensive welfare systems and yet also lack a truly comprehensive understanding of the extent and nature of the most extreme form of poverty and marginalisation it is possible for their citizens to experience. By contrast, Denmark's level of prosperity and sophistication in welfare systems is accompanied by a level of understanding of homeless populations that must be amongst the most detailed and systematic in existence; indeed, Denmark may have the most detailed, extensive and robust statistical data on homelessness to be found anywhere. France, which makes efforts that are both comprehensive but also infrequent in order to better understand homelessness, is another example of the variation that exists.

All EU countries face major challenges in relation to finding sufficient resources to tackle social problems, but some of those under particular financial pressure at the time of writing are nevertheless making efforts to understand homelessness and to reduce it. Portugal and Ireland are examples of countries where, in spite of the relatively small populations facing homelessness and a context of austerity, statistical research and data collection that has enhanced understanding of homelessness has nevertheless taken place in recent years.

Developing better ways to measure homelessness is dependent on winning a political argument – indeed, in causing such an argument to happen – about the case for improving data collection on homelessness. One argument is a simple one, as Chapter 6 shows; homelessness appears to be increasing across a considerable number of EU Member States. While the numbers of people experiencing homelessness may be relatively low compared to those experiencing other social problems within the EU, the unique distress of homelessness and the potential costs for individuals, families and wider society from homelessness must never be forgotten.

Appendix 1: Country Summaries

Czech Republic

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	There is not yet a single prevailing definition of homelessness in Czechia. As FEANTSA's ETHOS classification has been localized to the Czech context since 2007 (Hradecký *et al.*, 2012) it is slowly being adopted by the State and other bodies
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (excl. 4- temporary accommodation), 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing + People leaving institutions for children (at age 18) are considered as endangered by homelessness and this group is included in some estimations
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	In 2011 as an addition to national census, the CZSO carried out the 'Census of Homeless People'. This 'census' only includes people living in specific refuge institutions (ETHOS Light 2 and partly 3) (CZSO, 2012a; 2012b). People sleeping rough were omitted from the 'census of homeless people'. Other groups of homeless (ETHOS Light 3 (partly), 4, 5, 6) were supposed to be counted in regular census, but the census classification is not specifically adapted to recognize those groups
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	In 2011 the Ministry of the Interior carried out a survey on homelessness based on questionnaires sent to representatives of towns with over 25 000 inhabitants. The questionnaire covered 'visible' homelessness – roofless people and those in specific refuge institutions. It was used as a basis for estimating numbers of homeless people in accordance with the ETHOS classification. The estimation was used as part of preparation works for the *Conception of Work with Homeless People in the Czech Republic until 2020*
	Other surveys	Several local surveys; e.g., in Praha the first census of homeless people was carried out in 2004 and the last in 2010. Counting is done in three phases – in ambulatory services, in the field and in refuge houses. In Brno, a survey has been carried out every four years using similar methodology since 2006. This is considered the most complete count as it covers categories 1-5 of ETHOS-Light
	Responsible agencies	The Czech Statistical Office (CZSO) (census) Ministry of the Interior (survey) Municipalities
	Strengths in data collection	Inclusion of homelessness data in the census National survey
	Weaknesses in data collection	The survey relied on answers from municipal representatives – reliability and validity of data is unclear The census raised ethical concerns as social workers were supposed to fill in questionnaires in cooperation with homeless people, but were also supposed to report people who refuse to cooperate (non-cooperation carries a risk of being fined)

Denmark

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	Homeless people are defined as persons who do not own or rent homes or rooms, but are obliged to avail of temporary accommodation, or live temporarily, without a rental contract, with relatives, friends or acquaintances. Homeless persons also include those who do not have a place to stay for the coming night (used in national mappings of homelessness, SFI (Danish National Centre for Social Research))
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (excl. women's shelters); 4- People living in institutions (partly); 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing; 6- Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	Homelessness in Denmark is measured in a specific national count and through administrative data (see below), which are not part of the EU census
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	The national counts are conducted by asking all local services and authorities who are in contact with or have knowledge about homeless people to fill out a two-page individual questionnaire for each homeless person they are in contact with. The annual shelter statistics are collected and processed by The Social Appeals Board through client registration systems in all homeless shelters under Section 110 of the Social Assistance Act (Ankestyrelsen, 2013)
	Other surveys	None
	Responsible agencies	SFI – The Danish National Centre for Social Research (national counts) The National Appeals Board, under the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs (annual shelter statistics)
	Strengths in data collection	Regular surveys and administrative data with high quality data
	Weaknesses in data collection	Lack of data on people receiving floating support in housing after having been rehoused

