FEANTSA

**European Federation of National Organisations
Working with the Homeless**

EUROPEAN OBSERVATORY ON HOMELESSNESS

REVIEW OF STATISTICS ON HOMELESSNESS IN EUROPE

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1.   Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to identify the extent and nature of homelessness in the European Union using the most recent available sources of information in each member state. The ability to develop appropriate policies to tackle housing exclusion relies on good quality information collected in a consistent manner and monitored in a frequent time-scale. Data collection should also reflect the distinct dimensions of homelessness. However, this is impossible to achieve in most member states. The report therefore begins with a discussion of the issues involved in measuring homelessness and with a brief summary of the approaches to data collection in each country.

1.2 The EU strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion is based on the method of open co-ordination as part of which each member state produced a National Action Plan on social inclusion. The first round of these plans was submitted in June 2001. The intention is that these plans should monitor social exclusion in relation to the four objectives of the strategy agreed by the European Council in Nice in December 2000. Access to housing and the prevention of homelessness are included in these objectives. It is therefore incumbent on each member state to identify indicators which can measure housing exclusion – although the form and nature of these indicators was left to the discretion of each country in the first instance. The second part of the report summarises some of the issues involved in developing indicators on homelessness. It sets this report in the context of FEANTSA's work on developing indicators and examining existing practice on data collection by service providers.

1.3 It is notoriously difficult to reach a consensus on a conceptual definition of homelessness in a manner which will allow unambiguous operational definitions to be developed and applied consistently. The problems involved in this exercise are even greater in the light of different approaches to data collection employed by national statistical offices in relation to housing and social policy issues related to housing exclusion and homelessness. However, the FEANTSA definition of homelessness is summarised in **Appendix 1** of this report to provide a

benchmark against which the information contained in this report can be assessed.

1.4 Because of the inconsistent approaches to data collection this report attempts to summarise information on homelessness in relation to a sub-set of the FEANTSA definition on which data is available in at least some of the EU member states. This refers particularly to information on:
- Rooflessness (rough sleeping, the no abode)
- People using accommodation services for the homeless (hostels, temporary accommodation for example)
- People living in institutions designated as homeless.

1.5 This is the first statistical report of this type on European homelessness produced by FEANTSA. The intention is to update this report on an annual basis. Future reports will endeavour to develop a more standard form of reporting and to extend the estimate of homelessness to (eventually) include all aspects of the FEANTSA operational definition.

1.6 The main source of information used in this report is the statistical summary provided by the correspondents of the European Observatory on Homelessness. A list of the correspondents and their contact details is contained in Appendix 2. The national statistical update reports can be accessed from the FEANTSA web-site for those needing more detailed information at the national level. The web address is : www.feantsa.org

2. Measuring Homelessness

2.1 The EUROHOME project (1996) attempted, as part of a wider research agenda, to examine data available on homelessness in Europe, data needed for analysis and to make recommendations on the collection of official statistics. This report draws upon the final EUROHOME report from that research strand. Future reports will endeavour to take forward the conceptual, measurement and policy issues raised in that research in order to develop our understanding, at both European and national level, on the need for and the relevance of different measures of homelessness.

2.2 The difficulty in measuring homelessness arises because the homeless are often 'hidden', because homelessness is not a static phenomenon and because it is difficult to agree on a definition of what constitutes homelessness. People may be homeless for short periods in their lives, some people may have recurrent episodes of homelessness, others may be homeless for long periods of time. Because of this dynamic aspect of homelessness it is possible to arrive at different measures of the phenomenon.

2.3 Fitzpatrick et al (2001) give a clear description of the measurement issue. In counting homelessness, it is important to specify whether what is being measured is the stock, the flow or the prevalence of homelessness. They define these elements as:

- The **stock** of homelessness refers to the number of people or households who are homeless at any point in time.
- The **flow** of homelessness refers to the people who have become homeless, or ceased to be homeless, during any time period.
- The **prevalence** refers to the number of people who have experienced homelessness during a particular time period (period prevalence or lifetime prevalence).

2.4 Clarifying which measure is employed is also important because each measure gives a different perspective on the scale and nature of the problem. The stock of homelessness is usually much larger than the flow of people becoming homeless. Measures of the prevalence of homelessness are, by definition, larger than measures of the stock of homelessness.

3. Official Sources and Methods of Data Collection

3.1 There is no single and consistent method of collecting data on homelessness employed by the national statistical offices or other official sources of statistics in the member states of the European Union. Indeed, in almost all countries it is not possible to derive figures on homelessness for the whole country. In some countries there are simply no official statistics on homelessness (e.g. Austria, Greece, Spain). In other countries, especially those with a federal structure, data is collected at a regional or local level but not in a consistent manner and it is difficult to arrive at a national estimate of homelessness (e.g. Germany, the UK, Italy, France). In no country is it possible to derive estimates of homelessness for each of the dimensions identified in the FEANTSA definition of homelessness.

3.2 In many countries therefore the most reliable statistics on homelessness come from the NGO service providers. This source will, however, clearly underestimate the extent of the problem since it will exclude homeless people who do not avail themselves of service provision (e.g. young people staying with friends), people who are excluded from services (e.g. people who are using drugs, illegal immigrants) or for whom services do not exist (e.g. ethnic minority groups, women in some countries).

3.3 Theoretically a range of methods can be employed to collect information on the homeless depending upon our understanding of the nature of the problem. It is therefore not surprising that a variety of methods of data collection are currently employed by public / official sources in each of the member states. However, in practice two broad approaches can be identified. Firstly, there are systems related to a legislative duty placed on local authorities or agencies. For example, the United Kingdom homeless legislation or the Danish registration system for §94 institutions require local authorities to collect and report on homelessness in a particular form in relation to statutory duties imposed upon those authorities. Secondly, there are survey methods where a census or count or survey is taken at a defined time. This may be a regular annual survey – for example the National Board of Health and Welfare survey in Sweden or the National Housing Fund survey in Finland; or it may be an ad hoc survey conducted by a service provider (e.g. BAWO survey in Austria) or by a municipality (e.g. surveys in Lisbon and Porto in Portugal). In practice, therefore, data is derived either from administrative records, registration systems or census / surveys.

3.4 The definitions of homelessness used in the different systems of data collection vary to reflect the purpose for which the data is collected and the constraints imposed by the responsible agency. The definitions employed, where they are known, for each member state are summarised in Table 1 below.

3.5 The method of counting and recording homeless people, their characteristics and the nature of the services they access varies depending on the type of homelessness involved. It is, of course, notoriously difficult to accurately measure the number and characteristics of people sleeping rough and there is an extensive literature evaluating different methods which can be employed (for a discussion see, for example, papers in the Eurohome project by Burt, De Feijter, Kofler, Marpsat and Williams). While it is easier to register and count users of homelessness services there are concerns about the recording of people using multiple services (day centres and accommodation services) and about the ability to record the number of people independently from their repeat presentations in services. In addition, there is a concern about the accuracy of data recording in service agencies which are small and without sufficient administrative resources or experience with data processing.

3.6 Overcoming these concerns would require that data is recorded in a manner which facilitates the creation of distinct data-sets. The Danish method of recording information on users of §94 institutions is a good example of the data requirements in this respect. This information is compiled into five different data sets:

Dataset 1: Places
Contains the number of § 94- services and number of places (day-, 24 hours and night).

Dataset 2: Stays
Contains the number of entrances and discharges per service. Here the same person may be counted several times.

Dataset 3: Service
Contains the users of the different service, so that a user is only counted once in the same service.

Dataset 4: County
Contains the users in the different counties so that a user of more services in the same county is only counted once.

Dataset 5: Country
A user is only counted once.

Dataset 6: Register
Contains a description of the user at the time of the entrance (see above) and whether the user has entered the service after an assignment or has simply turned up himself.

Dataset 7: Discharge
Contains a description of the user at the time of the discharge and furthermore to what he has been discharged (own apartment, another service).

TABLE 1. Definitions of homelessness employed in primary data sources on homelessness

COUNTRY	DATA SOURCE	DEFINITION EMPLOYED
Denmark	Social Appeal Board	§94 institutions: 'persons with special social problems, who are without – or are unable to live in – their own apartment and who are in need of a place to stay …for activating support, care and subsequent assistance'.
Finland	Housing Market Survey	• persons staying outdoors, staircases, night shelters etc. • persons living in other shelters or hostels or boarding houses for homeless people, • persons living in care homes or other housing units of social welfare authorities, rehabilitation homes or hospitals due to lack of housing, • prisoners soon to be released who have no housing, • persons living temporarily with relatives and acquaintances due to lack of housing, • families and couples who have split up or are living in temporary housing due to lack of housing.
Germany	Federal Statistical Office (feasibility study on homelessness)	1. Currently homeless persons 2. Without a dwelling, temporarily in institutions 3. Persons threatened by homelessness 4. Persons living in unacceptable conditions 5. Repatriates in temporary accommodation (information only) 6. Asylum seekers (information only)
Greece	EOH Survey	1. roofless 2. emergency accommodation 3. boarding houses 4. squatters 5. refugee camps 6. institutions, asylum facilities
Ireland	Department of Environment and Local Government Assessment of Homelessness	Persons who have no accommodation they can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of; Persons who, because they have no other accommodation, are living in hostels etc.; Persons who, because they have no other accommodation, are living in health board accommodation.
Italy	Commissione di indagine sull'esclusione sociale	"Only those who at the time did not have a permanent roof over their heads, even in the form of a hostel or protected accommodation were included among the no abode. Those who spent the night of the survey (14 March 2000) on the streets or in parks or in low threshold accommodation (dormitories that offer a bed to sleep in and a shower for short periods of time but which do not require and do not allow any participation in daily routine".
Sweden	National Board of Health and Welfare	Lacking any owned, rented or subleased dwelling and not being permanently lodged in somebody else's home, but having to rely on temporary housing solutions or sleeping rough. People staying in institutions were included if they were intended to move out within three months but lacked any dwelling to go to. Individuals staying temporarily with acquaintances were considered homeless if they "due to their homelessness had been in touch with the respondent during the week of counting"
United Kingdom	England: ODPM Part VII of the Housing Act 1996	A main homelessness duty is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group. The priority need groups include households with dependent children or a pregnant woman and people who are vulnerable in some way e.g. because of mental illness or physical disability.