Finland

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	The Finnish definition of homelessness is based on the accommodation mode of the homeless person: people sleeping rough or in overnight shelters; people in dormitories or hostels; people in institutions; prisoners due to be released without housing; people living temporarily with friends or relatives
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (partly); 4- People living in institutions; 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing; 6- Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	No census exists. The annual population statistics data are obtained from the Population Information System of the Population Register Centre according to the situation at the turn of the year (ARA, 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014)
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	Housing market surveys are carried out in the municipalities of mainland Finland. The survey includes questions about the number of homeless people in the municipality on the date, the 15th of November. Data sources vary by municipality. Usually the homeless number is formed from several sources, such as the register for municipal rental housing applications, the register of social services customers and from homeless housing services providers
	Other surveys	A postal survey for Helsinki residents who had been registered as having no permanent place of residence in the Population Information System but had moved to a permanent residence within a year was conducted in 2013 to look at the relation of homelessness and having no permanent place of residence (Kostiainen and Laakso 2014, forthcoming). A register-based study on Helsinki residents registered as having no permanent place of residences in the Population Information System was conducted in 2012 (Kostiainen and Laakso, 2012). A register study based on a sample drawn from a database of homeless social service users having slept in reception centres for the homeless in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, supplemented with interviews and a clinical study, was conducted to look at the social situation and health of clients of homeless reception centres in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area in 2008 (Erkkilä and Stenius-Ayoade, 2009)
	Responsible agencies	Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland under the administrative sector of the Ministry of the Environment
	Strengths in data collection	The statistics since 1987 give a reliable picture of the trends of homelessness in the whole country and in municipalities
	Weaknesses in data collection	The instructions to fill in the survey questionnaire are interpreted differently in different municipalities and practical applications of the categories are varied. Not all municipalities are able to give precise numbers of homeless people. Homeless people who are not users of social services or have not applied for social housing are not included in the statistics

France

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	Homeless persons are part of the population classified as 'living outside a household', which also includes mariners and persons living in mobile dwellings. A person is deemed to be homeless if sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation or taken in charge by an organization providing accommodation free or for a small co-payment. Such organizations may provide places in communal facilities, rooming hotels, or ordinary flats. The accommodation may be provided for different periods of time, from overnight to several days, weeks or even months. (official definition by INSEE)
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	There is a specific population census on 'habitations mobiles, mariniers et sans-abri' (mobile homes, mariners/ bargemen and rough sleepers) (HMSA) which takes place once every five years (the last one in 2011)
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	National Housing Survey (surveying prior periods without a home) National Health and Handicap Survey (last in 2003) Homeless surveys (2001 and 2012) in urban agglomerations of more than 20 000 inhabitants. Individual data are collected on demographic, economic, social and health characteristics Database FINESS lists all health and social structures in France including institutions and services for people in social difficulty
	Other surveys	A survey of users of semi-rural services was conducted to target smaller-sized cities and complement homeless surveys (INED – Institute national d'études démographiques) Mobile Aid Services 2013 (INED) was carried out to include those excluded from homeless survey (individuals who do not attend the free food and emergency accommodation services) ES-DS Survey of the institutions and services for people in social and economic difficulties, part of which relates to emergency and temporary accommodation
	Responsible agencies	National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) (census and national surveys) INED – Institute national d'études démographiques DREES (Direction de la recherche, des études et de l'évaluation et des statistiques – Research Studies, Evaluation and Statistics Division) (ES-DS survey)
	Strengths in data collection	Multiple sources; specific census of the homeless population; national surveys and administrative data
	Weaknesses in data collection	Homeless surveys rare and not continuously carried out (e.g., once every ten years).FINESS database is not exhaustive in relation to emergency accommodation. Lack of longitudinal data