4. NAPs/Inclusion and Data on Homelessness

4.1 In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council launched the EU strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion as a result of which each member state produced the first National Action Plan on Social Inclusion. These plans were submitted to the Commission in June 2001.

4.2 A review of the first round of National Action Plans illustrates the diversity of information employed as indicators to measure the objectives of social inclusion. This demonstrates how limited and inadequate is the type and extent of the information used to measure homelessness and housing exclusion. **Appendix 3** summarises the content of the homelessness information referred to in the NAPs/Incl from nine of the member states in order to illustrate the extent and type of information made available in relation to homelessness (taking the wider FEANTSA definition).

4.3 On this evidence only one country (Finland) provides information which allows an estimate to be made of the scale of homelessness of different categories in a manner which relates to the FEANTSA definition of homelessness. Clearly some countries (e.g. the UK and Ireland) hold information that is not included in the NAPS/incl report. However, a number of countries are unable to provide even the most rudimentary estimates of homelessness at a national level (Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, France). A number of countries indicate that work is progressing to improve the provision of statistics in the future (e.g. Netherlands, Greece). In France the 2001 survey conducted by INSEE was not available for the NAPs. In Belgium the NAPs foresees the development of homelessness data as a key indicator of social exclusion but no concrete steps are identified.

4.4 This review also demonstrates that it is impossible, at this time, to derive a single European statistic or measure on homelessness. This is in part the result of a lack of consistency in the measurement of the stock, flow and prevalence of homelessness. In part, it reflects a lack of data available in some countries. In part the available homeless information is simply not included in all the Action Plans. In the absence of clear baseline data the ability to monitor progress in relation to the key objectives defined in the open method of co-ordination employed by the EU Strategy simply can not be adequately undertaken in relation to this key aspect of social exclusion.

5. Summary of Statistics on Homelessness in Europe

Extent of Homelessness

5.1 FEANTSA has adopted a broad four-fold conceptual definition of homelessness (see **Appendix 1**) which distinguishes between rooflessness, houselessness, insecure housing and inadequate housing. However, to gauge the extent of homelessness, it is necessary to convert this conceptual definition to an operational definition which can be implemented and which allows comparison. In order to devise an operational definition of homelessness we have adapted the definitions employed in Finland by the National Housing Fund. This definition (summarised in **Table 2** below) suggests seven distinct categories of homelessness which are necessary if an estimate of homelessness is to be calculated. A review of the sources of information on homelessness in each member state demonstrates the difficulty of obtaining reliable estimates of homelessness in each of these categories.

5.2 Because of the variation in the definitions of homelessness employed and the measures used between countries (and even within countries), and because the time periods of the data do not coincide, **it is not possible to provide a single reliable European statistic on the extent of homelessness in Europe**. The most recent statistical information on homelessness in each EU member state is summarised in **Appendix 4**.

5.3 The information derived from these sources allows some tentative comparisons to be made. Germany, with the largest population in the EU has the largest homeless population – around 390,000 - of whom almost a quarter of a million are homeless families. While it is difficult to

obtain an aggregate statistic for the United Kingdom, the figures for acceptances by local authorities under the homelessness legislation suggests around 165,000 people in priority need (i.e. homeless), in addition to which there are families living in temporary accommodation. Estimates for France using the INSEE survey data and service provider information similarly suggests a homeless population (including those living in temporary accommodation) of around 200,000. The homeless figure of 17,000 for Italy calculated from the survey by the *Commissione di indagine sull'exclusione sociale* relates only to the roofless population and is much lower than previous estimates given in the late 1990s (of 70-80,000). This suggests that there is no reliable comparable information on the extent of homelessness in Italy.

5.4 The homeless figure for the Netherlands (26,175) relates to people using shelters. While there have been local surveys on rough sleeping it is not pos-sible to get an aggregate statistic on homelessness which includes the different categories included in our operational definition. Elsewhere countries with similar population levels have very different levels of homelessness. For example, Greece has almost half the level of homelessness (10,000) estimated in Belgium (18,800) and a similar population size, while Sweden has less than half the homeless level (8,440) estimated for Austria (21,000). While we would expect differences as a result of different housing, welfare and service provision the extent of these variances undoubtedly also reflect differences in the definition of homelessness and the methods of information collection employed. Information for Denmark (7365), Finland (10,000) and Ireland (5234) provide stock based figures of homelessness based upon regular municipal or government survey. However, even here the differences in definition employed make it difficult to compare the overall level or specific categories of homelessness.

**TABLE 2.** An Operational Definition of Homelessness

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Roofless	Single people without permanent accommodation, who live in various types of temporary shelters, emergency night shelters, live outdoors, sleep rough
In Shelters or hostels	Single people who live in hostels for the homeless, in boarding houses (usually on a daily fee paid by the social welfare authorities)
In Institutions	Single people who live in various types of care homes or homes for institutional care, homes or hospitals where a person stays due to lack of housing. Units for supported housing are not counted. Includes those who are due to leave prison or hospital (within one to three months) for whom no accommodation is available.
In interim or temporary accommodation	Single people living in temporary accommodation for the homeless. Units of supported housing are not counted
Sharing with relatives or friends	Persons who are known to be living temporarily with relatives or friends due to lack of housing. This item does not include young people living in their childhood home.
Other	People living in refugee camps or other categories not elsewhere specified
Families	Families forced to live apart because of lack of housing, or in temporary accommodation, such as a boarding house, or temporarily with friends or relatives. Homeless families also include mothers in temporary mother-and-child homes or families in crises homes without a home of their own.

Trends in Homelessness

5.5 The countries with the largest populations have, as we may expect, the largest populations of homeless people. However, the trends in levels of homelessness are variable. In Germany, one of the best indicators to show long-term trends in homelessness is the annual survey of homeless people in the most densely populated Bundesland of North Rhine-Westphalia. This shows an increase in homelessness from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, followed by a sustained reduction since 1994. Estimates of homelessness made by the national coalition of service providers for the homeless shows, for the country as a whole, a similar reduction in the levels of homelessness since the mid-1990s **(see Figure 1)**.

FIGURE 1. Estimates of the national coalition of service providers ss (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe)
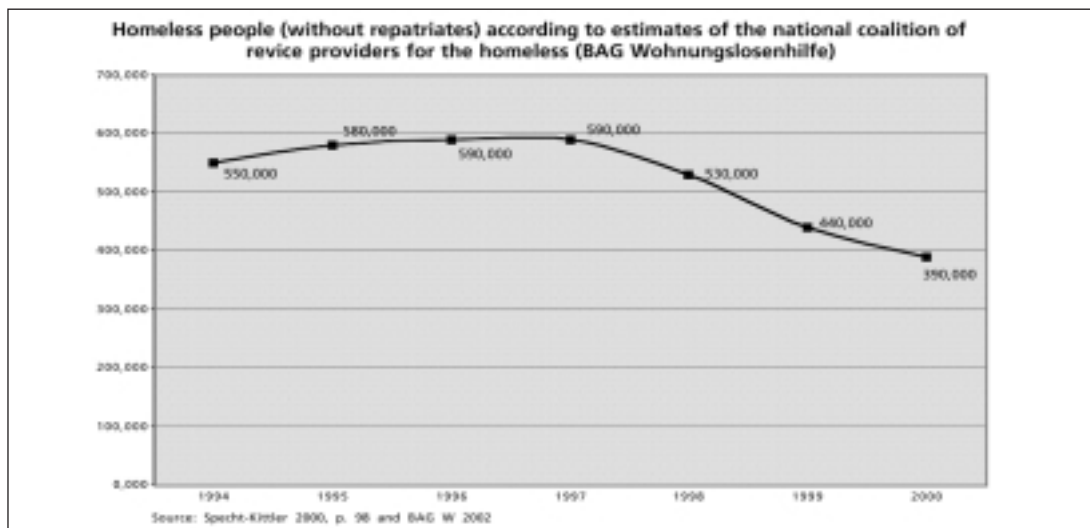
5.6 In the United Kingdom, total acceptances by local authorities under homeless legislation declined by one third during the 1990s (from over 170,000 to 116,000 for the UK and from 140,000 to 115,000 in England – **see Figure 2**). The Government have claimed success in achieving their target to reduce rough sleeping. In France, INSEE carried out the first national survey in January 200, targeted on temporary accommodation and meal site service users in towns of over 20,000 people, recording everyone who did not have a night-time residence on the survey date. This provides the most reliable estimate of homelessness on a national basis. However, there is no comparable data source in order to reliably establish the long term trend in this statistic in France. Data on homelessness in Italy is difficult to obtain at a national level and relates to the 'no abode' (senza dimora) population. The trend in street homelessness shows an increase in recent years.

FIGURE 2. Local Authority Homeless Acceptances (England)
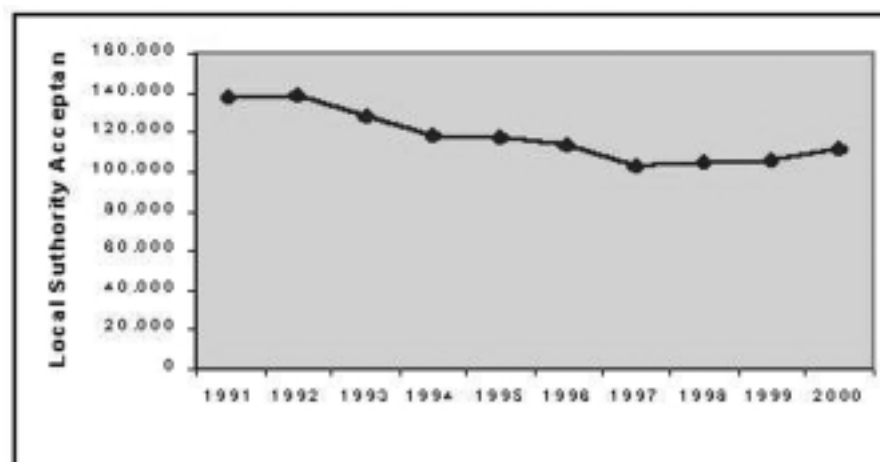
5.7 In the Scandinavian countries, levels of homelessness have remained relatively static or possibly declined since the early 1990s. In Finland, government initiatives have reduced the level of (single adult) homelessness by one-third from 15,000 in the early 1990s to 10,000 in 2001. The recovery of the housing market since the mid-1990s, following a period of economic recession, has led to a slight increase in the levels of homelessness. In Sweden, more than half the population live in towns where there is a shortage of housing accommodation. Levels of vacancy in the housing stock have returned to the levels of the early 1990s and so too has the number of applications for eviction. The NBHW concluded that homelessness in 1999 had reduced since the early 1990s. This may reflect a pattern of a return to a long-run underlying level of homelessness rather than a sustained reduction in the levels of homelessness. In Denmark, the figures reflect a growth