Germany

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	The German definition of homelessness covers all persons who have no secure home with regular tenancy security – or owner-occupied housing – and who need support to get access to such a home Two basic groups are distinguished: (1) People who are not provided with (temporary) accommodation/ shelter by any public bodies (NGOs, local authorities). This includes rough sleepers and people sleeping in make-shift accommodation, including squatting and living in buildings not designed for permanent habitation and persons temporarily sharing with friends and relatives because of a lack of home. Also people who are temporarily accommodated, at their own cost, in hotels or similar accommodation because of a lack of a home (2) People who are provided with temporary accommodation / shelter by local authorities or NGOs, namely those provided with temporary accommodation/shelter under the police laws or through other legal measures of local authorities against rooflessness. This group also includes people provided with places in shelters, hotels/B&Bs, hostels and other types of institutions or temporary accommodation that are paid for through social welfare benefits
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	Broad definition, covering almost all categories (though North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) statistics do not cover refuges for victims of domestic violence and people due to be released from institutions)
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	No census data available
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	At national level only a (rough) estimate is available on the annual flow of homelessness by the national association of (mainly NGO) services for homeless people (BAG W, 2012; 2014) BAG W also provides an annual analysis of data on the profile of clients of NGO services for homeless people based on their client registration systems A regional survey in NRW collects aggregated point-in-time data of municipalities and NGO services for homeless people on June 20 each year (Ministerium für Arbeit, Integration und Soziales des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2014)
	Other surveys	A number of surveys and counts were started in different regions of Germany
	Responsible agencies	The regional survey in NRW is conducted by the Statistical Office of NRW on behalf of the NRW Ministry of Social Affairs
	Strengths in data collection	NRW data is a reliable source, which allows analysis of trends BAG W profile data has a broad empirical basis
	Weaknesses in data collection	National estimates are of limited reliability; population quotas between national estimates and regional data differ substantially. Profile data is too focused on NGO clients. Lack of reliable national homelessness statistics despite proof of feasibility

Hungary

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	Those who are either roofless or sleeping in homeless services, or those whose address is a homeless facility or a public space are homeless according to the law
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (homeless hostels); 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	Covered homeless people living in institutions or sleeping rough (or in a construction not meant for habitation); does not enable observation of exclusively homeless population. Enumerators officially tried to reach rough sleepers with the help of outreach workers. Due to controversial times (homelessness was becoming criminalized from spring 2010), the original concept of the method and organization of counting street homeless people was not supported by one of largest partner institutions (BMSZKI) involved in designing the census data collection relating to homeless people
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	February 3rd survey. Every year since 1999 a survey has been conducted among homeless people (service users and rough sleepers) (See e.g., Győri, 2013) A central database, called KENYSZI [Social Register and Database of Claimants] records data on all users of services in the social and child protection sector (including homeless services) as well as those receiving any type of social benefits. The online database was set up in 2012
	Other surveys	Some service providers may collect additional information (e.g., housing pathways) on clients, but these serve as quality control instruments rather than social surveys
	Responsible agencies	National Office for Rehabilitation and Social Affairs collects data on service users Annual February 3rd survey is carried out as an NGO initiative with the cooperation of NGOs and one public provider
	Strengths in data collection	Regular survey at national level Inclusion of homeless population in the census even if to a limited extent – data has to be extracted
	Weaknesses in data collection	Participation in the survey is voluntary for homeless services, and only data about users of cooperating services (shelters, hostels and outreach teams) are collected No detailed data from the census on the homeless population and included subgroups

Ireland

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	A person shall be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless if (a) there is no accommodation available which he, together with any other person who normally resides with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or (b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution because he has no accommodation and is unable to provide accommodation from his own resources (Housing Act, 1988)
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	In *Census 2011*, the definition of homelessness was based on the type of accommodation households resided in on census night, and accommodation services for homeless people were categorised as emergency, transitional and long-term. A rough sleepers count was also undertaken
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	The *Pathway Accommodation and Support System* (PASS) – the national administrative system for managing homelessness accommodation (it defines homelessness by accommodation category) – was established in 2011. PASS was rolled out as a National Client Shared Database in 2014 and now operates across the country
	Other surveys	An annual count takes place on the accommodation situation of Traveller households
	Responsible agencies	Central Statistics Office (National statistical office) (census) PASS (Pathway Accommodation and Support System) is funded by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. Agencies providing services for homeless people are required to input data on service usage into the PASS system
	Strengths in data collection	Data is available on a quarterly basis with detailed information Inclusion of homeless people in census
	Weaknesses in data collection	Limited definition based on accommodation (excludes several categories of ETHOS Light)

Italy

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	The homeless population refers to all individuals experiencing housing problems due to the impossibility and/or inability to obtain and independently maintain a house (national survey, Istat in 2011 (Istat, 2014))
	Categories of ETHOS LIGHT commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people; 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	No data from the 2011 Population Census are available on homeless people in Italy
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	The homeless survey (November – December 2011) in 158 main Italian municipalities covering homeless people eating in a canteen or sleeping in a shelter during the survey period with a planned follow-up survey (after 36 months)
	Other surveys	Local and academic research
	Responsible agencies	Istat, the Italian Ministry of Employment and Social Policy, the Italian Federation of Associations for the Homeless (fio.PSD) and the Italian Caritas organization (survey)
	Strengths in data collection	Possible regional data breakdown and socio-demographic characteristics of homeless people
	Weaknesses in data collection	No inclusion of homelessness in the census No regular surveys and no information on trends The national survey excludes several groups of homeless people (e.g., those not using homeless services; minors; persons living in overcrowded circumstances or receiving hospitality from friends or relatives; and persons living in illegally occupied accommodation or in structured camps in the cities)

The Netherlands

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	The definition is based on the ETHOS typology and distinguishes between roofless people (those sleeping in public spaces, with family and friends) and residentially homeless people (those sleeping in hostels, temporary and supported accommodation)
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (homeless hostels; temporary accommodation; transitional supported accommodation); 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing, 6- Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	The Netherlands did not incorporate homelessness in the 2011 census
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	An annual national population estimate – three different types of registration as sources of data are used. The first one is based on the national population register (GBA) – i.e., people registered at the address of a night or day shelter. The second one is an administrative database of people receiving social benefits according to the Regulation on homeless people in the Law on Employment and Social Assistance. The third register is a selection of homeless people from the national alcohol and drug information system
	Other surveys	A number of local/regional surveys (carried out annually or bi-annually) The Monitor Reports of the Trimbos Institute that are based on annual surveys among the 43 local authorities and the national registration numbers provided by the National Federation of Shelters (Federatie Opvang) Cohort research on homelessness in the four biggest cities in the Netherlands (CodaG4)
	Responsible agencies	Dutch National Statistics Office (CBS) (population estimate) The Monitor Reports are commissioned by the Ministry of Health and Welfare
	Strengths in data collection	Regular data collection at national level Coverage of many ETHOS categories
	Weaknesses in data collection	No data from the census on the homeless population. Lack of comparability of data due to use of different definitions National population register removes people from the register if people do not respond to letters sent to them to assess whether they actually live at that address. It is estimated that more than 400 000 people have been removed from the register (however they are also not recorded as deceased or as an emigrant). Definition of roofless in the database of people receiving social benefits is not entirely clear

Poland

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	People who do not live in a habitable place; are not registered for permanent stay; or are registered for permanent stay in places in which they cannot live due to: an eviction order or a non-contact order (due to domestic violence), the life- or health-threatening physical standards of a place, rejection of people who currently live in that place (used in national counts)
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people; 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	National Housing and Population Census, 2011 (GUS, 2013): operational definition named two categories of homeless people: **First category – roofless**: people who live in the streets and in public spaces without shelter, which could be called a living quarter. The category is dedicated mostly to people who spent census evening and night outside of any institution that functions all day and night **Second category – 'with no housing':** people without a permanent place to live in who, on census night, stayed in collective living quarters including: shelters for homeless people and welfare homes for pregnant women and women with children Roofless people were counted in a survey registered by census enumerators in pre-identified locations in public spaces (point-in-time on the 15th and 16th of April 2011) Those with no housing were counted using an aggregated form filled in by object administrators in collective living quarters (point-in-time collected between the 4th of May and the 15th of June)
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	National counts of homeless people (e.g., the 7-8th of February 2013) based on individual surveys (surveys and observations conducted by local service workers) and public social assistance statistics (social assistance institutions fill in an aggregated SAC form [Central Statistical Application] on benefits and services granted to their clients as well as some data on the clients)
	Other surveys	Pomeranian socio-demographic survey (Debski, 2011); Wola pilot study
	Responsible agencies	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MPiPS) (national counts) Polish National Statistical Office (GUS) (census)
	Strengths in data collection	Regular survey at national level Inclusion of homeless population in the census
	Weaknesses in data collection	Regarding counts – poor organization of the count, which influenced results, especially in inhabitable places; poor funding (no additional funding from the Ministry) In the national census, questionable quality of data on no housing, as numbers differ significantly from previous counts and subsequent Ministerial Count (in 2013) Lack of flow and prevalence data