in the provision of places in section 94 institutions and the social living arrangements under section 91 (which form the basis for the registered count of homelessness) since the mid-1990s. However, the underlying level of homelessness is probably fairly static.

5.8 In Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands information on homelessness is dependent upon the service providers. In Belgium, the federal structure complicates the collation of accurate statistics on homelessness. No information is available for the Brussels Capital region; improved information is forthcoming for Walonnia but is not yet available and a similar situation is reported for the Flemish speaking community. In Luxembourg no official statistics are available and the data quoted here is drawn from surveys conducted by service providers in the mid-1990s. Information from the Ministry for the Advancement of Women indicates a static picture in relation to the reception of women into shelters. It is therefore difficult to say with confidence whether the situation is getting any worse in these two countries. In the Netherlands the Federatie Opvang has a national client registration system which all subsidised shelters use. This indicates an increase in the number of applications for shelter between 2001 and 2002. In 2001, 18,000 women made application to women's shelters while 34,000 people made application to other shelters. The number of places in shelters also increased from 11575 to 12295. Recorded levels of homelessness are thus, to some extent, linked to levels of service provision and funding.

5.9 In Austria, Portugal and Greece information is drawn from ad hoc survey information undertaken by the research correspondent in Greece and the umbrella homeless organisations in Austria (BAWO) and Portugal (AMI). It is therefore not possible to get accurate information on trends. The survey in Austria was undertaken in 1997 and at least provides an overview indicating 21,000 people in contact with services for the homeless. The Ministry of Health and Welfare in Greece is planning a 'National Chart of Welfare' which should be implemented within the next two years. In the meantime our survey data provides a base-line figure of 10,800 homeless people. In Portugal surveys were undertaken in 1999 and 2000 in Lisbon (funded by the Municipality) which demonstrated a decrease in rough sleeping due to the creation of new shelters

and an increase in use of those shelters. The first survey undertaken in Porto in 2000 estimated a total of 1,000 homeless which suggests an increase in homelessness in the city (compared to previous estimates). For the rest of the country data is drawn from service users of AMI (International Medical Assistance) which suggests a 40% increase (from 1700 to 3067) between 1999 and 2001.

5.10 In Ireland, information on the extent of homelessness on a national level is collected by local authorities on behalf of the Department of Environment and Local Government every three years. In addition, commencing in 1999, the Homeless Agency, in conjunction with the Economic and Social Research Institute, collect data on the extent of homelessness in the greater Dublin region every three years. The methodology utilised by the Homeless Agency is more sophisticated than that employed by the local authorities and is thus more reliable. Between 1996 and 1999, the number of homeless persons enumerated doubled, but this may reflect in part, a somewhat changed methodology.

5.11 These national figures mask important changes taking place within countries. In some countries – Finland, Ireland, Denmark, Portugal – recorded homelessness is concentrated in the capital city regions of Helsinki, Dublin, Lisbon and Copenhagen. In countries with a federal structure there is a disparity in recorded levels of homelessness between parts of the country. It is difficult to establish the extent to which this is the result of differences in actual incidence of homelessness rather than differences in provision and policy which are reflected in service provider statistics. In the United Kingdom there is a noticeable difference in trends. The recorded level of local authority acceptances under homeless legislation in England (and Wales) has reduced consistently since the early to mid-1990s while it has continued to grow in Scotland. Northern Ireland demonstrates a much higher per capita level of homelessness than other parts of the UK. In other countries, too, there are marked disparities in the underlying trend of the recorded level of homelessness. For example, in Portugal homelessness has decreased slightly in Lisbon while there has been a recorded growth in Porto.

Demographic Profile of the Homeless

5.12 Even in a situation, common to many European countries, where population growth does not increase there is a growth in the rate of household formation. In this situation policy has to respond to an increased demand for housing. In a similar manner, even where the extant level of homelessness is static, or increasing only slightly, the changing nature and composition of the homeless population means that there is an increasing demand on service provision and a continued requirement for innovation and change in the nature and form of that provision. The changing profile of homelessness can be measured in relation to three main components. Firstly, the demographic component can be measured by factors of age, gender, ethnicity and household composition. Secondly, the profile of the needs of the homeless population arising from the causes underlying their homelessness. Thirdly, the services consumed (or required) by the homeless population. The available evidence from the national reports of the correspondents of the European Observatory on Homelessness suggests that the composition of the homeless population, at least in relation to the demographic component, is changing in most countries. The profile of causes of homelessness for people in the youth, adult and old age pathways to homelessness probably remain broadly consistent over time but the relative importance of these causes varies with the changing demographic composition of the homeless population. The profile of services consumed by homeless people reflects the changing pattern of service provision rather than the actual requirements of homeless people per se. This statistical report on homelessness in Europe, being the first of its kind to be produced by FEANTSA, reports only on the key demographic profile of the homeless population. Where it is possible to do so some indication is given of significant trends in the changing composition of the homeless population.