Portugal

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	"A homeless person is considered to be an individual who, regardless of nationality, age, sex, socio-economic status and mental and physical health, is roofless and living in a public space or insecure form of shelter or is accommodated in an emergency shelter, or is houseless and living in temporary accommodation for the homeless." (2009 National Strategy on Homelessness (GIMAE, 2010))
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1-People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (excl. women's shelters); 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	In the 2011 general census, the definition was based explicitly on ETHOS typology, however included only the categories 1 and 2 of ETHOS Light as homeless people (*sem-abrigo*). Survey data was used – questionnaires both on the street count and in night shelters
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	Survey data – questionnaire sent to the local homelessness units (NPISA), reporting on homeless people who were supported during the last quarter of 2009. Data was collected only in territories that had – in a preceding survey – identified homeless-ness as a phenomenon of 'relevant numeric presence' (a total of 53 out of the 308 Portuguese municipalities). The questionnaires were filled in by the local organisations working with the homeless population and centralized by the NPISA AMI Acção Social 2013 (Social Action 2013) – annual prevalence data based on client registers used by the several local units of AMI providing support for vulnerable population (AMI, 2014)
	Other surveys	Rede Social de Lisboa (n/d) 2011 Monitoring: administrative annual data; Rough sleepers survey in Lisbon (Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, 2013)
	Responsible agencies	National Statistics Institute (INE) (census) The Institute for Social Security and local homelessness units have, according to the National Homelessness Strategy, responsibility for collecting data on homeless people. However, this is not an actual statutory responsibility since the National Strategy was never translated into a legal document
	Strengths in data collection	Inclusion of homelessness in the census. Growing use of ETHOS definitions, both in regular surveys and in surveys conducted for specific research purposes
	Weaknesses in data collection	For census – reliance on the information provided by the 'homeless-ness services' with very little methodological supervi-sion from the National Statistics Institute (INE), which may result in inconsistencies in data collection. Data collected (categories) were not sensitive to the living situations of this population Surveys – inconsistent way in which data collection has been approached, which has resulted in the lack of comparable data and, in some cases, of reliable data. Restricted focus on rough sleepers and people sleeping in emergency accommodation, which renders invisible other relevant categories of homeless-ness, namely homeless women and families

Slovenia

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	No uniform definition of homelessness. In the first comprehensive research carried out in city of Ljubljana (Dekleva and Razpotnik, 2007), homeless people were defined as people sleeping outside, and in shelters or basements, people uncertain of where they will sleep from day to day and those who have no roof over their heads or do not have a home. In the first national research evaluating the extent of (visible and hidden) homelessness in Slovenia (Dekleva *et al.*, 2010) the ETHOS definition was used by the researchers
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people (usually excl. women's shelters)
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	In Census 2011 the homeless population was included, even though not referring to them specifically as homeless. They defined this population as the persons registered at Centres for Social Work and other humanitarian organisations, indicating thereby that these people do not have a permanent address or housing
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	Administrative data collected by the Social Protection Institute – reports on the number of users in each programme for homeless people (such as meals and shelters). It is based on individual reports prepared by service providers
	Other surveys	In national research project in 2010 the extent of visible and hidden homelessness was analysed. However, researchers did not carry out primary research but were relying on their evaluation of separate ETHOS categories on the basis of analysis of secondary sources, which were of limited quality and not specifically designed to measure the extent of homelessness
	Responsible agencies	Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (census); Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (administrative data)
	Strengths in data collection	Regular administrative data on the number of users of social services for homeless people Partial inclusion of homeless people in the census
	Weaknesses in data collection	No surveys or other sources for observing trends and characteristic of the population Data from the 2011 census are limited and potentially inaccurate because they relied on a homeless person or household having their address registered as a place in which social work was delivered, meaning that several homeless categories were not included (e.g., rough sleepers with no registered address). Furthermore, the category can also include people who are not homeless but do not have the possibility of having their permanent residence registered at the address where they live. Also the census does not distinguish between different subcategories of homeless people (living conditions)