Future reports will examine the profile of homelessness in more detail. In this report we present the basic patterns of the demographic profile.

Household type

5.13 It is difficult in obtain basic information on the proportion of single homeless and homeless families in all countries. Typically users of low threshold services and people sleeping rough are single households. In countries where homelessness statistics are focussed on this aspect of homelessness between two-thirds and four-fifths of people are single person households.

Age

5.14 The pattern of the age of homeless people is variable reflecting in part the nature of service provision and in part whether the data refers to all homeless people or only to those sleeping rough. In Denmark, where data is drawn from the users of §94 or §91 institutions, one-fifth are aged under 30, while in Finland one-fifth of all homeless single people are aged under 25. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, where information relates mainly to shelter users and to users of women's shelters 44% are aged 21 to 30. In France the INSEE survey of service users indicates that 36% are aged 18-29. In Italy, where data relates to the no abode one-third of the homeless population is aged 28-37 and only 16% are aged under 27.

Gender

5.15 The profile of single homeless people remains a male story. However, many countries report a growth in the proportion of women in the homeless population and especially among young women. Typically a fifth to a quarter of the homeless population are reported to be female. This figure rises when supported housing and women's shelters are included in the figures for the homeless and is lower where the figures relate solely to the street homeless.

Ethnicity

5.16 Overall there is no consistent collection of data on the ethnicity of homeless people or service users. Only in a few countries is it possible to estimate the extent to which the homeless population is made up of immigrants. In Germany a fifth of the homeless population are repatriates (Ausseidler).

Elsewhere, there is a group of countries where the proportion of foreign born people in the homeless population is around 15% or less; these include Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Portugal and the UK. In Austria, France and Sweden a quarter to a third of users of homeless services are of foreign nationality while in Luxembourg this proportion rises to almost two-fifths. In Italy almost half the no abode population are reported to be foreign born and a survey of rough sleepers in the Hague found a similar proportion in the Netherlands.

6. Developing Indicators

6.1 In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council launched the EU strategy against poverty and social exclusion. In December 2000, the Nice European Council agreed on a set of common objectives for the strategy and decided that indicators had to be developed to allow an effective monitoring of the strategy. The Stockholm European Council, in March 2001, gave a mandate to the Council to adopt a set of commonly agreed social inclusion indicators by the end of the year. These indicators had to allow the Member States and the Commission to monitor progress towards the goal set by the Lisbon European Council of making a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty by 2010.

6.2 The Social Protection Committee (SPC), consisting of representatives of governments of the EU Member States, was given the task to develop common indicators. The SPC set up the Subgroup on Indicators, consisting of representatives of the governments of the EU Member States with specific expertise in the area social inclusion indicators, to prepare the report. In October 2001 the Social Protection Committee produced a "Report on Indicators in the field of poverty and social exclusion". The Sub-group reached agreement on 18 common indicators covering four dimensions of social exclusion. In its report to the council in December 2001 the Sub-group presented indicators on :

- Income and poverty
- Work and unemployment
- Health
- Education.

The fifth dimension of social exclusion – housing and homelessness – was missing from the sub-group's report. While the Sub-group took considerable time to consider propositions for housing and homelessness indicators no consensus was achieved.

In December 2001, the Laeken European Council adopted the set of 18 indicators proposed by the SPC. Most of the 18 indicators relate to income and employment. Only one indicator referred to housing - *1d Low income rate transfers with breakdown by tenure status.*

6.3 During 2002, the Belgian Presidency commissioned the Atkinson group to prepare the report "Indicators for Social Inclusion in the European Union" which included recommendations for indicators on Housing and homelessness. In their report the SPC recognised that they were unable to present a proposal for housing indicators but agreed on the following common approach: "National Action Plans should contain quantitative information covering three issues: **(1) decent housing, (2) housing costs, (3) homelessness and other precarious housing conditions.**

6.4 The FEANTSA Data Collection Working Group is working to develop appropriate indicators on homelessness linked to the Social Protection Committee proposals. More details on this can be found at the FEANTSA web-site.

Appendix 1

FEANTSA Operational Definition of Homelessness

The operational definition of homelessness adopted by FEANTSA provides a simple but robust definition of housing vulnerability as persons experiencing one of the following situations: -

1. Rooflessness;
2. Houselessness;
3. Living in insecure accommodation;
4. Living in inadequate accommodation.

Rooflessness, defined as rough sleeping, is the most visible form of homelessness. People with chaotic lifestyles or unsettled ways of living may be disproportionately represented among the roofless population. Successful resettlement for rough sleepers may be contingent as much on the availability of appropriate support as on the availability of temporary and permanent housing. **Houselessness** refers to situations where, despite access to emergency shelter or long term institutions, individuals may still be classed as homeless due to a lack of appropriate support aimed at facilitating social re-integration. People who are forced to live in institutions because there is inadequate accommodation (with support) in the community to meet their needs are thus regarded as homeless. In this context, homelessness refers as much to the lack housing as it does to the lack of social networks. **Living in insecure housing** (insecure tenure or temporary accommodation) may be a consequence of the inaccessibility of permanent housing. It may equally reflect the need for support to enable people to successfully hold a tenancy. The provision of appropriate support can be critical in helping people into permanent housing under their own tenancy. This classification also includes people who are involuntary sharing in unreasonable circumstances and people whose security is threatened by violence or threats of violence (e.g. women at risk of domestic abuse, racial violence or harassment). People **living in inadequate accommodation** includes people whose accommodation is unfit for habitation or is overcrowded (based on national or statutory standards) as well as those whose accommodation is a caravan or boat.

Appendix 2

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Appendix 3   NAPs/Incl Data on Homelessness – selected countries

Austria

"Approximately 20,000 persons are homeless in Austria at present. An estimated 2,000 to 3,000 live on the street, while the remainder are housed in accommodation for the homeless and in facilities for foreigners and refugees" (pp31-32).

Denmark

"People with special social problems include homeless people, drug and alcohol mis-users, mentally ill people, suicidal persons and prostitutes. An estimated 50,000 people are socially marginalised…. Homeless people are estimated at about 4,500" (p25).

TABLE 16. The resource development in the homelessness area (p66)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Reception centres etc.							
24-hour clients	2337	2218	2138	2332	2412	2437	2463
Day clients	454	552	718	952	849	891	866
Staff per 100 registered 24-hour clients	52	54	59	55	58	62	71

Finland

TABLE: Exclusion from the Housing Market (1990 to 2000) (p50) includes the following indicators and data:

Accommodation

1. number of households living in inadequate accommodation as a percentage of all households
2. number of persons living in overcrowding aas a percentage of population
3. total number of households queuing for State Housing rental accommodation – percentage of applicant households in urgent need of housing

Homelessness

4. Total single homeless persons
   • Sleeping in open or temporary overnight shelters
   • Persons in institutions because of lack of accommodation
   • Staying temporarily with friends or relatives
   • Percentage of women among single homeless persons
   • Percentage of under 25 year-olds among single homeless persons
5. Homeless Families

Germany

No figures for homeless people are quoted in the report. The following information is given for domestic violence:

"there are currently over 400 women's shelters…which offer refuge to around 45,000 women and children each year" (p31).

Greece

No figures are given

Ireland

No figures are given. Under the section on Indicators 3 measures are identified (but not defined):

1. level of homelessness
2. availability of affordable housing to buy or rent
3. housing standards.

Netherlands

Provision for the homeless (section 1.4.8, p13) states:

"There are no reliable figures on the total number of homeless people in the Netherlands; the most usual estimate is between 20,000 and 30,000. Currently, 74% of those using shelters for the homeless are men, and many of them have psychological and/or addiction problems. The number of women using homeless shelters has increased from 5% in 1994 to 26% in 2000. the number of homeless young people aged under 18 has increased over the same period from 0% to 10%".

The section also refers to the reason for the lack of information:

"The registration system of homeless shelters currently provides no reliable or relevant information. The task for the Netherlands in the coming years is therefore to improve the registration of homeless people in shelters in order to be able to foster a more effective national and local policy for social integration of the homeless" (p13).

Sweden

No specific figures are quoted. However under a section entitled "Homelessness and Overcrowding" the following statement is made:

"It is extremely difficult to obtain reliable information about the number of homeless people and develop-

ments over time, since regular statistical studies have proved incapable of capturing these groups. A conservative interpretation of the surveys of the numbers of homeless people carried out in 1993 and 1998 shows that there were not more homeless people at the end of the decade than at the beginning, The percentage of women among the homeless seems to have increased slightly and the percentage of homeless people with mental problems has also increased………….The rate of overcrowding (defined as more than 2 people living in one room excluding kitchen and drawing room) in Sweden was a little over 2% throughout the period" (p9).

United Kingdom

The report defines indicators grouped according to the first three of the four objectives agreed by the European Council of Nice. The following indicators are identified and baseline data and trends are referred to for each of these indicators.

	INDICATOR	COVERAGE	DATE	TREND
1.3	A reduction in the proportion of children living in a home that falls below the set decency standard	England	1996	23%
1.4	Reducing the number of households with children living in temporary accommodation	Scotland	2000	3,995
1,12	A reduction in the proportion of older people living in a home that falls below the set decency standard	England	1996	38%
1.16	A reduction in the proportion of households living in a home that falls below the set decency standard	England	1996	32%
3.12	A reduction in the number of people sleeping rough	England	2000	1180
3.13	No one has to sleep rough	Scotland	2001	Indicators still being developed

Appendix 4   STATISTICAL UPDATES BY COUNTRY • Summaries

COUNTRY   **Austria**
Source   BAWO (NGO)
Type of Data Survey
Date   1998
Measure   Prevalence
Summary   21,000 homeless service users in total
             2,000 sleeping rough
             12,000 shelters, supported housing
             7,000 refugee camps / facilities