Spain

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	There are numerous studies using very different definitions. The only national survey by the Statistical Institute (INE) uses the following definition: anyone who does not have access during the reference period to accommodation that meets commonly accepted human habitability criteria, regardless of whether the accommodation is legally owned, rented, or occupied free of charge with the permission of the owner, via contract or through any other non-temporary arrangement (including accommodation provided by the public sector, by non-governmental organizations or by employers)
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	INE: 1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people Many local and regional surveys focus either on rough sleepers or on the first 3 categories of ETHOS Light, or they cover most other groups as well
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	No separate census conducted
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	INE national survey was conducted in 2012, using similar methodology to INSEE in France Some NGOs have their own data from client registration systems
	Other surveys	Large number of regional and local surveys, e.g., in Barcelona, Madrid and the Basque Country
	Responsible agencies	At national level: National Statistical Institute (INE) At regional and local level: regional and local authorities, commissioning research institutes and individual researchers
	Strengths in data collection	Variety of sources using different definitions and methodologies at local and regional level. National data follow established methodology from French National Statistical Institute.
	Weaknesses in data collection	National data only available at long intervals (2005, 2012); definition rather restricted and rural areas not covered. Local and regional survey results often not comparable as they use different definitions and methodological approaches

Sweden

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare recognises four categories: 1- Acute homelessness; 2- Institutional care and category housing; 3- Long-term housing solutions (e.g., the secondary housing market); 4- Short-term insecure housing solutions
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people; 4- People living in institutions; 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing; 6- Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	Homelessness was not counted within the register-based census in 2011
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	National homelessness survey, conducted in 1993, 1999, 2005 and last in 2011. Data was collected from organizations that come into contact with homeless people. The primary respondents in the survey were the social services or other informants (such as voluntary organizations, correctional- and probation offices, prisons, psychiatric or addiction centres, clinics, churches, emergency rooms)
	Other surveys	Bigger cities in Sweden collect data on homelessness every year (Malmö) and others every second year (Stockholm)
	Responsible agencies	Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (NBHW) Municipalities report the total number of homelessness to NBHW The Swedish Enforcement Authority collects statistics on the number of evictions
	Strengths in data collection	Regular national survey that also gives socio-demographic and other information on homeless people
	Weaknesses in data collection	No registers at the national level Lack of data on children, youth and young adults

United Kingdom

DEFINITION	Most widely used definition	There is no single definition of homelessness for statistical purposes. Most commonly counted are 'People sleeping rough and in the emergency accommodation system' and 'Households accessing the statutory homeless systems in each UK country'.
	Categories of ETHOS Light commonly included	1- People living rough; 2- People in emergency accommodation; 3- People living in accommodation for homeless people; 5- People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing; 6- Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing) + People living in very low-cost hotels; people living in the unregulated private rented sector; in some cases also people living in housing that is unfit for habitation or overcrowded
DATA COLLECTION	Census data	The 2011 Census attempted to enumerate homelessness based on whether someone in a communal establishment had experience of sleeping rough, and abandoned its previous inclusion of rough sleepers (head count)
	National surveys/ counts/ administrative data	Quarterly statistical returns on the statutory homelessness system are published by the governments of England, Wales and Scotland In England, annual reports are produced through CORE, the system that monitors new lets in social housing, and Supporting People statistics cover low-intensity housing-led services and accommodation-based services England publishes regular updates on street counts of people sleeping rough
	Other surveys	The CHAIN database (London) (NatCen, 2009) and the Edinburgh Homeless Database – a longitudinal database that covers services working with people sleeping rough SNAP survey of homelessness service provision for single people in England (Homeless Watch, 2013)
	Responsible agencies	Office for National Statistics (census) Local authorities with a statutory duty to homeless people under the terms of the homelessness legislation must collect data on the decisions and actions they take under the homelessness legislation in England, Wales and Scotland In Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive
	Strengths in data collection	Regular surveys at national level Inclusion of homeless population in the census Existence of longitudinal database
	Weaknesses in data collection	Census – the question used was extremely narrow in focus and no account was taken of the function of communal establishments Administrative data are not designed with a view that they might be employed or combined for secondary analysis on homeless people Relatively little is known about concealed/hidden homelessness

Appendix 2: Data Sources

The Czech Republic

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European Observatory on Homelessness

Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States

A Statistical Update

Good quality statistical data are fundamental if effective strategies to reduce and prevent homelessness are to be developed. Small scale qualitative and cross-sectional survey research suggests that homelessness exists in multiple forms, but large scale, robust and longitudinal data are needed to fully explore these patterns. This report critically assesses the statistical data on homelessness in 15 member states. The report argues that there are encouraging signs, with improvements in data in Southern and Eastern Europe in recent years, but that there are important concerns about the comprehensiveness, robustness and comparability of statistical data on homeless people. This comparative report is the fourth in a series produced by the European Observatory on Homelessness (EOH) which explores pan-European issues through a questionnaire-based approach employing a group of national experts.

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