COUNTRY   **Belgium**
Source   Brussels: n/k
             Flanders: SAW (ngo)
             Wallonia: AMA (ngo)
Type of Data Survey
Date   Brussels   n/k
             Flanders 1998
             Wallonia 1999
Measure
Summary   Belgium   18,880
             Brussels   1,200
             Flanders 12,680
             Wallonia   5,000

COUNTRY	**Denmark**
Source	Den Sociale Ankestyrelse (Social Appeal Board)
Type of Data	Registrations (entries and discharges from §94 institutions Boform computerised system
Date	2000 (annual)
Notes	Excludes emergency services Excludes domestic violence shelters
Measure	Stock
Summary	7,365 users of §94 institutions

COUNTRY	**Finland**
Source	Housing Market Survey
Type of Data	Survey (annual)
Date	2001
Notes	Survey by all Municipal authorities by National Housing Fund Survey relates to a count on 15th November
Measure	Stock
Summary	10,000 single homeless total
	560 rough sleeping
	1,600 hostels
	1,400 rehabilitation hostels
	700 ex-prisoners
	5,700 temporary accommodation, family or friends
	800 families

Country	**France**
Source	INSEE National Survey
Type of Data	Survey
Date	2001 (January)
Notes	Survey by INSEE (National Institute for Statistical and Economic Research) January 2001, targeted on temporary accommodation and meal site service users in towns of over 20 000 people.
Measure	Stock (estimate from sample survey)
Summary	201,000 homeless total
	5,100 roofless
	12,000 shelters and hostels
	54,000 centres d'hébergements
	50,000 temporary accommodation
	80,000 staying with friends / relatives

COUNTRY	**Germany**
Source	BAGW
Type of Data	Estimates
Date	2000 (annual)
Notes	no national sources of information
Measure	Prevalence
Summary	500,000 all homeless
	390,000 non repatriates
	220,000 families (>1-person)
	170,000 single persons
	110,000 repatriates

COUNTRY	**Greece**
Source	FEANTSA Research Correspondent
Type of Data	Survey of services and users
Date	2002 (May)
Notes	Planned inventory of National Chart of Welfare Available within 2 years and will include homeless
Measure	Prevalence
Summary	10,000 all homeless
	350 sleeping rough
	2,550 emergency accommodation
	3,000 institutions
	2,000 squatters
	1,000 boarding houses
	540 refugee camps / facilities

COUNTRY	**Ireland**
Source	Department of the Environment and Local Government / Homeless Agency
Type of Data	Tri-annual Survey of Homelessness
Date	1999
Notes	Data for 2002 should be available in December 2002.
Measure	Stock
Summary	5,234 homeless households recorded in 1999, nearly 70 percent in Dublin.

COUNTRY	**Italy**
Source	Commissione di indagine sull'exclusione sociale
Type of Data	Survey and estimation weightings
Date	2000
Notes	includes only sleeping rough Hostel dwellers and protected accommodation excluded One night survey – 14 March
Measure	Stock
Summary	17,000 total national estimate of 'no abode'

COUNTRY	**Luxembourg**
Source	(a) CEPS (NGO) (b) Ministry for Advancement of Women
Type of Data	(a) Survey of hostels and accommodation centres (b) Intake to women's shelters
Date	(a) 1996 (b) 2000
Notes	One night survey in September annually for 3 years No survey since 1996
Measure	Stock
Summary	(a) 305 all users (nb 1995) (b) 362 women 365 children

COUNTRY	**Netherlands**
Source	Federatie Opvang
Type of Data	National Register of Clients
Date	2002
Notes	
Measure	Prevalence
Summary	26175

COUNTRY	**Portugal**
Source	Combination (see notes)
Type of Data	Surveys
Date	2000
Notes	No official national statistics Service Provider statistics (mainly AMI) One night count in Lisbon in 1999 and 2000 Survey by municipality of Porto in 2000
Measure	Stock
Summary	Lisbon: 1300 Porto 1000

COUNTRY	**Sweden**
Source	National Board of Health and Welfare
Type of Data	(a) National Survey of homeless (b) National count of housing support and institutional care
Date	(a) 1999 (b) 2001
Notes	Survey of homeless clients of services in one week in April Limited to specific service providers Restricted definition of homeless used Only counted adults 21 or over.
Measure	Stock
Summary	(a) 8,440 total homeless *1,200 sleeping rough* (b) 1593 total receiving assistance 11,016 housing assistance 4677 institutional care

COUNTRY	**United Kingdom**
Source	Local authorities
Type of Data	Applications under Homeless Legislation
Date	England: 2001 (June) Scotland 2000
Notes	Households in priority need Households in temporary accommodation
Measure	Prevalence
Summary	England: 113590 priority need (homeless) 75000 living in temporary accommodation 52,000 non-priority need (homeless) 700 sleeping rough Scotland: 46,000 applications 34,040 accepted as homeless Wales: 4,171 accepted as homeless N. Ireland: 12,694 applications

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This report was based on the 15 national statistical reviews produced in 2002 by the National Correspondents of FEANTSA's European Observatory on Homelessness. These national reviews can be downloaded from FEANTSA's website www.feantsa.org.

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